

OUR CHEROKEE HERITAGE

Marion County was formed from **Indian Lands**...lands of this area were a part of the **Cherokee Nation**. The original claims of their land ranged from the **Great Smoky Mountains** into portions of several present day states. **Western North Carolina, Virginia**, the Southern portion of **West Virginia**, Northern parts of **Alabama, Georgia, & South Carolina**; and **Eastern** portion of **Tennessee** and **Kentucky**.

The **Cherokee** called themselves "**Ani-Yunwiya**" meaning "**The Real People**", it is said they are descendants of the **Northern Iroquois Tribe**. The word "**Cherokee**" is not found in the **Cherokee** language, it seems the English started using this name about 1708.

Cherokee territorial claims were indefinite and included no fixed boundary lines, these being mainly natural mountain barriers, they were the original southern mountaineer and custodians of this area of wilderness.

There were three geographical divisions of the **Cherokee Nation** in **Tennessee**; The **Overhill Country**, The **Middle Settlement**, and the **Lower Towns**.

Their **Tribal Council** was made up of delegated leaders or "Chiefs" chosen from the **Seven Clans**. Our Nation's democracy was patterned from their tribal organization of each town being a self-governing body. Membership to a **Cherokee Clan** was indicated by distinctive headdress, as was their rank and position in each Clan.

Their **Council House** was a log structure, the center of political and religious life for the Cherokee. The building was seven sided, **hexagon** in shape, with each side representing one of the **Seven Clans**. The **Sacred Fire** was a cleared area in the center and the **Principal Leader "Chief"** sat in the central place, back of the **Sacred Fire**.

Women were often selected as clan leaders and were those who possessed strong voices. The chosen leader of the Tennessee **Women's Council** was the "**Beloved Woman**" **Nancy Ward, "Ghigan"**. When her "husband", **King Fisher** died in battle, **Nancy** took up his gun and fought in his place.

Cherokee huts and settlements were scattered along the banks of rivers and creeks without much arrangement in the early days. good springs nearby, with convenient location to fishing and hunting grounds. Their hunting tools and cooking vessels and war implements were fashioned by adept hands from sticks or whatever materials were near by.

The Cherokee love and worship of nature did not allow them to slash trees or kill without good reason. To the Cherokee, every stone, tree, and animal contained a "spirit" and had a purpose in life, and they considered themselves all brothers in the balance of the earth and nature. The hunting grounds, the air, the water, the sky and the earth belonged to everyone.....they could not understand the white mans thinking of personal possession. **How could one person own a part of the sky?**

Nancy Ward's Mother, Tame Doe; of the **Wolf Clan**, is said to be sister to **Attakullakulla**. "**Peace Chief**" of the Cherokee, and a cousin to "**Dragging Canoe**", a **Cherokee Warrior**, who lived here, and who led the "dreaded **Chicamauga's**" in the fight to save their Cherokee heritage. Our beautiful area, and county of Marion, was carved out of the homelands of his people.

Our story begins with this great Cherokee warrior who fought for his peoples' rightful heritage....his Cherokee name was Tsiyu gansini , Dragging Canoe who later became "**Dragon**" Canoe, and "**The Savage Napoleon**".

TSIYU GANSINI - TSU-GUN-SINI “DRAGGING CANOE”

Chief Opposer to American Settlements Encroaching on Indian Lands

“As a Warrior He Stood Second to None, In His Time, and In His Nation”

“Dragon Canoe”

The “Savage Napoleon”

The Great “Chu con se ne”

Tsiyu Gansini by: Ken Pennington

“As a peaceful youth in his Cherokee homelands.”

Artist ~ of Rising Fawn, Georgia

Tsiyu Gansini was born in 1732, he was the son of :

Atta-kulla-kulla, “**The Little Carpenter**” who was a great Cherokee Leader.

Atta kulla kulla was born about 1708 a member of the Wolf Clan. Captured as a child, & Adopted by the Cherokee He died in 1781 in what is now Tennessee.

Tsiyu Gansini’s mother was a Natchez from Mississippi. This Tribe was driven out of their land by the French in 1730. Many fled to the Cherokees for asylum, settling on the Tellico River near the site of old Fort Loudon.

Tsiyu Gansini was the grandson of **White Owl Raven** and **Nancy Moytoy** (Nancy was one of **Amatoya Moytoys** eight daughters.) also a sister to Chief **Kanagatoga “Old Hop.”** It was **Old Hop** who said, in his speech to the American Captains, *Demere and Stuart*, “it is true that **Willenawah** and the “**Little Carpenter**” (**Atta kulla kulla**) are my nephews.

Tsiyu Gansini’s great grand father, **Amatoya Moytoy “Miskwakhha”** was the *Principal Chief and Great Leader of the Cherokee Nation*. They were known as the “*Ani yunwiya*” or “*The Real People.*” **Moytoy** was born before 1690, and died about 1770. It is said he belonged to the Algonquin Nipising Indian Tribe. His wife was a **Sister** of “**Old Hop**”

Natsi ye, Natchey Place was a settlement on Natchey Creek [now Monroe County, TN] occupied by Natchez refugees about 1740, when the Natchez towns were destroyed by the French. This is also said to be the birth place of **Tsu gun sini** and in later years the home of **Atta kulla kulla**.

Tsiyu Gansini, “**Dragging Canoe**” was described when a grown man, as being powerfully built, six feet tall, with a strong face, deeply pitted with scars of smallpox, thereby making him look even fiercer, yet still handsome.

**Tsiyu
Gansini
“Dragging
Canoe”**

By: Artist
John Wood
Of Coppinger’s
Cove – Marion
Co., Tennessee

As submitted by Nonie Webb

Artists, in their attempt to portray him have tried to show this fierce side of him, as the fearless “**Dragon Canoe**” he later became, as in the above artwork of *John Wood*. [In his childhood, however, he was a happy, peaceful Indian, as captured in the artist work, above, of *Ken Pennington*]

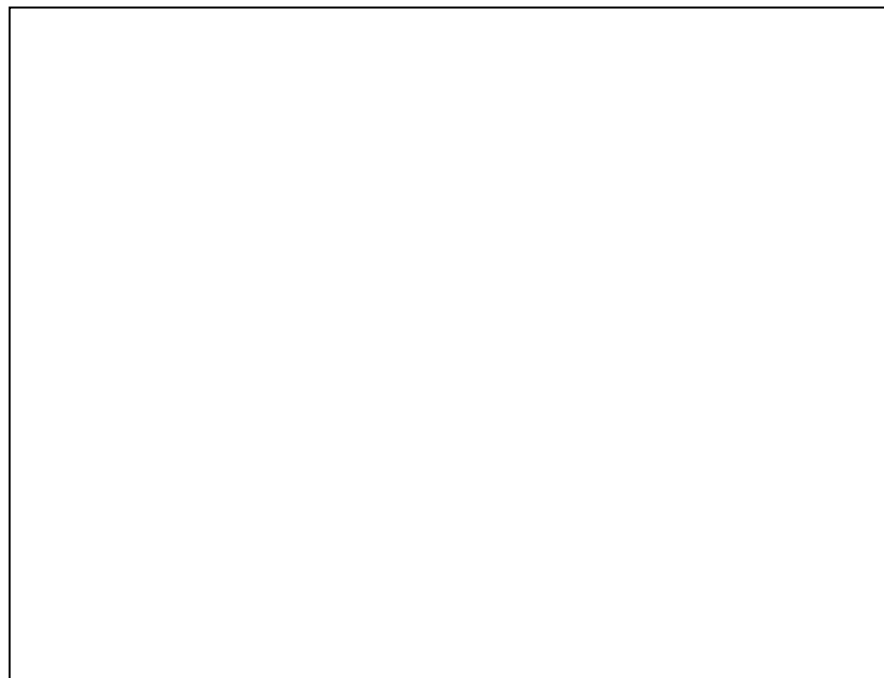
TSIYU GANSINI “Dragging Canoe” How “Dragging Canoe became his name

Tsiyu Gansini’s father **Atta kulla kulla**, was a great wise leader of the Cherokee, known for his work towards peace and forming an alliance between the Cherokee and the English people.

While still a very young boy, **Tsiyu Gansini** wanted very much to go with his father on a Cherokee War Party to battle the Shawnee. His father flatly refused him permission to go, but he slipped away ahead of the War Party and hid in a dugout canoe that he knew the warriors must use. Upon being discovered, **Atta kulla kulla** told his son, when he was grown up enough to carry his own canoe across the portage, like all the other warriors, he could go too.

The determined youth, grabbed one end of the canoe and because it was too heavy for him to carry, he started dragging it through the sand. The excited warriors shouted encouragement, and praises for the determination shown by **Tsiyu Gansini**. Laughing and pointing in glee they shouted, “Look he is dragging the canoe.!”

From then on, “**Dragging Canoe**” became his name.



Painting by *Ken Pennington* – Artist – Rising Fawn, Georgia

There were no early drawings of **Dragging Canoe**, but it is written that Cherokee children lived a peaceful life, adored and cherished by their parents, with few worries as a child.

It was each broken Treaty, more land lost to the Cherokee with each new Indian Land Cession. Each time the white settlers would again break the treaty agreed upon, boundary lines.

The Indians had no power to enforce the white mans law, nor could they understand the white mans “need” to destroy the beautiful forest lands, by cutting trees needlessly; laying personal land claims and shutting all Indians from their rightful hunting grounds, & precious water. Watching their food source disappear before their very eyes, with the slaughter of deer and other animals for the white mans sport called “hunting”, or just for the animals pelt.

Dragging Canoe finally said, “No more, we young Warriors will fight the white settlers in the only way we know! And thus, **Dragging Canoe** became “**Dragon Canoe**”...as the American Settlers came to fear him; and still later, the dreaded “**Savage Napoleon**” and **Chickamauga Leader**.”

Note: Our thanks to **Ken Pennington** for allowing us to use his beautiful painting , depicting **Dragging Canoe**, as a youth, during his peaceful childhood and Cherokee Homelands of Chota.

DRAGGING CANOE was the grandson of **Moytoy, Principal Chief of Cherokee** & the son of **ALLAKULLAKULLA**.

The Family of **MOYTOY “MISKWAKIHHA**
Algonquin Nipising Indian

MOYTOY “Miskwakhha” Principal Chief and Great Leader of the Cherokee. “AniYunwiya” or “The Real People”

b. 1690 d.1770

wife: Was a Sister of “**Old HOP**”

Sister of **Old HOP** was a Natchez from Mississippi. This Tribe was driven out of their lands by the French in 1730. Many fled to the Cherokees for Asylum, settling on the Tellico River near the site of Old Fort Loudun.

Children: **Moytoy** had 11 children.....

1. **ALLAKULLAKULLA “Little Carpenter” “Woodstick, Slightly Bent”**

b.1710 Big Island on French Broad River.

d. 1781 Tennessee

md. **Woman Clan /“White Owl” a Natchez woman.**

Children: [4. Lived in Upper Tenn. (then North Carolina) Overhill Country.

(1. **TSU-GUN-SINI “DRAGGING CANOE”**

b. 1732- d. Mar.1792. at Running Water Town, {now Marion Co.,TN}

md. Un/k 4 children

1. **Naky “Sarah”**

2. **Young Dragging Canoe** [information from Cenus-1835]

Wife not listed. Residence Lalegnoyah Creek

Males under 18=one/ over 18=3/ females under 16-4/over 16-3=11

Half breeds =2, Full blood Cherokee=9

1 farmer over 18/16, 1 weaver & 4 Spinsters.

One person reads English, one reads Cherokee

9 acres under cultivation, 1 farm, 5 horses, 300 bushels corn raised.

Bushels corn bought=15 @ \$7 ½

3. **Little Owl**

4. **Turtle at Home b. 1752**

(2. **TURTLE at HOME b. 1735**

Owned & operated a Ferry at near Nickajack Town.

(3. **The BADGER**

(4. **Little OWL**

(5. **GHI-GO-NE.**

2. **TAME DOE**

b. 1712 md **SKAYAGUSTUEGWO** b. 1710

(1. **TUSKEEGEETEEHEE**

(2. **GHIL-GA-U “Nancy Ward” (Beloved Woman”)**

b. 1738 Chola d. 1824 Benton, TN.

md. **KINGFISHER**

(1.) **Five Killer** b. 1754

(2.) **Catherine** b. 1753 CNE d. 1817

3. **KILLAQUE**

4. **OCONASTOTA**

5. **GREAT EAGLE**

(1. **OLD TASSEL**

(2. **WORTH/WURTAH** [Wurteh, mother of **SEQUOYAH**]

(3. **DOUBLEHEAD**

6. **SKALILOSKEN**

7. **OUNACONOA**

8. **KOLLANNAH**

9. **OUKAII**

10. **TATITOWE**

11. **CLOGOITTAH**

4 **DRAGGING CANOE b. 1732- 1792”The Great Chu son se ne”**

A Draught of the

Cherokee Country

On the West Side of the Twenty four Mountain

Commonly called Over the Hills;

Taken by Henry Timberlake, when he

Was in that Country in March 1762

Likewise the

Names of the Principal or Head men of each Town and

What Number of Fighting Men they send to War.

Mialaguo, or

}24 under the Governor of

Great Island

Attakullakulla

Taskegee 55 Attakullakulla Governor

Tommatley 91 Oftenaco Commander in Chief

Toqua 82 Willinawaw Governor

Tennessee 21 Under the Government of Kanagatuckeo

Choti 175 Kanagamekeo King of Govenor

Chilbonosy 110 Yachtino Governor

Seitacoo 204 Cheulah Governor

Tellassee 47 Governor dead, none elected now.

809

DRAGGING CANOE

Chief Opposer to White Settlements On Indian Lands

Time Line of Events

1775 March **White Settlers Encroaching on Indian Lands** The Cherokee lands belonged to all Cherokee, and were not “property” to be sold according to the white man ways. In Indian tradition the sky, the water, the land, the wind belonged to all, and were not something that could be bought or sold. Back in 1772 the Watauga Association, was made up of a group of settlers who tried to establish law and order in the wilderness by forming their own government. They drew up one of the first written constitutions in North America.

Richard Henderson, a Judge at Hillsborough ,N.C. was interested in land speculation. After the end of the French & Indian War in 1763 his agent for seeking out good land was **Daniel Boone**. After the “Treaty of Hard Labor” **Boone** made an extensive search exploring the Kentucky region. He had communicated to **Henderson** the details of the 1772 land lease & now after the war with the Shawnees in 1774, the Cherokees might be convinced to sell land in the area of the Kentucky River.

Henderson laid his plans well. 1st. he added new stockholders to purchase the western lands, knowing the land he sought was well beyond the “Lochaber line,” and that land acquisition from Indians was forbidden by royal edict, he took care to work out a legal rationale for his activities based on decisions of English courts.

In late 1774 with stockholder **Col. Nathaniel Hart, & Daniel Boone** as his guide he left N.C. & traveled across the mountains, through the Watauga & Nolichucky settlements, into the Indian territory.

Richard Henderson convinced the old Indian leaders they were only seeking a small portion of these lands, and would not pass “beyond the mountains,” The goods & trinkets displayed before the trusting was so enticing they were soon convinced & ready to sign away their hunting grounds and birthright.

Delegates of the Transylvania Company with Trading goods in 6 wagons, proposed to purchase Some twenty million or more acres of land between the Ohio River, the Tennessee, & the Cumberland River Valleys. After much discussion, the older Chiefs were agreeable to the proposals.

Map of the Original Cherokee Country>

MAP of GEORGIA - SOUTH CAROLINA - & TENNESSEE RIVER INDIAN LANDS 1732-1754

Indian Lands
{Future Marion Co.TN}
Tennessee

River

Dragging Canoe
b. 1732 - 1792

Our Story centers around this Cherokee Leader -
Who dedicated his life to opposing broken treaties,
& white settlers encroaching on Indian lands. He
fought for their hunting grounds, food sources, &
Indian Heritage. For-seeing that someday they
would even drive his people from their Homelands.

At one Time,.....

The Cherokees were known
as the mountaineers of the South.

When they first saw the white man
(Hernando DeSoto in 1540), their territory
included some 135,000 square miles covering
parts of present-day states:

North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia,
Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia.

By the end of the American Revolutionary War,
The Cherokees had lost over half of their vast land holdings.

1775 **March 17th. The TREATY of SYCAMORE SHOALS.** (near present Elizabethton)
Judge Richard Henderson Land Purchase Henderson was proposing to acquire most of Kentucky up to the Tennessee River and all of (now Tennessee) drained by the Cumberland River for goods worth 10,000 pounds sterling in a land purchase called the “Treaty of Sycamore Shoals.” This purchase included the whole tract of land between the Kentucky and the Cumberland Rivers. This cut the Cherokee’s off from the Ohio River and all their rich Kentucky hunting grounds. The Transylvania Company had neither the right, charter, power, nor sovereignty to make a Treaty. This was not really a Treaty, since the Cherokee Indians sold Him the land and He received a deed.

[Also remembered, is these few Cherokee Indians at the council, at that time, had no “Language” or modern way of communication, or even a vague understanding of the terms and consequences of the white mans ways or legal papers used to sign away their (all Cherokee) rightful heritage. The land did not belong to these few Cherokee.]

**Indian Towns and Locations –In the early 1700’s.
 In the Carolina’s, Tennessee and Georgia.**

Location of Major Indian Towns
 (Keyed to the following numbers)

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Occaneechi Town | 8. Peedee |
| 2. Occaneechi | 9. Keyauwee |
| 3. Eno | 10.Sapona |
| 4. Hancock’s Town | 11.Catawba Town |
| 5, Torhunta | 12. Waxhaw |
| 6. Haw Old Fields | 13. New Echota |
| 7. Cheraw | |

North Carolina
 History, Geography, &
 Government. by Lefler.

1775 **March 17th. CHEROKEE BIRTHRIGHT**

The older Cherokee leaders agreed to sell the area of Kentucky and Valley of the Cumberland to the Transylvania Company on March 17,1775. The sale was vigorously opposed by one young Cherokee leader, called “**Dragging Canoe**”. He was the son of the great Cherokee leader **Attakullakulla**, and said to be great-grandson of “**The Principal Cherokee, Chief Moytoy.**”

Dragging Canoe, and two of his brothers, **Turtle at Home**, and **Little Owl**, had talked about *Hendersons* plan to “Purchase” the Cherokee Lands, and they were very upset. It was not the Indian way for a young leader to speak at Council, for this privilege was given only to the elder, and wiser leaders of the tribes. But the brothers were defiant, and they chose **Dragging Canoe** to be their voice at council; well knowing the anger of their father and disapproval of the elders at such action. The stakes were high, time was short. They agreed that **Dragging Canoe** should speak at Council. They felt the old ones were swayed by *Henderson* lies, but they were young and strong, and they would fight for their hunting lands. The land is ours, the old ones have no right to give away our heritage. Soon even more white settlers would come, wanting even more land. It would not end here. The decision was made. **Dragging Canoe** would speak.

1775 Oration of Dragging Canoe.

*{Wording copied from a “white mans pen”probably the hopes and fears of **Dragging Canoe**....surely without his wording or expertise at the English language as hereby stated. Remember this was the year 1775}*

After **Henderson** had made his proposal at the Council Meeting , unexpectedly, **Dragging Canoe** [always dressed for battle, wearing only a breechcloth and breach & necklace of long bear’s claws,] rose to protest the sale of the land.

“**Dragging Canoe** began with a very flourishing state in which his nation once was, and spoke of the encroachments of the white people, from time to time, upon the retiring and expiring nations of Indians who left their homes and seats of their ancestors to gratify the insatiable desire of the white people for more land. Whose nations had melted away in their presence like balls of snow before the sun, and had scarcely left their names behind, except as imperfectly recorded by their enemies and destroyers.

It was once hoped that they would not be willing to travel beyond the mountains, so far from the ocean, on which their commerce was carried on, and their connections maintained with the nations of Europe. But now that fallacious hope had vanished; they had passed the mountains, and settled upon Cherokee lands, and wished to have their usurpation’s sanctioned by the confirmation of treaty.

When that should be obtained the same encroaching spirit would lead them upon other lands of the Cherokees and finally the country which the Cherokees and their forefathers had so long occupied would be called for; and a small remnant which may then exist of this nation, once so great and formidable, will be compelled to seek a retreat in some far distant wilderness, there to dwell but a short space of time before they would again behold the advancing banners of the same greedy hosts; who, not being able to point out any further the extinction of the whole race. He ended with a strong exhortation to run all risks and to incur all consequences, rather than submit to any further diminishing of their territory.”

Dragging Canoe, while pointing West, issued a final warning before departing from the Council grounds. He declared “**There is a dark cloud hanging over that country – it is a dark and bloody ground.**

You will pay a heavy price if you take it from us!”

Dragging Canoe warned his people that such a sale would only lead to more concessions and that the whole country which the Cherokee occupied would be demanded, but the old chiefs would not listen to him. Some of the chiefs completed the deal yielding 20 million acres.

1775 DRAGGING CANOE goes on the WARPATH becomes “**DRAGON Canoe**”

In March 1775 at Sycamore Shoals near the present Elizabethton, the muscular, pock-marked young chief threw down the gauntlet. **Richard Henderson** was proposing to acquire most of Kentucky up to the Tennessee River and all of Tennessee drained by the Cumberland River for goods worth 10,000 pounds sterling.

Though some of the chief completed the deal yielding 20 million acres, **Dragging Canoe** the following year went on the warpath. He was to lead one of three divisions attacking Upper East Tennessee settlements, but **Nancy Ward** (Beloved Woman of the Cherokee) was able to warn the settlers of the impending attack. In a fierce battle at Long Island, **Dragging Canoe** exhorted, “The Unakas (whites) are running. Come on and scalp them.” However, **Dragging Canoe** was badly wounded in the thigh and had to be carried off the field.

Troops afterward found in the house of **Dragging Canoe** near the ruins of Fort Loudoun “seven scalps hanging up, nicely painted, and just in front of the town, a stake to which “**Dragon Canoe**”, a short time before had bound small boy (*Samuel Moore*) and burned him to death while a war dance was held.”

1775 March 19th. *Charles Robertson* concludes the Watauga Purchase in which the Cherokee Indians deed a large block of land to him on the waters of the Holston and Wataugah Rivers.

The purchase was signed in the presence of:

<i>John Sevier</i>	Oconostota,	his x mark (Seal)
<i>William Bailey Smith</i>	Attacullecully,	his x mark (Seal)
<i>Jesse Benton</i>	Tennesy Warrior	his x mark (Seal)
<i>Tillman Dixon</i>	Willinawaugh	his x mark (Seal)
<i>Jas. Van Linguister</i>		
<i>Thomas Price</i>		
<i>Wm Blevins</i>		

**The Transylvania Co. March 1775
Watauga Purchase Cherokee Lands**

Drawing by *Bennie Andrew* in

The Overmountain Men by *Pat Alderman*

(at right) **Walton Road -100 miles long was
the first suitable for wagon travel.
Connecting East {now Tennessee}**

The Watauga Association **With the Cumberland Mountain
Becomes Washington District. Settlements.**

1775 March 25th. *Jacob Brown* made three land purchases from the Cherokee Indians in the area along the Nolichucky River, South West of present day Jonesborough, Tennessee.

These are included in the Watauga Purchase Book, Old Book A.

**Early Avenues 1768-1798 Indian Trails & Frontier Roads
by *B. C. Callaway.***

1775 April 19th The REVOLUTIONARY WAR (1775-1783)

The Frontier Settlements were so busy fighting Indian Attacks they gave little attention to the American Revolution. When threats grew serious they crossed the mountains and met the enemy at **Kings Mountain**. After defeating the British, the settler's returned to their homes and continued their efforts of

Pushing the Frontier Ever Westward.

1775 North Carolina extended clear to the Mississippi River.

WESTERN SETTLEMENTS

Proposed or Organized 1775-1785

Hundreds of settlers moved through mountain gaps, many Coming into Western North Carolina through Watauga, Swannanoa, and Butt Mountain Gaps.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Rockfishe Gap | 4. Fancy Gap | 7. Butt Mountain Gap |
| 2. White's Gap | 5. Watauga Gap | 8. Cooper's Gap |
| 3. Mowbray Gap | 6. Swannanoa Gap | 9. Cumberland Gap |

1776 Feb. 27th. WASHINGTON DISTRICT North Carolina

The settlers chose to become a part of North Carolina. The Northern boundary line extends clear to the Mississippi River. Washington District annexed to North Carolina. North Carolina army fought and won the Battle against British troops at Moors Creek Bridge, near Wilmington.

1776 April 12th. First **STATE CONSTITUTION** Adopted. North Carolina provincial Congress Meeting at Halifax directed its delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence.

1776 **NANCY WARD** cousin to **DRAGGING CANOE** “**Beloved Woman**” saved the white settlers on several occasions. **Nancy Ward** was a half-breed Cherokee known to her people as “**Beloved Woman**”. She was the sister of “**The Little Carpenter**” (**Atakullakulla**); cousin to **Dragging Canoe**, they grew up together. **Nancy Ward** was always friendly to the white people, who taught her many useful domestic sciences. Such as weaving, carding wool, animal husbandry, making butter and cheese. The Indian princess introduced cattle into the Cherokee Nation and owned the first herd among the Indians.

1776 July **Nancy Ward** told **Isaac Thomas** in Chota that the English were arousing the Indians, inciting them to kill all the settlers who had fought for the colonies against the British. She said there would be three groups attacking the whites, these would be led by **Dragging Canoe**, **The Raven**, and **Oconostota**, “King of all the Cherokees”

Upon **Nancy Wards** information, **Isaac Thomas** left Echota to warn the settlers. One of the couriers to spread the word of the impending Indian attacks was **Captain William Bean**. But he could not persuade his wife, **Lydia Russell Bean**, who believed in the friendship of her Indian friends and neighbors and believed they would not turn on her or her people. She refused to join with the terrified people who were fleeing toward the safety of Virginia or to a stockade refuge. A few days later **Lydia Bean** was seized and taken to **Oconostota**’s camp on the Nolichucky River. The Indians failed to capture Fort Lee. **Dragging Canoe** was angered by this defeat and demanded **Lydia**’s death by burning at the stake. A day was set for his torture. **Lydia** sent an appeal to **Nancy Ward** but no answer came until she was tied to a stake and the Indians prepared to light the wood heaped at her feet. The warriors circled around her, brandishing weapons. Suddenly **Nancy Ward** appeared a **Lydia**’s side and commanded: “Unbind this white woman in the name of the Great Spirit. If she is burned our nation will be destroyed!” **Lydia Russell Bean** was untied and released as a prisoner. The Watauga settlement knew of **Nancy Ward**’s rescue of **Mrs. Bean** and her stand on behalf of the white settlers. [Many of **Lydia Russell Bean**’s descendants played an important part in the later settlement of the Sequachee Valley and have always revered **Nancy Ward**’s memory]

1776 **The INDIAN WAR - WAR WITHIN A WAR**

The Cherokee and Creek Indians sided with the British and when the final severance came, they threw their whole power into the British scale. They would regret this decision, because in this war, as with any other, to the victor belongs the spoils. The action led to the Cherokee War in 1776. It was an era at the start of the American Revolution which demonstrates the rear guard Indian War as a “War within a War”. The Indians were associated with the British in spying activities, but certainly were not operating under British military directive or guidance.

A large British Naval and Military force attacked Charleston South Carolina. Simultaneously a body of Cherokee, led by Tories in Indian disguise ravaged the exposed frontier of South Carolina, killing and burning as they went. The British were repulsed, whereupon the Indians withdrew. About the same time seven hundred Cherokee warriors were advancing. **Old Abram** & 300 warriors attack the Nolichucky and Watauga. **Dragging Canoe** would take another force into Long Island Country. **Raven**, with a small force would move I to Carter’s Valley, then move into the Virginia territory, all sides killing and burning as they went. **Nancy Ward** (Beloved Woman of the Cherokee Council) was concerned of the ravages of war for her people and on her white friends, warned the settlers, who were able to repulse the attacks.

WHO REALLY OWNS THESE INDIAN LANDS?

The Chief adversary of the Wataugans was not North Carolina or Britain, but the Cherokee Indians, with whom they negotiated and with whom they fought. The chief issue was the land, encroached on by whites, defended by Indians. The result was conflict and, for the Indians, defeat and tragedy.

The tragic dimensions of Indian-white relations on the Southwest frontier, summed up the attitude of the early whites: “To eliminate this “useless people,” invertebrate enemies of the white race, was, as they saw it a political necessity and a religious duty.”
[Pioneers of the Old Southwest, p115-16 *Constance Lindsay Skinner*, historian]

Views from the participants themselves:

The Scotch-Irish View: “It is against the laws of God and nature that so much land should be idle while so many Christians wanted to work on it and raise their bread”

Trader *Caleb Starr* (to Indians at the French Broad River in 1777.)

“It is folly to contend with the white man. The Great Spirit intended that he should overrun and occupy all the low lands, which would be cultivated. To the red man he has been given the hills and forests where he might subsist on game without tilling the soil, which (is) work only for women. To struggle with the white man (is), therefore, to fight with destiny. The only safety for the Indian lay in retreat to their mountain fastness.”

Old Tassel (at the Long Island Conference in 1777)

“You say: Why do not the Indians till the ground and live as we do? May we not, with equal propriety, ask, why the white people do not hunt and live as we do? The Great God of Nature has placed us in different situations It is true that he has endowed you with many superior advantages; but he has not created us to be your slaves.”
[*S. C. Williams*, Tennessee during the Revolutionary War. P 68.]

Dragging Canoe (at Sycamore Shoals in 1775) (as described by *Haywood* in 1823)

He began with a very flourishing state in which his nation once was and spoke of the encroachments of the white people, from time to time, upon the retiring and expiring Nations of Indians who left their homes and seats of their ancestors, to gratify the insatiable desire of the white people for more land (and now they) wished to have their usurpation’s sanctioned by the confirmation of a treaty. When that should be obtained, the same encroaching spirit would be applied for and finally the country which the Cherokees and their forefathers had so long occupied would be called for; and a small remnant, which may then exist of this nation, once so great and formidable, will be compelled to seek a retreat in some far distant wilderness, there to dwell but a short space of time before they would again behold the advancing banners of the same greedy host; who not being able to point out any further retreat for the miserable Cherokees, would then proclaim the extinction of the whole race.

[*John Haywood*, Civil and Political History of Tennessee. P.58-59]

Dragging Canoe

1777 WASHINGTON DISTRICT becomes WASHINGTON COUNTY, North Carolina

Washington *District* North Carolina, becomes Washington *County*, North Carolina. Named in honor of *George Washington*. North Carolina legislature divided the land which became Washington County (eventually embracing all of what is presently Tennessee.) one half of the area is mountains. Jonesborough is the County Seat and the first town. [in what is now Tennessee.]

By this time the Indians had become dependant on the English for items to trade. Traders of unsavory character from the East often found the Cherokee unable to pay their obligations; thus the Cherokees were sometimes forced to grant their land to them to settle their obligations With each new Treaty, and Peace agreement even more white settlers would pour into the newly opened Indian lands. Agreements were made that the new settlers would not go beyond the borders, but each time the settlers would encroach on Indian lands. The Indians had no way to get rid of the encroachers, and there was no protection for the Indians when they fought to regain their own Treaty Lands.

1777 May 27th. By a **TREATY at DeWITTS CORNERS** in **South Carolina**, the Lower Cherokees surrendered nearly all their territory in that State.

1777 DRAGGING CANOE Breaks from the CHEROKEES

Again in 1777, the older chiefs ceded more land as peace overtures. Thoroughly disgusted, **Dragging Canoe** and his followers strongly opposed the Indian land sales. Meanwhile his followers grew in numbers and bitterly attempted to resist the continuous influx of colonial settlements all along the new “Tennessee” frontiers.

Dragging Canoe refused to be a part to any more treaties and land cessions. He would fight for his people’s birthright and heritage. There would be no more new settlers encroaching on Indian lands! His father, **Attakullakulla**, and the older chiefs, **Oconostota**, **Willanaugh**, and **Onistositah** did not understand that the white man would never stop until they had taken all the Indian hunting grounds, killed the buffalo and wild game that belonged to all the Indians, destroyed the forest lands, and tamed the wild rivers. The old chiefs were set in their ways of trust, but they had not right to sell the Indian Lands without the say of “all their people.”

“**Dragging Canoe** noted that other Indian Tribes had given up their land and had

“melted away like balls of snow in the sun”

Saying Treaties were for old men, **Dragon Canoe** declared,

“I have my young warriors. We will have our lands!”

1777 The Cherokees hold Council at Sycamore Shoals on the Holston River. **PEACE TREATY**

In 1777 the Cherokees held Council at Sycamore Shoals on the Holston River. At which time it was decided that those that wanted to make peace with the new settlers would remain on the Little Tennessee and those that would fight the invaders would go with **Dragging Canoe** to establish Villages on the South Chickamauga Creek area (now Chattanooga, Tennessee)

[The Overhill Cherokee Towns at Vonore still suffered many devastating raids in spite of their residents being peaceful.]

1777 Springtime ...Dragging Canoe Ceded from the Cherokees.

Gathering all his fellow opposers, and their families they said good by forever to their homelands in the Overhill Country. Calling themselves “Chickamaugas.” These “Cherokee” Indians, moved by canoe and trail, afoot, mounted, by packhorse and travois. They poured southward, down to their new home with **Dragging Canoe**, the leader, who would fight for their lands.

Their chosen site, already the home of *J. Stuart's* deputy, Scot trader *John McDonald*, who was an agent of *Panton Leslie* and Co., and of the Spanish. He set up his trading post about 1770 on Chickamauga Creek along the Great Indian Warpath. *McDonald* married a Cherokee woman.

Dragging Canoe and his people from Great Island settled at the old town of Chickamauga, two miles from the mouth of Chickamauga Creek.

The **Settico** people located on the Tennessee River near the creek mouth at the beautiful old town site which they renamed Citico after the home they had abandoned on the Little Tennessee River.

The **Toquo** warriors likewise gave the name of their old town, Toquo, to the new home.

Little Owl, (brother to Dragging Canoe) chose a site farther for his village farther up stream, on Chickamauga Creek. This site isat Audubon Acres in East Brainerd.

Another war chief who joined with **Dragging Canoe** was **Ostenaco Outacite**, or “**Judds Friend**”, who had long been a leader among the Cherokees. Well over seventy-five years old his influence was still strong. He had been in England, met with the King, and was one of the leaders who had settled the boundary dispute with North Carolina in 1767. Known as a “**Beloved Man**” his advice had considerable weight in their councils.

Outacite “Mankiller”

Judds Friend - Old Frontiers

Court Artist: Sir J. Reynolds

Other prominent chiefs who joined **Dragging Canoe** were **Willenaway**, who had helped to starve the Fort Loudon garrison into submission. **Bloody Fellow; Scolacuta** or **Hanging Maw; Kitegiska**, brother of **Oconostota; Young Tassel**, [who was later to become famous as **John Watts**] **Lying Fish; Tsaladihi**, and **The Buck**.

Old Tassel, who has succeeded **Oconostota** as speaker for the Nation, sympathized with the secedes, although he did not actively cooperate.

Many visiting Creek Indians, along with white Tories (or Loyalists) from the Carolinas, and others joined with the Chickamaugas. While the Chickamaugas were at Citico, another Scot, *Daniel Ross*, came down the river. *McDonald* induced **Dragging Canoe** to spare him, and *Ross* married *McDonald's* daughter. Their son was **Chief John Ross**.

Chief John Ross

1777 July 20th. By a **TREATY at LONG ISLAND** the Middle and Upper Cherokees ceded everything East of the Blue Ridge, together with all the disputed territory on the Wataugah, Nolichucky, Upper Holston, and New Rivers. North Carolina then passed a new law authorizing sale of 640 acres to each settler at fifty shilling per 100 acres, plus 100 acres for his wife and each child. **John Carter** became the public Entry Taker for the Counties West of the mountains. All settlers on the Watauga and Nolichucky were required to take new titles. **Dragging Canoe** and his followers refused to attend this meaningless Treaty.

1777 “You Have Bought A Fair Land – But NOW You Will Find it DARK and BLOODY.

Dragging Canoe and his people began making forays against the white settlements from his Chickamauga seclusion. They made Raids on the new white settlers all up and down the Tennessee River and Virginia Frontier. Making true the “**Dragon Canoes**” prediction at the Sycamore Shoals Treaty in 1775 that **Colonel. Richard Henderson** and the land hungry early settlers who traded trinkets for the Cherokee’s hunting grounds. Yes, they had bought a beautiful fair land, but they would find that it was a “**dark and bloody land!**”

Thus they made true the “**Dragon**” Canoe’s prediction that the land hungry American settlers had bought a dark and bloody land. **Thus the once peaceful son of the Cherokees “Dragging” Canoe, became “ Dragon” Canoe**, as well as “**The Savage Napoleon**”.

Few white men were then familiar with the mystical country to which **Dragging Canoe** had gone. Strange stories were told by the Indians. They themselves, it is said, moved some of their earlier villages because of fear of the unknown, or some greatly dreaded spirit, for the country was, indeed, awe inspiring.

1777 The INDIANS became PERMANENT Residents of the SEQUATCHEE VALLEY

The Overhill Cherokees were being pushed to the South. Another Center in the late 1700’s and early 1800’s was Ustansli, located at the flowing together of the Coosawatte and Conasauga Rivers, where they became the Oostanaula, near Calhoun, Georgia. This also brought the Indians into the Sequatchee Valley and [now] Chattanooga as permanent residents.

NICK-A-JACK CAVE

In the area below the new town sites of **Dragging Canoe**, below the narrows and high cliffs of the Cumberland Mountains facing the river, lies a vast cavern in the side of the mountain. Many strange tales were told of this mystical place. It is said the river that flows from its great mouth has no beginning, and the huge black hole that is the entrance belies the vast interior; there are huge rooms that have many side paths. Dark tunnels that go forever, twisting and turning into a thousand paths, until you are hopelessly lost in the black recess, losing your sense of direction, in the belly of the mountain. It is said brave men have gone inside, never to be seen again. Even the bravest of warriors were known to go quickly and silently as they made passage before the entrance of this great mysterious cavern. The Indians called the cavern Ani-Kusati-Yi. The white man came to know it as Nick-O-Jack.

Nick-O-Jack Cave
[Drawing by Harper’s News]

The Treacherous TENNESSEE RIVER

It was here that the Tennessee River, in some bygone geological era, forced a passage through the tall mountain ranges, and because of its rapid descent and unnaturally compressed water, it then broke into a series of whirlpools and land rapids, which roared, boiled and dashed madly against the great side boulders forming the Tennessee Rivers treacherous, irregular bed.

Of all the 640 miles of the Tennessee River this area shown on the of the above map was the most treacherous; both in navigation, and by the Indian control of **Dragging Canoe** and his Chicamauga followers.

In the photo at right, just beyond the background Mountains, were the lower Towns of **Dragging Canoe**.

Moccasin Bend on the Tennessee River below Lookout Mountain. Beyond lies the “Grand Canyon of the South” and the Cherokee Valley of Dragging Canoe.

1900 Photo Courtesy Jesse Jones-in 1989-Marion Co., TN.....

View from Lookout Mountain

These waters began at the base of another of natures masterpieces, Lookout Mountain, which towers above the winding waters and rich valleys, often clothed in cloud land mists, or standing out grandly in clear weather. Like a mighty watchtower which commands mile after mile of indescribably beautiful countryside. Its ancient patterns below the mountain forming a perfect outline of an Indian moccasin. The sloping lands around and below it are like a memorial to the Indians who fought so bravely to hold them.

1777/ 8 End of CHEROKEE WAR – ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA.

After the Cherokee War in 1776 which terminated with a Peace Treaty in 1777, the boundaries between the Cherokee and the American Settlers were confirmed by the Assembly of North Carolina in 1778.

From Early 1770-1800's
**Map of Major Indian
Trails & Paths**
Across the
GEORGIA PIEDMONT
By *John H. Goff*

Trails lead...
To.....
North & South
Carolina...
Alabama and
Tennessee..

1778 **INDIAN AGENTS Appointed.**

Following the Treaty of Long Island, *James Robertson* was made Indian Agent for North Carolina. *Joseph Martin* was appointed Indian Agent for the State of Virginia.

These two men proved a wise choice, capable and prudent in their dealing with the Cherokee, well liked by many of the tribe. Under the fair treatment of these two men the Cherokee remained comparatively quiet during the years of 1778.

1778 **ATTACULLACULLA Great Leader and Father of DRAGON CANOE now DECEASED.**

The death of *Attacullaculla* in 1778 affected the relation between the Cherokee and the frontiersmen. He had been friendly in his attitudes to the white people, but was succeeded as Principal Chief by *Oconostota*, and the new leader had much ill treatment to remember at the hands of the white men. Said to be a half-breed whose father was an Englishman, he was unfriendly to the whites

1779 **SULLIVAN COUNTY** is Created from
Washington County, North Carolina

1779 **DRAGGING CANOE** recognized as **Greatest American Settlement Opposer**
in South Eastern U. S.

Dragging Canoe became recognized as the chief leader in the entire South Eastern part of the United States in opposition to American Settlements. By the end of 1778 *Dragging Canoe* had more than 1,000 warriors.

In the face of continued raids on the new settlers the governor of the new State of Virginia, *Patrick Henry* solicited the support of the government of North Carolina to chastise the “Chickamauga” Indians.

1779 **Campaign to CLEAR the TENNESSEE RIVER of “Banditti”.**

Patrick Henry planned a campaign against the Chickamauga Indians to clear the Tennessee River for use. He felt that as long as **Dragging Canoe** and the Chickamaugas, whom he called “Banditti,” occupied the lands in South Eastern Tennessee the white man would not have free use of the Tennessee River. *Col. Evan Shelby* was chosen to complete the assignment.

1779 **April 10th. Expedition to DESTROY the CHICKAMAUGA TOWNS**

By the early part of 1779 *Patrick Henry* ordered *Col. Evan Shelby* to raise 300 men in his District to go to Chickamauga and “Totally destroy” that and every other settlement near it that was occupied by the offending Chickamauga Indians.” Two hundred men from North Carolina were to join the expedition under *Maj. Charles Robertson* of Washington County in the North Carolina Senate.

On April 10th, 1779 the flotilla began its descent on the Holston River. At dawn one morning about the middle of April the fleet reached the mouth of Chickamauga Creek, undetected by the Indians, and entered the town of Chickamauga. This town, which

was nearly a mile long, was governed by **Dragging Canoe** and **Big Fool**. Most of **Dragging Canoe's** warriors were away, and the frontiersmen found scant resistance after they waded through a swampy canebrake to **Dragging Canoe's** Town. The Indians, about 500 strong, were taken completely by surprise and fled into the mountains. *John McCrosky* of Sevier County,[N.C.] with a party of men, followed them across the river and dispersed a camp on Laurel Creek. **Little Owl's** town and others were burned in the same manner. What could be taken with them as "captured supplies" was carried away. Pelts and deerskins were taken from *McDonald's* Trading post. What could not was either burned or destroyed as *Col. Montgomery's* men floated down the Tennessee to join *Clark*. The remainder of the force began their homeward march by the new land route North of the Tennessee River. Eleven towns were destroyed.

"They passed by the place since known as Post Oak Springs, crossed the Emory and Clinch a little above their confluence, and the Holston some miles above its junction with the French Broad. They were the first troops that had seen the richest lands of the present Hamilton, Rhea, Roane and Knox Counties, and the North part of Jefferson Counties; as they were seen in all the beauty and verdure of May. It is not strange that a new and increasing current of emigration was at once turned to this beautiful and inviting country."

[Quoting from the Annals of Tennessee by Ramsy]

Dragging Canoe had been called the "**Savage Napoleon**". After destruction of his towns by *Shelby* he justified that title! Another Indian leader, after so crushing defeat would have asked for peace, but this was not so with **Dragging Canoe**. As soon as they learned of the attack, **Dragging Canoe** and **McDonald** returned to Chickamauga. They were reinforced by a fifty-man detachment of Loyalist Rangers led by *Cameron*, who also provided a small pack train of goods to help replace those lost to the Americans. The blow had been unexpected, but **Dragging Canoe** was not conquered. The victory by *Shelby* had been won against women and children, the men would be heard from later.

The destruction of the Chickamauga Towns by *Shelby* had been successful, but the Indian loss in manpower had been small. [One account says 14 Indians.] Crops had not been planted, some scanty stores carried through the winter were the only food stuffs destroyed. The British supplies had been taken, but new supplies could be brought quickly from Pensacola. *Cameron* himself appeared with 50 Tories, to encourage the Indians.

The most serious feature for **Dragging Canoe** was that the white warriors had found their way into his town. The Great Spirit however, had provided a remedy. Down the Tennessee River, past Chatanuga Mountain the swift current dashing against the mountain, recoiled upon itself, and hemmed in between the steep banks, fought its way through the great Whirl and Suck to the wilds of the Cumberland Mountains. The swirling course of the river, called by the Cherokees **Untiguihi**, the Boiling pot, could not be passed by boats except with grave danger.

Chatanuga Mountain was high [two thousand feet] rough, and impassable. The path between mountain and river could be defended by few against a host. **Dragging Canoe** had a plan for his followers....and revenge against the wrongs done to his people

In July, addressing a delegation of Northern Indians, he reaffirmed his determination to continue the war.

Dragging Canoe....sometimes defeated.....never conquered!

1779 April – May

How “SALE CREEK” got it’s Name.

After the 11 Chickamauga towns were burned, the Command of *Colonel Evan Shelby* returned to the white settlements on the Watauga and Holston from their expedition against the Chickamauga's. One evening, shortly after they started homeward on a trail, where *Shelby's* men made camp along a small stream and auctioned off the Indian plunder they were carrying. This was in the upper end of what is now Hamilton County. This small stream later received the name “**Sale Creek.**”

This trail leading to “Sale Creek” passed near **Jolly’s** Island, (Hiwassee Island) where **Chief John Jolly** lived and with whom *Sam Houston* made his home for three years.

The old Waterhouse tract in Rhea County included the Indian medical spring, (Rhea Springs) on the “Old Indian Truce”. The Indian Spring at Harriman is also on the Truce. In early grants is mentioned so often one can almost walk from the crossing below Chattanooga to the Northern boundary of the State.

1779 July

DRAGGING CANOE Addresses the SHAWNEE DELEGATION

“We Are Not Yet Conquered”

by *John Wood*

“We cannot forget the talk you brought to us some years ago into this Nation, which was to take up the hatchet against the Virginians. *We heard and listened to it with great attention, and before the time that was appointed to lift it, we took it up and struck the Virginians. Our Nation was alone and surrounded by them. They were numerous and their hatchets were sharp; and after we had lost some of our best warriors, we were forced to leave our towns and corn to be burnt by them; and now we live in the grass as you see us. But we are not yet conquered, and to convince you that we have not thrown away your talk, here are four strands of wampums we received from you when you came before us a messenger to our Nation.*”

The talk of **Dragging Canoe** made a lasting impression upon the Shawnees. The Cherokee and Shawnees put the ill feeling and hostilities, which had existed for more than a 100 years. The two peoples exchanged pledges of aid in the war. In the confirmation of this friendship, a number of the Chickamauga to the Ohio Valley, where they lived with the Shawnees and shared their defeats & victories of the war. In return, about a hundred Shawnees came South to live with the Cherokees.

friend
Cherokees
during

aside forever
ship & mutual
moved North
the rest

1779 DRAGGING CANOE Relocates His TOWNS in a more Impregnable Area , Down the TENNESSEE RIVER.

The “**Savage Napoleon**,” led the bulk of his warriors around the base of Mountain, making full strategic use of the windings of the river and located in the sites which to be known as the **Five Lower Towns of the Cherokees**. The sites of these towns were in Creek but this made little difference, as many of his followers were Creek. However, he sent a delegation by his brother **Little Owl** to request permission of the great Creek **Chief Alexander McGilivray**, consent. The **Five Lower Towns** were old Indian town sites, extending back to & beyond the time

Chatanuga
soon came
Territory,
headed
who gave his
of *DeSoto*.
concealed base
moving

For purposes of offensive warfare, the location of these lower towns was excellent. It was a from which the **Chickamaugas** could issue in armies of one or two thousand, or in scattered bands, **by paths known only to them, free from observation, free to choose the time and place to strike.** Starting with the entrance to the “**Suck**,” following down river, to the “**Narrows**”, through the **Canyon Cliffs**, past **Nick-o-Jack Cave**, following the **Tennessee River into Alabama**.

Any hostile force attempting to move down river would be seen at or before **Tuskegee Town**, who, in turn, **would alert the lower towns** by sending a “runner” through the **secret mountain paths** along and above the river. There would be **hidden from view from the boats or rafts who were faced with the navigational hazards** of the treacherous “**Suck**”, “**Narrows**”, “**Boiling Pot**” and Shoals of the Tennessee River.

With his back to the mountains, He & His “Chickamaugas” would face the river.

**“We
will
keep
our land!”**

Valley of the Lower Towns

“There will be No American Encrochers on These Chickamauga Lands!”

1779 THE FIVE LOWER TOWNS of DRAGGING CANOE & the CHICKAMAUGAS

Dragging Canoe chose he Headquarters to be at **Running Water Town**. He gathered his most formidable foes of the new settlers as his chiefs. He was friendly with the British, French and Spanish, but for the Americans who would take his Peoples lands, he had only undying hatred, bullet, tomahawk, and arrow.

For fifteen years, until his death, he made good his boast to Judge **Richard Henderson**. *“You have bought a fair land, but you will find it dark and bloody!.*

1. **Lookout Mountain Town “Stecoyee”**

Located on Lookout Mountain Creek, on the West bast of Lookout Mountain, North of Trenton Georgia, and about 15 miles from the mouth of Lookout Creek and 15 miles to the Southward of the **Running Water Town**. **Lookout Mountain Town** contained 80 huts in 1790. A valley leads from the mouth of Lookout Mtn Creek three or four miles wide, to this town.

Lookout Mountain. Dragging Canoes scouts could see for Miles from all sides of this awesome mountain. Up and down the Tennessee River , almost to his base at Running Water Town.

The Cherokee name for Lookout Mountain was Tali-danda-ganu’ Meaning “Two looking at each other” or two mountains facing each Other. The Creek name for it was Chado-na-ugsa “Rock Coming to an end” Hence the work Chattanooga.

The treacherous waters of the “Suck,” :Boiling Pot,” “Skillet,” “Pan,” “Narrows” and “Tumbling Shoals” insured the Chicamaugas the river control was theirs.

2. RUNNING WATER TOWN “Amo-Gayunyi” “Amo ga yun yi” Dragging Canoe’s Headquarters.

Here Dragging Canoe put his back to the mountain facing The Tennessee River, insuring complete control. [now Ladd’s Mtn At Whiteside by Running Water Creek] Running Water Town is Located on the south Bank of the Tennessee River, [except 5 or 6 huts which were on the South side] three miles above Nickajack Town. There were 100 huts in 1790, including some of the Shawnee Tribe. This was also a common crossing place for Creek Indians. Running Water Town was 12 miles downstream from the Dangers of the treacherous “Suck”, “Pot” and “Pan” of the River.

Then came the “Narrows” where the winding river “cuts a Deep swath” through the mountain. Steep cliffs rise straight up from The water on both sides of the narrow passage.

Warriors hiding in the bushes of these high cliffs could take Advantage as the men in the boats fought for control in the rapids.

If the boats somehow made it past this danger, the Indians Could still hide their canoes among the bull-rushes on both river Banks as the boats left the “narrows” and have their way with the Settlers then. A hand full of warriors could now control any and all The river passage.

Running Water Town was just above the bend in the river, [see photo above] and below the “Narrows” as visible on this more recent “location” map of that area of the Tennessee River.

Steep Cliffs rose up on both sides of the “Narrows” where the Indians hid and looked down on any river passage.

3. **NICK-O-JACK TOWN “Ani kusati’yi” “Old Creek Place”**

Nickajack Town was located on the South bank of the Tennessee River, three miles West of Running Water Town, five miles above Long Island Village and fifteen miles below the “Suck”

It contained about forty huts in 1790. Some Shawnees also settled there in 1789 and 1790. Here the Creek and Northward trails cross.

The cavernous Nick-O-Jack [Nick-A-Jack] Cave gave added safety to the site, plus secret entrance ways, that only the Indians who lived There would have access to. Lush cleared areas to grow their corn and tend their horses lay nearby.

Dragon Canoe’s brother, **Turtle-at-Home** owned and operated a ferry close by, making easy access to both sides of the river. [later the Ferry was known as **“Lowrys”, “Loves” & “Shellmound”**]

A drawing of Nick-A-Jack Cave from Harpers News shows The main entrance viewed from inside the cave. The largest Natural cave opening in America. [62’ x 172’] Just outside This cave was Nickajack Town. To the right and beyond those distant Cumberland Mountains were the earlier Towns of “Dragon Canoe” and the dreaded “Chickamaugas.”

Nick-O-Jack Cave “Tecallassee” 1855 Drawing from Harpers Weekly
“Old Crossing Place of the Great Indian Warpath”

Modern view of Nickajack Cave from the authors home across the Tennessee River.
The entrance is massive, even though now inundated with the waters of Nickajack Lake.

4. LONG ISLAND TOWN **Amo yeli gunhita**

Long Island Town was located on a natural Island in the Tennessee River with some Huts built on the southern shore.

Long Island extended down into Alabama. [now Bridgeport] crossing the Tennessee boundary line. Ten miles down the Tennessee River following along the ‘Great War Path’ was positioned **Dragging Canoe’s** Chickamauga fortress called **Crow Town**.

Dragging Canoe had earned the name the white man chose for him. “The **Savage Napoleon**”.

Dragging Canoe

Old Drawing of **Long Island Town**
From Harper’s Weekly

Air view of **Long Island Town** looking upstream. Overlooking Battle Creek. [now South Pittsburg] Several miles beyond were located **Nickajack Town** and **Running Water Town**, by Running Water Creek. [at now Hale Town, where the bridge crosses the Tennessee River at Highway 41] A small part of **Long Island** is in Tennessee, the major portion lies in the State of Alabama. The Island was heavily wooded in **Dragging Canoes’** day, and warriors could easily hide along the banks of the river defending both sides of the Island. No land encroachers, or riverboats could safely pass these Indian Towns. In the far left background Aetna Mountain overlooks **Running Water Town**. and through the early morning haze you can almost view far off Lookout Mountain.

Over-view from a mountain looking down on
Long Island .[at the Tennessee/Alabama State line]

5. CROW TOWN Ka gun yi [Southern most of the 5 Towns of Chickamauga's]

Crow Town was located on the North side of the Tennessee River, one half mile from the river up from Crow Creek. It was the lowest (Southern most) of the Five Lower Towns of **Dragging Canoe** and the dreaded Chickamaugas.

Crow Town contained 30 huts in 1790. The Creeks and Northward Indian Tribes crossed there.

Situated approximately 30 miles from the Tennessee River "Suck", any boats coming down river that somehow escaped the fury of the Chickamaugas from the other locations would be dealt with at **Crow Town**. [*Donald Davidson* recanted it well in his book the "Old River – The Tennessee" and *Governor Blount* gave his description on the Five Lower Towns in 1792 in a letter to *Henry Knox*, Secretary of War.]

"The location of these Five Towns of the "Chickamauga" met all requirements of military security.

On the East, the approach was guarded by the defiles of the "Suck" and the rugged masses of Lookout and Raccoon Mountain ambush. No hostile force could come from that direction. To the North and West was the Tennessee River, which any attacking force must cross; and at that time the pioneers knew no path that led to a crossing in the vicinity of the Five Lower Towns. To the South, at **Dragging Canoe's** back, where his Creek allies and the mountain wilderness.

If invaders came overland from the East, a canoe would shoot away from New Settico or Tuskegee Island Town and settle with them. If a boat was sighted on the River, a runner hurried overland by the short route, and by the time the voyagers had navigated the circuitous "Narrows" an ambush was ready. Guileful canoes would put out in pretense of friendliness, but other canoes, packed with warriors would hide in the cane thickets. If the voyagers somehow got away, they would be pursued and overhauled at Muscle Shoals."

"They" would be dealt with at one of the Five Town sites. Under his blanket, **Dragging Canoe's** tomahawk laughed at the white man.

"We will have our Lands!"

The Five Towns of Dragging Canoe

1. Amo gay unyi [Running Water Town,
2. Ani kus ati ye [Nick-O-Jack Town
3. Amo yeli gunhita [Long Island Town]
4. Steco yee [Lookout Mountain Town]
5. **Ka gun yi [Crow Town]**

DRAGGING CANOE- Time Line

1779

The **ATTACK** of the *DONELSON FLOTILLA* 1779 Tennessee River at the “Canyon of the South”

James Robertson plans for a Cumberland Settlement.

It began with the **Treaty of Sycamore Shoals** and the purchase by *Judge Henderson* and the Transylvania Company.

Henderson had lost his claim to Kentucky, which was part of original Indian Land Purchase, and now was interested in trying to promote American Settlement in that portion of the purchase that was within the “Tennessee” area.

Henderson talked with *James Robertson* and *John Donelson* among others. *Robertson* made a trip to the Cumberland in 1779, liked what he saw and returned home to continue to plan for migration; even though this meant that the people in the migration would be moving some 200 miles directly into the Indian country. This area was without a continuous Frontier to tie them in with assistance or support of any kind against the dangers of Chickamauga attacks.

Robertson and the men of the party drove livestock overland, by way of Kentucky, down into the Nashborough area during the winter months of 1779. Their plan was to erect cabins, plant corn, clear the land and plan for the arrival of the women and children who were coming later by river route. With the horses, cows, hogs, and sheep forming a caravan, they followed a route that made a great bend

With the horses, cows, hogs and sheep forming a caravan, through the wild Kentucky country.

The extreme cold winter made the trip difficult, and there were many hardships along the way. Upon reaching the Cumberland River and finding it frozen, it was no small task to drive horses & stock across safely.

Thus the Cumberland Settlement, later to become the center of the Western expansion had its beginning.

James Robertson and the men drove the livestock overland, By way of Kentucky, down into the Nashborough area.
“Overmountain Men” by *P.Alderman*, drawing by *Bernie Andrews*.

1779 December 22nd. The *Donelson River Trip*

The women and children, some slaves, and other men planned to make the trip to the same destination by Way of the Tennessee River.

A very spectacular flotilla, embarked upon the waters of the Tennessee, was that led by *Col. John Donelson*, which was organized and fitted out at Kingsport in 1779. The men, livestock, and much of the equipment had made the trip safely overland and now the women, children, and rest of the party were to complete the plan for a new settlement at Nashborough. Flatboats were constructed and equipped to

to carry the household furnishing and necessities of the Voyage plus the settlers' families.

They left Fort Patrick Henry, near the end of December 1779, after suffering several setbacks, due To the extremely cold winter a total of 30 boats in a Flotilla finally passed through the Chickamauga Towns [now Chattanooga].

“whirl” was passed, the river widened to a placid gentle current, all Appeared safe, except the boat of Jonathan Jennings, which ran on a large rock projecting from the Northern shore. While the family of Jennings was trying to get the boat off, one of his sons, another young white man and a Negro jumped from the boat and left. The Indians were again firing down on them, the Negro was drowned, young Jennings and his companion swam to the North bank of the river where they found a canoe and again headed down the river; but later the Indians caught up with them. The young man was killed, Young **Jennings** knocked down and captured, but later rescued by an Indian trader, named **Rogers**, who ransomed him with goods. The Jennings boat later caught up with the main flotilla.

Due to the presence of small pox on board, one other boat

The expedition by river route heading for Nashborough left in December, 1779. The little fleet totaled about 30 boats.

[Over mountain Men” by *P. Alderman*. Drawing by *Bernie Andrews*.]

The enraged Chickamaugas' were still smarting from the severe chastisement of **Shelby** and the others who had burned their towns the year before, thus, when the **Donelson** fleet appeared in the gorge below Lookout Mountain they attempted to take their revenge.

The flotilla now arrived at the “Whirl” or “Suck” in The river, then through the upper part of the “Narrows”, then Then the “boiling Pot” where some of the party landed on the Northern shore. The Indians appeared immediately over their Heads on the opposite cliffs and began firing down on them. A hasty retreat was made to the boats, and the Indians, lining The bluffs continued to fire. After the “whirl” was passed, the

Map showing the Voyage of the Good Boat “Adventure” through the Chickamauga Towns of **Dragging Canoe**.

In the flotilla was trailing behind, a little distance from the others. This boat was unarmed. Venturing too near the shore, the boat was set upon by the Indians, and was captured by the angry Chickamaugas. Several of the sick passengers were slain, among them a new-born infant of *Mrs. Peyton*.

Tradition states that several hundred warriors contracted smallpox from their captives, from which they suffered severely and many of the Indians died.

The *Donelson* flotilla, by large, made it safely through the treacherous waters of the river gorge and on down to Muscle Shoals, where they expected to meet with James Robertson and continue the trip overland from there. Finding no sign of them, they continued on down through the hazardous shoals and on down the river.

Map of the Voyage of the *Donelson* Party, to Nashboro {Nashville}

Even before the *Donelson* voyage, a few parties of emigrants left the Holston And floated down the Tennessee River bound for Natchez or for the Illinois country After *Donelson*, in a thin and fitful trickle, other boats took the hazard and got through. But as long as Dragging Canoe and his warriors of the Lower Towns held the river in firm blockade, there could be no such mass emigration down the Tennessee as there was on the Ohio River or its upper Tributaries.

Settlers bound for Tennessee took the old route through the Cumberland Gap and Kentucky.

The Tennessee River later became the “highway” for our first settlers. These flatboats carried many families west. They were poled along or allowed to drift with the current of the river. Musium Nat.Histy TN drawing

Flatboats were exceedingly difficult to Navigate upstream. It is quite probable that Col. *Donelson's* success in propelling his fleet from The mouth of the Tennessee up the Ohio to the Mouth of the Cumberland, thence up the Cumberland to the site of “Nashville” was the Greatest feat of this kind ever accomplished in The country. They completed their journey on April 24, 1780.

Rachel, a daughter of *Co. Donelson* and The future wife of *Pres. Andrew Jackson* was a Passenger on board one of his flatboats. The flatboat on the river has been as that of the covered wagon on the plains.

Sources Chattanooga Times News, & “Overmountain” Men by *Alderman*

1782 Summer **North Carolina Army Called Out Against the Dreadful Depredations of the “CHICAMOGGIES”**

The depredations of the “Chicamoggies” were so dreadful that by the summer of 1782 the North Carolina Assembly called out an army against them. Instructions were for “All the males therein to be killed, and the females captured for exchange, supplies captured to be divided among the soldiers participating.”

John Sevier led the frontiersmen to the vicinity of Chickamauga Creek, but he was misled by **John Watts**, a firm supporter of **Dragging Canoe**. Some Indians were still at Citico, but most of **Dragging Canoe’s** warriors had moved to the even safer lair in the Five new Lower Towns past the perils of the Grand Canyon of the Tennessee. [Now Marion County]

Following the surrender of the Chickamauga **Chief Wyuca** to the Tennessee Volunteers in 1782, *General Joseph Martin* led an Expedition of about 500 men from Knoxville to Lookout Mountain Town, hoping to take **Dragon Canoe** by surprise. Much to their disappointment, the place was deserted, but *Martin’s* troops made a dash to Tuskegee Town [now Williams Island] searching for the Chickamaugas. The Indians, however, were concealed behind huge boulders there and *Martin* was forced to retreat empty handed.

The Towns of **Dragging Canoe** & the Chickamaugas
At the State Lines of Alabama, Georgia, & Tennessee.

Looking down river towards “Marion County, Tennessee” Through the
“Grand Canyon of the Tennessee River” controlled by “**Dragon Canoe**”
And the Dreaded Chickamauga Bands. Post card courtesy of *Mabel Kelly in 1986*.

1783

End of the Revolutionary War.

The **Treaty of Paris** formally **ended the Revolutionary War**. It provided for liberal **American boundaries extending from the Atlantic Coast to the Mississippi River** and from **the Great Lakes to the 31st Parallel to the South**.

INDIAN TREATIES

The following list of **Indian treaties** is used as a topical analysis, & convenient reference to the map. The Treaties are arranged chronologically.

[Robert H. White. Messages of the Gov. of TN. 1796-1821 Vol . #1. Nashville. The Tennessee . Historical Com. 1952.]

- 1721 a. **Nicholson's Treaty**
- 1730 b. **Cumming's Treaty**
- 1732 c. **Oglethorpe's Treaty**
- 1756 e. **Waddell's Treaty**
- 1757 f. **Capt. Jack's Grant (Mar.1st)**
- 1760 g. **Littletons Treaty**
- 1761 h. **Grant's Treaty**
- 1763 i **Treaty of Augusta**
- 1768 j **Treaty of Hard Labor (Oct 14th)**
- 1768 k **Treaty of Fort Stanwix.**
(Nov. 5th.) overlapped by #2
- 1770 l **Treaty of Lochabor (Oct.18th)**
- 1772 1 **Leases of Watauga Settlers**
& **Jacob Brown. (Mar. 19th)**
Nearly coincides with #3.
- 1775 2. **Transylvania Purchase (Mar.17th.)**
- 1775 m. **Purchase of Carter's Valley (Mar.17th)**
- 1775 n **Purchase of Watauga Settlers &**
Jacob Brown(Mar.19th)
- 1755 d **Glenn's Treaty (Nov.24th)**
- 1775 o **2nd Purchase of Jacob Brown.**
(Mar.19th) (#3)
- 1777 3 **Avery's Treaty. (July 20th.)**
- 1783 p **Treaty of Nashborough.(June see #4)**
- 1785 q **1st Franklin Treaty (May 31st)**
- 1785 4 **Treaty of Hopewell. (Nov. 18th.)**
- 1786 r **2nd Franklin Treaty (May 31st.)**
- 1791 5 **Blount's Treaty (July 2nd)**
- 1792 s **Knox's 1st Treaty.(Feb. 17th)**
- 1794 t. **Knox's 2nd Treaty (June 26th)**
- 1798 6 **1st Treaty of Tellico (Oct 2nd)**
- 1804 u **2nd Treaty of Tellico (Oct. 24th)**
- 1805 8 **Chickasaw Cession (July 23rd.)**
- 1805 v **Creek Treaty**
- 1805 9/10 **3rd. & 4th Treaty of Tellico**
- 1806 12/13 **Dearborn's Treaty (Jan 7th)**

Cessions by States

We are not yet conquered!
[see 1779 Dragging Canoe]

Indian Treaties 1721 - 1806

1783 Davidson County
1783 Green County

Act of North Carolina
Created from Washington

<i>Col. James Robertson</i>	<i>Heydon Wells</i>
<i>Capt. George Freeland</i>	<i>James Maulding</i>
<i>Thomas Malloy</i>	<i>Ebenezer Titus</i>
<i>Isaac Linsey</i>	<i>Samuel Barton</i>
<i>David Rounsevall</i>	<i>Andrew Ewin</i>

The Elected Government Officials of Nashborough, Davidson County, and Mero Dist. during 1780 decade.

Dragging Canoe and the Chickamaugas Defeat Plans to:

**Establish a new Settlement in Area of
“Now” lower Marion County, Tennessee.**

{From his Un-edited version of “Sequatchie” **J. Leonard Raulston**
gives us this bit of pre-“Marion County”, Tennessee history}
[That he gleaned from “Ramsey’s Annals.]

1783 In 1783, a group of North Carolinians formed a Company and petitioned the Georgia Legislature for permission to settle on a strip of land lying North of the Tennessee River which South Carolina and Georgia were squabbling about. They said they had bought this land from the Indians. [They had given a group of Cherokees a little merchandise for it.]

John Sevier and **John Donelson** were two of the leaders in this as the country [around what is now South Pittsburg and Bridgeport, Alabama] had made an impression of **Donelson** as he made his famous voyage down the Tennessee River. **John Sevier** had a vision of his State of Franklin spreading and growing even larger. The Georgia Assembly passed an Act creating Houston County, to be located in the Bend of the Tennessee River, and **Sevier** was appointed one of its commissioners.

1786

South Carolina’s strip of land claimed bought from Cherokees

1784 The STATE of FRANKLIN

The settlers and Indians were trying to drive each other out of the “Tennessee” region. The settlers appealed for help from North Carolina. But help did not come. In 1784, three counties in “East Tennessee” revolted against North Carolina and formed the Independent State of Franklin and adopted their own constitution. They made **John Sevier** “The Hero of Kings Mountain” as Governor.

The Cumberland settlements of middle “Tennessee” did not cooperate. In a few years the new state collapsed and the Territory once again became a part of North Carolina.

[The “Lost” State of Franklin lasted for four years.]

1785 The organization of the State of Franklin and disregard of boundaries provided in the Hopewell Treaty bore bloody fruit to the frontier. The Cumberland Region rapidly filled up with white people, many of whom took the water route down the Tennessee River and up the Cumberland to Robertson; fort at Nashville, where they spread out over the choice hunting lands of the Indians.

This route took them by the villages of the Chickamaugas, and hostility increased as warriors viewed the white procession with growing disfavor. Old Chiefs counseled peace, remembering former disasters at the hands of **Sevier** and his militia, but the young braves were not to be held back. More bloodshed.

1785 November 18th. TREATY at HOPEWELL

Boundary lines were drawn by “**The Tassel**” and other headmen. 937 Chiefs & Principal Men signed the document. One corner of North Carolina reserve began “on the Tennessee River where the Southern boundary of the State of North Carolina intersects the same, nearest the Chickamoga Towns.

The boundary line passes directly below the Town of Nickajack and crossed the river at the Northern tip of Long Island, surveyors began notching trees on the river banks at the very doors of Indian huts. The local Indians welcomed Shawnee, Creek, and any other unfriendly to the “Unakas” in their midst”.

They were called renegades and banditti by historians, but :

[The Indians were a primitive people who took the only means of which they had for their self-defense].

**1785 TREATY at HOPEWELL
Cherokee Map drawn by “The TASSEL”**

(Designating places by the Numbers)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Augusta | 18 Mtn, 6 miles South of Nollachucka |
| 2. Natchez | 19. Nollachuka |
| 3. Oconee River | 20. Holston River |
| 4. 5 th Fork of Oconee | 21. Long Island of Holston |
| 5. Broad River | 22. Clinch River |
| 6.. Carahee Mountain | 23. Powell River |
| 7. Savannah River | 24. Martin’s Station |
| 8. Keowee River | 25. Nashville |
| 9. Saluda River | 26. Cumberland River |
| 10. Mississippi River | 27. Wabash River |
| 11. River above the
Fort called Kaskaskia | 28. Ohio River |
| 12. Tennessee River | 29. Falls |
| 13. Ocochappo River | 30. Kentucky River |
| 14. Muscle Shoals | 31. Fort Pitt |
| 15. Chickasaw Claim | 32. Henderson’s Range
for his horses and
cattle.
(within the circle) |
| 16. Ocunna Mountain | |

Between 1785 & 1835
The Cherokee land
had shrunk to a few
million miles.

This Map is copied from one drawn by the Tassel to describe Cherokee claims presented at Treaty at Hopewell, November 1785 At Hopewell on Keowee. The dotted lines show the reduced Territory now agreed upon as a dividing ridge between the Cumberland River, Tennessee and forty miles above Nashville.

- 1785:** White Settlers claiming their land (Grants received as payment for their service in the Revolutionary War) without regard to Cherokee possession rights were claiming and building homes in the area of “East Tennessee” where the Cherokee lived
- 1785** In late 1785 *Seviers’* brother *Valentine Sevier*, at the head of ninety settlers land at [now]South Pittsburg point, where they intended to build a blockhouse and stockade as a nucleus for the proposed settlement. Military officers and justices of the peace were elected and land warrants were issued, signed by *John Donelson*, surveyor.
- 1786** **Dragging Canoe** and his warriors [Chickamaugas] at once placed them in a state of siege and the settlers found it impossible to accomplish anything at all. After a few weeks of incessant fighting, the site was abandoned in 1786.
The defeat of the American Settlers in this attempted settlement caused a great rejoicing among the Chickamaugas. A series of savage raids by the jubilant warriors followed almost at the heels of the retiring new settlers. *Colonel John Donelson*, who had acted as surveyor of Houston County, was killed on the Kentucky road. *Colonel William Christian* was killed a short distance north of the Ohio. *Archie Scott* and four children were killed in Powell’s Valley and *Mrs. Scott* was taken prisoner. A series of atrocities and horse stealing by warriors from Crow Town sent the fiery *Colonel John Logan* into action. He raised a force and followed the trail of the offenders across the Cumberland River and down the Indian path which ran along the base of Walden’s Ridge. After shooting a leader of the Indians and killing six of their number, *Logan* returned to Kentucky.”

1786 Sumner County from Davidson County

1786 Hawkins County created from Sullivan County

Walden’s Ridge [Walton Road] Wilderness Road. into KY
Crow Town below Long Island in Alabama. map by *George Annand*

1788 Dragging Canoe was Kept Well Informed of the American Settlement Plans.

Dragging Canoe was a staunch and unrelenting enemy of the American Settlers seeking new lands from Indian Territory. He was well known to Spanish Officials at Mobile, Pensacola, and New Orleans, and he maintained contact with the English at Detroit. Two of his brothers, **Little Owl** and **Badger** were his able aides. His third brother, **Turtle at Home** had a ferry on the Tennessee River at Nickajack Town. [Later **Lowry, Love, & Shellmound Ferry**] **Dragging Canoes** two youngest brothers made frequent trips representing him as ambassadors to Detroit, to the Shawnees, and to the great Creek **Chief McGilivray**, who was **Dragging Canoe's** firm friend. Also, **John Watts**, the Chickamauga Indian diplomat was frequently in the American Settlements, where his bluff friendliness deceived frontiersmen **Sevier** and **Blount**.

Through all these contacts **Dragging Canoe** was kept advised of the progress of affairs in all directions, and which with all his might he attempted to organize a confederacy of Southern Indians as the only means he knew of checking the new settlers invasion.

1788 Dragging Canoe & Chickamauga's Assisted by TECUMSEH & Other SHAWNEE WARRIORS

In the spring of 1788 a party of Shawnee warriors (eleven) under the leadership of **Chessekau [Chicksika]** with his younger brother **Tecumseh** [who later became the great Shawnee Leader] arrived at Running Water Town traveling from their home in Ohio. **Cheesehau** came to spend some time with his wife and daughter, and the brothers were also wanting to visit their Mother **Methotaske**, who was also at Running Water Town visiting relatives. Their Father, **Puckewhinwah** had died in battle several years before. [1774].

This was at a time when the Shawnee's were engaged in bitter warfare with the Kentuckians, and they had found an ally in **Dragging Canoe**. **Tecumseh** was still a youth at this time, and learned much from the teachings of **Dragging Canoe**.

Dragging Canoe's belief that an Indian Confederacy for all Indian Tribes to ban together, in the fight to keep their Indian lands, later became the life work of **Tecumseh**. The two Shawnee Indian brothers **Cheesehau** and **Tecumseh** heartily entered into the war plans of the Chickamaugas.

1788 February. CHEESEKAU and TECUMSEH Join with the CHICKAMAUGAS

In an attack by the Chickamaugas upon an unnamed fort near this Frontier town of Running Water, [perhaps Bledsoe's] **Cheesekau** and **Tecumseh** readily joined the war party.

It is written [Narrative of *William Hall*, Southwester Monthly, Vol. 1 p.335] the fort was a large stockade, the entrance to which was in the runway of a double log cabin. The Chickamaugas stealthily approached the cabin early in the morning. The schoolmaster, **George Hamilton**, was practicing the children in a song. Taking advantage of the noise, the Indians gouged a chinking from between two logs and fired, striking the singer in the chin. A schoolboy, **Hugh Rogan**, sprang to the opening thus made and fired his rifle. **Cheesekau** was killed. The Indians withdrew, taking the body of their leader with them.

The death of his favorite brother, who had been his companion and adviser since childhood, teaching him among other skills to fight bravely but to scorn all little and mean things. **Tecumseh** swore he would not return to his home in Ohio until his brother had been avenged. He assisted **Dragging Canoe** and the Chickamaugas in battles for nearly two years, making his home and headquarters at Running Water Town as he developed his plans for uniting Indian resistance against American settlers.

Tecumseh was twenty years old in 1788, when he and his older brother, **Cheesekau**, visited the Cherokees to see their mother. They removed to the Lower Towns about 1782, and it is probable that **Tecumseh** spent 1788 and 1790 in the Sequachee Valley with the **Chickamaugas** and perhaps had his headquarters at **Running Water Town**. **Tecumseh** returned to Ohio in the spring of 1790.

“Grand Canyon of the South ”

This area is beautiful now, what must it have been like in the days of **Dragging Canoe**, the **Chickamaugas**, and **Tecumseh**.
“The Grand Canyon of the Tennessee River is called one of the five most beautiful river gorges in America.” Photo by Argosy Magazine.

1788 May 9th.

BROWN EXPEDITION.....MURDER OF THE BROWN FAMILY

A fair sized craft descending down the Tennessee River passed the town of Chickamauga Creek and the Town of Tuckigagee (Tuskegee) Island. This was the *Brown* Expedition and *Colonel Brown* and part of his family were killed at Nickajack by **Dragging Canoe's** Chickamaugas.

MURDER of the BROWN FAMILY

May 9, 1788

Joseph Brown was born in North Carolina on August 2, 1772. His father *Col. James Brown* was an active man in the struggle for independence during the Revolutionary War with Great Britain, and served as a guide to *Col. George* and *Col. Lee's* troops of horse in Gilford County, North Carolina in 1781. *Col. Brown* received a certificate for this and was paid with several tracks of land on the Duck River, and waters of the Cumberland in {now Tennessee}. Only a pathway going through Kentucky served as a road to "Nashboro" at this time. The only other choice was by boat down the Tennessee. One other voyage had made the trip safely in 1786, and *Joseph's* father concluded to go the same route. He was endeavoring to get to them, when his boat was taken by the Creeks and Cherokees.

1788 May *Col. Brown*, with his wife, three daughters and four of his six sons, along with five young men [some of them son-in-laws] *J. Bays, John Flood, John Gentry, William Gentry, John Griffith* and a Negro woman set out as one of the first emigration parties from North Carolina.

1788 May 9th At dawn the *Brown* boat arrived at and safely past the Chickamauga Towns, at Tuskegee Island Town [just below] *Col. Brown* made his first mistake by allowing seemingly friendly Indians aboard. Continuing down the Tennessee River they quickly passed through the "Suck" of the river, through the "Narrows" and then approaching Running Water Town more Indians came aboard. Continuing down river they quickly passed through the "Suck" of the river, through the "Narrows: and then approaching Running Water Town more Indians came aboard. Still more Indians met them at the mill just above Nick o jack.

Here the Indians suddenly made their attack on the boat. *Col. Brown*, two sons, and three sons-in-laws were all killed. *Joseph Brown* was taken captive and held at Nick o jack Town. His Mother was also made captive, two sisters and other younger members of his family were marched away 200 miles further.(His Mother and one little sister were purchased from the Indians by **Alexander McGillivray** the next fall. His little brother (age 8) remained 5 years with the Indians as the one who had him would not sell him and there were no other Creek Indians held captive to trade for him at that time.)

A Youthful leader appropriated appropriated young *Joseph Brown*, a son of the Indian demanded his death, one of the old Cherokee women prophesied that unless they killed the boy he would someday escape and lead an army against their nation. After much deliberation among the Indians, *Joseph* was spared and adopted by "**The Breath**", chief leader at Nick o jack Town. *Joseph* lived with the English trader **Tom Tunbridge** and his wife "**French Sal**" while at Nick o jack. The wife of old **Tunbridge** was a white woman who had been taken prisoner when a little girl down by Mobile. Unable to get back to her relatives until she was grown, she decided it best to stay with the Indians having been raised by them.

When **Joseph** was first captured an old woman was very angry that they had not killed him along with all the other white men on the boat and that her son would soon be back and he would kill him. When **Cutteotoy** came he made efforts to kill **Joseph**, but the old woman begged him not to kill him there in her cabin. **Joseph** could not understand what they were saying, but understood the threat of the man with the hatchet and begged old **Tunbridge** to let him have a half hour that he might pray first. The Indians stripped off his clothes so as not to bloody them. The old woman begged them not to kill him there, or to bloody the road where she carried water. **Joseph** learned later they said they would take him to Running Water Town where they would all “have a frolic with him” before they killed him.

Joseph, while kneeling to pray, noted the Indians had suddenly gone quiet, peeking up with one eye he saw the smiles on their faces, but not understanding their reason, he thought he would not be killed after all. He did not realize the smiles were in anticipation of their “frolic” as the torture of him, before they were to kill him. **Cutteotoy** had taken the Negro woman captured as his “prize” and in rethinking, decided if they killed **Joseph**, the Indian who took **Joseph** would kill his Negro in retaliation, and well might he have thought so, for **Chiachattalley** was a dreaded Indian name, although he was generally called **Tom Tunbridge**, after his stepfather.

Thus began **Joseph’s** life as an Indian. They shaved his head on both sides, Indian style, leaving only a small scalp-lock on top to tie a bunch of feathers to. Only a piece of coarse cloth about 4 feet long and 10 to 15’ broad took the place of his breeches. Short leggings and an old short shirt with a broach to the breath of it, coming down to his waist, was all he wore.

Near the entrance to Nickajack Cave was the Indian Town of Nick o jack.
Photo from Harpers Weekly

The old Historical Map of Marion County, TN (restored by thisAuthor) that now hangs in the local Court House shows the location on the river where the Brown Family was murdered. Information from “Narrative by Joseph Brown” after his release.

1788 Summer. OLD TASSEL Advocate for Peace.

Old Tassel, strongest advocate for peace in the Cherokee Nation and first Beloved Man of Upper Towns with his son and some other friendly chiefs, were cruelly murdered while under the flag of truce in *Seviers* Camp.

All murders and thefts on the frontier were laid at the door of Chickamaugas and their neighbors, the Creeks, but now warriors from every part of the Nation joined in conflict because of frequent raids into Cherokee Territory by *Sevier* and his militia.

1788 August. ATTACK on Five Lower Towns by Gen. Joseph Martin

The Frontiersmen were determined to invade again the Lower Cherokee Country. *Col. Joseph Martin* was appointed to lead the Expedition against the Chickamaugas. His army crossed the Hiwassee the 19th of September near the present town of Calhoun, marched to the North of Lookout Mountain, and camped in an old Indian field. After darkness, *Colonel George Doherty* and 50 men started out to surprise the village six miles below. But as soon as they reached the spur of Lookout Mountain the Chickamauga Warriors fired on them and they retreated to their camp. Again next 5 morning the battle ensued between the bluff and the river. Three captains were killed, *John Hardin, Fuller and Thomas Gibson. Capt. George Vincent and Joseph Bullard* were wounded. *General Martin* proposed to follow the Indians into the wild unknown, but the militia rebelled and refused to go beyond the “Chatanuga” Mountain {Lookout Mountain}. Encouraged by this success, **John Watts** and 300 warriors set out upon the War Path with the first frost of Autumn to drive the white settlers off the Cherokee side of the Treaty line.

Map shows Indian Locations at Lower Towns -Chickamaugas
Portion of a map by Tennessee Government [formerly N.C.]
By J. Reed, I. Wayland, & K. C. Smith 1796

The Hopewell Treaty Line- 1789
The Southern Indians
by: **R. S. Cotterell**

Dragging Canoe gained a great victory when his warriors picked off several of the soldiers from ambush and a retreat was called.

1788 August After the horrible melee on the attack on the five lower Chickamauga towns this letter resulted this letter was left by the Chickamauga Chiefs at the desolated station:

“Mr. John Sevier, and Joseph Martin, and to you, the Inhabitants of the New State:

*We wish to inform you of the accident that happened at Gillespie’s Fort, concerning the women and children that were killed in the battle. The **Bloody Fellow**’s talk is, that he is here now upon his own ground. He is not like you are, for you kill women and children and he does not. He had orders to do it, and to order them off the land, and he came and ordered them to surrender and that they would not be hurt, and they would not, and he stormed it and took it.*

For you beguiled the headman that was your friend, and wanted to keep peace, but you began it, and this is what you get for it..

When you move off the land, then we will make peace, and give up the women and children; and you must march off in thirty days. Five Thousand Men Is Our Number.”

Signed: **Bloody Fellow** **John Watts** **Categiskey** **Glass**

1789 May 19th. GRAND COUNCIL at CHOTA.

Among the 21 Indian Towns represented in this Council at Chota were Chatanuga, Chickamaugah, Stickoe (Lookout Town), Nicogachee, and Tuskeegah. These were all villages of the Lower Towns.

Chief Tickagiska made the following talk:

“ We still remember and abide by the treaty held with your commissioners in South Carolina on May 31, 1785. (1st. Franklin Treaty), and though our hunting grounds and towns North of Tennessee and Holston Rivers are sold unto white people to settle upon without our consent, we still hope Congress will have mercy upon us, we shall not be able to raise our children, neither is there any place left for us to remove to.”

A letter was sent to **President Washington** to New York on August 28. 1789 (along with a copy of the talk) **Keenuhteetah** (Rising Fawn of Highwassee) and **Nontowakee**, accompanied by a white man, **Bennet Ballew**, a resident of the Nation, who served as interpreter.

“At our last treaty, we gave up to our white brothers all the land we could any how spare, and have but little left to raise our women and children upon, and we hope you won’t let any people take any more from us without our consent. We are neither birds nor fish; we can neither fly in the air, nor live under water; therefore, we hope pity will be extended towards us. We are made by the same hand and in the same shape as yourselves.”

But there was no relief for the distraught Cherokees, & the Chickamaugas were constantly on the war path.

1790 January 26th. From *President Washingtons Diary*.

“There is a place called the “Suck” or “Boiling Pot” where the Tennessee River runs through the Cumberland Mountains that is somewhat difficult, occasioned by the narrowness of the water and suddenness of the turn, that causes a rebound and a kind of whirlpool; but many boats have passed it, and not doing damage to any of them The Cherokees may be classed in three divisions.

- 1. The Valley Settlements on the Tennessee above Chota, Eastward of the Iron Mountain**
- 2. Those in the neighborhood of Chickamauga, which is a creek running into the Tennessee River on the South side a few miles above the Suck.**
- 3. The Chicamaugas of the Lower Towns are perhaps the most numerous. It is those of the lower Towns, Chickamauga, Nickajack and Crowtown that give annoyance to the Southern settlements Of Kentucky, the path through the wilderness and the Holstein Settlements.”**

The Chickamaugas had everybody uneasy. They were dedicated to vengeance. Fortified by the Chatanuga Mountain, concealed by the natural fortress of the valley below and armed with stone hatchets, their very name spread terror on the frontier.

1790 August 7th. WILLIAM BLOUNT Appointed GOVERNOR

William Blount appointed Governor of the Territory South of the Ohio River. This territory was composed of the Western North Carolina Counties, which had been recently ceded to Congress, and embraced the settlements on the Northern Cherokee boundary. Mr. **Blount** was also Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the four great southern tribes, with instructions to restore and maintain peace with the Indians. A large order since:

1. Some Indians were friendly to the United States.
2. Some to the Spanish authorities on the South West, who had extensive military and trading posts in Florida and along the Mississippi.
3. Some listened to the Councils emanating from the British Posts in the Northwest.

1790 September. TENNESSEE LAND CO. OPENED OFFICE.

The Tennessee Land Company opened office for Disposal of Lands in Great Bend of Tennessee River near Muscle Shoals.

This was so flagrant a violation of the Treaty Of Hopewell (1785) that the U.S. Government Issued a proclamation against it, but not before a boat load of white people under the leadership of **Col. James Hubbard** and **Peter Bryan** had floated down the river to the proposed settlement. This invasion of their property really provoked the Chickamaugas.

The white settlers built a block-house and erected other works of defense of he Island at Muscle Shoals. **The Glass**, Chief of Lookout Town, accompanied by 60 warriors appeared upon the scene and informed the white men to withdraw of threat of death. After the white men finally left, the Chickamaugas set fire to all the building.

Map showing area of Muscle Shoals

1791 July 1st. The INDIAN TRIBES of the NORWEST UNITE

The Indian tribes of the Norwest unite to oppose **St. Clair's** Invasion of Shawnee County. Miami Rapids. A great assembly of Indians attended. **Shawnees, Delawares, Wyandots, Pottwatomies, Chippewas, Ottawas, Iroquios, Miamis** and others of the Northwest. From the South came **Creeks, Chickamaugas**, and among them was the **Badger**.

England was not then at war with the United States. **McKee**, distributed plenty of supplies and ammunition and led the chief in believing that they had a faithful friend in Great Britain.

Message from **Badger** from Shawnees.

*“To **Dragging Canoe** and the Cherokee Nation Council. Their Nations, the Shawnees said **Badger** borne the brunt of the fight to hold back the white settlement of Kentucky, which was the hunting ground of all Cherokees, as well as their own. The Americans had sent **Gen. Harman** against them with a great army, and they had beaten him. Now they are sending an even greater army under **Gen. Arthur St. Clair**, to cut off the Shawnees as a Nation. They had lost many of their best warrior, now thy are asking the help of all the Cherokees and all tribes everywhere to defeat the new army.”*

Following the death of **Old Tassel**, the Cherokee Seat of government had been removed from Chote on the Little Tennessee, to Ustanali on the Coosawatie River of Georgia [Conasauga]. As **Dragging Canoe** did not attend the Cherokee Council, he instructed his brother to leave the Shawnee talk and Peace Pipe at the house of **Kitegista**, the **Old Price**, brother of **Oconostota**. When the **Badger** arrived at Ustinali, he learned **Kitegista** was in Philadelphia with **Bloody Fellow, Kingfisher**, and other chiefs. He left the Pipe and a message at the home of **Kingfisher**, and he returned to Running Water Town, where he raised a war party against **St. Clair**. When the Cherokee chiefs returned from Philadelphia, [their hearts had been “warmed” by the U.S. and **General Washington** had “wiped away their tears”] **Kingfisher** destroyed the War Pipe sent by the Shawnee, thinking *“they would never again have to fight the Americans.”*

On hearing the news, **Dragging Canoe** hurried to **McGilvray**, of the Creeks. *“Now is the time to promote a great Indian Federation to forever banish the Americans from our hunting ground.”* Willingly **McGilivray** pledged the Creeks and Choctaws would join such a federation. He suggested **Dragging Canoe** himself go to the Chickasaws and persuade them to join, they were great fighters. However they had remained firm friends with **James Robertson**, and **Dragging Canoe** left disappointed, determined to carry on the war alone if necessary.

The Blue Ridge Mtns. which form the boundary between N.C. & TN were barriers to travel. therefore for that reason, it was easier to come into Tenn. from the North than East. Many settlers, came into Tennessee from Virginia. Virginia was in fact thought by some to be a part of that State.

1791 July 2nd. BLOUNTS TREATY

Gathering at White's Fort, (Knoxville) another treaty with which the Cherokees were wholly dissatisfied, in spite of the many gifts and farming equipment given to them. Hoes, ploughs, cattle, and other equipment. Game was going fast away and farming was now a necessity for the Indians to survive.

1791 Treaty that Guaranteed Free Use of The Tennessee River.

Other chiefs at White's Fort (Knoxville) in 1791 signed a Treaty that Guaranteed Free Use of the Tennessee River, but **Dragging Canoe** refused to go along with it and remained in league with Spanish and British agents. He visited the Creek Chief **Alexander McGillivray** to again *promote an Indian Confederation*

1791 October 4th. St. Clair's Army Against the Indians.

With fourteen hundred men, *St. Clair's* army advances against the Indians. although he was a brave man, he was sick and almost unable to sit upon his horse, most of his men were raw recruits. He kept out neither scouts nor outposts.

The Indian forces had chosen for their commander a shrewd Miami chief, the **Little Turtle**. Spies watched every move *St. Clair* made, and brought the news to their leader.

Sick and almost incapable of leading, open mutiny existed among *St. Clair's* troops, some deserting. Sending part of his troops to recapture his own men weakened his force even more against the formidable enemy. In short, the white force was surrounded and the order given to retreat. Only the Indians desire for spoils, the deserted camp enabled any of *St. Clair's* force to escape. The defeat of *St. Clair* was far-reaching, hope again filled the Indian villages, and there was rejoicing with all the tribes. Now they could regain their hunting grounds.

1792 Feb. 17th. More Chickamauga Troubles for the American Settlers.

A party of travelers, consisting of *John Collingsworth*, his family, his family and two friends were on the old Chickasaw Trace from Natchez to the Cumberland. A few miles south of Nashville they walked into an ambush of Chickamaugas, headed by **The Glass** of Lookout Mountain Town. *Collingsworth* was wounded but escaped (died later) *Mrs. Collingworth* and one child were killed, a daughter age eight was taken prisoner. **The Glass** took as his prize a handsome black horse. About this same time a trader (*Mims*) was conveying salt from Kentucky to Nashville, and was killed near Dripping Spring in the Barrens of Kentucky, by **Turtle at Home**, of Running Water Town, and his son taken prisoner.

1792 Feb. 22nd. CELEBRATION at LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN TOWN

The Glass and **Turtle at Home** arrived among the Chickamaugas on the same day.

February 26th. the scalps of **Mims** and *Collingsworth* were taken to Lookout Mountain Town where a great celebration and scalp dance was held. **The Glass**, [warrior chief of Lookout Mtn. Town], **Turtle At Home** and **Richard Justice** took the scalp of trader **Mims** in their teeth and tore it ferociously as they danced, representing their hatred for the whites. Others followed this example.

The war dance was repeated three days later when **Dragging Canoe** brought a party of warriors over to Lookout Creek from Running Water Town (now Haletown). **Dragging Canoe** and Running Water warriors attended the celebration. *The Eagle Tail Dance* was held in honor of this great war chief. Dancing continued that night, with both men and women taking part. The Indians danced all that night, and *the exertion opened up one of Dragging Canoe's old wounds*.

Dragging Canoe died the next day. The implacable enemy of the white settlers was buried at Running Water Town with his pipe and tobacco, his gun and his bow.

It is believed **Dragging Canoe's** body lies today below the waters of Nickajack Lake.

“Unto these Hills” The Ancient Cherokee
“Eagle Dance”

Photo by: **Vivienne Roberts**

DRAGGING CANOE- Time Line

Dragging Canoe, “Sometimes Defeated, but Never Conquered!”

1732 – 1792

Dragging Canoe - Stood Second to None in His Time and In His Nation

“You have bought a Fair Land
But you will find it Dark and Bloody!”

1792 February 28th.

It is surmised that “**The War Chief**” was given burial rites according to ranking Chiefs who died a natural death.

[From “Adair”, as summary of a burial ceremony of a Chief’s ritual.]

“The body is washed and clothed in the Chief’s best garments, the hair is anointed with bear’s oil and the face painted red. The body is seated, on animal skins, outside his winter home, facing West. His most cherished possessions are placed about him.

A prominent headman, usually a kinsman, delivers an eulogy on the achievements and deed of the dead leader. Then the body is borne three times around the place of internment with the Medicine Man leading the procession. The relatives and friends follow behind. at each complete round the Medicine Man pauses and commends the body to the Master of Life.

When this part of the ceremony is finished, the dead Chief is placed in his grave or Tomb, in a seated position, facing East. His gun, bow, and quiver, made of panther skin, is filled with arrows, pipe, tobacco and other useful articles, along with food for the journey are placed in the grave. His widow visits the grave daily, during the first month, to mourn his going.”

Artist conception of and Indian Chief’s burial “Adair” & “Overmountain Men “ by P. Alderan

Dragging Canoe died on February 28, 1792

At Lookout Town

He was buried at Running Water Town

The place He Chose for His Headquarters

Tradition says he is buried near
[now] Haletown, in the area of
the bridge, [now] covered by the
Waters of Nickajack Lake.

Map: The Five Lower Towns of **Dragging Canoe**:

Dragging Canoe, Greatest Opposer to American Settlements - Encroaching On Indian Lands

1792 March 1st. “**Dragging Canoe - Has Left This World.**”

The Great **Chu-Con-Se-Ne** died at Running Water town on the Tennessee River, and with his passing the temporary pacification of the Lower Towns by the success of the recent delegation to Philadelphia, seemed to change. **Dragging Canoe's** nephew, **John Watts**, was elected to succeed him. He carried on the war against the Americans for a while leading nearly a thousand warriors in an expedition against Knoxville in 1793. *Colonel Sevier* pursued and defeated him near the present site of Rome, Georgia.

Dragging Canoe, “as a warrior, he stood second to none in the Nation !”

The War song again began to be heard. The alteration of sentiment was credited by *Governor Blount* to the presence of a number of Creeks and Shawanees in the lower Towns. Since the defeat of *Gen. St. Clair*, the arrival of an adventurer named *Bowles*, [from England] and the death of **Dragging Canoe**. [who under **Little Turkey**, was the head of the Lower Towns.]

1792 July 2nd. Treaty of Holston

By 1791 control of the river traffic was so complete that the U. S. Government called for the “free” navigation of the Tennessee River in the Treaty of Holston by the more peaceful Cherokee. But **Dragging Canoe's** followers, who had not taken part in the Treaty making, refused to recognize such terms, and informed the authorities that *boats* using the Tennessee River “**must take the consequences.**”

The **Treacherous** part of the **River**

“Warping” a boat through the “Suck”
Drawing from Harpers Weekly

The Tennessee River

1792 **Knox County** formed From Greene and Hawkins County

1792 **Jefferson County** created from Greene and Hawkins County.

Important Locations in the Life of DRAGGING CANOE

1. **Chota** Capitol of the Cherokee Nation between 1753 & 1788
2. **Malaquo** Town where **Dragging Canoe** served as Head Warrior as a young man.
3. **Eaton's Station** Scene of the Battle of Island Flats which was **Dragging Canoes** first major engagement with the whites.
4. **Chickamauga** Town founded by **Dragging Canoe** in winter of 1776-7-burned by *Evan Shelby* in 1779
5. **Running Water** One of the Five Lower Towns founded by **Dragging Canoe**. He made his residence here and died in the Town March 1, 1792.
6. **Lookout Mountain** In a battle fought here in 1788 **Dragging Canoe** decisively defeated and turned back an American army attempting to invade the Chickamauga towns.
7. **Nashville** **Dragging Canoe** fought several engagements in this area, and best known of which was the Battle of the Bluffs in 1781.[Formerly Fort Nashborough]
8. **Telico Blockhouse** Where the final peace treaty between the Chickamauga Cherokees and the American was concluded in 1794 by **Dragging Canoe's** successor **John Watts**.

Map by "Journal of Cherokee Studies"
Drawing by:.....

[At left]
View from area of
Nickajack Town, looking
Up river towards
Running Water Town &
Aetna Mountain.
View from East bank.

[at right]Looking up river from
West bank of Tennessee River.
Photo from *Joe Hoge* in 1985