

Journal of Lieutenant-Colonel James Grant,
Commanding an Expedition Against the Cherokee Indians,
June-July, 1761¹

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Enclosed I have the honour to send to Your Excellency a Journal of our Operations against the Cherokees. The Provincials have behaved well, as I always expected they would do and the Rangers, who I had not so favourable an opinion of, have been very usefull and alert, they never made a difficulty and they seem now to despise the Indians as much as they were suspected to fear them before.

We have been lucky; everything has succeeded; we have not met with a single Rub but I must observe to Your Excellency that the country we have been in is impenetrable if it was defended by a very few men of any degree of Spirit, they might kill and wound a number of men every day without running the smallest risk and it would be next to impossible to guard such a line of pack horses if the inhabitants deserved the name of an enemy. I should not do justice to Major Monypenny if I did not inform Your Excellency that he has been extremely diligent and attentive and of great use to me upon all occasions. The officers commanding the several corps have exerted themselves and indeed everybody has behaved with a proper spirit.

Our Indians have been of great use, Captain Kennedy has had a great deal of trouble and has merit for taking so much care of them and for keeping them in so good order. The Upper Chicasaws are quite a different species of people from any other Indians I ever met with; they have behaved remarkably well and if their Province does not reward them I must do so at the expence of the Crown; tho' they have been at war above a twelve month they readily agreed to stay with me as long as I pleased; they said they would ask nothing till the service was over but the preliminary article was, that when they went home they were to trust to me for their presents.

The Cherokees must certainly starve or come into terms, and even in that case I think tis hardly in the power of the Province to save them; I shall in a few days send to the Great Warrior and the Little Carpenter to come and treat of peace, if they choose to save their nation from destruction; till I receive their answer I shall endeavor to save the small remains of the lower towns. In the meantime I shall put this Fort in repair and shall wait either here, or at Ninety-Six, till your pleasure is known.

James Grant.

Journal of the March and Operations of the Troops Under the Command of Lieut. Colonel Grant of the 40th Regiment Upon An Expedition from Fort Prince George Against the Cherokees.

1761 June 7th. The troops moved from the camp near Fort Prince George at five in the morning without tents or baggage except bearskins, blankets and liquor. Six hundred horses loaded with flour bags were divided into 15 brigades which with the ammunition stores and other pack horses were distributed in the line of march in the best manner that could be thought of for their protection. The River of Keowee was deep and rapid, the passage of it took much time, and as the roads afterwards were very bad we with difficulty and late in the day got to Scony [?] Old Town about 15 miles from the Fort.

8th and 9th. Two forced marches were made in order to pass some dangerous defiles, and to get as near the Indian towns as possible before the Cherokees could have time to inform a body to oppose us. From the best information we had there was reason to believe that they were in want of provisions; it was therefore probable that they would not begin to assemble till they had received certain accounts from their runners that we were in motion; the event answered our expectation for we got to Tuckoritchie [?] the 8th and arrived at Estatoe Old Town the 9th in the evening without firing a shot.

10th. As the Indians had not sent deputys to sue for peace it was possible that they intended to make an attempt to save their country and as we had got so near their Towns it was next to a certainty that the

¹ Because of his high place in the history of colonial East Florida, any important event of Governor Grant's military career is of interest to us, especially one which was so near in place and time and which was perhaps his most successful command. (See *Quarterly* VIII, 116. Oct. 1929.)

We are indebted to Mr. A. Macpherson Grant. Of Broughton, Scotland, and Loudon, for a copy of this journal.

attack would be made this day. Before we moved the troops were ordered to load for the first time since they took the field, the advanced Guards and Picquets having only been loaded till then.

The flanking parties upon our provisions and other pack horses were reinforced with 120 men; every man in the line expected to fight, and our march was conducted with all the precaution that could be taken against a surprise. Before the rear had moved out of the ground of encampment a few shots were fired at the cattle guard from a hill at a considerable distance, where one of our advanced guards had been posted during the night. This was immediately reported and as their first act of hostility seemed to point at our provisions, the rear guards were reinforced with 50 Provincials.

The Indian corps which has been useful served as flankers to the line and marched in front of the advanced guard of light infantry. About half an hour after light in the morning a party of them fell in with a body of the enemy upon our right flank, their being discovered disconcerted them, a few shots were exchanged and the Cherokees tho' numerous gave way; but the yelp went from front to rear of the line upon both flanks upon a ridge of mountains upon our right and on the opposite side of the Cowhowee River which could not be passed on our left.

This Indian cry served as a signal for the attack and they began a pretty smart fire but at a considerable distance;— stopping and forming in disadvantageous ground against an invisible enemy could answer no good end, the line of march was therefore continued, a platoon of light infantry was sent to the river side with orders to cover themselves in the best manner they could and to fire from time to time at the enemy to prevent their drawing nearer and becoming more troublesome. Major Monypenny was sent back to order the Royal and Burton's to continue the line of march and to throw in a fire upon the enemy when it would appear to be necessary which was done in very good order.

The Provincial Regiment, the Battalion Companies of the 17th and 22nd, the rear guards and rangers executed the orders which they received very properly and behaved with great coolness. About half a mile from the place where the attack began there is a ford and on the opposite side a rising ground ; as soon as the light infantry got over they were posted to cover the passage of the river. The Royal, Burton's and other troops were formed in columns as they came up and continued in that position till the rear had passed the river. The firing was pretty smart till near twelve o'clock and popping shots continued till after two which is hardly to be believed as our loss is so very inconsiderable.

Ensign Munro of the 22nd and ten men of the line were killed. Ensign Knight of the Royal, Lieut. Barber and Ensign Campbell of Burton's and Lieut. Tirry [?] of the Provincials with forty-eight men were wounded. Some horses were killed; others threw their loads; some pack horse men left their horses and some loads were thrown down by the drivers who were frightened and expected to get off with their horses – many of them were forced back to bring up the bags of flour and all possible care was taken to prevent anything being lost; notwithstanding of which the rear guards were obliged to cut .up some bags and to throw the flour into the river to prevent any of it from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Our wounded were dressed; litters were provided for such as had broken bones ; horses were given to others – these preparations with all the other difficultys attending an incumbered line of march, above two miles in length consumed a good deal of time so that it was near three o'clock before everything was got in readiness to proceed. The Cherokees were so thoroughly foiled in this attempt that they were neither able to get a prisoner or a scalp.

Tis difficult to judge of the numbers of an Indian enemy but from the disposition they had made tis probable there were at least 600 of them and they had taken possession of as good grounds as can well be imagined. Their loss was probably considerable as they gave us no further trouble.

The front arrived at Etchoe at nine at night; the troops were encamped as they came up and fires were immediately made. Orders were given to Colonel Middleton to remain with about 1,000 men as a guard to the wounded ami prisoners, the rest of the troops marched at half an hour after ten to surprise, if possible, the Towns of Tasse and Newcassee. But tho' the last of those places is above 18 miles from the place we were attacked in not a soul was found in either of the Towns. The reception the Indians met with in the morning, and this movement at night, threw them into a panick which they'll not get the better of soon.

11th. At four in the morning 150 Rangers were sent to meet our provisions, etc. At eight the Indians tho' much fatigued were prevailed on to go back. But no attempt was made by the enemy and before one

o'clock everything was safe in the camp at Newcassee. The wounded men were put into the town house which made an excellent hospital.

12th and 13th. We halted. The corn by the Town was destroyed, partys "were sent out to burn the scattered houses and to pull up beans, peas and corn and to demolish every eatable thing in the country. The Indians with one of our partys destroyed the new Towns of Neowee and Camonga, one of them settled by the people who formerly lived at Etchoe, the other by some of the inhabitants of the lower towns.

A scout of our Indians killed a Cherokee and wounded another at Ayoree ; a poor miserable squaw' was brought in from Tasse and put to death in the Indian camp by one of the Catawbaws.

14th. The Lower Chickesaws, about 20, tired of the service or thinking wre should get into a scrape, declined going further and went down the country. We marched to Wattagui, destroyed that Tow'n and the corn about it and so proceeded to Ayoree.

15th. We halted and sent partys to burn and destroy all the plantations which could be found in the country.

The troops were reduced to twelve ounces of flour that we might be able to remain in the Indian country long enough to destroy everything effectually and to prevent their planting corn again for this season, and that we might at the same time facilitate the operation on the side of Virginia.

16th. We proceeded in the morning to Cowhee the most considerable Town in the middle settlements, the corn was destroyed, but the Town was saved as it was intended to form a camp there for some time on our return.

We marched to Ussanah where the country shared the same fate as in every other place.

17th. We moved to Cowhitchie and destroyed everything about that place, as it was found difficult to pass Cowhitchie River with the troops, the Rangers and Indians were sent to destroy Burning Town which was effected that evening.

18th, 19th, 20th. We were obliged to remain at Cowhitchie owing to excessive heavy rains, which, it seems, are common in this country, and frequently swell the river and creeks so as to make them impassable for several days at a time which was the case upon this occasion.

As the rivers were represented to be impracticable for the troops with pack horses, cattle and the light infantry with the Rangers and Indians were under orders to destroy Allejoy the last town upon the Etchoe River: but this could not be effected on account of the river and creeks which they had to pass and the roads to Allejoy on the south side of the river were so bad that even our Indians could not pass them, tho' to do them justice they readily attempted it when desired.

21st. We return to Ussanah and remained the 22nd and 23rd as the River of Cowhee was not fordable.

The 22nd in the morning two Indian scouts were sent out with directions to bring in a prisoner if possible. In the evening the Chickesaws brought in the headman of Kittoa's Scalp and the Mohawks and Catawbaws returned to camp the 23rd in the forenoon with another scalp but they could not get a prisoner without risking too much, and by that means we could get no intelligence of the Cherokees and none of them had appeared since the day of the action.

24th. We marched and encamped on the north side of the river opposite to Cowhee. Our wounded and sick men were carried over with difficulty to the Town House where a Picquet of a Captain and 80 men were sent to cover them.

25th. A camp was formed upon very advantageous ground for a detachment of near 1,000 men including our wounded, sick and lame which was left under the command of Lieut. Colonel Laurens [?] to guard our provisions, cattle, horses, etc., while the troops proceeded without baggage and with four days bread to destroy the back settlements or outside towns upon the Sticoe River.

The road from Cowhee to Sticoe was represented by the guides to be very practicable—they said pack horses were frequently drove that way—that there were but a few bad stops and no dangerous passes as the road led over a ridge of mountains; that there was almost a constant ascent and one very high mountain to pass.

The advantage of marching by this road was obvious if the information given about it had been just. It was probable the enemy would be deceived by our coming back to Cowhee and would conclude that we were upon our return. Those river Indians were at a considerable distance and it was hoped that they

would not be very much upon their guard and less so at Sticoe (their most distant town) than anywhere else. All those things being considered in order to take the best chance of surprising them, we moved from Camp at ten at night, guides having been sent to every corps to prevent any risk of losing the line of march during the night.

The roads were excessively bad and the night very dark so that we proceeded but slowly.

26th. About half an hour after one the moon got up and we mended our pace a very little but we were obliged to make frequent halts on account of a number of creeks and narrow defiles which are passed. At daylight we found ourselves in the most difficult country' that can be imagined, the only practicable road commanded everywhere by inaccessible mountains, and at the same time so bad that the men could hardly march in an Indian file and if their feet had slipt they were in danger of falling down a precipice.

No troops ever were in so dangerous a position and they continued to be so for many hours till we got to the top of the Catouchee Mountain, one of the highest and one of the steepest in America. The road from thence became less hazardous tho' even this part of the country is impenetrable if defended by 50 men only who knew how to take advantage of the situation; but luckily for us the Indians were frightened or knew nothing of the matter; they did not fire a single shot at us and we arrived at Sticoe about four o'clock in the afternoon after a very' fatiguing march of above 20 miles. Two squaws were taken prisoner by our Indians. They knew the two men who had lately been scalped and said that all the warriors of the middle settlements, the valley, the lower and outside towns, had been in the action. They declared that every town had lost men, they said their Indians had not got a hair, and expressed much surprise that we seemed to take so little notice of them during the action. It must be something of this kind which has prevented their giving us any trouble.

27th. The town and country were destroyed. The finest corn we had yet met with was cut down.

Our partys having returned to camp we proceeded at eleven o'clock on our march to Kittoa (the oldest settlement in the whole Cherokee Nation) where we passed the river which is at least a hundred yards broad and at the same very rapid and deep. We halted till the town was burnt and the corn cut down. About four in the afternoon we moved forward and encamped at Tuckoritchie that night.

An old man was found in the town and put to death by our Indians – a young fellow was made prisoner but could give us no satisfactory account about his Nation. He confirmed pretty nearly what the squaws had told us before 28th. The town and country were destroyed. We passed the Sticoe River a second time and proceeded to Tessantee where another poor old man was killed. Here the Indians found about twenty bushells of old corn, the first we had met with in the country and they were much pleased with the acquisition ; in a few hours this town and the plantation round it were in flames, all the corn cut down and an end put to the back settlements without a shot being fired in defence of the country, tho' those people have always been considered as the best Cherokee warriors and have frequently defended their towns against the northern Indians.

We marched to Allejoy, the only remaining town in the middle settlements, having in our way passed the Etchoe River. Our Indians found five Cherokees in this place, one of them was killed and one taken prisoner. The other three tho' closely pursued made their escape but when these Cherokees get into the mountains none of the other Indians can come near them. After destroying the town and country we marched about three miles further, passed the Etchoe River again with great difficulty at a very bad ford and encamped on the north side of it within six miles of Cowhitchie. When we got to the ground our men were so much fatigued, that they could hardly crawl. Numbers of them were mounted on the Rangers' horses, even our Indians were knocked up.

29th. We returned by Cowhitchie and Ussanah to the camp of Cowhee where we found everything in good order.

30th and 1st July. We halted to recover the troops from the immense fatigue which they had suffered in the last four days march. Some houses and corn were destroyed by the Rangers.

2nd. The list of sick increased. Numbers of men were footsore and a great many of them had no shoes, about 200 of them were mounted on horseback. We then proceeded to Ayoree where the camp had been left standing. This movement was made to make the Cherokees believe that we intended to proceed to the valley by the loa Conara Road which leads from this place.

3rd. We halted to keep the enemy in suspense and by that means to favour Colonel Byrds operations which was the only thing we had now in view.

Fifteen towns and all the plantations in the country have been burnt – above 1,400 acres of corn, beans, pease, etc., destroyed; about 5,000 people including men, women and children drove into the woods and mountains to starve. They have nothing left to subsist upon but a few horses which they contrived to keep out of our way; but we found the remains of numbers of them, which had been killed by themselves almost in every place we went to. Luckily nothing was left to be done on this side. It would have been impossible for us to proceed further. Our provisions were almost expended and our men were wore out and unable to act.

Four Cherokees had taken the advantage of a storm of thunder and rain to get near our camp and about eleven at night fired four shots at a pack horse man, killed and scalped him at a creek within an advanced picquet and two other advanced posts, and indeed quite close to the camp guards; the guards ran to the fire but the Indians made their escape. If they had always acted with the same spirit which they did upon this occasion they would have been more troublesome.

4th. We marched to Newcassie and Etchoe by the Trading Path, passed the ground where the action had happened last year and encamped about two miles from Cowhowee River near the place where we were attacked the 10th ultimo. On this march 250 men were carried on horseback.

5th. We proceeded to Sticoe Old Town and encamped where the Fort London path separate from that leading to the middle settlements. The number of ailing men increased.

6th. We halted to refresh the troops and sent scouts towards the valley to continue the alarm there, and to prevent those peoples joining the inhabitants of the upper towns to oppose Colonel Byrd.

7th. We moved with some precaution as it was not improbable that they might attempt to interrupt our march in passing thro' the Potatoe Hills, or at the War Womans Creek, two very dangerous defiles, which may be considered as barriers to the Cherokee country. Not an Indian appeared and we encamped on this side Chatougi River.

8th. We continued our march down country and encamped near Scony Old Town. Our lame increased.

9th. We arrived at Fort Prince George.

The troops have suffered more fatigue than can well be imagined. Near a thousand men are absolutely without shoes and without the help of our pack horses, the lame and ailing who daily increased could not have been taken care of.

There was not much time to lose for we had just two days flour left and the River of Keowee was not fordable upon our arrival.