WILLIAM BARTRAM

THE CHEROKEE MOUNTAINS

Keowee, the Vale of Cowee, and the Jore Mountains, 1775
from his Travels, *1791*



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Two chapters from Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, *&c., 1791*



WAKING UP IN BOONE
Boone, North Carolina

The text is chapters III and IV of part III of William Bartram, *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws* (Philadelphia: James and Johnson, 1791), pages 333 to 374. This edition follows the transcription of the 1791 edition published by Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The two chapters are printed complete, with Bartram's spelling and punctuation, his footnotes, and his list of Cherokee towns. Misspellings in the transcription, such as "Aazalea" and "releived," are kept. Three changes are typographic. The first word of each paragraph, printed in capitals in 1791, is set in small capitals. Latin names of plants are set in italics. The chapter titles and the heading over the list of towns are new.

The engravings are from Wilbur G. Zeigler and Ben S. Grosscup, *The Heart of the Alleghanies; or, Western North Carolina* (Raleigh and Cleveland, 1883). The photographs are from Horace Kephart, *Our Southern Highlanders* (New York, 1913). Text, engravings, and photographs are in the public domain in the United States.

Cover: *On the Blue Ridge,* 1883. Title page: Whiteside Mountain, Macon County. Chapter openers: Whitewater Falls, on the headwaters of the Keowee, and hardwood forest in Jackson County. Back page: *The Macon Highlands,* 1883.

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I began again to ascend the Jore mountains, which I at length accomplished, and rested on the most elevated peak; from whence I beheld with rapture and astonishment, a sublimely awful scene of power and magnificence, a world of mountains piled upon mountains.

WILLIAM BARTRAM
Travels, 1791

INTRODUCTION

William Bartram was born near Philadelphia in 1739. His father, John Bartram, was a self-taught botanist who sent American plants and seeds to gardeners in England, and William traveled with him as a young man and learned to draw plants and birds. In 1773 John Fothergill, a London physician with a large garden, agreed to pay William to collect plants in the southern colonies and to send back seeds, specimens, and drawings. Bartram spent most of the next four years in Georgia, the Carolinas, and Florida.

In the spring of 1775 he left Charleston for the Cherokee country. He rode up the Savannah River to the Lower Cherokee town of Seneca, which he spelled Sinica, and to the trading post at Fort Prince George, across the river from the old town of Keowee, in what is now South Carolina. This volume begins there. Bartram waited a few days for a guide, and when none came he went on alone. He crossed the Blue Ridge into the valley of the Little Tennessee River, which he called the Tanase, and followed the river north past the towns of Echoe, Nucasse, and Whatoga to Cowee, the largest of the Middle Cherokee towns. From Cowee he set out west over the Jore Mountains, now the Nantahala Mountains, toward the Overhill towns in what is now Tennessee. Beyond the mountains he met Attakullakulla, the Cherokee leader the English called the Little Carpenter, who was on his way to Charleston. A short time later Bartram decided that it was not safe to go on, and he turned back to Cowee and Keowee.

Bartram wrote *Travels* years after the journey, and he dated this trip to 1776. Historians who have compared the book with his letters and other records place it in May

1775. The fighting at Lexington and Concord had taken place a month before, but the news had not reached him. In the summer of 1776 the Cherokees, allied with the British, attacked the frontier settlements, and that fall militia from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia burned the Cherokee towns. Most of the towns Bartram describes here, including Nucasse and Cowee, were destroyed in September 1776.

Bartram went home to Philadelphia early in 1777. *Travels* was published there in 1791 and in London in 1792, and it was read widely in England and Europe. Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth drew images from it for their poems. In these two chapters Bartram describes the plants of the mountains, the Cherokee towns and their council houses, a dance at Cowee, and his meetings with Cherokee men and women along the way. He writes about the Cherokees with respect and often with admiration, and also in the language and with the assumptions of a white traveler of his time. The chapters are printed without change. The second chapter ends with his list of the Cherokee towns.

Many names have changed. Keowe is Keowee, and the sites of Keowee and Fort Prince George are now under Lake Keowee. Occonne is Oconee. Nucasse is Nikwasi, whose mound still stands in Franklin, North Carolina, and the mound at Cowe, the town of Cowee, is a few miles north of Franklin. Ata-cul-culla is Attakullakulla. The tree Bartram called *Magnolia auriculata,* for which he named Mount Magnolia, is now called the Fraser magnolia, and his *Stewartia montana* is the mountain camellia. The Bartram Trail, a footpath from Georgia through Macon County, North Carolina, to Cheoah Bald, follows parts of his route.



Whitewater Falls, on the headwaters of the Keowee.
Photograph, U. S. Forest Service, 1913

CHAPTER III

OVER THE MOUNTAINS TO COWEE

I WAITED two or three days at this post expecting the return of an Indian, who was out hunting; this man was recommended to me as a suitable person for a protector and guide to the Indian settlements over the hills, but upon information that he would not be in shortly, and there being no other person suitable for the purpose, rather than be detained, and perhaps thereby frustrated in my purposes, determined to set off alone and run all risks.

I crossed the river at a good ford just below the old fort. The river here is near one hundred yards over: after an agreeable progress for about two miles over delightful strawberry plains, and gently swelling green hills, began to ascend more steep and rocky ridges. Having gained a very considerable elevation, and looking around, I enjoyed a very comprehensive and delightful view: Keowe which I had but just lost sight of, appears again, and the serpentine river speeding through the lucid green plain apparently just under my feet. After observing this delightful landscape I continued on again three or four miles, keeping the trading path which led me over uneven rocky land, and crossing rivulets and brooks, rapidly descending over rocky precipices, when I came into a charming vale, embellished with a delightful glittering river, which meandered through it, and crossed my road: on my left hand upon the grassy bases of the rising hills, appears the remains of a town of the ancients, as the tumuli, terraces, posts

or pillars, old Peach and Plumb orchards, &c. sufficiently testify. These vales and swelling base of the surrounding hills, afford vast crops of excellent grass and herbage fit for pasturage and hay; of the latter *Plantago Virginica*, *Sanguis orba*, *Geum*, *Fragaria*, &c. The *Panax quinquifolium*, or Ginseng, now appears plentifully on the North exposure of the hill, growing out of the rich mellow humid earth amongst the stones or fragments of rocks.

HAVING crossed the vales, began to ascend again the more lofty ridges of hills, then continued about eight miles over more gentle pyramidal hills, narrow vales and lawns, the soil exceedingly fertile, producing lofty forests and odoriferous groves of *Calycanthus*, near the banks of rivers, with *Halesia*, *Philadelphus inodorus*, *Rhododendron ferruginium*, *Aazalea*, *Stewartia montana*[1], NOW at once the mount divides, and discloses to view the ample Occonne vale, encircled by a wreath of uniform hills; their swelling bases clad in cheerful verdure, over which issuing from between the mountains, plays along a glittering river, meandering through the meadows, which crossing at the upper end of the vale, I began to ascend the Occonne mountain. On the foot of the hills are the ruins of the antient Occonne town: the first step after leaving the verdant beds of the hills was a very high rocky chain of pointed hills, extremely well ambered

[1]This is a new species of *Stewartia*, unknown to the European botanist, and not mentioned in any catalogues.

with the following trees: *Quercus tinctoria*, *Querc. alba*, *Querc rubra*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Juglans* hickory, various species, *Ulmus*, *Tilia*, *Acer saccharinum*, *Morus*, *Juglans nigra*, *Juglans alba*, *Annona glabra*, *Robinia pseudacacia*, *Magnolia acuminata*, *Æsculus sylvatica*, with many more, particularly a species of *Robinia* new to me, though perhaps the same as figured and described by Catesby in his Nat. Hist. Carol. This beautiful flowering tree grows twenty and thirty feet high, with a crooked leaning trunk, the branches spread greatly, and wreath about, some almost touching the ground; however there appears a singular pleasing wildness and freedom in its manner of growth, the slender subdivisions of the branches terminate with heavy compound panicles of rose or pink coloured flowers, amidst a wreath of beautiful pinnated leaves.

My next flight was up a very high peak, to the top of the Occonne mountain, where I rested; and turning about found that I was now in a very elevated situation, from whence I enjoyed a view inexpressibly magnificent and comprehensive. The mountainous wilderness through which I had lately traversed down to the region of Augusta, appearing regularly undulated as the great ocean after a tempest; the undulations gradually depressing, yet perfectly regular, as the squammae of fish or imbrications of tile on a roof: the nearest ground to me of a perfect full green, next more glaucous, and lastly

almost blue as the ether with which the the most distant curve of the horizon seems to be blended.

MY imagination thus wholly engaged in the contemplation of this magnificent landscape, infinitely varied, and without bound, I was almost insensible or regardless of the charming objects more within my reach: a new species of *Rhododendron* foremost in the assembly of mountain beauties, next the flaming *Azalea*, *Kalmia latifolia*, incarnate *Robinia*, snowy mantled *Philadelphus inodorus*, perfumed *Calycanthus*, &c.

THIS species of *Rhododendron* grows six or seven feet high, many nearly erect stems arise together from the root forming a group or coppice. The leaves are three or four inches in length, of an oblong figure, broadest toward the extremity, and terminating with an obtuse point; their upper surface of a deep green and polished, but the nether surface of a rusty iron colour, which seems to be effected by innumerable minute reddish vesicles, beneath a fine short downy pubescence; the numerous flexile branches terminate with a loose spiked raceme, or cluster of large deep rose coloured flowers, each flower being affixed in the diffused cluster by a long peduncle, which with the whole plant possess an agreeable perfume.

AFTER being recovered of the fatigue and labour in ascending the mountain, I began again to prosecute my task, proceeding through a shady forest, and soon after gained the most elevated crest of

the Occonne mountain, and then began to descend the other side; the winding rough road carrying me over rocky hills and levels, shaded by incomparable forests, the soil exceedingly rich, and of an excellent quality for the production of every vegetable suited to the climate, and seems peculiarly adapted for the cultivation of Vines (*Vitis vinifera*) Olives, (*Olea* Europea) the Almond tree (*Amygdalus communis*) Fig (*Ficus carica*) and perhaps the Pomgranate (*Punica granatum*) as well as Peaches, (*Amyg.* Persica) *Prunus*, *Pyrus*, of every variety: arising again steep rocky ascents, and then rich levels, where grew many trees and plants common in Pennsylvania, New-York and even Canada, as *Pinus strobus*, *Pin. sylvestris*, *Pin. abies*, *Acer saccharinum*, *Acer striatum*, s. Pennysylvanicnm, *Populus trimula*, *Betula nigra*, *Juglans alba*, &c. but what seems remarkable, the yellow Jessamine, (*Bignonia sempervirens*) which is killed by a very slight frost in the open air in Pennsylvania, here on the summits of the Cherokee mountains associates with the Canadian vegetables, and appears roving with them in perfect bloom and gaiety; as likewise *Halesia diptera*, and *Hal. tetraptera*, mountain *Stewartia*, *Styrax*, *Ptelea*, and *Æsculus pavia*, but all these bear our hardest frosts in Pennsylvania. Now I enter a charming narrow vale, through which flows a rapid large creek, on whose banks are happily associated the shrubs already recited, together with the following; *Staphylaea*, *Euonismus Americana*, *Hamamelis*, *Aza-*

lea, various species, *Aristalochia frutescens*, s.. odoratissima, which rambles over the trees and shrubs on the prolisic banks of these mountain brooks. Passed through magnificent high forests, and then came upon the borders of an ample meadow on the left, embroidered by the shade of a high circular amphitheatre of hills, the circular ridges rising magnificently one over the other: on the green turfy bases of these ascents appear the ruins of a town of the ancients; the upper end of this spacious green plain is divided by a promontory or spur of the ridges before me, which projects into it; my road led me up into an opening of the ascents through which the glittering brook which watered the meadows ran rapidly down, dashing and roaring over high rocky steps. Continued yet ascending until I gained the top of an elevated rocky ridge, when appeared before me a gap or opening between other yet more lofty ascents, thro' which continuing as the rough rocky road led me, close by the winding banks of a large rapid brook, which at length turning to the left, pouring down rocky precipices, glided off through dark groves and high forests, conveying streams of fertility and pleasure to the fields below.

THE surface of the land now for three or four miles is level, yet uneven, occasioned by natural mounds or rocky knobs, but covered with a good staple of rich earth, which affords forests of timber trees and shrubs. After this, gently descending again, I travelled some miles over a varied situation of

ground, exhibiting views of grand forests, dark detached groves, vales and meadows, as heretofore, and producing the like vegetable and other works of nature; the meadows affording exuberant pasturage for cattle, and the bases of the encircling hills, flowering plants, and fruitful strawberry beds: observed frequently ruins of the habitations or villages of the ancients. Crossed a delightful river, the main branch of Tugilo, when I began to ascend again, first over swelling turfy ridges, varied with groves of stately forest trees, then ascending again more steep, grassy hill sides, rested on the top of mount Magnolia, which appeared to me to be the highest ridge of the Cherokee mountains, which separates the waters of Savanna river from those of the Tanale or great main branch of the Cherokee river, which running rapidly a North-West course thro' the mountains, is joined from the North-East by the Holstein, thence taking a West course yet amongst the mountains receiving into it from either hand many large rivers, leaves the mountains immediately after being joined by a large river from the East, becomes a mighty river by the name of Hogehege, thence meanders many hundred miles through a vast country consisting of forests, meadows, groves, expansive savannas, fields and swelling hills, most fertile and delightful, flows into the beautiful Ohio, and in conjunction with its transparent waters, becomes tributary to the sovereign Missisippi.

THIS exalted peak I named mount Magnolia[2], from a new and beautiful species of that celebrated family of flowering trees, which here, at the cascades of Falling Creek, grows in a high degree of perfection, for although I had noticed this curious tree several times before, particularly on the high ridges betwixt Sinica and Keowe, and on ascending the first mountain after leaving Keowe, when I observed it in flower, but here it flourishes and commands our attention. THIS tree, or perhaps rather a shrub, rises eighteen to thirty feet in height, there are usually many stems from a root or source, which lean a little, or slightly diverge from each other, in this respect imitating the *Magnolia tripetala*; the crooked wreathing branches arising and subdividing from the main stem without order or uniformity, their extremities turn upwards, producing a very large rosaceous, perfectly white, double or polypetalous flower, which is of a most fragrant scent; this fine flower fits in the center of a radices of very large leaves, which are of a singular figure, somewhat lanciolate, but broad towards their extremities, terminating with an acuminated point, and backwards they attenuate and become very narrow towards their bases, terminating that way with two long, narrow ears or lappets, one on each side of the insertion of the petiole; the leaves have only short footstalks, sitting very near each other, at the extremities of the floriferous

[2] *Magnolia auriculata*.

branches, from whence they spread themselves after a regular order, like the spokes of a wheel, their margins touching or lightly laping upon each other, form an expansive umbrella superbly crowned or crested with the fragrant flower, representing a white plume; the blossom is succeeded by a very large crimson cone or strobile, containing a great number of scarlet berries, which, when ripe, spring from their cells and are for a time suspended by a white silky web or thread. The leaves of these trees which grow in a rich, light, humid soil, when fully expanded and at maturity, are frequently above two feet in length and six or eight inches where broadest. I discovered in the maritime parts of Georgia, particularly on the banks of the Alatamaha, another new species of *Magnolia*, whose leaves were nearly of the figure of those of this tree, but they were much less in size, not more than six or seven inches in length, and the strobile very small, oblong, sharp pointed and of a sine deep crimson colour, but I never saw the flower. These trees grow strait and erect, thirty feet or more in height, and of a sharp conical form, much resembling the Cucumber tree (*Mag. acuminata*) in figure.

THIS day being remarkably warm and sultry, which, together with the labour and fatigue of ascending the mountains, made me very thirsty and in some degree sunk my spirits. Now past mid-day. I sought a cool shaded retreat, where was water for refreshment and grazing for my horse, my faithful

slave and only companion. After proceeding a little farther, descending the other side of the mountain, I perceived at some distance before me, on my right hand, a level plain supporting a grand high forest and groves; the nearer I approach my steps are the more accelerated from the flattering prospect opening to view; I now enter upon the verge of the dark forest, charming solitude! as I advanced through the animating shades, observed on the farther grassy verge a shady grove, thither I directed my steps; on approaching these shades, between the stately columns of the superb forest trees, presented to view, rushing from rocky precipices under the shade of the pensile hills, the unparalleled cascade of Falling Creek, rolling and leaping off the rocks, which uniting below, spread a broad, glittering sheet of chrystal waters, over a vast convex elivation of plain, smooth rocks, and are immediately received by a spacious bason, where, trembling in the centre through hurry and agitation, they gently subside, encircling the painted still verge, from whence gliding swiftly, they soon form a delightful little river, which continuing to flow more moderately, is restrained for a moment, gently undulating in a little lake, they then pass on rapidly to a high perpendicular steep of rocks, from whence these delightful waters are hurried down with irresistible rapidity. I here seated myself on the moss clad rocks, under the shade of spreading trees and floriferous fragrant shrubs, in full view of the cascades.

AT this rural retirement were assembled a charming circle of mountain vegetable beauties, *Magnolia auriculata*, *Rhododendron ferruginium*, *Kalmia latifolia*, *Robinia montana*, *Azalea flammula*, *Rosa paniculata*, *Calycanthus Floridus*, *Philadelphus inodorus*, perfumed *Convalaria majalis*, *Anemone thalictroides*, *Auemone hepatica*, *Erythronium maculatum*, *Leontice thalictroides*, *Trillium* fessile, *Trillium cesnum*, *Cypripedium*, *Arethuza*, *Ophrys*, *Sanguinaria*, *Viola uvuleria*, *Epigea*, *Mitchella repens*, *Stewartia*, *Halesia*, *Sryrax*, *Lonicera*, &c. some of these roving beauties are strolling over the mossy, shelving, humid rocks, or from off the expansive wavy boughs of trees, bending over the floods, salute their delusive shades, playing on the surface, some plunge their perfumed heads and bathe their flexile limbs in the silver stream, whilst others by the mountain breezes are tossed about, their blooming tufts bespangled with pearly and chrystaline dewdrops collected from the falling mists, glisten in the rain bow arch. Having collected some valuable specimens at this friendly retreat, I continued my lonesome pilgrimage. My road for a considerable time led me winding and turning about the steep rocky hills; the descent of some of which were very rough and troublesome, by means of fragments of rocks, slippery clay and talc; but after this I entered a spacious forest, the land having gradually acquired a more level surface; a prettey grassy vale appears on my right, through which my wandering path led me, close by the banks

of a delightful creek, which sometimes falling over steps of rocks, glides gently with serpentine meanders through the meadows.

AFTER crossing this delightful brook and mead, the land rises again with sublime magnificence, and I am led over hills and vales, groves and high forests, vocal with the melody of the feathered longsters, the snow-white cascades glittering on the sides of the distant hills.

IT was now after noon; I approached a charming vale, amidst sublimely high forests, awful shades! darkness gathers around, far distant thunder rolls over the trembling hills; the black clouds with august majesty and power, moves slowly forwards, shading regions of towering hills, and threatning all the destructions of a thunder storm; all around is now still as death, not a whisper is heard, but a total inactivity and silence seems to pervade the earth; the birds afraid to utter a chirrup, and in low tremulous voices take leave of each other, seeking covert and safety; every insect is silenced, and nothing heard but the roaring of the approaching hurricane; the mighty cloud now expands its sable wings, extending from North to South, and is driven irresistibly on by the tumultuous winds, spreading his livid wings around the gloomy concave, armed with terrors of thunder and fiery shafts of lightning; now the lofty forests bend low beneath its fury, their limbs and wavy boughs are tossed about and catch hold of each other; the mountains

tremble and seem to real about, and the ancient hills to be shaken to their foundations: the furious storm sweeps along, smoaking through the vale and over the resounding hills; the face of the earth is obscured by the deluge descending from the firmament, and I am deafened by the din of thunder; the tempestuous scene damps my spirits, and my horse sinks under me at the tremendous peals, as I hasten on for the plain.

THE storm abating, I saw an Indian hunting cabin on the side of a hill, a very agreeable prospect, especially in my present condition; I made up to it and took quiet possession, there being no one to dispute it with me except a few bats and whip poorwills, who had repaired thither for shelter from the violence of the hurricane.

HAVING turned out my horse in the sweet meadows adjoining, and finding some dry wood under shelter of the old cabin, I struck up a fire, dryed my clothes and comforted myself with a frugal repast of biscuit and dried beef, which was all the food my viaticum afforded me by this time, excepting a small piece of cheese which I had furnished myself with at Charleston and kept till this time.

THE night was clear, calm and cool, and I rested quietly. Next morning at day break I was awakened and summoned to resume my daily task, by the shrill cries of the social night hawk and active merry mock-bird. By the time the rising sun had gilded the tops of the towering hills, the mountains and vales

rang with the harmonious shouts of the pious and cheerful tenants of the groves and meads.

I OBSERVED growing in great abundance in these mountain meadows, *Sanguiforba Canadensis* and *Heracleum maximum*, the latter exhibiting a fine shew, being rendered conspicuous even at a great distance, by its great height and spread, vast pennatified leaves and expansive umbels of snow-white flowers; the swelling bases of the surrounding hills fronting the meadows, present, for my acceptance, the fragrant red strawberry, in painted beds of many acres surface, indeed I may safely say many hundreds.

AFTER passing through this meadow, the road led me over the bases of a ridge of hills, which as a bold promontory dividing the fields I had just passed, form expansive green lawns. On these towering hills appeared the ruins of the ancient famous town of Sticoe. Here was a vast Indian mount or tumulus and great terrace, on which stood the council-house, with banks encompassing their circus; here were also old Peach and Plumb orchards, some of the trees appeared yet thriving and fruitful; presently after leaving these ruins, the vale and fields are divided by means of a spur of the mountains pushing forward; here likewise the road forked, the left hand path continued up the mountains to the Overhill towns; I followed the vale to the right hand, and soon began again to ascend the hills, riding several miles over very rough, stony land, yielding the like

vegetable productions as heretofore; and descending again gradually, by a dubious winding path, leading into a narrow vale and lawn, through which rolled on before me a delightful brook, water of the Tanase; I crossed it and continued a mile or two down the meadows, when the high mountains on each side suddenly receding, discover the opening of the extensive and fruitful vale of Cowe, through which meanders the head branch of the Tanase, almost from its source, sixty miles, following its course down to Cowe.

I LEFT the stream for a little while, passing swiftly and foaming over its rocky bed, lashing the steep craggy banks, and then suddenly sunk from my sight, murmuring hollow and deep under the rocky surface of the ground: on my right hand the vale expands, receiving a pretty silvery brook of water, which came hastily down from the adjacent hills, and entered the river a little distance before me; I now turn from the heights on my left, the road leading into the level lawns, to avoid the hollow rocky grounds, full of holes and cavities, arching over the river, through which the waters are seen gliding along, but the river is soon liberated from these solitary and gloomy recesses, and appears waving through the green plain before me. I continued several miles, pursuing my serpentine path, through and over the meadows and green fields, and crossing the river, which is here incredibly increased in size, by the continual accession of brooks

flowing in from the hills on each side, dividing their green turfy beds, forming them into parterres, vistas and verdant swelling knolls, profusely productive of flowers and fragrant strawberries, their rich juice dying my horses feet and ancles.

THESE swelling hills, the prolific beds on which the towering mountains repose, seem to have been the common situations of the towns of the acients, as appear from the remaining ruins of them yet to be seen; and the level rich vale and meadows in front, their planting grounds.

CONTINUING yet ten or twelve miles down the vale, my road leading at times closes to the banks of the river, the *Azalea*, *Kalmia*, *Rhododendron*, *Philadelphus*, &c. beautifying his now elevated shores, and painting the coves with a rich and cheerful scenery, continually unfolding new prospects as I traverse the shores; the towering mountains seem continually in motion as I pass along pompously rising their superb crests towards the lofty skies, traversing the far distant horizon.

THE Tanase is now greatly increased from the conflux of the multitude of rivulets and brooks, descending from the hills on either side, generously contributing to establish his future fame, already a spacious river.

THE mountains recede, the vale expands, two beautiful rivulets stream down through lateral vales, gliding in serpentine mazes over the green turfy knolls, and enter the Tanase nearly opposite to each

other. Strait forward the expansive green vale seems yet infinite: now on the right hand a lofty pyramidal hill terminates a spur of the adjacent mountain, and advances almost into the river; but immediately after doubling this promontory, an expanded wing of the vale spreads on my right, down which came precipitately, a very beautiful creek, which flowed into the river just before me: but now behold, high upon the side of a distant mountain overlooking the vale, the fountain of this brisk flowing creek; the uparalleled water fall appears as a vast edifice with chrystal front, or a field of ice lying on the bosom of the hill.

I Now approach the river at the fording place, which was greatly swolen by the floods of rain that fell the day before, and ran with foaming rapidity, but observing that it had fell several feet perpendicular, and perceiving the bottom or bed of the river to be level, and covered evenly with pebbles, I ventured to cross over, however I was obliged to swim two or three yards at the deepest chanel of it, and landed safely on the banks of a fine meadow, which lay on the opposite shore, where I immediately alighted and spread abroad on the turf my linen, books and specimens of plants, &c. to dry, turned out my steed to graze and then avanced into to the strawberry plains to regale on the fragrant, delicious fruit, welcomed by communities of the splendid meleagris, the capricious roe-buck and all the free and happy tribes which possess and inhabit those

prolific fields, who appeared to invite and joined with me in the participation of the bountiful repast presented to us from the lap of nature.

I MOUNTED again and followed the trading path about a quarter of a mile through the fields, then gently ascended the green beds of the hills, and entered the forests, being a point of a chain of hills projecting into the green vale or low lands of the river; this forest continued about a mile, the surface of the land level but rough, being covered with stones or fragments of rocks, and very large, smooth pebbles of various shapes and sizes, some of ten or fifteen pounds weight: I observed on each side of the road many vast heaps of these stones, Indian graves undoubtedly[3].

AFTER I left the graves, the ample vale soon offered on my right hand, through the tall forest trees, charming views, and which exhibited a pleasing contrast, immediately out of the gloomy shades and scenes of death, into expansive, lucid, green, flowery fields, expanding between retiring hills and turfy eminences, the rapid Tanase gliding through as a vast serpent rushing after his prey.

MY winding path now leads me again over the green fields into the meadows, sometimes visiting

[3]At this place was fought a bloody and decisive battle between the Indians and the Carolinians, under the conduct of general Middleton, when a great number of Cherokee warriors were slain, which shook their power, terrified and humbled them, insomuch that they deserted most of their settlements in the low countries, and betook themselves to the mountains as less accessible to the regular forces of the white people.

the decorated banks of the river, as it meanders through the meadows, or boldy sweeps along the bases of the mountains, its surface receiving the images reflected from the flowery banks above.

THUS was my agreeable progress for about fifteen miles, since I came upon the sources of the Tanase, at the head of this charming vale: in the evening espying a human habitation at the foot of the sloping green hills, beneath lofty forests of the mountains on the left hand, and at the same time observed a man crossing the river from the opposite shore in a canoe and coming towards me, I waited his approach, who hailing me, I answered I was for Cowe; he intreated me very civilly to call at his house, adding that he would presently come to me.

I WAS received and entertained here until next day with the most perfect civility. After I had dined, towards evening, a company of Indian girls, inhabitants of a village in the hills at a small distance, called, having baskets of strawberries; and this man, who kept here a trading-house, and being married to a Cherokee woman of family, was indulged to keep a stock of cattle, and his help-mate being an excellent house-wife and a very agreeable good woman, treated us with cream and strawberries.

NEXT morning after breakfasting on excellent coffee, relished with bucanned venison, hot corn cakes, excellent butter and cheese, sat forwards again for Cowe, which was about fifteen miles distance, keeping the trading path which coursed

through the low lands between the hills and the river, now spacious and well beaten by travellers, but somewhat intricate to a stranger, from the frequent colateral roads falling into it from villages or towns over the hills: after riding about four miles, mostly through fields and plantations, the soil incredibly fertile, arrived at the town of Echoe, consisting of many good houses, well inhabited; I passed through and continued three miles farther to Nucasse, and three miles more brought me to Whatoga: riding through this large town, the road carried me winding about through their little plantations of Corn, Beans, &c. up to the council-house, which was a very large dome or rotunda, situated on the top of an ancient artificial mount, and here my road terminated; all before me and on every side appeared little plantations of young Corn, Beans, &c. divided from each other by narrow strips or borders of grass, which marked the bounds of each one's property, their habitation standing in the midst: finding no common high road to lead me through the town, I was now at a stand how to proceed farther, when observing an Indian man at the door of his habitation, three or four hundred yards distance from me, beckoning to come to him, I ventured to ride through their lots, being careful to do no injury to the young plants, the rising hopes of their labour and industry, crossed a little grassy vale watered by a silver stream, which gently undulated through, then ascended a green hill to the house, (where I

was cheerfully welcomed at the door and led in by the chief, giving the care of my horse to two handsome youths, his sons. During my continuance here, about half an hour, I experienced the most perfect and agreeable hospitality conferred on me by these happy people; I mean happy in their dispositions, in their apprehensions of rectitude with regard to our social or moral conduct: O divine simplicity and truth, friendship without fallacy or guile, hospitality disinterested, native, undefiled, unmodifyed by artificial refinements.

My venerable host gracefully and with an air of respect, led me into an airy, cool apartment, where being seated on cabins, his women brought in a refreshing repast, consisting of sodden venison, hot corn cakes, &c. with a pleasant cooling liquor made of hommony well boiled, mixed afterwards with milk; this is served up either before or after eating in a large bowl, with a very large spoon or ladle to sup it with.

After partaking of this simple but healthy and liberal collation and the dishes cleared off, Tobacco and pipes were brought, and the chief filling one of them, whose stem, about four feet long, was sheathed in a beautiful speckled snake skin, and adorned with feathers and strings of wampum, lights it and smoaks a few whiffs, puffing the smoak first towards the sun, then to the four cardinal points and lastly over my breast, hands it towards me, which I cheerfully received from him and

smoaked, when we fell into conversation; he first enquired if I came from Charleston? if I Knew John Stewart, Esq,? how long since I left Charleston? &c. Having satisfied him in my answers in the best manner I could, he was greatly pleased, which I was convinced of by his attention to me, his cheerful manners and his ordering my horse a plentiful bait of corn, which last instance of respect is conferred on those only to whom they manifest the highest esteem, saying that corn was given by the Great Spirit only for food to man.

I ACQUAINTED this ancient prince and patriarch of the nature and design of my peregrinations, and that I was now for Cowe, but having lost my road in the town, requested that I might be informed. He cheerfully replied, that he was pleased I was come in their country, where I should meet with friendship and protection, and that he would himself lead me into the right path.

AFTER ordering my horse to the door we went forth together, he on foot and I leading my horse by the bridle, thus walking together near two miles, we shook hands and parted, he returning home and I continuing my journey for Cowe.

THIS prince is the chief of Whatoga, a man universally beloved, and particularly esteemed by the whites for his pacific and equitable disposition, and revered by all for his exemplary virtues, just, moderate, magnanimous and intrepid.

He was tall and perfectly formed; his countenance cheerful and lofty and at the same time truly characteristic of the red men, that is, the brow ferocious and the eye active, piercing or fiery, as an eagle. He appeared to be about sixty years of age, yet upright and muscular, and his limbs active as youth.

After leaving my princely friend, I travelled about five miles through old plantations, now under grass, but appeared to have been planted the last season; the soil exceeding fertile, loose, black, deep and fat. I arrived at Cowe about noon; this settlement is esteemed the capital town; it is situated on the bases of the hills on both sides of the river, near to its bank, and here terminates the great vale of Cowe, exhibiting one of the most charming natural mountainous landscapes perhaps any where to be seen; ridges of hills rising grand and sublimely one above and beyond another, some boldly and majestically advancing into the verdant plain, their feet bathed with the silver flood of the Tanase, whilst others far distant, veiled in blue mists, sublimely mount aloft, with yet greater majesty lift up their pompous crests and overlook vast regions.

The vale is closed at Cowe by a ridge of mighty hills, called the Jore mountain, said to be the highest land in the Cherokee country, which crosses the Tanase here.

On my arrival at this town I waited on the gentlemen to whom I was recommended by letter, and was

received with respect and every demonstration of hospitality and friendship.

I TOOK my residence with Mr. Galahan the chief trader here, an ancient respectable man who had been many years a trader in this country, and is esteemed and beloved by the Indians for his humanity, probity and equitable dealings with them, which to be just and candid I am obliged to observe (and blush for my countrymen at the recital) is somewhat of a prodigy, as it is a fact, I am afraid too true, that the white traders in their commerce with the Indians, give great and frequent occasions of complaint of their dishonesty and violence; but yet there are a few exceptions, as in the conduct of this gentleman, who furnishes a living instance of the truth of the old proverb, that "Honesty is the best policy," for this old honest Hibernian has often been protected by the Indians, when all others round about him have been ruined, their property seized and themselves driven out of the country or slain by the injured, provoked natives.

NEXT day after my arrival I crossed the river in a canoe, on a visit to a trader who resided amongst the habitations on the other shore.

AFTER dinner, on his mentioning some curious scenes amongst the hills, some miles distance from the river, we agreed to spend the afternoon in observations on the mountains.

AFTER riding near two miles through Indian plantations of Corn, which was well cultivated, kept

clean of weeds and was well advanced, being near eighteen inches in height, and the Beans planted at the Corn hills were above ground; we leave the fields on our right, turning towards the mountains and ascending through a delightful green vale or lawn, which conducted us in amongst the pyramidal hills and crossing a brisk flowing creek, meandering through the meads which continued near two miles, dividing and branching in amongst the hills; we then mounted their steep ascents, rising gradually by ridges or steps one above another, frequently crossing narrow, fertile dales as we ascended; the air feels cool and animating, being charged with the fragrant breath of the mountain beauties, the blooming mountain cluster Rose, blushing *Rhododendron* and fair Lilly of the valley: having now attained the summit of this very elevated ridge, we enjoyed a fine prospect indeed; the enchanting Vale of Keowe, perhaps as celebrated for fertility, fruitfulness and beautiful prospects as the Fields of Pharsalia or the Vale of Tempe: the town, the elevated peeks of the Jore mountains, a very distant prospect of the Jore village in a beautiful lawn, lifted up many thousand feet higher than our present situation, besides a view of many other villages and settlements on the sides of the mountains, at various distances and elevations; the silver rivulets gliding by them and snow white cataracts glimmering on the sides of the lofty hills; the bold promontories of the Jore mountain

stepping into the Tanase river, whilst his foaming waters rushed between them.

AFTER viewing this very entertaining scene we began to descend the mountain on the other side, which exhibited the same order of gradations of ridges and vales as on our ascent, and at length rested on a very expansive, fertile plain, amidst the towering hills, over which we rode a long time, through magnificent high forests, extensive green fields, meadows and lawns. Here had formerly been a very flourishing settlement, but the Indians deserted it in search of fresh planting land, which they soon found in a rich vale but a few miles distance over a ridge of hills. Soon after entering on these charming, sequestered, prolific fields, we came to a fine little river, which crossing, and riding over fruitful strawberry beds and green lawns, on the sides of a circular ridge of hills in front of us, and going round the bases of this promontory, came to a fine meadow on an arm of the vale, through which meandered a brook, its humid vapours bedewing the fragrant strawberries which hung in heavy red clusters over the grassy verge; we crossed the rivulet, then rising a sloping, green, turfy ascent, alighted on the borders of a grand forest of stately trees, which we penetrated on foot a little distance to a horse-stamp, where was a large squadron of those useful creatures, belonging to my friend and companion, the trader, on the sight of whom they assembled together from all quarters; some at a

distance saluted him with shrill neighings of gratitude, or came prancing up to lick the salt out of his hand; whilst the younger and more timorous came galloping onward, but coyly wheeled off, and fetching a circuit stood aloof, but as soon as their lord and master strewed the chrystaline salty bait on the hard beaten ground, they all, old and young, docile and timorous, soon formed themselves in ranks and fell to licking up the delicious morsel.

IT was a fine sight; more beautiful creatures I never saw; there were of them of all colours, sizes and dispositions. Every year as they become of age he sends off a troop of them down to Charleston, where they are sold to the highest bidder.

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 skirting 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 busily 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 cerulian *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.

THIS sylvan scene of primitive innocence was enchanting, and perhaps too enticing for hearty young men long to continue idle spectators.

IN fine, nature prevailing over reason, we wished at least to have a more active part in their delicious sports. Thus precipitately resolving, we cautiously made our approaches, yet undiscovered, almost to the joyous scene of action. Now, although we meant no other than an innocent frolic with this gay assembly of hamadryades, we shall leave it to the person of feeling and sensibility to form an idea to what lengths our passions might have hurried us, thus warmed and excited, had it not been for the vigilance and care of some envious matrons who lay in ambush, and espying us gave the alarm, time enough for the nymphs to rally and assemble

together; we however pursued and gained ground on a group of them, who had incautiously strolled to a greater distance from their guardians, and finding their retreat now like to be cut off, took shelter under cover of a little grove, but on perceiving themselves to be discovered by us, kept their station, peeping through the bushes; when observing our approaches, they confidently discovered themselves and decently advanced to meet us, half unveiling their blooming faces, incarnated with the modest maiden blush, and with native innocence and cheerfulness presented their little baskets, merrily telling us their fruit was ripe and sound.

We accepted a basket, sat down and regaled ourselves on the delicious fruit, encircled by the whole assembly of the innocently jocose sylvan nymphs; by this time the several parties under the conduct of the elder matrons, had disposed themselves in companies on the green, turfy banks.

My young companion, the trader, by concessions and suitable apologies for the bold intrusion, having compromised the matter with them, engaged them to bring their collections to his house at a stipulated price, we parted friendly.

And now taking leave of these Elysian fields, we again mounted the hills, which we crossed, and traversing obliquely their flowery beds, arrived in town in the cool of the evening.



Mixed hardwoods, Jackson County.
Photograph, U. S. Forest Service, 1913

CHAPTER IV

THE JORE MOUNTAINS

AFTER waiting two days at Cowe expecting a guide and protector to the Overhill towns, and at last being disappointed, I resolved to pursue the journey alone, though against the advice of the traders; the Overhill Indians being in an ill humour with the whites, in consequence of some late skirmishes between them and the frontier Virginians, most of the Overhill traders having left the nation.

EARLY in the morning I sat off attended by my worthy old friend Mr. Gallahan, who obligingly accompanied me near fifteen miles, we passed through the Jore village, which is pleasingly situated in a little vale on the side of the mountain, a pretty rivulet or creek winds about through the vale, just under the village; here I observed a little grove of the *Casine* yapon, which was the only place I had seen it grow in the Cherokee country, the Indians call it the beloved tree, and are very careful to keep them pruned and cultivated, they drink a very strong infusion of the leaves, buds and tender branches of this plant, which is so celebrated, indeed venerated by the Creeks, and all the Southern maritime nations of Indians; then continued travelling down the vale about two miles, the road deviating, turning and winding about the hills, and through groves and lawns, watered by brooks and rivulets, rapidly rushing from the towering hill on every side, and flowing into the Jore, which is a considerable branch of the Tanase.

BEGAN now to ascend the mountain, following a small arm or branch of the vale, which led to a gap or narrow defile, compressed by the high pending hills on each side, down which came rapidly a considerable branch of the Jore, dashing and roaring over rocky precipices.

NOW leaving Roaring creek on our right and accomplishing two or three ascents or ridges, another branch of the trading path from the Overhills to Cowe came in on our right, and here my transitory companion Mr. Gallahan parted from me, taking this road back to Cowe, when I was left again wandering alone in the dreary mountains, not indeed totally pathless, nor in my present situation entirely agreeable, although such scenes of primitive unmodified nature always pleased me.

MAY we suppose that mankind feel in their hearts, a predilection for the society of each other; or are we delighted with scenes of human arts and cultivation, where the passions are flattered and entertained with variety of objects for gratification?

I FOUND myself unable notwithstanding the attentive admonitions and pursuasive arguments of reason, entirely to erase from my mind, those impressions which I had received from the society of the amiable and polite inhabitants of Charleston; and I could not help comparing my present situation in some degree to Nebuchadnezzar's, when expelled from the society of men, and constrained

to roam in the mountains and wilderness, there to herd and feed with the wild beasts of the forest.

AFTER parting with my late companion, I went forward with all the alacrity that prudence would admit of, that I might as soon as possible see the end of my toil and hazard, being determined at all events to cross the Jore mountain, said to be the highest land in the Cherokee country.

AFTER a gentle descent I entered on an extreme stony narrow vale, through which coasted swiftly a large creek, twelve or fifteen yards wide, roaring over a rocky bed, which I crossed with difficulty and danger; the ford being incommoded by shelving rocks, full of holes and cliffs; after leaving this rocky creek my path led me upon another narrow vale or glade, down which came in great haste another noisy brook, which I repeatedly crossed and recrossed, sometimes riding on narrow level grassy verges close to its banks, still ascending, the vale gradually terminated, being shut up by stupendous rocky hills on each side, leaving a very narrow gap or defile, towards which my road led me, ascending the steep sides of the mountains, when, after rising several wearisome ascents, and finding myself over heated and tired, I halted at a little grassy lawn through which meandered a sweet rivulet; here I turned my horse to graze, and sat down to rest on a green bank just beneath a high frowning promontory, or obtuse point of a ridge of the mountain yet above me, the friendly rivulet making a circuit

by my feet, and now a little rested, I took out of my wallet some biscuit and cheese, and a piece of neat's tongue, composing myself to ease and refreshment; when suddenly appeared within a few yards, advancing towards me from behind the point, a stout likely young Indian fellow, armed with a rifle gun, and two dogs attending, upon sight of me he stood, and seemed a little surprised, as I was very much; but instantly recollecting himself and assuming a countenance of benignity and cheerfulness, came briskly to me and shook hands heartily; and smilingly enquired from whence I came, and whither going, but speaking only in the Cherokee tongue, our conversation was not continued to a great length. I presented him with some choice Tobacco, which was accepted with courtesy and evident pleasure, and to my enquiries concerning the roads and distance to the Overhill towns, he answered me with perfect cheerfulness and good temper; we then again shook hands and parted in friendship, he descended the hills, singing as he went.

Of vegetable productions observed in this region, were the following viz. *Acer striatum*, *Ac. rubrum*, *Juglans nigra*, *Jug. alba*, *Jug. Hickory*, *Magnolia acuminata*, *Quercus alba*, *Q. tinctoria*, *Q. rubra*, *Q. prinus*, with the other varieties common in Virginia: *Panax* ginseng, *Angelica lucida*, *Convalaria majalis*, *Halesia*, *Stewartia*, *Styrax*, *Staphylea*, *Evonimus*, *Viburnum*, *Cornus Florida*, *Betula nigra*,

Morus, *Telea*, *Ulmus*, *Fraxinus*, *Hopea tinctorea*, *Annona*, *Bignonia sempervirens*, *Aristalocha frutescens*, *Bignonia radicans*, &c. Being now refreshed by a simple but healthy meal, I began again to ascend the Jore mountains, which I at length accomplished, and rested on the most elevated peak; from whence I beheld with rapture and astonishment, a sublimely awful scene of power and magnificence, a world of mountains piled upon mountains. Having contemplated this amazing prospect of grandeur, I descended the pinnacles, and again falling into the trading path, continued gently descending through a grassy plain, scatteringly planted with large trees, and at a distance surrounded with high forests, I was on this elevated region sensible of an alteration in the air, from warm to cold, and found that vegetation was here greatly behind, in plants of the same kind of the country below; for instance, when I left Charleston, the yellow Jasmine was rather past the blooming days, and here the buds were just beginning to swell, though some were in bloom: continued more than a mile through this elevated plain to the pitch of the mountain, from whence presented to view an expansive prospect, exhibiting scenes of mountainous landscape, Westward vast and varied, perhaps not to be exceeded any where.

My first descent and progress down the West side of the mountain was remarkably gradual, easy and pleasant, through grassy open forests for the distance of two or three miles; when my changeable

path suddenly turned round an obtuse point of a ridge, and descended precipitately down a steep rocky hill for a mile or more, which was very troublesome, being incommoded with shattered fragments of the mountains, and in other places with boggy sinks, occasioned by oozy springs and rills stagnate sinking in miceous earth; some of these steep soft rocky banks or precipices seem to be continually crumbling to earth; and in these mouldering cliffs I discovered veins or stratas of most pure and clear white earth[4], of the flakes or laminae incredibly large, entire and transparent, and would serve the purpose of lights for windows very well, or for lanthorns; and here appeared stratas of black lead (stibium.)

At length, after much toil and exercise, I was a little releived by a narrow grassy vale or lawn at the foot of this steep descent, through which coursed along a considerable rapid brook, on whose banks grew in great perfection the glorious *Magnolia auriculata*, together with the other conspicuous flowering and aromatic shrubs already mentioned; and I observed here in the rich bottoms near the creek, a new species of *Hydrastis*, having very large sinuated leaves and white flowers: after this I continued several miles over ridges and grassy vales, watered with delightful rivulets.

[4] *Mica nitida*, specimens of this earth have been exported to England, for the purpose of making Porcelain or China ware.

NEXT day proceeding on eight or ten miles, generally through spacious high forests and flowery lawns; the soil prolific, being of an excellent quality for agriculture; came near the banks of a large creek or river, where this high forest ended on my left hand, the trees became more scattered and insensibly united with a grassy glade or lawn bordering on the river; on the opposite bank of which appeared a very extensive forest, consisting entirely of the Hemlock spruce (*P. abies*) almost encircled by distant ridges of lofty hills.

SOON after crossing this large branch of the Tanase, I observed descending the heights at some distance, a company of Indians, all well mounted on horse back; they came rapidly forward; on their nearer approach I observed a chief at the head of the carravan, and apprehending him to be the Little Carpenter, emperor or grand chief of the Cherokees; as they came up I turned off from the path to make way, in token of respect, which compliment was accepted and gratefully and magnanimously returned, for his highness with a gracious and cheerful smile came up to me, and clapping his hand on his breast, offered it to me, saying, I am Ata-cul-culla, and heartily shook hands with me, and asked me if I knew it; I answered that the Good Spirit who goes before me spoke to me, and said, that is the great Ata-cul-culla, and added that I was of the tribe of white men, of Pennsylvania, who esteem themselves brothers and friends to the red men, but

particularly so to the Cherokees, and that notwithstanding we dwelt at so great a distance we were united in love and friendship, and that the name of Ata-cul-culla was dear to his white brothers of Pennsylvania.

AFTER this compliment, which seemed to be acceptable, he enquired if I came lately from Charleston, and if John Stewart was well, saying that the was going to see him; I replied that I came lately from Charleston on a friendly visit to the Cherokees; that I had the honour of a personal acquaintance with the superintendant, the beloved man, who I saw well but the day before I sat off, and who, by letters to the principal white men in the nation, recommended me to the friendship and protection of the Cherokees: to which the great chief was pleased to answer very respectfully, that I was welcome in their country as a friend and brother; and then shaking hands heartily bid me farewell, and his retinue confirmed it by an united voice of assent. After giving my name to the chief, requesting my compliments to the superintendant, the emperor moved, continuing his journey for Charleston, and I yet persisting in my intentions of visiting the Overhill towns continued on; leaving the great forest I mounted the high hills, descending them again on the other side and so on repeatedly for several miles, without observing any variation in the natural productions since passing the Jore; and observing the slow progress of vegetation in this

mountainous, high country; and, upon serious consideration, it appeared very plainly that I could not, with entire safety, range the Overhill settlements until the treaty was over, which would not come on till late in June, I suddenly came to a resolution to defer these researches at this time, and leave them for the employment of another season and a more favourable opportunity, and return to Dartmouth in Georgia, to be ready to join a company of adventurers who were to set off in July for Mobile in West Florida. The leader of this company had been recommended to me as a fit person to assist me on so long and hazardous a journey, through the vast territories of the Creeks.

THEREFORE next day I turned about on my return, proceeding moderately, being engaged in noting such objects as appeared to be of any moment, and collecting specimens, and in the evening of next day arrived again at Cowe.

NEXT morning Mr. Galahan conducted me to the chief of Cowe, who during my absence had returned from the chace. The remainder of this day I spent in observations in and about the town, reviewing my specimens, &c.

THE town of Cowe consists of about one hundred dwellings, near the banks of the Tanase, on both sides of the river.

THE Cherokees construct their habitations on a different plan from the Creeks, that is but one oblong four square building, of one story high; the ma-

terials consisting of logs or trunks of trees, stripped of their bark, notched at their ends, fixed one upon another, and afterwards plaistered well, both inside and out, with clay well tempered with dry grass, and the whole covered or roofed with the bark of the Chesnut tree or long broad shingles. This building is however partitioned transversely, forming three apartments, which communicate with each other by inside doors; each house or habitation has besides a little conical house, covered with dirt, which is called the winter or hot-house; this stands a few yards distance from the mansion-house, opposite the front door.

THE council or town-house is a large rotunda, capable of accomodating several hundred people; it stands on the top of an ancient artificial mount of earth, of about twenty feet perpendicular, and the rotunda on the top of it being above thirty feet more, gives the whole fabric an elevation of about sixty feet from the common surface of the ground. But it may be proper to observe, that this mount on which the rotunda stands, is of a much ancienter date than the building, and perhaps was raised for another purpose. The Cherokees themselves are as ignorant as we are, by what people or for what purpose these artificial hills were raised; they have various stories concerning them, the best of which amounts to no more than mere conjecture, and leave us entirely in the dark; but they have a tradition common with the other nations of Indians, that they found them in

much the same condition as they now appear, when their forefathers arrived from the West and possessed themselves of the country, after vanquishing the nations of red men who then inhabited it, who themselves found these mounts when they took possession of the country, the former possessors delivering the same story concerning them: perhaps they were designed and apropriated by the people who constructed them, to some religious purpose, as great altars and temples similar to the high places and sacred groves anciently amongst the Canaanites and other nations of Palestine and Judea.

THE rotunda is constructed after the following manner, they first fix in the ground a circular range of posts or trunks of trees, about six feet high, at equal distances, which are notched at top, to receive into them, from one to another, a range of beams or wall plates; within this is another circular order of very large and strong pillars, above twelve feet high, notched in like manner at top, to receive another range of wall plates, and within this is yet another or third range of stronger and higher pillars, but fewer in number, and standing at a greater distance from each other; and lastly, in the centre stands a very strong pillar, which forms the pinnacle of the building, and to which the rafters centre at top; these rafters are strengthened and bound together by cross beams and laths, which sustain the roof or covering, which is a layer of bark neatly placed, and tight enough to exclude the rain, and sometimes

they cast a thin superficies of earth over all. There is but one large door, which serves at the same time to admit light from without and the smoak to escape when a fire is kindled; but as there is but a small fire kept, sufficient to give light at night, and that fed with dry small sound wood divested of its bark, there is but little smoak; all around the inside of the building, betwixt the second range of pillars and the wall, is a range of cabins or sophas, consisting of two or three steps, one above or behind the other, in theatrical order, where the assembly sit or lean down; these sophas are covered with matts or carpets, very curiously made of thin splints of Ash or Oak, woven or platted together; near the great pillar in the centre the fire is kindled for light, near which the musicians seat themselves, and round about this the performers exhibit their dances and other shews at public festivals, which happen almost every night throughout the year.

ABOUT the close of the evening I accompanied Mr. Galahan and other white traders to the rotunda, where was a grand festival, music and dancing. This assembly was held principally to rehearse the ball-play dance, this town being challenged to play against another the next day.

THE people being assembled and seated in order, and the musicians having taken their station, the ball opens, first with a long harangue or oration, spoken by an aged chief, in commendation of the manly exercise of the ball-play, recounting the

many and brilliant victories which the town of Cowe had gained over the other towns in the nation, not forgetting or neglecting to recite his own exploits, together with those of other aged men now present, coadjutors in the performance of these athletic games in their youthful days.

THIS oration was delivered with great spirit and eloquence, and was meant to influence the passions of the young men present, excite them to emulation and inspire them with ambition.

THIS prologue being at an end, the musicians began, both vocal and instrumental, when presently a company of girls, hand in hand, dressed in clean white robes and ornamented with beads, bracelets and a profusion of gay ribbands, entering the door, immediately began to sing their responses in a gentle, low and sweet voice, and formed themselves in a semicircular file or line, in two ranks, back to back, facing the spectators and musicians, moving slowly round and round; this continued about a quarter of an hour, when we were surprised by a sudden very loud and shrill whoop, uttered at once by a company of young fellows, who came in briskly after one another, with rackets or hurls in one hand. These champions likewise were well dressed, painted and ornamented with silver bracelets, gorgets and wampum, neatly ornamented with moccasins and high waving plumes in their diadems, who immediately formed themselves in a semicircular rank also, in front of the girls, when these changed their

order, and formed a single rank parallel to the men, raising their voices in responses to the tunes of the young champions, the semicircles continually moving round. There was something singular and diverting in their step and motions, and I imagine not to be learned to exactness but with great attention and perseverance; the step, if it can be so termed, was performed after the following manner, i. e. first, the motion began at one end of the semicircle, gently rising up and down upon their toes and heels alternately, when the first was up on tiptoe, the next began to raise the heel, and by the time the first rested again on the heel, the second was on tip toe, thus from one end of the rank to the other, so that some were always up and some down, alternately and regularly, without the least baulk or confusion; and they at the same time, and in the same motion, moved on obliquely or sideways, so that the circle performed a double or complex motion in its progression, and at stated times exhibited a grand or universal movement, instantly and unexpectedly to the spectators, by each rank turning to right and left, taking each others places; the movements were managed with inconceivable alertness and address, and accompanied with an instantaneous and universal elevation of the voice and shrill short whoop.

THE Cherokees besides the ball play dance, have a variety of others equally entertaining; the men especially exercise themselves with a variety of gesticulations and capers, some of which are ludicrous

and diverting enough; and they have others which are of the martial order, and others of the chace; these seem to be somewhat of a tragical nature, wherein they exhibit astonishing feats of military prowess, masculine strength and activity. Indeed all their dances and musical entertainments seem to be theatrical exhibitions or plays, varied with comic and sometimes lascivious interludes; the women however conduct themselves with a very becoming grace and decency, insomuch that in amorous interludes, when their responses and gestures seem consenting to natural liberties, they veil themselves, just discovering a glance of their sparkling eyes and blushing faces, expressive of sensibility.

NEXT morning early I sat off on my return, and meeting with no material occurrences on the road, in two days arrived safe at Keowe, where I tarried two or three days, employed in augmenting my collections of specimens, and waiting for Mr. Galahan who was to call on me here, to accompany him to Sinica, where he and other traders where to meet Mr. Cameron, the deputy commissary, who were to hold a congress at that town, with the chiefs of the Lower Cherokees, to consult preliminaries introductory to a general congress and treaty with these Indians, which was to be convened next June, and held in the Overhill towns.

I OBSERVED in the environs of Keowe, on the bases of the rocky hills, immediately ascending from the low grounds near the river bank, a great number

of very singular antiquities, the work of the ancients; they seem to me to have been altars for sacrifice or sepulchres; they were constructed of four flat stones, two set on an edge for the sides, one closed one end, and a very large flat one lay horizontally at top, so that the other end was open; this fabric was four or five feet in length, two feet high and three in width. I enquired of the trader what they were, who could not tell me certainly, but supposed them to be ancient Indian ovens; the Indians can give no account of them: they are on the surface of the ground and are of different dimensions.

I ACCOMPANIED the traders to Sinica, where we found the commissary and the Indian chiefs convened in counsel; continued at Sinica sometime, employing myself in observations and making collections of every thing worthy of notice; and finding the Indians to be yet unsettled in their determination and not in a good humour, I abandoned the project of visiting the regions beyond the Cherokee mountains for this season; sat off for my return to fort James Dartmouth, lodged this night in the forests near the banks of a delightful large creek, a branch of Keowe river, and next day arrived safe at Dartmouth.

THE CHEROKEE TOWNS

List of the towns and villages in the Cherokee nation inhabited at this day, viz.

On the Tanase East of the Jore mountains. 4 towns.

No. 1 Echoe — 2 Nucasse — 3 Whatoga
4 Cowe

Inland on the branches of the Tanase. 4 towns.

5 Ticoloosa — 6 Jore — 7 Conisca
8 Nowe

On the Tanase over the Jore mountains. 8 towns.

9 Tomothle — 10 Noewe — 11 Tellico
12 Clennuse — 13 Ocunnolufte — 14 Chewe
15 Quanuse — 16 Tellowe

Inland towns on the branches of the Tanase and other waters over the Jore mountains. 5 towns.

17 Tellico — 18 Chatuga — 19 Hiwasse
20 Chewase — 21 Nuanha

Overhill towns on the Tanase or Cherokee river. 6 towns.

22 Tallase — 23 Chelowe — 24 Sette
25 Chote great — 26 Joco — 27 Tahasse

Overhill towns on the Tanase or Cherokee river. 5 towns.

28 Tamahle — 29 Tuskege — 30 ----. Big Island
31 Nilaque — 32 Niowe

◊

Lower towns East of the mountains, viz.

On the Savanna or Keowe river.

No. 1 Sinica — 2 Keowe — 3 Kulsage

On Tugilo river.

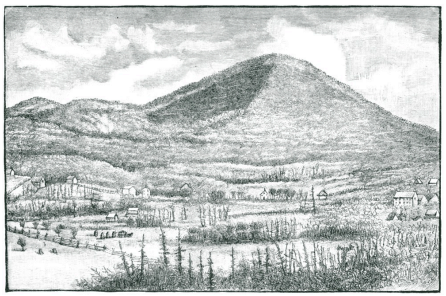
4 Tugilo — 5 Estotowe

On Flint river.

6 Qualatche — 7 Chote

Towns on the waters of other rivers.

Estotowe great. Allagae. Jore. Nae oche
In all forty-three towns.



The Macon Highlands, 1883

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