

Cover letter for the "Ring Fight Study"

I wanted to add this cover letter to the study of Gen. Pickens and the Ring Fight for several reasons. The first is simply that we are dealing with a substantial amount of information in regard to Oconee County that is highly debatable. The second is that a substantial amount of information in Oconee County that has dubious or hearsay origins. The third is simply that what people often want to believe has little or no basis in documentary reality. And the fourth is that much of the information quoted regarding Oconee County has origins that were accepted without being completely checked and examined at the time, or since. I thought it best to go ahead and give examples of all of these things at one time so that I can be "hanged" on the spot. Needless to comment, I have more than generous evidence to support all of the below examples even though only the so called "Ring Fight of 1779" will be reasonably covered in this issue. Even so, all of these subjects, except Spanish exploration, are often interrelated in terms of the research and the documentation.

Of Spanish exploration in Oconee County: Charles Hudson and others noted for their work in Anthropology have presented a most convincing picture of DeSota's travels based on archeological and anthropological work done during the past 40 years. The route they rather convincingly document does not pass through this area or even particularly close to this area. Hudson refutes the work of earlier researchers including Swanton. Hudson's work shows DeSota crossing the upper reaches of the Santee and continuing up the Catawba into North Carolina. Because Hudson is a very distinguished living authority in the field of Anthropology, it is most likely that his work will be the accepted information for years to come; however, you may safely assume that this will not be the last word on this subject. Hudson's previous work on Pardo shows a similar route. Thus, if you are even thinking of hoping to demonstrate that either Pardo or DeSota passed through the upper western part of South Carolina, you had better be prepared to go up against some "big guns in the academic world", who currently boast generous amounts of supporting information and archeological research. The route of DeSota and Pardo are examples of debatable information, in that the opinions offered by noted professional researchers have changed and been in conflict with each other so much over the years.

Of Oconee Station: Even though in my opinion, the exact date of the rock building on that property called "Oconee Station" will always remain unknown, it is virtually certain that Montgomery nor his troops nor anybody else connected with Montgomery built the rock building in circa 1760. The British were good bookkeepers (fortunately) and rather detailed accounts of expenditures from large sums down to miserly sums can be located for this expedition. The rock building is probably going to eventually be declared circa 1789; however,

there is no particular reason to even assume that the rock building was a part of a larger complex of now gone presumably wooden buildings call "Oconee Station". I now have total confidence that those building that were called "Oconee Station" will prove to date to circa 1792. It is suspected that the rock building became a part of Oconee Station; however, so far no evidence has surfaced to support this conclusion. Oconee Station is a classic example of something based on dubious and hearsay origins. For in fact, I believe we are on the verge of discovering the origins of this first story about the 1760 date, the three outposts, etc. This story apparently came into being sometime in the 1920s as evidence will show that it was not even a quoted story prior to that date.

Of settlement in this area before 1783: Even though a number of people want to believe that permanent settlers were in Oconee County prior to this date, and even that some individuals had grants from the King (or his representatives) for land in this area, there has yet to surface the first shred of evidence to support anybody being in Pickens or Oconee County as permanent settlers between September of 1776 and September of 1783. Nor has there thus far surfaced any support for a King's grant or any evidence to clearly indicate that any of the white Indian traders remained in this same noted area between the above noted dates. In fact, there were laws prohibiting the sale of Indian lands in this region to white men. There is an ever growing body of very substantial evidence to support the above statements just made---i.e. that nobody other than some whites riding the frontier as mounted horsemen, some men stationed at Fort Rutledge, and some Indians were apparent in the Pickens and Oconee areas during these years. Even though there are Revolutionary Soldiers buried in Oconee County, there has not surfaced any evidence to support any claims that any of these people were permanent settlers here prior to 1783; nor have I seen or been able to locate over the last 18 years any evidence to even suggest any settlers in this area between Sept. of 1776 and Sept. of 1783. The only people that I have ever been able to successfully locate were Alexander Cameron and his band of Tories and some Indian traders. What very few people as were living in Oconee County between 1783 and 1790 can be traced to other areas by those willing to do the proper research. Even though I begged people making such claims for supporting documentary evidence, nothing has ever been presented in any way to make me think otherwise. I personally feel that anyone who is planning to continue to make such claims should be prepared to present their evidence in writing to the public or otherwise simply admit that they are wrong before another generation grows up quoting hearsay. I lastly, in regard to this subject, quote from the people living in the Western Corner of South Carolina in the early 1790s who, in my opinion, are a reasonable source of authority for knowing what was actually happening in this area and certainly better than whatever we happen to want to believe.

[From the Grand Jury report of the people living in the Washington District (present Greenville, Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee County) published in 1794] We contemplate with great pleasure, that

Pendleton county, which in the year 1786, did not contain twenty families, in the beginning of the year 1793, at this time, contains *thirteen thousand souls*!---what an astonishing effort of population! ! ! . . .

[Another account from 1794 presumably written by people to the South in Edgefield County states in regard to the Pendleton County] ... of Pendleton county, which about eight years ago was a desert,.....

I might add that the twenty families which they note can be reasonably accounted for, as well as establishing the fact that their locations in places other than this area before 1783 can be documented and established. Lastly I will note that none of the numbers of travel accounts ever mention seeing a white family as permanent settlers (other than Cameron should one want to push the point), nor a church, nor any groups of settlers, nor Oconee Station, nor anything else to make one think that there were settlers in this area prior to 1783. It is more than apparent that white settlement in Oconee County is a subject with a beginning no earlier than 1783. Anyone wishing to scoff at these remarks are cordially invited to prove these accounts of 1794 in error; otherwise the idea of continuing to contend otherwise rather strikes me as nothing more than promoting hearsay and a considerable public disservice. I would like to lastly add that continued research will most likely eventually prove that the entire population of Oconee County as late as 1790 was very small and that these few people lived in small groups on less than 1% of all the available land in the county. Current evidence tends to support the idea that scarcely any degree of settlement had ventured far up the main creeks and rivers off the Seneca and the Tugaloo even by 1790 (i.e. not far up into the areas near the creeks and rivers in the lower half of Oconee County from approximately Madison across to Clemson). Later travel accounts and census records speak accordingly of the small population of Oconee County.

Of the so called "Ring Fight of 1779": It is particularly important that we have a working knowledge of what materials were at least generally available to the public at any point in time in order to have a working knowledge of possible source materials used by a particular person or group of persons. In 1925 when the Wizard of Tamassee Chapter of the D.A.R. erected the marker to "the Ring Fight" of 1779, which Alice Noble Waring would later attempt to give credibility as a "second ring fight", these D.A.R. members had little research materials to work with other than a few dated South Carolina History school textbooks. The one reference book perhaps available to at least some members of the D.A.R. was the work entitled *History of the Upper County of South Carolina* reputed to have been the notes of John H. Logan for a second volume. These notes were published by a Georgia Chapter of the D.A.R. in 1910. Information in this book was supplied by someone who had copied the information from the material supplied by Lyman C. Draper by way of the refuted notes of John H. Logan; who got his information from John H. Marshall of Anderson in 1858; who had gotten his information

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from the grandson of General Andrew Pickens, Francis W. Pickens, in 1847; who had seemingly picked up most of his information from Garden's Second series of *Anecdotes of the American Revolution* published in 1828 from sources currently unknown. F.W. Pickens also also claims to have obtained some information from his father which he used in these letters of 1847.

It is particularly interesting to note that a reference in the published volume of the refuted notes of Logan, pp.78-79 of Vol. 3 of the new edition of Garden's *Anecdotes of the American Revolution* is cited as the reference. This reference could not possibly have been supplied by F.W. Pickens in his letters of 1847 as the three volume work was not published until 17 years later in 1865. The original 1828 volume, of which photocopies of the original pages are enclosed in this study, clearly show the date to be 1776. The material now on a marker, quoted for years and years and written up in books and articles and distributed statewide is seemingly, just as A.L. Pickens predicted in the mid 1930s, a misprint from years past. Anyone seriously interested in this subject should compare the better accounts of the First Battle of Tamassee with the story of Capt. Michael Watson on pp. 543-550 of Joseph Johnson's *Traditions and Reminiscences of the American Revolution in the South*. This related story is from the same time frame equally near Little River but with a different hero. I had written this entire study before I happened to realize that the Garden reference to F.W. Pickens' comments was added long after his original letter; that in fact, the 1779 so long attributed to F.W. Pickens is in fact taken from the 1828 edition of Series two of Garden. Equally, I now tend to simply acknowledge the idea advanced by A.L. Pickens that in all of this rewriting and retelling, the 6 was simply transposed at some point in time to a 9. The 1865 edition also gives the 1776 date. (Let me add that I believe there is one other reference having some authority that equally gives the 1779 date; however, I have failed to locate it thus far.)

The Wizard of Tamassee Chapter of the D.A.R. apparently recognizing the need for proper recognition of some form for General Pickens undoubtedly used what they considered a source book to gather the information they needed to support a fitting marker. Let me carefully state that even with the help of telephones, consulting authorities, and a bountiful quantity of resource materials, I only located the reference in the Second series of Garden with great difficulty and after a most considerable amount of effort. And in fact, I don't believe that I would ever have located it without a clue offered in the works of A.L. Pickens. There is, in my opinion, little way that the D.A.R. members of 1925 could have located this refence or even have checked the printed materials in the 1910 edition (it is not easy to check them presently). Even though there remains some materials to further examine, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the "Ring Fight of 1779" is an example of material that was accepted without being completely checked or examined (even though such was virtually impossible at the time).

Needless to comment, I have no interest in tearing down old stories and long accepted information; however, I believe

that it is greatly more important that we have our history as correct as possible for future generations of school children no matter whom such information may presently slightly offend. As such, I have no interest in anyone accepting any of my comments as "gospel" in anyway. In fact, I will be graciously happy to work with anyone to discredit any of the remarks just presented---for I rather tend to want to believe the old stories myself. As even such a careful scholar as Dr. Lewis P. Jones remarked to me regarding Oconee Station: "but Mr. Holder, it is such a wonderful story!". For better or worse there are a lot of things that I would like to believe about this area; however, until some evidence comes to light to at least vaguely support these concepts, I think that they will remain in my private notebooks.

In the particular case of General Pickens, we might review the comment made by William Gilmore Simms:

It is a curious fact that our people will treasure carefully the traditional reputation of a remarkable man, without preserving any of the details of which that general reputation was made.

Such seems to be the case with General Pickens. Until the publication of Logan's reputed second volume in 1910, people appear to have been only aware that Pickens was a very famous figure of the Revolution without understanding why. A.L. Pickens did much to solve this problem with his *Skyagunsta* and Alice Noble Waring carried the exploration even further with *The Fighting Elder*. Claude Ferguson undoubtedly recognizing faults with both of these books attempted to fill in some gaps with this Ph.D. thesis entitled "General Andrew Pickens". However I continue to maintain that a definitive biography of Pickens has yet to be written. Even small documented studies by local historians such as ourselves will eventually help forward such an effort.

GENERAL PICKENS AND THE SO CALLED RING FIGHTS OF TAMASSEE

"The Battle of Tamassee" and/or "The Ring Fight", "The Second Battle of Tamassee" and/or "the Second Ring Fight" are names not unfamiliar to many people in the upper western corner of South Carolina. I can certainly testify that I have heard them since the time I was a child. Until recently I, not unlike nearly everyone else, simply accepted these events as happenings well represented in the annals of history. Unfortunately, these events are hardly well represented, and in fact, what information as does exist is clouded with some degree of confusion.

Several very interesting points have surfaced during this investigation:

(1) There is seemingly no actual contemporary evidence to truly support the idea that the battle at Tamassee in 1776 was a ring fight and there is equally no contemporary evidence to support a ring fight at Tamassee in 1779.

(2) Even though a marker was erected in 1925 to "The Second Battle at Tamassee in 1779", the evidence for such an event is based on reports that nearly every scholar of the past forty years who has examined the subject agrees refer to the battle that occurred in 1776. Alice Noble Waring attempts to provide some documentation to support this supposed battle; however, her effort is entirely unsatisfactory. A.L. Pickens had already decided by the mid 1930s that the notes regarding this battle (1779) actually referred to the battle in 1776 or that there was some confusion over a conjectured battle whereby the word Tennessee had been confused with Tamassee [he cites an interesting example of this type of word confusion]. Clyde Ferguson in the perhaps the only reasonably well footnoted study of General Pickens plainly notes that there was but one battle at Tamassee and that this battle occurs in 1776. I will quickly point out that although I have not examined the Draper manuscript in detail, I am partially familiar with the references which Ferguson notes. As such, I can't say that I find his footnote to the First Battle of Tamassee totally satisfactory even though it far exceeds the one offered by Waring on this 1776 event. In this writer's opinion, Waring's footnotes are sometimes impossible to follow.

SPECIAL NOTE: Anyone who is aware of the sheer size of the Draper Manuscript and has some familiarity with it is aware that few people have examined the entire manuscript. Pieces and parts of it are to be found on microfilm scattered among a number of institutional libraries here in S.C. To the best of my knowledge no complete copy of it exists within South Carolina. It is well to point out that small reprint volume entitled *History of the Upper Country of South Carolina*. Vol. II and commonly available in the Oconee County Library System is actually material from the Draper Manuscript. The introduction to this small volume states that it was secured at great expense which no doubt is correct since it had to be copied by hand from the Draper Manuscript Collection sometime before 1910. It is to be regreted that someone's ego apparently prevented them from noting that they had obtained

this material from the Draper Collection. Unless you would like to personally check the Draper Collection to confirm this information, you may note the initials of L.C.D. (Lyman C. Draper) in some of the quoted materials below that are noted as being from Logan/ Vol.II.

(3) A.L. Pickens appears to offer the only insight and explanation regarding the actual confusion that exists about various ring fights and "The Second Battle of Tamassee". Waring tries to treat it as a happening while Ferguson simply dismisses it as non existant. Ferguson does by far the best job of documenting the activities of Pickens during 1779. It is Ferguson who provides the only insight into the actual possibilites of Gen. Pickens even being in this area for any purpose during 1779. The South Carolina Department of Archives and History does not include a Second Battle of Tamassee in their list of Revolutionary War Battles within the State of South Carolina. A number of experts in the field of Revolutionary South Carolina consulted during this study concur with Ferguson. Equally various individuals who have actually gone through the ordeal of examining large parts of the "Draper Manuscript" on microfilm and in particular one reputed account of this supposed battle are all of the opinion that the date for this event was 1776 [i.e. the "First Ring Battle"].

(4) The accounts that actually recant the more graphic events of the First Battle of Tamassee as it involves General Pickens and the Indians were seemingly written years after the fact.

(5) Linda Skelton's publication of autobiographical materials relating to General Pickens does little to reinforce the accounts noted in #4; however, thanks to Ms. Skelton, we do have the life of General Pickens in his own words.

(6) The erection of the marker at Tamassee in 1925 probably resulted from the publication in 1910 of the Logan Manuscript (from the Draper Collection...see SPECIAL NOTE on first page of Pickens study).

(7) It is more than obvious that General Pickens has had an excellent unsolicited public relations campaign going on his behalf for the past one hundred, fifty-plus years. While Pickens bravery at the Battle of Tamassee in 1776 may have been legendary, it was but one example of the brave acts of any number of individuals during the many other days of the Williamson Campaign of 1776. To hear people recant this event, one would think that it was the outstanding event of the campaign; or, as is more often the case, that this Battle of Tamassee was an isolated battle that was not even related to other events. It is not unusual in the annals of history for various individuals to remember and record the events related to the famous sometimes at the expense of the less than famous. The actual journals of the Williamson Campaign and other documents well point to other individuals, perhaps not as well known, but equally deserving our admiration.

(8) I would like to conclude the principal issues raised by this investigation by pointing out that serious research by anyone on this subject will raise substancial

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questions as to the actual happening regarding General Pickens in this area from 1775-1782. The accounts of General Pickens and his activities are certainly not as clear cut as his biographers would lead us to believe. It is more than evident that there is a certain degree of confusion over the dating. There is massive confusion in the footnotes that pertain to this subject...especially in regard to *Anecdotes of the Revolution* by Garden (only A.L. Pickens even hints that the information is to be found in Series II [Vol II] of the work [Very few people are aware of the 1828 (Series two) publication which followed the 1822 work or of the three volume 1865 work]). A.L. Pickens and Ferguson cite the Ross and/or the Fairey journals in their references [neither of these journals make even the first mention of General Pickens]; and Waring cites as a source for the Second Battle of Tamassee the work of A.L. Pickens [who goes to some length to express the idea that the Second Battle of Tamassee was nothing but an account of the First Battle of Tamassee with an incorrect date]. The cited materials to be found in this study will add even more confusion to the issue.

After pursuing this research, this writer (F.C.H.) recognizes origins of substantial confusion and rather gets the general feeling that a second ring fight or battle at Tamassee is probably unlikely. There can be no doubt that General Pickens was involved in a conflict with the Indians as part of the Williamson Campaign of 1776 as the one absolutely clear reference as found in the Colonial Records of North Carolina will show. However any discussion beyond this point will certainly involved expanded research and a far better presentation of the subject than has been previously presented. I personally think that to deny that General Pickens was possibly involved in other conflicts in this area following 1776 is a bit naive. It is certainly possible that Pickens returned to this area at some point in time during the years following 1776 and before 1783; however a second Battle at Tamassee with many of the same details of the first is highly suspect.

The purpose of presenting any of this material is not to argue the points about this battle nor to offend the Wizard of Tamassee Chapter of the D.A.R. members who originally put up the marker, but rather to point out that this so called "Second Ring Fight" cannot in all good faith be included in a history of this county until someone provides some documentation on the subject that will successfully establish it as an actual happening without question as to it being a rehash of the First Battle of Tamassee. It is to be hoped that members of the Historical Society and the D.A.R. will pursue an active and continuing investigation to determine the exact truth [if such is possible] regarding this subject. Although I have read through the Pickens manuscript and published letters once, I am planning to recheck them for any evidence of this supposed Second Battle of Tamassee or any other later events as pertains to Oconee County. We will naturally want to obtain photocopies from the *Draper Manuscript* for our files regarding this subject.

There is much to be learned about Gen. Pickens that his sympathetic and family related biographers have left out. Clyde Ferguson demonstrates this position to some degree.

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Unfortunately, I am of the opinion that the work done by Clyde Ferguson will probably be the last serious research of General Pickens' life and work for sometime to come. The work of Ferguson has not been published as a book (although available from University Microfilms) and remains as a PhD. Thesis. It is to be sincerely hoped that eventually someone will produce a usable, readable, and accurate commercially published biography of this famous and legendary man for the general public. I personally find the work of Waring biased and at times questionable and would recommend her book only in so far as it provides a reasonable outline of some of the events of Pickens' life.

Lastly I would like to hazard the guess that both A.L. Pickens and Alice Noble Waring actually wrote large portions of their books from the scrapbooks of the various members of the Pickens Family (some of which contained materials going back to the 1780s) and then simply filled in the "picture" with other materials and documentation. However in all fairness, Alice Noble Waring made a fine contribution to future efforts by collecting numerous photocopies of Pickens' letters from numerous depositories and archives. Although he supplied no footnotes, I would personally recommend the work of A.L. Pickens to the casual reader. This is not a "great book", but A.L. Pickens has a way of keeping you entertained while providing lots of small but interesting clues about things in this area. A.L. Pickens does supply a Bibliography of works consulted, a feature sorely missing in Waring's work where her use of cryptic footnotes mandates some method of determining just what it is that she is referring to at that time.

In her book *The Fighting Elder: Andrew Pickens (1739-1817)*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1962.), Alice Noble Waring on pps. 31-32 deals with the so called "Second Ring Fight" which Waring calls the "second battle of Tamassee" as follows:

After Pickens and his men left Lincoln, they reached mountainous regions and were in the valley of Tamassee Creek when the Indians attacked them in an open field near a cane brake. This was the second battle of Tamassee.

Outnumbered and surrounded by a band of yelling painted warriors, Pickens got a few men into the brake where they set fire to the cane. Pickens was about to give up when the Indians mistook the explosion of the cane joints for rifle fire from reinforcements and retreated.

A monument near the site of Pickens' last home marks the battlefield:

COMMEMORATING THE RING FIGHT, THE LAST
AND MOST DESPERATE BATTLE BETWEEN
GENERAL ANDREW PICKENS AND THE
CHEROKEE INDIANS. FOUGHT IN
IMMEDIATE VICINITY

ERECTED 1925

WIZARD OF TAMASSEE CHAPTER

D.A.R., SENECA, S.C.

As footnotes for this information, Waring cites:

Skyagunsta, p. 53; Hennig [this is presumably Hennig, Helen Kohn, *Great South Carolinians: Vol I.1*, p. 180. and also suggests that the reader consult note 44 of Chapter I which refers to David Duncan Wallace, *History of S.C.*, Vol.II, p. 59. [Waring undoubtedly means note 44 of Chapter II as best as I can determine her meaning].

I find her references to be totally unsatisfactory for in fact the reference to note 44 regards the A.L. Pickens' First Ring Battle (the Battle of Tamassee 1776) and can hardly be cited as any sort of proof for a Second Ring Battle or Second Battle of Tamassee, Hennig does not provide references of any kind for her materials and A.L. Pickens in *Skyagunsta: The Border Wizard Owl* on pps. 53-54 accords the story the status of a legend as follows:

To this same year belongs the fascinating and elusive legend of the second battle of Tomassee, or the "Ring Fight."

In this legend, Colonel Pickens, presumably back from the Low-country with his troops, has reached the mountainous regions of the northwestern tip of the state. They had come to the valley of Tomassee creek, when unexpectedly they found themselves opposed by an Indian force placed by some writers at ten times the number of the whites.

Quickly the colonel called for twenty-five men to scout ahead and divert the attention of the enemy while arrangements were made for a fight. Robert Pickens was one of the number volunteering for this dangerous service. A number of the force, suspecting no danger, had fallen somewhat behind the advanced party and to Joseph Pickens, fell the task of hurrying these forward. Tradition states that in his excitement he gave vent to a burst of such violent language as shamed the standards of the family, and by no means met with the approval of the colonel. The arrival of the loiterers, however, may have held in it the suggestion that still others were behind and so proved valuable. The fight occurred in an open old field near a canebrake, and a hand to hand encounter lasted three quarters of an hour. The painted, yelling savages, were pressing the whites together with the ring formation, so dreaded in frontier warfare, and fatal to Custer and others. Opposing the bloody tomahawks doggedly, but

fighting only in desperation, the whites struggled on, and succeeded, in spite of the ring in effecting an entrance into the nearby cane-brake in sufficient numbers to carry out a ruse, clever but desperate. The cane-brake was set on fire, and the huge joints filling with steam, each exploded with a loud report startlingly like the crack of a rifle. Concealed numbers, some additional shouting, and other attendant noises were sufficient when added to the sharp crack of the canes to give the impression of additional reinforcements hurrying up from the rear. The nervous savages, so often thwarted by the arrival [sic] of reinforcements, gave up the battle and fled. The whites were, no doubt, quite as surprised at the sudden relief as were their foes. Pickens had all but abandoned hope and had been expecting that all of his force would be scalped.

Now, if we eliminate the incident of the cane brake, a clever textualist and higher critic can build almost the whole of this legend from previous battles and skirmishes.

Twenty-five men who went forward as scouts, and the part played by Joseph Pickens in the rear, sound like echoes from the skirmish on Little river in 1776.

The number of savages engaged, ten times as many, roughly agrees with eight times as many said to have been encountered there.

The desperate fight with the Cherokees at Coweechee, or Noewee, appears to have been designated also as the Ring Fight: the Indians having formed a horse-shoe there, had pressed the whites into a circle. This also occurred in 1776, and near the Tennessee.

Now the words, Tomassee, Tanassee, and Tennessee, have been badly mixed at times. One account makes Tomassee, the home of the general after the war, to read Tennessee. They fought at Tomassee.

The legend states that this was the last and most desperate fight that Pickens held with the Cherokees. If he regarded Cherokees and Chickamaugas as separate nations, that could be said of the fight of Coweechee, also called Ring Battle, fought near the Tennessee river. If in later years he stated that it was his last battle in South Carolina, and the listener forgot the territorial qualification it might have been said of Tomassee in 1776. But while legend states that Tomassee was the scene of his last battle with the Cherokees, Lee [A.L. Pickens is probably referring to a reference in Henry Lee "Campaign of 1781 in the Carolinas" but he also cites R.H. Lee War in the Southern Department of the U.S, 1870.] states

that it was the scene of one of his earliest battles. This may have arisen from confusion of Tomassee with Pickens' earlier seat at Hopewell, which was near the site of the battle of Seneca, the earliest battle of the Cherokee campaign of 1776.

Now if some old type-setter [this is a favorite theme of A.L. Pickens be he dealing with notes on the General or Indian place names], busy with a manuscript account of one these engagements in 1776, had inverted a 6, and it had missed the proof-readers eye, he would have made exactly the necessary change in dates we find here. [I must admit that Pickens may have a point. At present a considerable amount of discussion is going on regarding a particular place in S.C. that has for generations been accorded the date of 1786; however the single existing piece of possible documentation that was printed some years after the founding of the place states 1789. Some person, who unfortunately did not initial the change, scratched through 9 and wrote above it a 6; however and even though the work had been in private hands for years, we do not know if the person who had the paper printed made the correction or simply some later person who was aware of the traditional date. There is but one extant copy of this printing and no source notes.]

One authority for the Ring Fight was a manuscript of Overton Lewis which, it is said, gave an account of the battle as General Pickens himself gave it. This may refer to the action as he saw it on the field rather than the date. Governor Francis Pickens, who seems to date the Sky-a-gustah nickname from the time of the Ring Fight, in his account in the Logan manuscript, gives the date as 1779, and says there were 25 whites to 185 reds. He gives the name of the half-breed interpreter as being Cornels. The chief, he says, gave orders to his braves to swing their rifles in their left hands, charge, and tomahawk the whites without giving an alarm by firing. The whites threw themselves into a ring and fought desperately; only Cornels was killed among Pickens' force, though 85 red men were killed. The incident of the cane-brake, and the late arrival of Captain Joseph Pickens figure in this story too.

That nearby Indians were on the war-path this year, and that Pickens' men returned to protect their homes from possible invasion adds color to the story. No doubt many small engagements of Pickens' various border detachments have been forgotten. Such an engagement this year is not disputed, but it is obvious that tradition is to be suspected of coloring the incident with phases of engagements that occurred elsewhere and elsewhere.

After all, the most fascinating part of history may be its uncertainties. [at least for A.L. Pickens]

That from August 10 to October 8, of 1779, Pickens was into Georgia after Cameron, we have the testimony of one of his men given in the Logan manuscript. The narrator also records a suspicion of treachery attempted by Williamson at even this early date, though Pickens in his old age felt that Williamson had been corrupted even earlier at Briar Creek.

Unfortunately, I can't truthfully say that the *Logan Manuscript* [from the Draper Collection--see SPECIAL NOTE on the first page of the Pickens study] does much to clarify the situation. The *Logan Manuscript* referred to is sometimes and especially recently called *History of the Upper Country of South Carolina*. Vol. II. This volume was reputedly printed from the notes John H. Logan in 1910. On pps. 104-105 we find the following from notes by Francis W. Pickens secondhand from J.H. Marshall of Anderson in 1858:

RING FIGHT.---Perhaps you have never seen anything of Gen. Pickens' great "Ring Fight"--see Garden's *Anecdotes of the Revolution* (Vol. 3, new edition, p. 78-9) [A copy of the identical information from the first edition of this work printed in 1828 as Series two is included at the back of this study]. It took place in 1779, (really August 12, 1776 L.C.D.) [This is Lyman C. Draper...see SPECIAL NOTE near the beginning of this work on Pickens] At the very place where he afterwards settled in the latter part of his life and died, "Tamoossee," about twenty-two miles above old Pendleton village. He was with 25 men on a party of discovery, looking for the position of Indians, about two miles from the main force he had left under Col. Anderson; and suddenly, in the edge of an Indian field, they discovered the Indians rising in a circle around them. There was a half-breed by his side, a friendly man, named Cornels, who understood Indians well. The Indians paused, and Cornel said they [the Indians] passed the order around their ranks, to swing their rifles in the left hand, and tomahawk them as they (the whites) were but a "handful," and the rest "could not bear the guns." There were only 25 whites, and about 185 warriors. They formed the circle complete, and Col. Pickens immediately formed a countercircle, facing onwards to receive them, giving the order distinctly, "Let every man sell his life as dear as possible, and no man fire till he can see the whites of their eyes." So they came advancing on foot to their prey, and the 25 drew and fired and each man killed his man; and they were so astonished and confused that they fell into confusion and before they could recover, the whites had loaded again, and again each man brought his man. In the meantime some of the savages had also fired, and Cornels, the

half-breed was shot down and Col. Pickens' rifle choked, so he couldn't get it off, and he took up Cornels' immediately, and fired right on! They kept it up for 5 rounds, until some 83 of the Indians fell dead and wounded, and every white man was covered literally with blood and smoke--but Cornels was the only man actually killed on their side. [In A.L. Pickens account of the 1776 Ring Fight, the half breed is named Brennan (p. 24). Brennan is shot down and Pickens picks up his gun and continues firing (p. 25). This is particularly interesting in that this same half breed Bremen (all spellings in Ross and Fairey are phonetic) turns up alive and well in September 21, 1776 long after the Williamson Campaign has departed South Carolina and long after the events of August 12 and the Battle of Tamassee (*Ross Journal*). Dr. Garden's account, which I will certainly take over that of Francis Pickens writing even more years later, cites the name of the scout as Brennan.]

By this [time?] Capt. Joseph Pickens, a younger brother of Col. Pickens, heard the firing at the camp, and rushed out with some men, hastily picked up, to the help of his brother (although some said it was the cracking of the cane on fire). The Indians were beaten back, and about to break up, terrified by their dreadful slaughter, just as Capt. Pickens reached them with a few men, and this dispersed them entirely. I know of no more bloody or heroic fight on record [apparently Francis W. Pickens had not looked very far in search of such accounts] --where great coolness, with the most lion-like courage, saved a few men from slaughter. My father has often told me, that his father [Gen. Pickens/ then Col. Pickens] considered that the greatest danger he ever encountered, and that he was determined to live and die on the spot, where he had with 25 men beat fairly 185 picked warriors in a battle that was as bloody as ever recorded for the number engaged. The Indians ever afterwards called him "Ski-a-gus-ta," which signifies "Great Warrior," and to his death they called him nothing else. The great McGillivray, afterwards chief of the Creek Nation, wrote him a letter by that name, and begged him not to join the Georgians in the war they were then raging against them, and said if he would but keep aloof, he could whip the Georgians on one bank of the Oconee, and raise corn on the other.

In the *Logan Manuscript* on p. 3 we also find the supposed account of one Robert Long of Laurens District, S.C. as follows in part as it may/or may not relate to this incident [By way of note, it is generally thought that this account pertains to actions that took place in Georgia].

August 10th, 1779, against the Creek Indians

same regiment and company officers, and Brigadier A. Williamson and Col. Andrew Pickens, crossed Saluda, Little river, Rocky river and Savannah river. Got home 8th October--58 or 59 days out on horseback. The object was to take a certain Cameron, superintendent for the British over the Cherokee Indians, then at the Big Shoemake, in the Creek Nation. Cameron, having got notice of their object, slipped out of the way, supposed [sic] by Gen. Williamson, then a traitor.

On p. 49 of the *Logan Manuscript* from the claimed notes of Rev. James H. Saye we find the following information in regard to Robert Anderson and Andrew Pickens:

He [Robert Anderson], as well as Gen. Pickens, was held in great veneration by the Cherokees. They always called both by the same name--Sky-gusta, great man....

Saye is noted on p. 50 of the *Logan Manuscript* as pointing out in regard to Tamassee [here meaning Pickens last home]:

...not far from this spot that he fought one of his hardest battles with the Indians; but no one with whom I have conversed can tell me any of the particulars of that battle.

Lastly it is noted on p. 113 of the *Logan Manuscript* in a statement by Capt. John Selling as follows:

George Swelling, my father, was with Gen. Pickens on one occasion when pursuing the Indians up Tugaloo river.....The Indians were following them upon one side of the river, while they marched on the other, looking for a convenient crossing place....He said the bullets fell around them in the water like muscadines from overhanging vines, and yet not a man was hurt. By the time the corps reached the opposite bank, not an Indian was to be found. [NOTE: A.L. Pickens on p. 24 of *Skygunsta: The Border Wizard Owl* has this event as occurring on August 10 as part of the Williamson Campaign. Clyde Ferguson also includes this event as a part of the Williamson Campaign under the August 10, 1776 date. This information is generally confirmed by the last noted contemporary documentary reference from the Colonial Records of North Carolina.

It is interesting to note while A.L. Pickens will make two separate events out of selected information regarding the Battle of Tamassee, the actual journals of the expedition currently being edited by Holder, Hammerick, et.al. make no mention whatsoever of the Ring Battle that is noted by A.L. Pickens et.al. as occurring on August 12 of 1776 or of Pickens. In the journals they note that:

That on the twelfth instant, General Williamson came to Towmossy, where he saw signs of the Indians very fresh--Detached Captain Perkins and Captain Anderson with sixty men to reconnoiter or track the enemy; likewise Major Downs went out with twenty men, Captain Anderson with twenty-five men, parted from Captain Perkins, and crossed a creek. Soon after Captain Perkins and his thirty-five men saw two Indians, and fired at them. The Indians instantly set up the war whoop and ran. The party followed, and was quickly met by party of the enemy, supposed to be between two and three hundred, who engaged them very furiously, when Major Downs fortunately came up in the rear, and Anderson falling on the back of the enemy. The the right the firing was heard at the town, when Williamson turned out with one hundred and fifty men, who coming close on the back of the enemy, made them quickly give way. The furthestmost of their party being almost surrounded, and were entirely cut off, sixteen were found dead in the valley where the battle ended.....[I may say at this point that this in my opinion rather refutes the comments that A.L. Pickens often tries make about Anderson being a coward. See p. 24 of *Skyagunsta* (which is nothing more than a recant of information found in the *Logan Manuscript* and certainly points to some confusion over just which Anderson is being referred to by that reference)].

From the "Revolutionary Diary of William Lenoir" in *The Journal of Southern History*. Vol. VI. May 1940. Number 2 on p. 256, we find the following entry from this contemporary journal of the campaign against the Indians in 1776:

On Wedy. 18th march, d over 2 very steep mountains and Camp't on the head of a Creek of hywassey the lighthorse took 50 or 60 lb of Powder & 12 Horses and some other Articles Major Pickins [the editor of this diary has identified this reference as being that of General Andrew Pickens--see ff. 22 on p. 256] Brought Tiding from yesea-12 [I take this to mean that Pickens brought news to these soldiers under Rutherford of the events of the 12th; however, I may be interpreting this "yesea-12" incorrectly].

A small portion of the letter of Colonel Andrew Williamson to General Griffith Rutherford written from "CAMP AT KEOWEE August 14th, 1776" is noted below as found in *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*. 23 Vols. Vol X. 1775-1776. Raleigh: The State of North Carolina, 1890. pp. 747-748.:

...The 9th I marched for and destroyed the corn at Estatoe, haveing before sent off Capts. Anderson and Pickens to reconnoitre the Mountains near the

River, who returned and informed me that they had seen several Indians, On both sides of the River, on the Hills.

...The 12th I proceeded about 12 miles to Tomassie where I found a large quantity of corn and detached Capt. Pickens wth [with] 60 mem to reconnoitre the Hills, when about three in the afternoon they discovered a spy from ye Enemy, of whom they fired, and followed, and after running some small distance about 35 of them engaged a large number of the Enemy. On hearing of the firing at Tomassie I immediately hurried to their assistance wth [with] about One hundred & Fifty Men, and came upon their back about a mile from Tomassie, when a sharp firing ensued, which lasted about an Hour and a quarter, when the Enemy gave way with considerable loss, Sixteen dead bodies being found, in about the space of 150 Yards whom our people scalped. They were so nearly Engaged that three of the Indians were killed by our people with their corn knives & Tomahawks.-- From apparent circumstances I cannot think there could be less than 60 Indians killed wounded in this affair. We had one man killed and 15 wounded 3 of which since dead, & the rest in a fair way to do well. Here I Incamped for the night and the next day 13th reached this Camp late in the evening.

A.W.

Some of the people who helped with this still uncompleted study should be noted including members of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, the Georgia Department of Archives and History, The South Caroliniana Library, and Brian McKown, Elmer O. Parker, Sue C. Nimmons, Marshall W. Williams, Joe Gauzens, Linda Skelton, and numbers of others who took the time to discuss this subject, and/or the marker related to same, and the documentation. I would like to note that with only a small amount of additional material, I believe that it would be possible to at least partially reconstruct this battle which apparently took place between Tamassee and Little River in 1776.

Unfortunately, much of this information cited by Garden is wrong. Pickens was certainly sent by Williamson to secure the area in question (in opposition to the idea that Pickens requested the assignment...Pickens may have volunteered for the assignment). The scout Brennan was hardly killed as he turns up alive and well in North Carolina in the Ross Journal. The date of this event is certainly not September but rather August.

It is difficult to speculate just where Garden got his information; however, it would seem possible that it was derived from the Pickens family (not here referring to the General).

Garden suffered from a great disadvantage which I do not have to work under...i.e. he was dependent upon others for the information which was perhaps even then second hand. Garden was not able to consult the various journals, letters, etc. that I have in my possession.

Garden's work makes one point perfectly clear...if it is not cited to particular materials of the actual period in which the events took place, then it is suspect!

In point of fact, I am becoming increasingly sure that Garden's account of this event is probably useless.

Please compare the information in Garden carefully to the noted documentary materials before even considering citing his work as in any way correct.

ANECDOTES

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE TALENTS AND VIRTUES

OF THE

HEROES AND PATRIOTS,

WHO ACTED

THE MOST CONSPICUOUS PARTS THEREIN.

BY ALEXANDER GARDEN,

Of Lee's Legion,

SECOND SERIES.

In their commendation I am fed,
It is a banquet to me.—*Shakespeare.*

CHARLESTON;

PRINTED BY A. E. MILLER,

No. 4 Broad-Street.

1828.

C

*N W Can
1391*

Lee's Legion, to command the Infantry. From the certificate, which Major M'Lean is possessed of, it appears that he was early active in the cause of his country, and from the time of his joining the Continental army, I can testify, that he distinguished himself highly, as a brave and enterprising officer. Previously to the siege of York, he was employed to watch the motions of the British army, near New-York, as well as in Virginia, and was entrusted with dispatches of the first importance to His Excellency, Count De Graesse, which commission he executed with great celerity, and was afterwards very serviceable in reconnoitering and bringing intelligence of the strength and disposition of the British army and fleet in the Chesapeake.

Given under my hand and seal, at Rocky Hill, near Princeton, November 4th, 1783.

GEORGE WASHINGTON."

On one occasion, doing duty near the British lines, finding his horse greatly fatigued, and himself much in want of rest and refreshment, he was retiring towards Germantown, when the enemy's cavalry appeared in view, and advancing with a rapidity that threatened to cut off the possibility of a retreat. The Commander of the British forces, perceiving that pursuit as a body would impede the celerity of movement, essential to success, selected two of his best mounted troopers, and ordered them to continue the chase, and use every possible exertion to make him their prisoner. The first of these approaching very near, called to M'Lean by name, and ordered him to surrender, but he, preserving his presence of mind, drew forth the only pistol he possessed, and levelled it with effect, laid his adversary prostrate in the dust. The second now coming up, was, in turn, eagerly charged, and being struck from his horse by the butt-end of the pistol that had disabled his companion, was incapacitated from using any further exertion.

M'Lean, continuing his route, sought shelter in a swamp, where he remained in security, till the evening afforded him an opportunity of rejoining his command."

My wish on the present occasion is, to speak only of the occurrences of the Revolutionary war, but I have in my possession, an interesting memoir from the pen of Colonel M'Lean, relative to the proceeding of the Army before Washington, when taken and pillaged by Ross, the British General, that fills me both with grief and astonishment. The British General, notices it, the Colonel says:—

"All was confusion—nothing like spirit—nothing like subordination—universal complaint for the want of food, the Militia going off in every direction to seek it. Men, badly armed, being, in many instances, without flints in their muskets, and so completely without discipline, as to exhibit a far greater resemblance to an armed mob, than an organized army. I most religiously believe, that if I had been at the head of three hundred men, such as I led on to the attack of Paulus Hook, or such as I had under my command, during the war of our Independence, I should have defeated General Ross, when he pressed General Winder over the Eastern Branch. Confident I am, that the enemy would never have reached Washington, and America been spared the disgrace of beholding the British triumphantly possessing the Capital."

GENERAL ANDREW PICKENS.

The following instance of cool and deliberate heroism, is given as illustrative of the military character of one of our distinguished partizan officers—General Andrew Pickens. Owing to the rude and wild state of the back country, in the

Revolution, our Heroes of that section of country have not been as honourably known to posterity as they deserve. I am gratified that it has been put in our power, by the politeness of a friend, on whose information the most complete reliance can be placed, to throw some light upon the obscurity of those times and transactions.

"In September, 1776, General Andrew Pickens, being then a Major, belonged to an army of two thousand men, composed of Regulars and Militia, commanded by Colonel Williamson, which was sent on an expedition against the Cherokees, who had been instigated by British emissaries, to wage a war of extermination against the frontier inhabitants of the country, now composing Abbeville, Laurens and Spartanburgh Districts. When this army had proceeded into the Indian country, as far as the upper part of what is now Pickens District, it was halted for a day or two, either for rest or to gain intelligence. During this time, Major Pickens obtained permission to take twenty-five choice men, to scout and reconnoitre the adjacent country. He had not proceeded more than two miles, when, early in the morning, after crossing a stream, now called Little River, in passing through an old Indian field, along the margin of the stream, which was covered with a thick grass, four or five feet high, more than two hundred Indians, painted for war in the most hideous manner, were seen rushing down the point of a ridge, directly upon them, with their guns swinging in their left hands, and their tomahawks raised in their right; their leader animating and exhorting them not to fire a gun, but to tomahawk the white men; for they were but a handful. Brennan, a half-breed, was one of the twenty-five, and he, understanding them, told what they said. Major Pickens and all his party were on foot, and he, as well as every other, had his trusty rifle. He ordered his men not to fire until he did, to take deliberate aim, and fire two at a time in succession, and to fall in the grass

and loud. Brennan was by his side in front, and when the Indian chief approached within about twenty-five yards, he and Brennan fired, and two Indians fell; the fire of his other men was in succession, as directed, and equally effective. This invincible firmness, in so small a band, astonished and struck terror into the savage ranks, and they immediately recoiled upon each other, dropped their tomahawks, and resorting to their guns, gradually fell back, and were picked out at leisure by the steady and unerring aim of this small band of firm Militia. After the first or second fire, Brennan was shot down. But few were killed or wounded of the whites; if they had not been brave men, and true, not one would have escaped. Major Pickens, in landing in a hurry, soon choked his gun, when he picked up Brennan's and continued to use it while the Indians were in reach. How many of them were killed, could not be known, as the Indians, in those times, always carried off their dead, whenever they could, to prevent their enemies from acquiring their savage trophy, the scalp; but, it was believed a great number were killed, in proportion to the number of combatants opposed to them.

During the action, one of the men observed that there was a constant firing from behind a tree-root, and watching his opportunity when its occupant had to expose himself to take aim, shot him in the head, and when one of his comrades had taken up the dead body, and was making off with it, shot him also, with as much coolness, as if he was shooting at a target, and they fell, one upon the other. The firing was heard at Williamson's camp, when Major Pickens' youngest brother, Joseph, (killed at the Siege of 1761) who was a Captain, immediately summoned his followers, and hastened to his brother's assistance. But, before he could reach him, the Indians were beaten back, and dispersing, and fleeing to the neighbouring mountains. Captain Pickens, was a man of great animation and zeal, and was often bold and loud in his abuse and crimination of men, who were turdy in their movements

for the deliverance of his brother, accusing them of cowardice, but Major Pickens pacified and rebuked him for his warmth."

** THE CHEROKEE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE: Although many people are aware of the visits to England by various members of the Cherokee Indian Tribe; and a lesser number are aware of the visit to this area by a representative of the famous English potter, Josiah Wedgwood; very few people are aware that Oconee County turns up in English Poetry. Special thanks are extended to the "errudite" George Townes of Greenville, S.C. for locating and providing us with copies of the following material from Wordsworth, as well as the page references from *The Road to Xanadu* by John Livingston Lowes that refer to the Cherokees in the literature of Wordsworth. Parts of the poem: "Ruth" which appears in *Poems of the Imagination* by Wordsworth tell of a Cherokee village. Wordsworth derived his information from a passage in the *Travels* of William Bartram as noted below from the Beehive Press Edition found in the Walhalla Library on p. 355. [I have in the past seen this reference applied mistakenly to Oconee County, S.C. even though I have yet to relocate the particular book that contained this error. In fact, at this point, Bartram had left South Carolina and was at the village of Cowe (Cowhee or Cowee). A map enclosed will prove useful to anyone wishing to explore portions of passages in Bartram's *Travels*.]

Having paid our attention to this useful part of the creation, who, if they are under our dominion, have consequently a right to our protection and favour, we returned to our trusty servants that were regaling themselves in the exuberant sweet pastures and strawberry fields in sight, and mounted again. Proceeding on our return to town, continued through part of this high forest skiring on the meadows: began to ascend the hills of a ridge which we were under the necessity of crossing; and having gained its summit, enjoyed a most enchanting view; a vast expanse of green meadows and strawberry fields; a meandering river gliding through, saluting in its various turnings the swelling, green, turfy knolls, embellished with parterres of flowers and fruitful strawberry beds; flocks of turkies strolling about them; herds of deer prancing in the meads or bounding over the hills; companies of young, innocent Cherokee virgins, some busy gathering the rich fragrant fruit, others having already filled their baskets, lay reclined under the shade of floriferous and fragrant native bowers of Magnolia, Azalea, Philadelphus, perfumed Calycanthus, sweet Yellow Jessamine and cerulean *Glycine frutescens*, disclosing their beauties to the fluttering breeze, and bathing their limbs in the cool fleeting streams; whilst other parties more gay and libertine, were yet collecting strawberries, or wantonly chasing their companions, tantalising them, staining their lips and cheeks with the rich fruit.

Which Wordsworth uses as follows:

RUTH

[composed 1799.—Published 1800]

[only parts that give you either the feeling of the poem or relate the scene noted in Bartram are quoted]

Beneath her father's roof, alone
 She seemed to live; her thoughts her own;
 Herself her own delight;
 Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;
 And, passing thus the live-long day,
 She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore---
 A military casque he wore,
 With splendid feathers drest;
 He brought them from the Cherokees;
 The feathers nodded in the breeze,
 And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung:
 But no! he spake the English tongue
 And bore a soldier's name;
 And, when America was free
 From battle and from jeopardy,
 He' cross the ocean came.

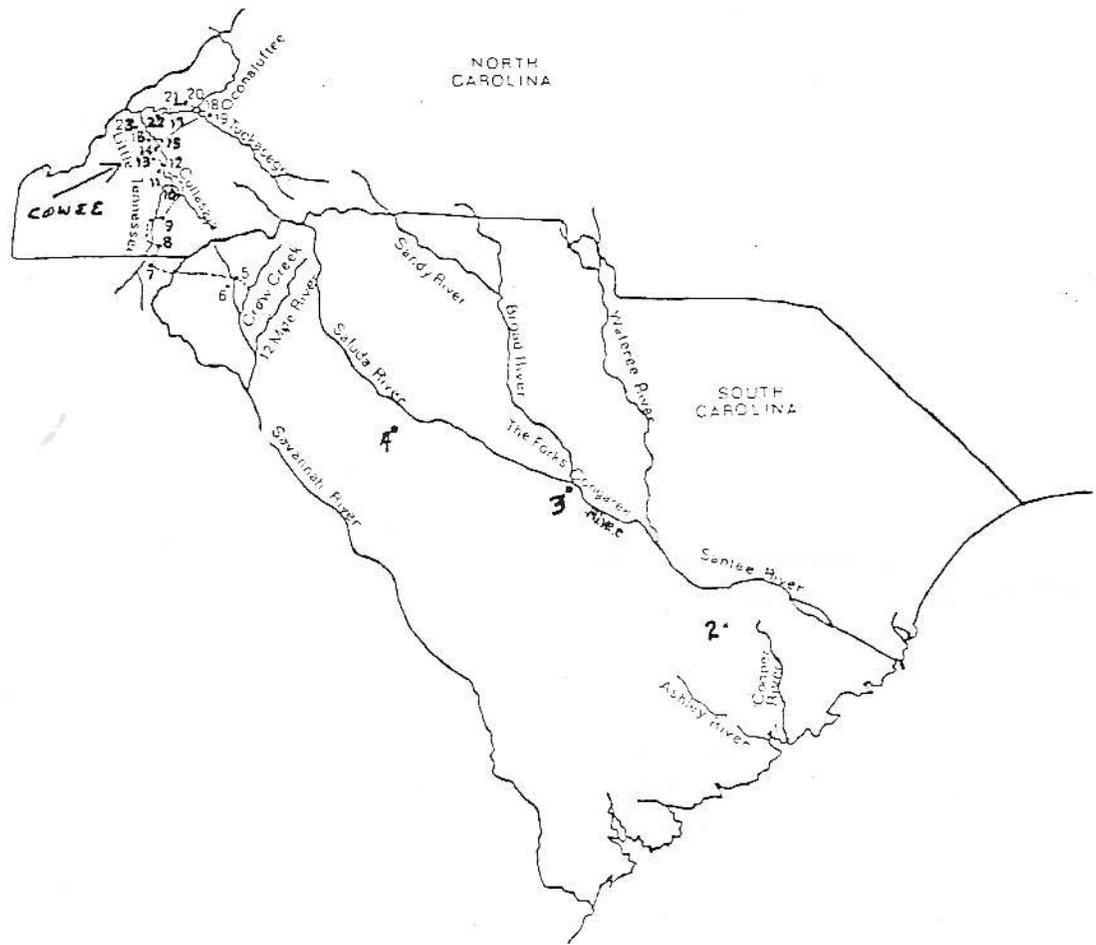
With hues of genius on his cheek
 In finest tones the Youth could speak:
 ---While he was yet a boy,
 The moon, the glory of the sun,
 And streams that murmur as they run,
 Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth! I guess
 The panther in the wilderness
 Was not so fair as he;
 And, when he chose to sport and play,
 No dolphin ever was so gay
 Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,
 And with him many tales he brought
 Of pleasure and of fear;
 Such tales as told to any maid
 By such a Youth, in the green shade,
 Were perilous to hear

He told of girls---a happy rout!
 Who quit their fold with dance and shout,
 Their pleasant Indian town,
 To gather strawberries all day long;
 Returning with a choral song
 When daylight is gone down.

THIS IS NOT A MAP OF BATRAM'S TRAVELS; HOWEVER, IT IS USEFUL FOR SHOWING SOME OF THE PLACES VISITED BY BATRAM



- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Charlestown | 14. Cowhee (COWEE) |
| 2. Monks Corner | 15. Usinah |
| 3. Congarees | 16. Cowitche |
| 4. Fort Ninety-Six | 17. Cowhee Gap |
| 5. Fort Prince George | 18. Stickoee |
| 6. Keowe* | 19. Conutory* |
| 7. Estatoe Old Field | 20. Kittoa |
| 8. Field of Battle
(Near Etchoee Pass) | 21. Tuckorithe |
| 9. Etchoee | 22. Tassatee |
| 10. Tassie | 23. Alejoy |
| 11. Nockase | |
| 12. Watoga | |
| 13. Ayoree | |

**** HISTORICAL MATERIALS:** Because some degree of interest has been generated in the Revolutionary War events as they relate to Oconee County, an attempt has been made in this newsletter to define at least in part those events that relate to General Andrew Pickens in Oconee County prior to 1782. It is my feeling that we will all benefit from a review and discussion of selected subjects. Should some of you disagree with some of the historical information provided in this newsletter, we will certainly be more than happy to print up any contrary, additional, or related information. We would naturally prefer to print the entire documentary materials should you be able to obtain a full copy in order that the membership can reach their own conclusions on this subject. I would like to add that these newsletters have begun to generate some increased professional interest in the happening in Oconee County between 1776 and 1800. Such interest will hopefully add more to our knowledge of this perhaps most interesting period in Oconee County History.

In addition to the above, one of the more brilliant thinkers in the State of South Carolina graciously provided us with some information which I think you might find of special interest regarding Wordsworth.

**** MEETING NOTICE (and on the subject of meetings):** Even though we should be having a meeting shortly, the weather has rather been against everything. As such, we will simply trust that everyone can stay cool and contemplate the enclosed information. Unless it is terribly disagreeable with anyone, we will resume meetings in late September.

We have received some internal criticism for not meeting more often. Let me be the first to point out that I will be delighted to come over to anybody's house who would like to serve "tea" and preferably more that afternoon; however, we are not a social club in terms of our ongoing work. As such meeting are held as topics become available, as information surfaces and research is completed, and as scheduling permits. Unlike the South Carolina Historical Society and the South Caroliniana Society or even many local historical societies, we do meet more than once a year...in fact our ultimate goal is that of four times yearly. However, I personally see little point in simply having a meeting so that people will be able to fill a slot on their social calenders, and I have no intention of calling a meeting for that reason. However, any member is free to call a meeting at any time and I will happily provide that person with both postage and mailing labels for that purpose as well as deal with a press release of public notification of same. Naturally I will look forward to that meeting as well as their topic for discussion. To use an old expression: "If you aren't doing the cooking; don't complain about the food."

**** NOTES FROM THE LAST MEETING:** A meeting was the Oconee County Historical Society was held at the Walhalla Library on March 23, 1986. Some of the materials collected on Oconee

Station and the families who had lived there was presented. It is worth mentioning that since this meeting, a considerable amount of additional information relating to Oconee Station, other frontier forts, and the frontier in general have been uncovered. Because it would take years to uncover all of the evidence regarding Oconee Station, we will perhaps produce our publication based on the material then at hand in June of 1992.

**** A SMALL EDITORIAL:** As is not unusual these days, several people have suggested that we do a county history. I have tried to explain to these individuals that very little is actually known about the county in terms of specific details regarding a number of subjects; that very little serious research has been done on any number of topics; that information regarding certain periods of time would likely be refuted by information that will probably be available in only two to three years; and that far too little secondary work is available at present to carry forward with such a project. As an example of the above, I will note that the Rev. Shealy's upcoming publication will in my opinion substantially alter our thinking on the German settlement in Walhalla. Research work on legends and place names in Oconee County will alter our perception of old stories, some of the things already in print about the Indians, and in particular our thinking on many of the local place names. As another example, the various mill villages and their sociological and economic influences have hardly been touched with only the small writeups on Newry and a few newspaper clippings getting any credit at all! Interestingly enough, these villages have been somewhat discussed in publications seemingly not available in the county. If someone feels inclined to do a serious history of the county for an high school and adult audience, they might give very serious consideration to doing one that would cover the years from World War I to the present while there are still a substantial number of people alive who could supply documentary materials.

Having just made all of those remarks, I will comment that we are possibly in the position to do a small, very general juvenile history of the county for young school children (ages 8-10). Because such a work would not have to deal with many areas in question and subject to considerable clarification, a work of this nature is possible. Such a work would deal primarily with events in Oconee County after 1800. Fortunately, I have found several educators who have expressed possible interest in assisting with this type of work. Naturally it would be wonderful to produce a juvenile work from a larger well documented county history; however, because it might be years before we could accumulate the materials and produce this sort of larger work (not to mention getting it written), it might be best to give some very serious consideration to putting out something fairly soon for the young school children. We would have to keep close monitor on the locations of such a publication so that they could be constantly corrected and updated. Your thoughts on this subject would be most appreciated.

Historical societies sometimes erect markers. This is certainly a worthwhile pursuit in that it educates the public

about a particular site or event (as a point of note, only a few markers are ever approved as they pertain to a specific individual. A case in point would be someone of great importance such as John C. Calhoun). However, the marker is rarely as important as the research which it takes to get the marker as well as the time spent on the proper wording for same. In this regard, it might well be pointed out that the research has already been done that would support several different markers; however, we would seriously have to ask the question of what we can best do with our limited funds. As we could produce two small publications for the same cost as a single marker, I am personally of the opinion that the general population of the county would at this time better benefit from some information pertaining to the county. Even so, this should not deter us from doing research towards the eventual goal of erecting some markers. Some categories for such research include Kilpatrick's Mill; Madison's Station; some of the now defunct towns, crossroads, and settlements; Long Creek Academy (which is already covered to some degree in an unpublished Master's thesis); the Generals Road (which several individuals have already worked on to some degree); etc.

**** A NOTE OF CONGRADULATIONS:** Congradulations to Frances Holleman on being named the official Seneca Historian. Having personally examined some of her research materials which she gathered in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere, I can comment that her book on Seneca does not even begin to explore all of the potential avenues of interest as relates to Oconee County that can be gleaned her collected sources. Miss Holleman's work only verifies one of the positions presented above: i.e., you are going to have to look in resource libraries far from Oconee County to gather materials for many topics. It is to be hoped that Miss Holleman will produce some additional works based on her research.

**** NOTES ON CURRENT PROJECTS:** We have several ongoing projects to promote a better understanding of Oconee County which some of you will perhaps find interesting: (1) We are beginning to provide some of our collected information to the libraries of Oconee County as reference copies. The first series will on legends and place names related to these legends. The first volume is entitled: *Legends and Place Names of Oconee County: The Issaquena and Issaquena/Cateechee Legends*. This is undoubtably the largest collection of material that has ever been assembled in one unit on these legends. The introduction provides some additional information and the Index is a wealth of Oconee County place names. In addition to the legends and many of the names defined by J.W. Daniel, we have additional information on the meaning of Indian Place Names as supplied by A.L. Pickens with notes on where to find even more definitions. Anybody who thinks that they know all about these legends and what they mean or have to do with this area will probably be surprised with some of the materials in this volume. Let me briefly comment that the legend series will reveal a whole facet of Oconee County History that you will not find easily in books, magazines, or newspaper articles...i.e., something of the background of the legend gatherers and creators. I have rarely been tempted to write a book; however, some years of work by someone with more free

time than I have could produce a fascinating study of these individuals.

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(2) We have assembled a Reference Guides to Oconee County Materials for each of the branch libraries in the Oconee covering everything from BEES to HIKING to HISTORY to FOLKLORE to TRAPPING, etc.. Each branch will be provided with copies of the same information for the other branch libraries. In this way, one can go to the Westminster Branch for example to find out not only what can be found on Oconee County in Westminster but also in Seneca and Salem along with the reference # for many titles. This has been an extremely interesting project that has already substantially enlightened me about where to go to find certain materials. For example, Seneca (and not Walhalla) has the best collection of materials on the Indians. If I wanted to look for books on church histories, I would certainly give a visit to Westminster. The place that most needs some more area material is Salem. If any of you publish anything, please give a copy to the Salem branch!! There are other books that should be in the libraries of Oconee County; however, many of the ones most needed are now out of print and have joined the ranks of the rare book market. Please be aware that this in no way a criticism of the county library system...for example: books given by an individual to the Seneca Library stay in Seneca. Thus the library system is in many cases hardly responsible for one branch having a better collection of certain materials than other branches. It is worth noting that when the library only has two copies of a particular book, one copy is generally retained as Reference and the other copy is circulating. Thus, these guides will help you find the circulating copy of some reasonably obscure books that can be very helpful in different lines of research.

(3) I have authorized (I hope with your approval) the Library to purchase some additional copies of Chapman J. Millings *Red Carolinians*. While slightly dated, this book remains a standard reference work on the Indians of South Carolina. The cost of this project will be approximately twenty dollars for some three copies. The Salem Library will get two copies and the Westminster Library one copy. The Seneca Branch already has two copies in the collection as does the Walhalla Library.

(4) I was amazed to find that two branch libraries (Seneca and Westminster) do not seem to have copies of Seaborn's maps. Unfortunately, the trail map is now out of print and unavailable. Please contact me if you have any extra copies that you might be willing to donate or to sell!

**** FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:** I would suggest that beginning in 1987 and ending in 1992, we began a celebration of two hundred years of area history. This rather arbitrary beginning date derives from the fact that the area of Oconee County officially became an uncontested part of the State of the South Carolina by the Treaty of Beaufort in 1787 (although not ratified until 1788) by both Georgia and South Carolina. There were seemingly no permanent settlers in this area until ca. 1784 (discounting those semi permanent Indian traders who were not half breeds and the tory, Alexander Cameron). Thus we

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would be celebrating not only the official treaty between the two states but also the lives of the early settlers. The ending date of 1992 derives from the only account thus far located that gives an indication of when the Indians perhaps finally removed from this area as tribal units. This celebration of area history would not involve street parades or fairs or the like (unless someone wanted to use the event as a fund raiser), but rather a serious effort to promote places of interest within the county, to either publish or encourage publication of new materials as well as possibly reprinting rare materials related to the county, and through newspaper articles to make the county citizens, especially children and newcomers, aware of the area. I am presently hoping to have a small tour of the Picket Post area in 1987 in cooperation with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Should actual work start on Oconee Station before this proposed tour takes place, some other section of the country will be selected for the 1987 tour. It is to be hoped that others of you will select areas where you have a particular expertise for a possible spring car tour during the years from 1987 through 1992.

As many of you are aware, we have not had a president for some time. As none of the current officers have any desire to succeed to this position, we basically have three choices: (1) Operate as we are (2) Find someone who WANTS (a slightly higher qualification than simply being WILLINGS) to be president (3) Change our constitution from that of certain officers to a Board of Directors. From time to time, we need someone as either a president or else a chairman of the board to sign various legal papers. For all other purposes, the day to day operation of the society is going along rather nicely. The one biggest advantage to a board of directors is simply that various areas of the county could be represented in the day to day policy making of the society. In this regard, a board of directors would probably be much more democratic. Please find a map enclosed that suggests various areas of possible representation.

We need to purchase a heavy duty stapler. The cost of this particular item is approximately \$75.00. It would serve both the society and individual members in their publications. Should anyone know where we can obtain one cheaply...PLEASE YELL LOUDLY!!!

**** A GENERAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:**

Since we reorganized last year, we have made some significant progress: Our mailing list has been updated and corrected; we have catalogued and bound all of the old materials of the Society including minutes, correspondance, etc; we have attracted the interest of a number of individuals including some research scholars from outside this area regarding the happenings at various times in Oconee County; we have assembled a reasonable collection of materials on this area including a substancial body of materials that cannot at present be located within the county other than in our collections; we have begun work on a resource guide to materials on Oconee County both for sources to be found within the county and from outside of this area; we have added to the historical map collection and the general holding of the

County Library System; we have provided for the exchange of information among different individuals regards certain areas of interest; and as all of you are aware, we have published newsletters containing information on this area. Naturally we have some failing; We have not in fact generated a tremendous amount of interest within the county regarding local history nor have we attracted new members in tremendous numbers. We have not done anything particularly "flashy" such as publications for sale, the erection of historical markers, etc. We have in fact barely kept ourselves before the public eye other than in some few newspaper articles. I would like to say that although we have these failing, I for one am more than satisfied with our progress for several reasons: (1) We have established realistic operating goals and expectations and followed through with them; (2) We are developing the solid base to stand upon that is needed before someone tries to rise; (3) we are providing information for ourselves and some selected information for public use and consumption; (4) we are working within reason with other organizations within the county; (5) we are slowly developing long range goals; (6) we are operating as a responsible organization for the public benefit; (7) we are committed to being democratic organization representative of the entire county and all of its citizens.

As always, your comments, suggestions, ideas, association, complaints, criticisms, etc. are welcome and sincerely desired. This is particularly true in regard to the above noted five year plan for the advancement of Oconee County History.

**** REGARDING THE LUNNEY MUSEUM (a larger editorial):** Having now reflected on the Lunney Museum in some detail as a result of Mr. Norman Crain's recent article in the Greenville News, I would like to offer a few comments regarding this subject.

It was a very brave and heroic thing for Mrs. Louise Bell and two members of the historic society to accept the Lunney property as a Museum for Oconee County to be administered by the Historic Society as a museum. Equally, it was a culturally responsible action for the then county delegation, who at that time virtually administered the county funding, to accept same for the county. However, the world has changed to use an euphemism. The legislative delegation no longer administers the county funding and the museum as envisioned by its creators has, for all practical purposes, been rather much of a disappointment. The problems with the Lunney Museum have been much the same as those experienced by the historical society at one time---a lack of vitality.

This recently developed trend of trying to make the historical society the "scape goat" for the problems of the museum is in itself doomed to failure in addition to being ridiculous simply because it is approaching the situation with negative goals. Apparently the intent is somehow to breath new life into a failed project by doing damage to the Historic Society. What hasn't worked in the past is not going to work in the future. Equally this effort to offend the Historic Society is clearly going to cause us to distance ourselves even further, from what many already view as a "sinking ship", at the very time when the Museum needs all the friends that it can muster.

It is my personal opinion that few people in Oconee County are actually interested in a static exhibit that fails to excite their imagination. The quicker we all accept this as a reality, the easier it will be to move ahead. To somehow excite the county council into renewing funds to maintain the status quo will only forstall the inevitable. While Mrs. Bell has publically stated that professional management could be a possible key to solving the problem, I am afraid that I rather tend to disagree from the point of view that basically too many people are still, I believe, rather committed to retaining the house to at least a partial degree as representative of life in Seneca among a very small element of the population some seventy-five years ago. It seems evident to me that only a small percentage of the present population has any interest in this concept. Equally many "professionals" are not gifted or famous for supplying vitality. However a number of "professionals" are very good at getting vitality from other sources such as traveling exhibits, etc.

The first point that we must deal with is simply the fact that the Historic Society is a relatively small and not terribly affluent organization totally incapable of bring to fruition the concepts of those who conceived the project. There is no need for embarrassment on this point for I rather feel that the Historic Society got stuck "holding the bag" anyway.

The second point is simply that the Museum is going to have to have more than money to successfully survive---it is going to have to have realistic management and a careful reevaluation of its functions in the Seneca Community...for I really do not foresee it receiving substancial support from Westminster and Walhalla as even a part house museum. I would surmise from my own experiences that the only salvation for th place is going to be to turn it into a full time art museum with changing exhibits, to host social receptions for visiting artists, theater performers, and lecturers, and lastly as a functioning meeting place for those feeling the need for challenging surroundings. In this respect, I think it only fair to say that I suspect the current trappings are going to have to go. Let's be realistic enough to admit that the Historic Society as a whole, at least according to what notes I can find, was only lastly consulted about the best fashion for the building to function as a museum...not to even mention the fact that the average Oconeeian was seemingly not consulted at all. From a logical point of view, the Historical Society has played "dead dog" long enough. I really do not see the Lunney Museum either now or in the immediate past as being to the benefit of the Society. Should anyone like to retort that the board of directors of the Museum could have changed the Museum at any time, I will simply have to honestly answer that in my opinion the effort would have at the time scarcely have justified the rewards, not to mention the fact that I, personally, as a member already felt that the Historic Society had gotten on a wayward course. This is not to say that I am not interested in the survival of the Lunney Museum, but rather to say that I am not interested in the survival tactics to the exclusion of other interests and concerns regarding Oconee County---in particular the goal of public education and dissemination of information.

A society whose history is basically composed of legends and unproven hearsay expects and wants to see just that and no more! A properly informed public might respond to the Lunney Museum in its current field of display. In effect until we solve our "root" problems, this continued discussion of the Lunney Museum as a means of historic education and instruction is frivolous.

I, for one, have little interest in taking part in continued negative discussions of the subject. My time can be substantially better spent otherwise. However positive discussions by a larger segment of the general population than just the members of the Historical Society might accrue some appreciable results. With demands for our research materials growing, it seems foolish to devote notable efforts to continued discussion of the role of the Historic Society as the literal administrator of the Lunney Museum. Equally I have grown a bit weary of defending the Historical Society to those few people with self centered interest that disregard the concerns of the county as a whole.

The time spent in replying and retorting statements by others as well as keeping the society posted of all these procedures and actions could have been spent in producing a small body of work on Oconee County. I personally consider this time ill spent with little appreciable results. To those who would say that the Historic Society has renigged on its responsibilities to the Museum, I will quickly and efficiently notify them that the only responsibility that the Historic Society, from even a quasi-legal point of view, has ever had was that of administering the Museum...and that DOES NOT mean in the manner in which others happen to have seen fit. At the time Mr. Cater excused himself from the administration of the Museum, the Society notified Mr. Crain that they would appoint a new board of directors. This fulfilled our responsibilities. At that time public pressures took the matter reasonably out of our hands by the supposed naming of an Arts and Historical Commission as a functioning branch of County Government. Subsequently the Museum has collapsed.

I, for one and not speaking for the Historic Society, do not plan to be involved in any way in the Museum business without adequate public interest and financial support...and until such time as this seemingly typical negative way of doing business in Oconee County stops. It rather strikes me that such attitudes result from people trying to establish power bases that have little reality beyond the extent of their back yards and two closest neighbors. For better or worse, I and others have much larger goals in mind for the Historic Society that can be carried forward with or without (it makes no difference) the support of those few detractors the Society currently has been at least attempting the deal with. We have certainly given our best at being gracious; however, after a point in time, the more subtle points of Southern etiquette make "a good kicking" very respectable indeed. I simply refuse to offer valuable services and support, even by nothing more than the form of my presence, to any future meeting of any group of people who are so ingrained in laying blame that they fail "to see the forest because of the trees". I would encourage the rest of you to adopt the same position.



**** IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Because the maps in this issue will be used in future discussions of settlement, population growth and density, etc., it is requested that you put this issue in a reclaimable position as we will in the future simply refer to materials contained herein by the reference of (*Newsnotes*, Vol I, #4, fig. 1-4). New members in the future will receive a copy of this last *Newsnotes* for reference.

**** HISTORICAL MATERIALS:** This is a special issue of our *Newsnotes* as well as the last one of the fiscal year, and the last one which we will calling "Newsnotes" that contains historical materials. Henceforth, we will title our publications that deal with historical materials the *Journal of the Oconee Historical and Recreational Commission*. This change is not being made to be pretentious in any way but rather to avail ourselves of better postage rates for large issues and to differentiate between the simple notices and announcements made at odd times and the publication of materials.

The geography and physiographic features of Oconee County briefly covered in this issue are very important and most unfortunately, often ignored by historians. Failing to deal with these issues can result in a much maligned view of a region as well as a failure to comprehend various phases of activity. Because this material was accumulated from a variety of sources as well as personal observations, no footnotes are included; however, a reasonable bibliography is supplied that will enable any interested party to substantially explore this subject.

**** A COUNTY HISTORY:** There is a "sort of" history of the county. Over the years, the Oconee County Planning Commission has compiled in excess of two hundred pages of materials on Oconee County (typed, double spaced on legal size paper) which deals with a number of subjects. Some of it is very interesting and useful while other sections contain much misleading and useless information. Also and rather unfortunately, the copy I have in my possession rarely gives the source for the information. Even so, I rather tend to think that the Commission has files on these subjects that might be enlightening, at least in terms of the source for the materials. I an enclosing a copy of the Index to this material, a copy of which may be located in a file in the Walhalla Library under Oconee County History or in our collection, for whatever value it may have to you as individual researchers. PLEASE USE VERY CAUTIOUSLY!!!!

**** OTHER INFORMATION:** On a recent trip I acquired Draper's *Hero's of Kings Mountain* and McCall's *History of Georgia* (this volume is not otherwise found anywhere in upper S.C.) as well as a French map showing Fort Prince George and a few of the Indian villages in 1760. These rare works, virtually impossible to find outside research libraries and private collections, contain information relevant to this area before and during the Williamson campaign of 1776, sections on Benjamin Cleveland, Andrew Pickens, etc. Please notify me if you have research needs in these areas.

OCCONEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION COMPILATION INDEX

(Much of this information is interesting and a substantial amount useful although undocumented or referenced...it at least points to areas for research. This IS NOT a history, nor does the Planning Commission present it as one, but rather a compilation of materials collected by the Planning Commission Office---PLEASE USE CAUTIOUSLY!!!)

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		from S.C. Institute of Arch. and Anthop. already reprinted
		in the Newsnotes of the Historical Society.)
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		Aug 11, 1849 ed. Keowee Courier--interesting none the less)
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		(NOT included in this compilation is an article on Fort
		Prince George from the June 2/ 1849 Keowee Courier
		(p4,c1-2) that might prove of interest to some of you)
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		with presumably no basis in fact as Robinson did not come
		into this area until after the Revolution...the part about
		the gold is ridiculous!)
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PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES AND GEOLOGY OF OCONEE COUNTY

Oconee County takes in an area of approximately 650 square miles in the most northwestwardly portion of South Carolina. This land area is slightly reduced from its original 1868 size by several alterations including the annexation of a track of land by Pickens County. This track took in that area across the Seneca River running approximately from the football stadium at Clemson University by Tillman Hall thence up the road going toward Central, thence turning right and proceeding toward Anderson, thence turning back right near the Old Stone Church and proceeding to the Seneca River. The annexation resulted from problems over schools and student transportation. Oconee County lies between latitude 34 30' and 35 00' north and longitude 82 50' and 83 20' west. Approximately two thirds of the county to the southeast are part of the Piedmont Plateau which starts approximately at the fall line near Columbia, S.C. and extends northwest (See fig. 1). Elevation in this area of the Piedmont Plateau in Oconee County ranges from 700 ft. at the lowest points in the south of the county to approximately 1200 feet at the base of the Blue Ridge Province. The remaining one third of the county to the northwest lies in the Blue Ridge Province. Elevations in this area range from the extremes of approximately 1000 ft. to approximately 3000 ft. Deep valleys and steep hills and mountains combined with large areas of forest being under the control of the Federal Government as part of the the Sumpter National Forest makes access difficult to many part of this extremely beautiful area.

Although the extremes are most frequently remembered, the climate on the average is mild and rainfall sufficient. Although Spring and Fall tend to be short seasons, the area does experience distinct seasonal changes. Summers are long, frequently hot and somewhat humid usually in late July and August. This "unpleasantness" is more than compensated by many sunny, bright, and mild winter days. There are approximately 200 "growing days" in an average year with an average rainfall of 55 inches. The last frost is generally in mid April and is almost always accompanied by a decidedly warm period from mid March to early April. The first frost is normally in late October or early November generally followed by a number of glorious days of "Indian summer". Because of the wide variance of elevation, many types of plants can be grown depending upon location. Equally the climate and topography are well suited on the whole to golf and many other outside activities. The large square millage covered in man made lakes makes water activities easily accessible, and the large territory of mountainous areas make this area a joy for hikers, wildlife and wildflower enthusiasts.

Short leaf pine and mountain hardwood predominate in the county with pulpwood being a major business (see fig. 2). Inland water drainage is accomplished principally by the Little River which drains into the Keowee and subsequently into the Seneca, and by the Chauga which drains into the Tugaloo, which like the Seneca is but a branch of the Savannah River (see fig. 3).

Bounded on the north by the rugged but not completely impenetrable southern reaches of the Blue Ridge Mountains; on the east and southeast by the Keowee and Seneca Rivers; and on the northwest and southwest respectively by the Chattooga and the Tugaloo Rivers, Oconee County along with a portion of Anderson County is virtually an island in a sea of land. The mountains in the north and northwest have somewhat contributed to Oconee county's alignment with areas to the east and southwest in terms of both development and politics from 1784 through the 1960s rather than areas to the north and south. This southwestward orientation represents an almost radical shift from the general northwestward alignment of the Colonial period when traffic passed from Charleston to Tennessee. Patterns of migration, settlement, and trade following the Revolution, and the general westward push the Indians were experiencing, all contributed to the view point of the area being closely tied to neighboring counties as well as parts Georgia while the geography created conditions that for a short time in the early 1800s made parts of Oconee County slightly more provincial than even these nearby areas.

Naturally the larger portion of the population, found living on the lower flatter less rocky lands of the southern part of the county closer to small areas of trade in the late 1700s and the early 1800s, would develop somewhat differently from those individuals living in the small coves (small valley areas surrounded by hills and small mountains on two to three sides) isolated from frequent communication with more populous areas. This isolation, even in regard to small mountainous areas not millage wise far distant from Walhalla, would continue to exist for many people until after World War I; however, this view cannot be extended too far nor extreme analogies made regarding these individuals in that much of the South was somewhat insular until well after World War II.

Even though blessed with a bountiful water supply, the area was not truly ideal for early manufacturing for several reasons including a lack of adequate transportation systems, and relatively steep valleys combined with fairly frequent mountain freshlets (floods) in those places best able to utilize water power. Newry would experience these problems in 1903 and 1915, and the much earlier small trading and manufacturing area of Andersonville below the Oconee County line would ultimately attribute its demise in part to severe floods. Even though water transportation was much advocated, small shoals usually made such a transportation systems unfeasible except for low drawing flatboats operating in the lower parts of the county on the Seneca and the Tugaloo Rivers at high water levels.

While it was expected that the projected railroad line to run northwest from Charleston, S.C. to Cincinnati, Ohio would bring great benefit and prosperity to the area in the mid eighteenth hundreds, this plan was thwarted by the cost of defying the geographic features encountered at Stump House Mountain in northwest Oconee County. When a railroad running Southwest became a reality in the 1870s, the expected benefits were never fully realized simply because other areas were better able to adapt the transportation system with the availability of a labor force and a more controllable source of water power.

With the currently improved highways and a growing access to forced water supplies, Oconee county is in the position to prosper with expanded recreational activities. Some degree of increased industrial development, a considerably enhanced educational program, and expanded public service are required for Oconee County to take full advantage of its physiographic features which undoubtedly in the long run will prove to be county's greatest asset.

Geology of Oconee County

Composed primarily of metamorphic and metaigneous rocks generally found in belts in the northwestern part of the county as geographic formations pass from North Carolina into Georgia, and in zones in the southeastern and southern parts of the county that have relationship to features of neighboring counties in both South Carolina and Georgia, Oconee County exhibits a number of types of soil composition and some mineral deposits (see fig. 4). While there is a relatively small amount of very good farmland in the county, the heavy soils of approximately one third of the county lying primarily in the "Westminster pluton" and the "hornblende gneiss injection zones" have been used to grow a number of crops and in particular cotton until the 1930s when production began to diminish (see fig. 2). A substantial portion of the "biotite gneiss zone" is relatively poor land, and although settled in the late 1790s and early 1800s, it is now used primarily as a growing housing area and for pine plantations and grazing land. Major portions of the "mica gneiss", "whiteside granite", "Brevard belt", and the "augen gneiss" zones are classed as poor farmland. This area that supports a major forest also contains many small valley areas with rich soil deposits. By far the best way to observe the geography of Oconee County is to take a boat trip up the Hartwell, Keowee, and Jocassee reservoirs at low water levels. The geographical complexity of the area is quickly revealed by the multitude of soil colorations, soil textures, and rock formations along the banks.

Metals found in small quantities in the county include gold, lead, and silver. Non metals include asbestos, clay, corundum, feldspar, flagstone, granite, graphite, gravel, marble, mica, monazite, sand, and talc. With the exception of sand, it is currently not economically feasible to mine most of the above noted materials.

The "Brevard belt" is particularly interesting to both professional and amateur geologists. An area of large and small scale faulting, this strip continues to be subject to minor slippage. On a very simplified level, it is this area that separates the Blue Rige Plateau from the Piedmont Plateau with many of the accompanying implications of any fault line. This area is rich in a number of low grade minerals and some low grade gemstones.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Listing only includes materials that may be located within Oconee County at public libraries...many other sources are available at both the Clemson University Libraries and in Columbia. Selected portions of most of the materials listed below and other materials not listed as they pertain to Oconee County are in the collections of the Historical Society.)

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GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS

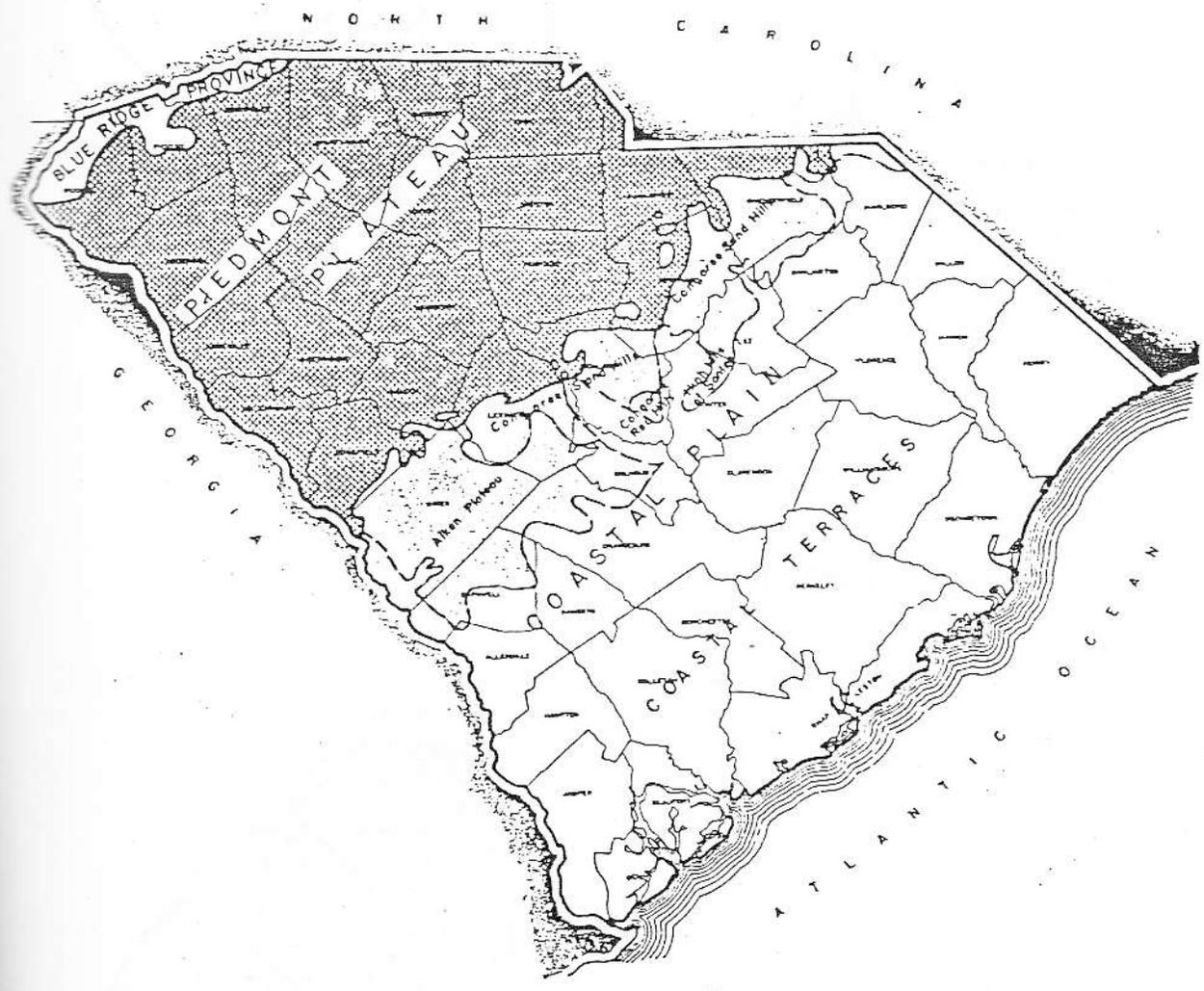
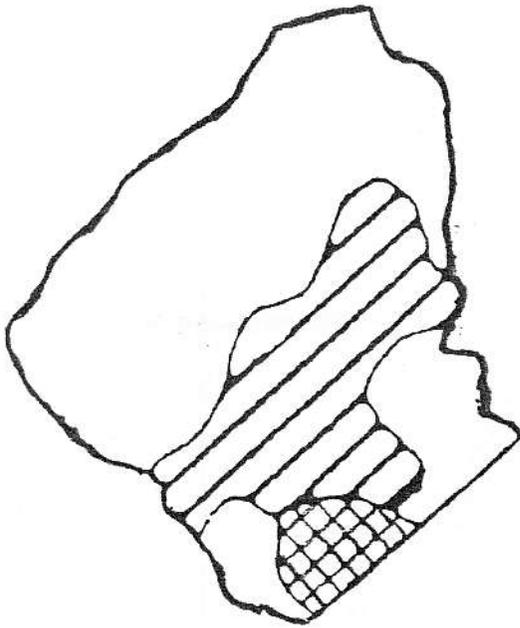


fig. 1

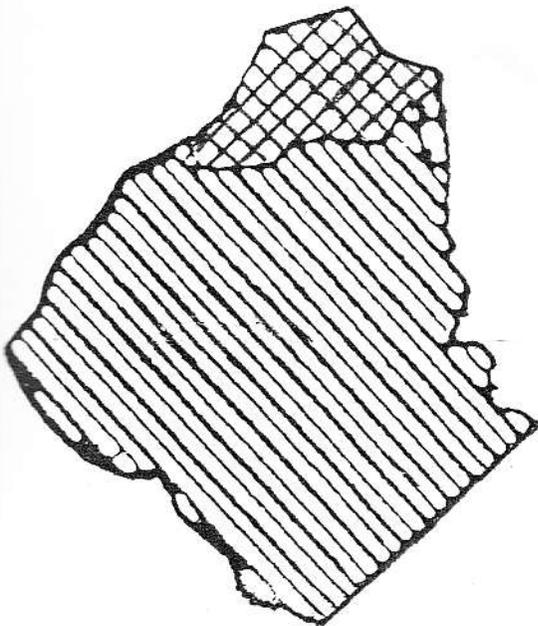
LAND CLASSIFICATION



LEGEND

-  Best Farm Land
-  Good Farm Land
-  Fair (best for timber and grazing)
-  Poor (for timber and grazing only)

MAJOR FOREST TYPES



LEGEND

-  Loblolly Pine - Hardwood
-  Longleaf Pine
-  Shortleaf Pine - Hardwood
-  Virginid Pine - Hardwood
-  Mountain Hardwood

fig. 2

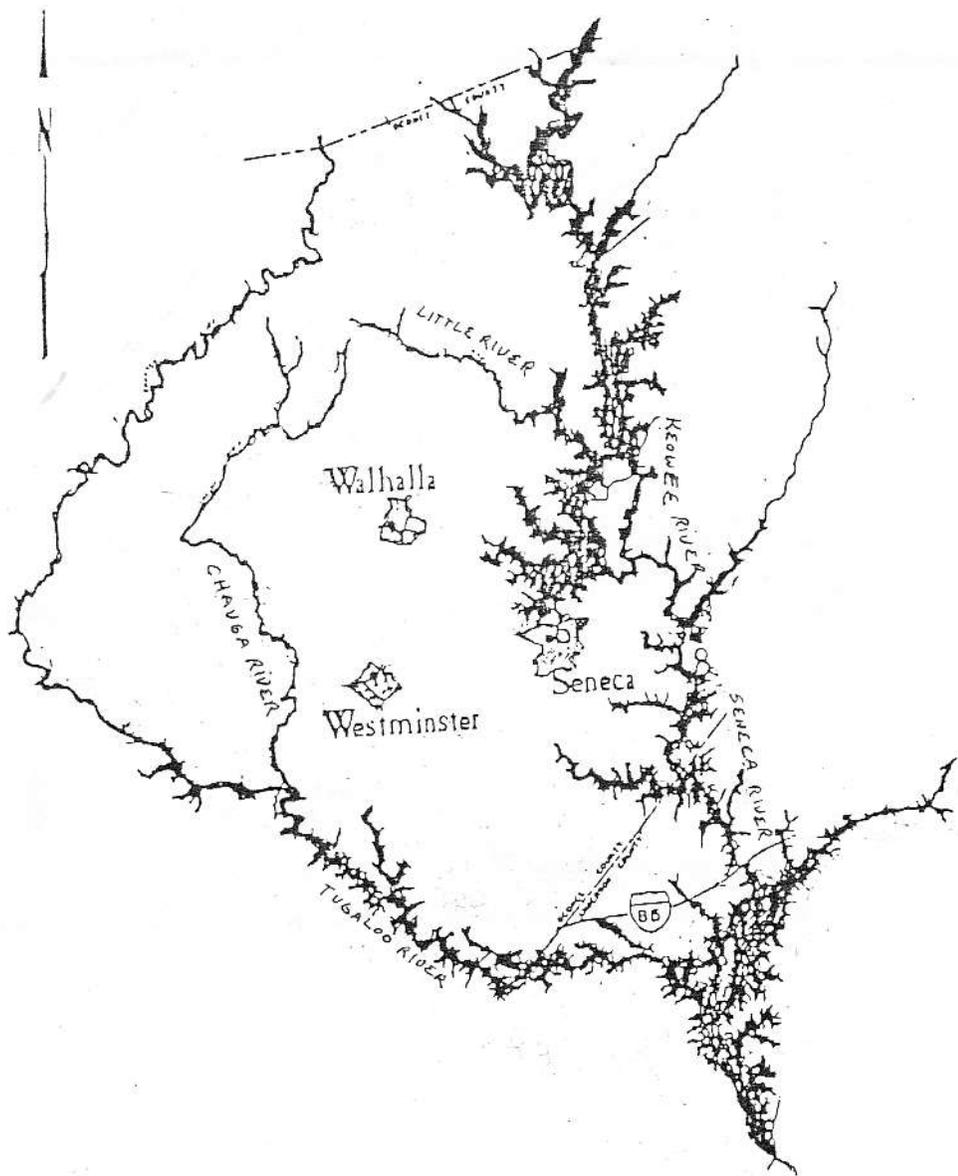


fig. 3

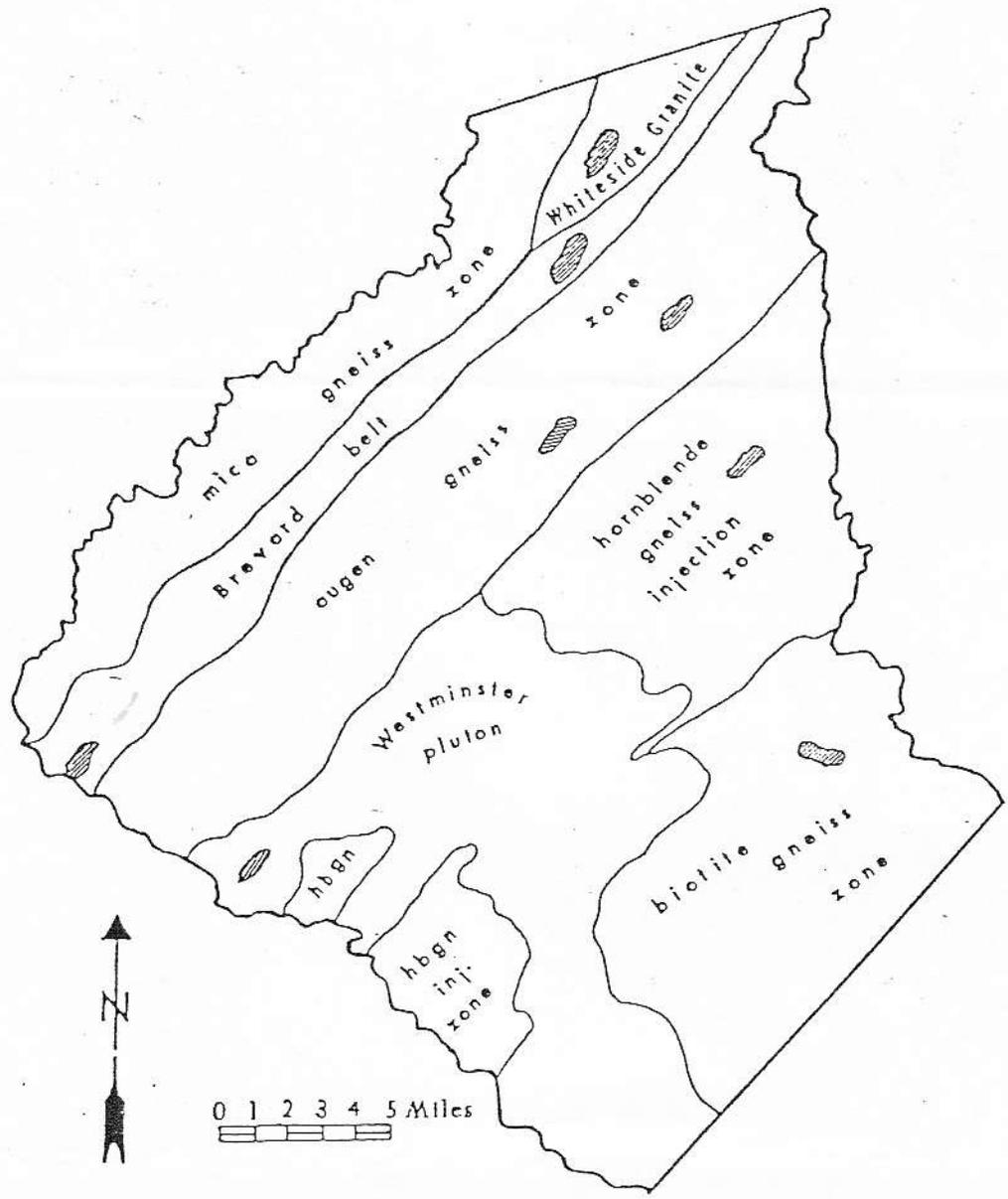


Figure 4. Major rock zones in Oconee County. (Shaded areas are copper anomalies indicated by geochemical survey.)