



COLORADO RIVER RED, WHITE & BLUE NEWSLETTER

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October 2015

Welcome to this issue of your Colorado River Chapter, AZSSAR newsletter. The Colorado River, Red, White & Blue is an official publication of the Colorado River Chapter, AZSSAR.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter and the updates and information it provides.

Constitution Day Bell Ringing Lake Havasu



Chapter Meetings

**Next Chapter Meeting November 8th
Mohave County Library
Lake Havasu City**

Colorado River Chapter rotates meetings between Kingman and Lake Havasu in hopes that one location will be more appealing to you than the other.

Our meeting location in Kingman is Mohave County Community College, 1971 Jaegerson Ave, Kingman, which is about 4-5 miles north of I-40. The meeting room is in the Library Building in a really nice conference room across from the Library.

Our meeting location in Lake Havasu is Mohave County Library in the K-Mart Plaza at 1770 North McCulloch Blvd, Lake Havasu City.

President Don Reighard along with Sharon Eaton Havasu DAR Regent and members of Havasu Chapter DAR – participated in Constitution Day Bell Ringing ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 17, at the DAR Flagpole in front of the Mohave County Library

Did you know that this year marked the 228th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution?

Campaigns and Battles of the American Revolution (1775-1783)

Our series on Battles of the American Revolution continues with this issue's installment – Battles of the Cherokee Campaign. I hope you find it interesting and informative!

Battles of the Cherokee Campaign (Also known as Second Cherokee War)

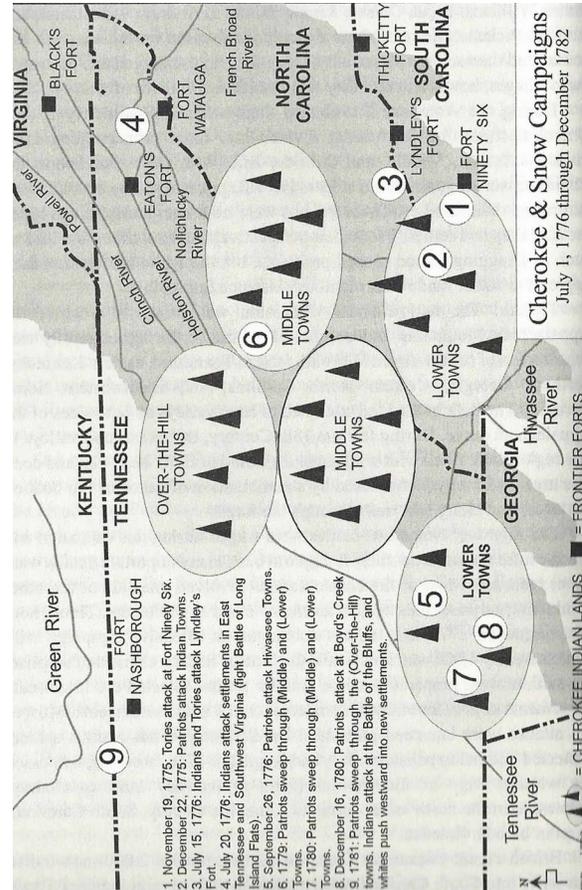
1 July 1776 through December 1782

The area where Battles of the Cherokee Campaign was fought was primarily west of the Appalachian Mountains and comprised the fertile agriculturally rich breadbasket of southwestern Virginia, eastern Tennessee, eastern Kentucky, northern Georgia, western North Carolina and northwestern South Carolina.

The bulk of this land consisted of river valleys on both sides of the Appalachian range. In the late 18th Century, the forests and valleys in this region were filled with wild game including buffalo, bear, elk, and deer. While this was a rich area, it could only be traversed by a combination of canoe or flat boat on rivers and along foot trails thought out the forest.

One of the results of the French and Indian War was the ceding of land west of the Appalachian Mountains to the Indians. Colonial settlers were supposed to remain east of the Proclamation Line of 1763 in accordance with the end of the fighting.

While this was acceptable in 1763, western expansion of white settlements was or should have been anticipated. This western movement of white settlers and Indian raids and fighting for frontier lands in Southern colonies continued unabated.



On 17 Mar 1775, the largest private real estate transaction in American history was consummated when the Cherokee agreed to the “Henderson Purchase”. Through this transaction, the Cherokees gave the Transylvania Land Company the bulk of what are today Kentucky and Tennessee (some 20,000,000 acres) in exchange for 2,000 pounds sterling and 8,000 pounds of gunpowder, lead, clothing and various other trinkets.

On paper this deal which provided the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals was meant to provide settlers and Indians a guaranteed peace. This deal/treaty had been agreed to by elder chiefs of the Treaty Council, which included Old Tassel, Oconostota, Savanooka, and Attakullakulla, which meant the contract with the white men was confirmed. However, the son of

Attakullakulla, Chief Dragging Canoe, vehemently opposed the transaction, pledging that the deal would provide whites with a “dark and bloody ground”.

With the start of the American Revolution, many northern Indian tribes, including Mohawk, Shawnee, and Ottawa, made pacts with British forces who in turn, encouraged the southern tribes to also ally with the British. Some Cherokee factions did ally with the British and Indians along the Ohio River, but most southern Cherokee remained neutral.

British Indian agents Alexander Cameron, Henry Stuart and John McDonald, however, supported the Chickamauga Cherokee and Chief Dragging Canoe. In addition many Tory sympathizers in and around the frontier settlements provided Indians with intelligence concerning Patriot settlements and outposts. On several occasions Tories dressed as Indians joined the Indians on settlement raids.

The various peace treaties mad during the war did little to stop Indian war parties from attacking whites, and punitive expeditions conducted by whites made the frontier in Southern colonies a brutally contested campaign. The attacks by Chief Dragging Canoe and his men continued throughout the remainder of the war and many years thereafter.

Prior to the British offensive in Southern colonies in 1779, colonial settlers in the region faced few threats from a British invasion. This was true even though many of the men in the frontier settlements joined the cause of liberty and served in both the Continental Line and local militia units! The battles they fought in were mainly in the Northern colonies far removed from their daily lives and thus not as important to them as the constant threat from Indian attacks on their homes.

In 1775, just as war with England got underway, pioneers in Southern colonies achieved a peace treaty with the Cherokee Indians. The Henderson Purchase opened former Indian land to white settlers and provided them new opportunities. Richard Henderson, the man who brokered this deal was nothing more than a land speculator and legal issues concerning this land deal’s validity remained.

Legal or not, men like Daniel Boone who worked for Henderson, led settlers into the fertile land of Kentucky and Tennessee to establishment homesteads.

And as promised Chief Dragging Canoe, found the settlements his target for attack by his braves, which in turn prompted settlers to conduct retaliatory raids on the Indians. The result was a low-profile backwoods fight which raged on simultaneously with the more visible campaigns of the American Revolution.

The colonial settlements of western Virginia and what today is Kentucky and Tennessee, were especially contested by Indian tribes who fought to push the settlers out for good. Watauga and Nolichucky settlements in what today is East Tennessee and Clinch and Holston River settlements in southwest Virginia were very isolated and frequently attacked.

Militia leaders in these western settlements were Colonels Arthur, Campbell, Shelby and Sevier and they led many raids to destroy at least 36 Indian villages and kill scores of Cherokee.

Meanwhile in western North and South Carolina and northern Georgia, punitive militia raids were led by Brigadier General Rutherford and Colonels Williams, Clarke, Winston, Williamson, and Pickens. Many of these expeditions focused on Indians who had committed themselves to neutrality. However, once the raiders had pillaged and destroyed their villages, neutrality was abandoned in favor of war.

As a point of reference – during the American Revolution there were approximately 25,000 Cherokee living on the frontier which was comprised of three primary geographic divisions – Lower, Middle, and Over-the-Hill. Within these areas the Cherokee had at least 170 villages; they were early farmers planting crops and raising families. The Cherokee in this area were no longer nomadic and loved the land they lived on. From the Indian perspective tribal leaders like Dragging Canoe caused problems for them, but the white settlers and their aggressive nature made a harmonious coexistence impossible.

During the Cherokee Campaign, numerous battles were waged, but precise information about them is vague at best with many important details never recorded/preserved for history.

Most battles involved one side conducting surprise raids against their enemy's camp or settlement. However, during the summer of 1776 Indians conducted an offensive campaign with about 4,000 warriors. While these warriors had the element of surprise when the fighting started, settlers were prepared because American frontier scouts had detected the large scale movements days before they descended upon white settlements.

Most of the attacks of the early Indian Campaign were launched piecemeal by disjointed bands of Indians against settlers protected within log palisades. But July and August 1776 witnessed the western edges of the frontier erupt into bloody violence (this area is present day Sullivan County, TN in the north as far south as Abbeville County, SC).

British involvement is shown by the presence of British Agent Alexander Cameron who accompanied 2,000-man Indian war party in South Carolina, where it joined with several hundred Tories dressed as Indians. This group attacked Lyndley's Fort (Abbeville County, SC) on 15 Jul, however, the 600 defenders were able to hold the stronghold and beat back this assault.

During the following weeks Indians terrorized much of the Upcountry, and even though they killed many settlers, their objective of driving out the white settlers failed miserably. This was caused by the fact that the Indian summer 1776 offensive lacked any kind of coherent plan and utilized too many disjointed methods.

Meanwhile, further north, Chief Dragging Canoe had led his main war party against settlements near Fort Watauga and Eaton's Forts in modern-day east Tennessee. Pioneer militiamen at Fort Watauga were ready and were able to survive the three-week siege by the Indians before the Indians gave up.

Even farther north on the frontier at Long Island Flats on the Holston River, militiamen were positioned west of Eaton's Station, and on 20 Jul, the militia attacked the Indians as they moved toward the fort in

a fight known today as the Battle of Long Island Flats. During this battle many of the Indians were killed and Dragging Canoe was wounded, making the battle a resounding victory for white settlers.

During the next few weeks Indian bands attempted similar operations against forts and outposts in southwestern Virginia, with the same disappointing results for them.

Local militias of all the associated Southern Colonies, after the Indians summer 1776 offensive, initiated punitive expeditions of their own against Cherokee villages in retaliation. Marching and riding into Cherokee lands from their colonies, the Americans combined forces deep in Indian Territory at Hiwassee, TN, on 26 Sept. This united force of 4,000 men pillaged and burned Indian villages throughout the area to eliminate the Cherokee threat.

An unknown number of Indians (including women and children) were slaughtered during this operation. However, conservative estimates suggest the American militia suffered 300 casualties, while the Cherokee lost several thousands.

This bloody expedition by the Colonial militia forces convinced the Cherokee to sign a peace treaty. But once again, Dragging Canoe and the Chickamauga branch of the Cherokee's refused to discuss peace or surrender.

Colonel George Rogers Clark, meanwhile was conducting his own expedition against Indians in the north along the Ohio River, an effort designed to keep most northern and southern tribes separated and thus weak.

But for the next several years, harassing raids by the Chickamauga (who would band with Shawnee and white Tories) continued terrorizing Patriot settlements.

During 1779-1780, Colonel Shelby and Colonel Sevier launched raids deep into Chickamauga territory, burning villages and destroying vast amounts of property. They took females hostage and killed male warriors. However, even with Patriot

actions, Dragging Canoe and his followers continued their own operations against white settlements.

During the summer of 1779, Colonel Shelby traveled as far south as Lookout Mountain, TN (west of present day Chattanooga) where they attacked Chickamauga villages throughout the area, destroying crops, killing braves and taking hostages.

But Dragging Canoe and his band of Indians escaped by dissolving into the forest, only to emerge again after Shelby's offensive ended.

On 16 Dec 1780, Colonel Sevier and a large contingent of militiamen attacked a large camp of Indian warriors at Boyd's Creek (Sevierville, TN). This victory was decisive and came just two months after the stunning militia victory at Kings Mountain against Loyalist troops.

In another battle on 2 Apr 1781, Dragging Canoe led an assault against settlers at Fort Nashborough (present-day Nashville) which nearly ended in a disaster for the white frontiersmen, who beat back the assault at a very high cost.

While these many battles constituted significant military victories for white settlers, they were difficult to follow up because the Indians simply vanished by moving deeper into the forest, only to reappear later to launch another counterstrike.

These battles between Indians and white settlers in the Southern Theater had little or no direct strategic impact on the Patriot war with England. However, this constant threat from Indian attacks and the need to deal with them forced the colonial militia to commit resources that could otherwise have been used to fight British forces elsewhere. This impact was especially burdensome in 1776 when the Cherokee launched their summer offensive.

This ongoing fight with Indians became more onerous in 1779, when British soldiers invaded South Carolina. With Indians threatening their settlement from the west, and British marching inland from the east, the American pioneers faced tremendous challenges that for some time seemed unsolvable.

These threats forced frontier settlers to contribute frontier militias (known as "Overmountain Men") to the American Continental Army. These Overmountain Men were experienced Indian fighters and their well-honed skills and courageous fighting abilities proved invaluable in dealing with the Indian threat during this long war for independence.

Compiling accurate estimates of casualties for the long Cherokee Campaign is impossible because records do not exist. So the best estimate of casualties is that Patriot militia suffered at least 500 killed and wounded during these war years, and Indians many thousands which included women and children.

Sources: A Guide to the Battles of the American Revolution by Savas and Dameron; U.S. National Park Service.

NEXT: Battle of Long Island (New York Campaign) 27-29 August 1776.

Chapter Member Birthdays

October 2015

Michael Boop – 12th

November 2015

None

Chapter Officers

Donald Reighard – President – (928) 680-4087

Ray Lackey – Vice President – (928) 754-1941

Mike Boop – Secretary – (928) 753-7968

Ray Lackey - Treasurer – (928) 754-1941

Jimmie Bodenhamer – Registrar/Genealogist – (928) 692-6636

Michael Boop – Sergeant at Arms – (928) 753-7968

December 1st
Chapter Newsletter Mailed

Membership

If you need assistance with a membership issue, or know someone interested in joining the NSSAR, please provide me the contact information and I will work the issue for you.

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Newsletter Editor

Hope you enjoyed this newsletter and I look forward to any comments or suggestion. Jimmie Bodenhamer, Editor, jimmieb@frontiernet.net.

Need another copy of this Newsletter? It is on our AZSSAR website link.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

October 1st
Chapter Newsletter Mailed

October 10th
Chapter Meeting
Kingman

October 12th
Columbus Day

October 31th
Halloween

November 1st
Daylight Savings Time Ends

November 11th
Veterans Day

November 26th
Thanksgiving Day