

EXTRACTS FROM THE TRAVELS OF WILLIAM BARTRAM¹

November 27th, 1777, set off from Mobile, in a large boat with the principal trader of the company, and at evening arrived at *Taens* (Tensaw), where were the pack-horsemen with the merchandise, and next morning as soon as we had our horses in readiness, I took my last leave of Major Farmer,² and left *Taens*. Our caravan consisted of between twenty and thirty horses, sixteen of which were loaded, two pack-horsemen, and myself, under the direction of *Mr. Tap-y* the chief trader.³ One of our young men was a Mustee Creek, his mother being a Choctaw slave, and his father a half breed, betwixt a Creek and a white man. I loaded one horse with my effects, some presents to the Indians, to enable me to purchase a fresh horse, in case of necessity; for my old trusty slave, which had served me faithfully almost three years, having carried me on his back at least six thousand miles, was by this time almost worn out, and I expected every hour he would give up, especially after I found the manner

¹Bartram was a Philadelphia born man of some *thirty-seven* years of age who had previously visited the South in company with his father, John Bartram, but he had not reached into the Creek Indian country, having gone on his first trips to Florida and east Georgia. There are some discrepancies in the accounts in the several copies of Mr. Bartram's journal, some showing dates which differ from others. He was without doubt, in that section west of the Chattahoochee River during the latter half of the year 1776 and on his return to Philadelphia, he was at Autossee in our Macon County, on January 1st, 1778.

The John Bartram Association, Inc., in Philadelphia, is a group whose purpose it is to preserve the homestead and the grounds of the old home of John and William Bartram. The house is in the Germantown section.

²Major Farmer resided at a location on the upper Tensas River, above our present Stockton, maintaining a home there because of the unhealthful situation at Mobile. Robert Farmer was the British governor of the Mobile Colony who served several years prior to the American Revolution. He has descendants residing today in Washington City.

³This man *Tap-y*, referred to as the chief trader, was undoubtedly one of the employees of James Germany the licensed trader at Kulmui.

of these traders' travelling. They seldom decamp until the sun is high and hot; each one having a whip made of the toughest cow-skin, they start all at once, the horses having ranged themselves in regular Indian file, the veteran in the van, and the younger in the rear; then the chief drives with the crack of his whip, and a whoop or shriek, which rings through the forests and plains, speaks in Indian, commanding them to proceed, which is repeated by all the company, when we start at once, keeping up a brisk and constant trot, which is incessantly urged and continued as long as the miserable creatures are able to move forward; and then come to camp, though frequently in the middle of the afternoon, which is the pleasantest time of the day for travelling; and every horse has a bell on, which being stopped when we start in the morning with a twist of grass or leaves, soon shakes out, and they are never stopped again during the day. The constant ringing and clattering of the bells, snaking of the whips, whooping and too frequent cursing these miserable quadrupeds, cause an incessant uproar and confusion, inexpressibly disagreeable.

After three days travelling in this mad manner, my old servant was on the point of giving out, and several of the company's horses were tired, but were relieved of their burthens by the led horses which attended for that purpose. I was now driven to disagreeable extremities, and had no other alternative, but either to leave my horse in the woods, pay a very extravagant hire for a doubtful passage to the Nation, or separate myself from my companions, and wait the recovery of my horse alone; the chief gave me no other comfortable advice in this dilemma, than that there was a company of traders on the road a-head of us from the Nation, to Mobile, who had a large gang of led horses with them for sale, when they should arrive; and expected, from the advice which he had received at Mobile before we set off from thence, that this company must be very near to us, and probably would be up to-morrow, or at least in two or three days; and this man condescended so far as to moderate a little his mode of travelling, that I might have a chance of keeping up with them until the evening of next day; besides I had the comfort of observing that the traders and pack-horsemen carried themselves

towards me with evident signs of humanity and friendship, often expressing sentiments of sympathy, and saying that I must not be left alone to perish in the wilderness.

Although my apprehension on this occasion was somewhat tumultuous since there was little hope, on the principle of reason, should I be left alone, of escaping cruel captivity, and perhaps being murdered by the Choctaws (for the company of traders was my only security, as the Indians never attack the traders on the road, though they be trading with nations at enmity with them) yet I had secret hopes of relief and deliverance, that cheered me, and inspired confidence and peace of mind.

About the middle of the afternoon, we were joyfully surprised at the distant prospect of the trading company coming up, and we soon met, saluting each other several times with a general Indian whoop, or shout of friendship; then each company came to camp within a few paces of each other; and before night I struck up a bargain with them for a handsome strong young horse, which cost me about ten pounds sterling. I was now constrained to leave my old slave behind, to feed in rich cane pastures, where he was to remain and recruit until the return of his new master from Mobile; from whom I extorted a promise to use him gently, and if possible not to make a pack-horse of him.

Being now near the Nation, the chief trader with another of our company set off a-head for his town, to give notice to the Nation, as he said, of his approach with the merchandize, each of them taking the best horse they could pick out of the gang, leaving the goods to the conduct and care of the young Mustee and myself. Early in the evening we came to the banks of a large deep creek, a considerable branch of the Alabama; the waters ran furiously, being overcharged with the floods of rain which had fallen the day before.⁴ We discovered immediately that there was no possibility of crossing it by fording; its depth

⁴This stream is, according to students who have examined the topography of the county, Pintlala Creek. The writer probably followed the trading path which crossed the stream quite near the mouth (about where

and rapidity would have swept our horses, loads and all, instantly from our sight; my companion, after consideration, said we must make a raft to ferry over our goods, which we immediately set about, unloading our horses and turning them out to range. I undertook to collect dry canes, and my companion, dry timber or logs and vines to bind them together; having gathered the necessary materials, and laid them in order on the brinks of the river, ready to work upon, we betook ourselves to repose, and early next morning set about building our raft. This was a novel scene to me, and I could not, until finished and put to practice, well comprehend how it could possibly answer the effect desired. In the first place we laid, parallel to each other, dry, sound trunks of trees, about nine feet in length, and eight or nine inches diameter; which binding fast together with grape vines and withs, until we had formed this first floor, about twelve or fourteen feet in length, we then bound the dry canes in bundles, each near as thick as a man's body, with which we formed the upper stratum, laying them close by the side of each other, and binding them fast; after this manner our raft was constructed. Then having two strong grape vines, each long enough to cross the river, we fastened one to each end of the raft, which now being completed, and loading on as much as it would safely carry, the Indian took the end of one of the vines in his mouth, plunged into the river and swam over with it, and the vine fixed to the other end was committed to my charge, to steady the raft and haul it back again after being unloaded. As soon as he had safe landed and hauled taught his vine, I pushed off the raft,

DeSoto crossed in 1540) and not far from the Western Railway of Alabama's station, Manac, near the boundary line of Lowndes County.

The arrival at the Tallapoosa River "in the evening," must have been at the place understood by present students as the lower one of the three Shawnee towns. Sawanoga, or as he spells it, "Savannuca," was composed of a town and two branch towns on the south side of the Tallapoosa River, never on the north side, in Montgomery County. The main trail actually led to Muklasa. There may have been a branch from this trail leading up two or three miles to that Shawnee village located about the site of the old Ernest Dreyspring plantation. This is two miles above the mouth of our Seven Mile Branch. This stream is on some maps shown as *Sawanoogi Creek* and Bartram may have meant that he was arriving at *Sawanogi Creek*, not town.

which he drew over as quick as possible, I steadying it with my vine; in this manner, though with inexpressible danger of losing our effects, we ferried them all safe over. The last load, with other articles, contained my property, with all my clothes, which I stripped off, except my breeches, for they contained matters of more value and consequence than all the rest of my property put together; besides I did not choose to expose myself entirely naked to the alligators and serpents in crossing the flood. Now seeing all the goods safe over, and the horses at a landing place on the banks of the river about fifty yards above, I drove them all in together, when, seeing them safe landed, I plunged in after them, and being a tolerable swimmer, soon reached the opposite shore. But my difficulties at this place were not yet at an end, for our horses all landed just below the mouth of a considerable branch of this river, of fifteen or twenty feet width, and its perpendicular banks almost as many feet in height above its swift waters, over which we were obliged to carry every article of our effects, and this by no other bridge than a sapling felled across it, which is called a raccoon bridge; and over this my Indian friend would trip as quick and light as that quadruped, with one hundred weight of leather on his back, when I was scarcely able to shuffle myself along over it astride. At last having re-packed and sat off again, without any material occurrence intervening, in the evening we arrived at the banks of the great Tallapoosa River, and came to camp under shelter of some Indian cabins, in expansive fields, close to the river bank, opposite the town of *Savannuca*. Late in the evening a young white man, in great haste and seeming confusion, joined our camp, who immediately related, that being on his journey from Pensacola, it happened that the very night after we had passed the company of emigrants, he met them and joined their camp, in the evening; when, just at dark, the Choctaws surrounded them, plundered their camp, and carried all the people off captive, except himself, he having the good fortune to escape with his horse, though closely pursued.

Next morning very early, though very cold, and the surface of the earth as hoary as if covered with a fall of snow, the trader standing on the opposite shore entirely naked, except for a

breech-clout, and encircled by a company of red men in the like habit, hailed us, and presently with canoes, brought us all over with the merchandize, and conducted us safe to the town of *Mucclassee*,⁵ a mile or two distant.

The next day was a day of rest and audience; the following was devoted to feasting, and the evening concluded in celebrating the nuptials of the young Mustee with a Creek girl of *Mucclasse*, daughter of the chief and sister to our *trader's wife*.⁶

The trader obliged me with his company on a visit to *the Alabama*,⁷ an Indian town at the confluence of the two fine rivers, the Tallapoosa and Coosau, which here resign their names to the great Alabama, where are to be seen traces of the ancient French fortress, Thoulouse; here are yet lying, half buried in the earth, a few *pieces of ordnance*,^{*} four and six pounders. I observed, in a very thriving condition, two or three very large ap-

⁵The town of Mucclassee, was what is generally known as "Muklasi," a town which must have existed on both sides of the stream and was located on what we know today as the Dr. William Westcott place, in northern Montgomery County, some nine miles east of Montgomery. It was a town of considerable antiquity, and the most eastern one in the Creek country which continued to practice Alibamo customs.

⁶The trader's wife referred to, is the Indian wife of John Tarwin (sometime known as Tarvin), a man frequently mentioned in connection with Mr. Germany. He is not accounted for in 1796.

⁷"The Alabama," an Indian town at the confluence of the two fine rivers, referred to was the town of Taskigi, generally understood, to be a Creek town but Mr. Bartram's observations are strengthened by archeological investigations conducted at this point during the past hundred years. Pre-historic evidence suggests that the original people living there were not Creeks, though these people did subsequently occupy the site.

^{*}The "pieces of ordnance" found by him were the remnants of eight cannon mounted there in the early days of the French occupancy. The Indian town was about a quarter of a mile down stream from French Toulouse. Two of the cannon seen by Mr. Bartram in 1777 (you should note that he was here during Christmas week and actually on Christmas Day), were re-mounted, in 1814, on Fort Jackson when General Pinckney christened that point to honor General Andrew Jackson. One of these guns was exploded in Montgomery on February 25, 1825, in a political celebration. It is now in the Department of Archives and History.

ple trees, planted here by the French. This is, perhaps, one of the most eligible situations for a city in the world; a level plain between the conflux of two majestic rivers, which are exactly of equal magnitude in appearance, each navigable for vessels and perriaugas at least five hundred miles above it, and spreading their numerous branches over the most fertile and delightful regions, many hundred miles before we reach their sources in the Apalachean Mountains.

Stayed all night at *Alabama*, where we had a grand entertainment at the public square, with music and dancing, and returned next day to *Mucclassee* where being informed of a company of traders about setting off from *Tuckabatche* for Augusta, I made a visit to that town to know the truth of it, but on my arrival there they were gone; but being informed of another caravan who were to start from the Ottassee town in two or three weeks time, I returned to *Mucclassee* in order to prepare for my departure.

Now having all things prepared for my departure, early in the morning, after taking leave of my friend the trader of *Mucclassee*, I sat off, passed through continued plantations and Indian towns on my way up the Tallapoose River, being everywhere treated by the inhabitants with marks of friendship, even as though I had been their countryman and relation. Called by the way at the beautiful town of Coolome, where I tarried some time with *Mr. Germany*,⁹ the chief trader of the town, *an elderly gentleman*, but active, cheerful and very agreeable, who received and treated me with the utmost civility and friendship; his wife is a Creek woman, of a very amiable and worthy character and disposition, industrious, prudent and affectionate; and by her he had several children, whom he is desirous to send to Savanna or Charleston, for their education, but cannot prevail on his wife

⁹Mr. Germany, "the elderly gentleman," was James Germany, who must have resided here in the Nation for quite a long time. He was licensed for the town of Kulumi (and had one or two adjacent towns under his jurisdiction), by the Colonial Trade Relations Agreement of 1761, and no doubt lived here on the Tallapoosa River until his death. His family is mentioned as late as 1796.

to consent to it; this affair affects him very sensible, for he has accumulated a pretty fortune by his industry and commendable conduct.

Leaving *Coolome*,¹⁰ I re-crossed the river at *Tuccabache*,¹¹ an ancient and large town; thence continued up the river, and at evening arrived at *Attassee*,¹² where I continued near a week, waiting the preparations of the traders, with whom I was to join in company to Augusta.

The next day after my arrival, I was introduced to the ancient chiefs, at the public square or areapagus; and in the evening, in company with the traders, who are numerous in this town, repaired to the great rotunda, where were assembled the greatest number of ancient venerable chiefs and warriors that I had ever beheld; we spent the evening and great part of the night together, in drinking Cassine¹³ and smoking Tobacco. The great *council*

¹⁰*Coolone*, scientifically spelled today, Kulumí, had houses on both sides of the Tallapoosa River. The original earliest site was in our Montgomery County on the Goodwin plantation, near Cook Station, twelve miles east of Montgomery, the property now known as the Jenkins place. It was long known as Mrs. Emma Dreyspring's place. It is a mile west of Johnson's Bridge at the site of old Ware's Ferry. Note here the difference in the spelling of the name "Attassee."

¹¹The town of "Tuccabache," was on the west side of the Tallapoosa River, in our present Elmore County, two miles south of Tallassee.

¹²The town of "Ottassee" was on the east side, at that point on the south bank, of the Tallapoosa River, in present Macon County and two miles west of our Shorter town. The traveler was on the north side of the stream, went up to Tukabahchi (as we spell it today) where he crossed over a better ford and came down to Atasi (as it is scientifically spelled today) (or Autossee), as some other writers have spelled it.

¹³Mr. Bartram's description of the ceremony of the "black drink" is the one which has been the most often quoted from and referred to by subsequent writers. To understand the ceremony one must know something of the background of the history of the Creek Nation. The description embodies not only a sketch of the Council House which was generally a round house, but likewise as well he strived to describe and picture in words the *Square* of one of these towns. He possibly took the ceremony at Autossee, because it was immediately fresh in his mind and because it was more elaborately put on, and from it he could get the most ceremonial exhibition of the function. The *Square* of any town was composed of four

house or rotunda, is appropriated to much the same purpose as the *public square*, but more private, and seems particularly dedicated to political affairs; women and youth are never admitted; and I suppose, it is death for a female to presume to enter the door, or approach within its pale. It is a vast conical building or circular dome, capable of accommodating many hundred people; constructed and furnished within, exactly in the same manner as those of the Cherokees already described, but much larger than any I had seen of them; there are people appointed to take care of it, to have it daily swept clean, and to provide canes for fuel, or to give light.

As their vigils and manner of conducting their vespers and mystical fire in their rotunda, are extremely singular, and altogether different from the customs and usages of any other people, I shall proceed to describe them. In the first place, the governor or officer who has the management of this business, with his servants attending, orders the black drink to be brewed, which is a decoction or infusion of the leaves and tender shoots of the *Cassine*: this is done under an open shed or pavilion, at twenty or thirty yards distance, directly opposite the door of the council-house. Next he orders bundles of dry canes to be brought in: these are previously split and broken in pieces to about the length of two feet, and then placed obliquely crossways upon one another on the floor, forming a spiral circle around about the great centre pillar, rising to a foot or eighteen inches in height from the ground; and this circle spreading as it proceeds round and round, often repeated from right to left, every revolution encreases its diameter, and at length extends to the distance of ten or twelve feet from the center, more or less, according to the length of time the assembly or meeting is to continue. By the time these preparations are accomplished, it is night, and

buildings facing each other, but in large towns and more important towns, these four buildings were of larger and more imposing appearances. The conical Council House was actually the place where the deliberations of the large town were held. It was this building to which no women were admitted. The women did not function in governmental affairs and this building was actually the courthouse of that town. Each town in the Creek Nation exercised its own immediate governmental conduct.

the assembly have taken their seats in order. The exterior extremity or outer end of the spiral circle takes fire and immediately rises into a bright flame (but how this is affected I did not plainly apprehend; I saw no person set fire to it; there might have been fire left on the earth, however I neither saw nor smelt fire or smoke until the blaze instantly ascended upwards), which gradually and slowly creeps around the centre pillar, with the course of the sun, feeding on the dry canes, and affords a cheerful, gentle and sufficient light until the circle is consumed, when the council breaks up. Soon after this illumination takes place, the aged chiefs and warriors are seated on their cabins or sophas, on the side of the house opposite the door, in three classes or ranks, rising a little, one above or behind the other; and the white people and red people of confederate towns in the like order on the left hand; a transverse range of pillars, supporting a thin clay wall about breast high, separating them: the king's cabin or seat is in front; the next to the back of it the head warrior's; and the third or last accomodates the young warriors, etc. The great war chief's seat or place is on the same cabin with, and immediately to the left of the king, and next to the white people; and to the right hand of the mico or king the most venerable head-men and warriors are seated. The assembly being now seated in order, and the house illuminated, two middle aged men, who perform the office of slaves or servants, pro tempore, come in together at the door, each having very large conch shells full of *black drink*, and advance with slow, uniform and steady steps, their eyes or countenances lifted up, singing very low but sweetly; they come within six or eight paces of the king's and white people's cabins, when they stop together, and each rests his shell on a tripos or little table, but presently takes it up again, and, bowing very low, advances obsequiously, crossing or intersecting each other about midway: he who rests his shell before the white people now stands before the king, and the other who stopped before the king stands before the white people; when each presents his shell, one to the king and the other to the chief of the white people, and as soon as he raises it to his mouth, the slave utters or sings two notes, each of which continues as long as he has breath; and as long as these notes continue, so long must the

person drink, or at least keep the shell to his mouth. These two long notes are very solemn, and at once strike the imagination with a religious awe or homage to the Supreme, sounding somewhat like a-hoo--ojah and a-lu-yah. After this manner the whole assembly are treated, as long as the drink and light continue to hold out; and as soon as the drinking begins, tobacco and pipes are brought. The skin of a wild cat or young tyger stuffed with tobacco is brought, and laid at the king's feet, with the great or royal pipe beautifully adorned; the skin is usually of the animals of the king's family or tribe, as the wild-cat, otter, bear, rattle-snake, etc. A skin of tobacco is likewise brought and cast at the feet of the white chief of the town, and from him it passes from one to another to fill their pipes from, though each person has besides his own peculiar skin of tobacco. The king or chief smokes first in the great pipe a few whiffs, blowing it off ceremoniously, first towards the sun, or as it is generally supposed to the Great Spirit, for it is puffed upwards, next towards the four cardinal points, then towards the white people in the house; then the great pipe is taken from the hand of the mico by a slave, and presented to the chief white man, and then to the great war chief, whence it circulates through the rank of head men and warriors, then returns to the king. After this each one fills his pipe from his own or his neighbor's skin.

The great or *public square* generally stands alone, in the centre and highest part of the town: it consists of four-square or cubical buildings, or houses of one story, uniform, and of the same dimensions, so situated as to form an exact tetragon, encompassing an area of half an acre of ground, more or less, according to the strength or largeness of the town, or will of the inhabitants: there is a passage or avenue at each corner of equal width: each building is constructed of a wooden frame fixed strongly in the earth, the walls filled in and neatly plastered with clay mortar; close on three sides, that is the back and two ends, except within about two feet of the wall plate or eaves, which is left open for the purpose of a window and to admit a free passage of the air; the front or side next to the area is quite open like a piazza. One of these buildings is

properly the council house, where the mico, chiefs, and warriors, with the citizens who have business, or choose to repair thither, assemble every day in council, to hear, decide and rectify all grievances, complaints and contentions, arising betwixt the citizens; give audience to ambassadors, and strangers; hear news and talks from confederate towns, allies or distant nations; consult about the particular affairs of the town, as erecting habitations for new citizens, or establishing young families, concerning agriculture, etc. This building is somewhat different from the other three: it is closely shut up on three sides, that is the back and two ends, and besides, a partition wall longitudinally from end to end divides it into two apartments, the back part totally dark, only three small arched apertures or holes opening into it from the front apartment or piazza, and little larger than just to admit a man to crawl in upon his hands and knees. This secluded place appears to me to be designed as a sanctuary¹⁴ dedicated to religion or rather priest craft; for here are deposited all the sacred things, as the physic pot, rattles, chaplets of deer's hoofs and other apparatus of conjuration; and likewise the calumet or great pipe of peace, the imperial standard, or eagle's tail, which is made of the feathers of the white eagle's tail¹⁵ curiously formed and displayed like an open fan on a sceptre or staff, as white and clean as possible when displayed for peace, but when for war, the feathers are painted or tinged with vermillion. The piazza or front of this building, is equally divided into three apartments, by two transverse walls or partitions, about breast high, each having three orders or ranges of seats or cabins stepping one above and behind the other, which accomodate the senate and audience, in the like order as observed in the rotunda. The other three buildings which compose the square, are alike furnished with three ranges of cabins or sophas, and serve for a banqueting-house, or shelter and accomodate the audience and spectators at all times, particularly at feasts or public entertainments, where

¹⁴Sanctorium or sacred temple; and it is said to be death for any person but the mico, war-chief and high priest to enter in, and none are admitted but by permission of the priests, who guard it day and night.

¹⁵Vultur facra.

all classes of citizens resort day and night in the summer or moderate season; the children and females however are seldom or never seen in the public square.

The pillars and walls of the houses of the square are decorated with various *paintings and sculptures*;¹⁰ which I suppose to be hieroglyphic, and as an historic legendary of political and sacerdotal affairs: but they are extremely picturesque or caricature, as men in variety of attitudes, some ludicrous enough, others having the head of some kind of animal, as those of a duck, turkey, bear, fox, wolf, buck, etc. and again those kind of creatures are represented having the human head. These designs are not ill executed; the outlines bold, free, and well proportioned. The pillars supporting the front or piazza of the council-house of the square, are ingenuously formed in the likeness of vast speckled serpents ascending upwards; the *Ottasses being of the snake family or tribe*.¹⁷ At this time the town was fasting, taking medicine, and I think I may say praying, to avert a grievous calamity of sickness, which had lately afflicted them, and laid in the grave abundance of their citizens. They fast seven or eight days, during which time they eat or drink nothing but a meagre gruel, made of a little corn-flour and water; taking at the same time by way of medicine or physic, a strong decoction of the roots of the *Iris versicolor*,¹⁸ which is

¹⁰The reference to the picturesque characters and representations on the houses at Atassee, (the correct pronunciation of this name as adopted by later students is Ottassee," with the accent on the first syllable, and a short pronunciation of the second syllable, makes a sound alike "ter") makes possible the historical rendition and the application of the primitive designs so often seen on the Tallapoosa River pottery. The scroll and snake-like figures are of frequent occurrence and bowls and pots in earthenware frequently represent animals, birds, and the like.

¹⁷Present day students are contrary to the belief which the writer infers that this town was of the "Snake Clan." These whitewashed pictures on the columns supporting the awnings or porch covers and representing "speckled serpents," as he expresses it, were perhaps only fanciful designs.

¹⁸*Iris versicolor*, this plant is the common Flag Lily of marshy places and is found always with several other medicinal herbs frequently on Indian town sites. The native variety of the plant has been domesticated and developed into the very attractive *Iris* of commerce.

a powerful cathartic: they hold this root in high estimation, every town cultivates a little plantation of it, having a large artificial pond, just without the town, planted and almost overgrown with it, where they usually dig clay for pottery, and mortar and plaster for their buildings, and I observed where they had lately been digging up this root.

In the midst of a large oblong square adjoining this town, (which was surrounded with a low bank or terrace) is standing a *high pillar*¹⁹, round like a pin or needle; it is about forty feet in height, and between two and three feet in diameter at the earth, gradually tapering upwards to a point; it is one piece of pine wood, and arises from the center of a low circular, *artificial hill*, but it leans a little to one side. I inquired of the Indians and traders what it was designed for, who answered they knew not: the Indians said that their ancestors found it in the same situation, when they first arrived and possessed the country, adding, that the red men or Indians, then the possessors, whom they vanquished, were as ignorant as themselves concerning it, saying that their ancestors likewise found it standing so. This monument, simple as it is, may be worthy the observations of a traveller, since it naturally excites at least the following queries: for what purpose was it designed? its great antiquity and incorruptibility—what method or machines they employed to bring it to the spot, and how they raised it erect? there is no tree or species of the pine, whose wood, i. e. so large a portion of the trunk, is supposed to be incorruptible, exposed to the open air

¹⁹High pillar, this reference is to a pole or actually to the stump of a pine tree which had been erected in the center of a mound at that point. The artificial hill mentioned was the Indian mound of the town and this is yet there. It was a domiciliary mound and the reference by Mr. Bartram is the only known case in Southern history. A pole on the mound or in the mound there may have reference to the use of such poles as a Totem. There was generally a pole in the center of the Square, mounted in a small thrown-up embankment and on which and around which they piled the skulls of captives and to which they tied the scalps, but this reference is the only one noted by Indianologists to a pole in connection with the mound of the town.

to all weathers, but the *long-leaved Pine*²⁰ (*Pin. palustris*), and there is none growing within twelve or fifteen miles of this place, that tree being naturally produced only on the high, dry, barren ridges, where there is a sandy soil and grassy wet savannas. A great number of men uniting their strength, probably carried it to the place on handspikes, or some such contrivance.

On the *Sabbath day*²¹ before I set off from this place, I could not help observing the solemnity of the town, the silence and the retiredness of the red inhabitants; but a very few of them were to be seen, the doors of their dwellings shut, and if a child chanced to stray out, it was quickly drawn in doors again. I asked the meaning of this, and was immediately answered, that it being the white man's beloved day or Sabbath, the Indians kept it religiously sacred to the Great Spirit.

²⁰Mr. Bartram is in error in saying that the *Pinus palustris*, the long-leaf pine, did not grow within twelve miles of this site. It was growing adjacent to this place, for lumbering operations have cut trees more than one hundred years old from this vicinity in recent years, and this variety of pine is growing in limited quantities there today.

²¹The Botanist's observance as to the reverence to the Sabbath is not compatible with facts established by later students. It is not unlikely that on account of the pestilence, a recent occurrence there, that there was a fast day observance about that time and that some ceremony caused this situation which he ascribed as the observance of the white man's sacred day.

THE MUSCOGEES OR CREEK INDIANS 1519 to 1893.

By DR. MARION ELISHA TARVIN

(or Turvin, as pronounced by one of the old settlers of Alabama)*

From tradition, this once most powerful tribe, from the succession of their Chiefs on down, say that they originally crossed over to America from Asia. Finally settled in the northwestern part of Mexico, forming a separate Republic from that of Montezuma. Herando Cortez, with some Spanish troops, landed at Vera Cruz and conquered the forces under Montezuma, in which battle Montezuma was killed. The Muscogees lost many of their warriors in that conflict and were unwilling to live in a country conquered by foreign assassins so they determined to seek another country. They took up a line of march eastward, until they struck Red River, upon which they built a town. The Alabamas, a tribe who were also traveling east from Mexico, but unknown to them before, came in contact with a hunting party of Muscogees and killed several of them. The Muscogees resolved to be revenged. After this the Muscogees again took up their march eastward, in the direction of the Alabamas. This incident led to the final conquest of the Alabamas by the victorious Muscogees, as will be seen. The great streams were crossed by the Muscogees in the order of their grade, the more aristocratic moving first; the Wind family, followed by the Bear, and Tiger, on down to the humblest of the clan. The army, led by the Tustennugee or war chief. The Alabamas finally settled on the Yazoo where DeSoto, the Spanish invador, destroyed their fortress in 1541. From the time the Muscogees left Mexico to the time of their settling on the Ohio, fifteen years had elapsed, which was in 1535. They were delighted with their new home. Their wisdom, prowess and numbers enabled them to subjugate the other and less powerful tribes. They had learned of the mild climate on the Yazoo, occupied by the Alabamas, and they

*The original of this paper is in the hands of Mrs. Wm. H. Durant, Government St., Mobile. Throughout South Alabama today are a number of far removed connections of the old Indian countrymen who lived in the Creek country prior to statehood.

determined to possess it. They crossed the Ohio and Tennessee and settled on the Yazoo. The Alabamas, hearing of the approach of their old enemy, fled to the Alabama and Tallapoosa Rivers and built their capitol at the present Montgomery, now the capitol of Alabama. Here they found a charming region, rich in soil, navigation, and remote from their enemies, and made permanent homes. The Muscogees remained some years on the Yazo, then hearing what a delightful country the Alabamas possessed, they took up a line of march for it, arriving in safety and full force, with their tribe in the best plight, and without opposition, took possession of it; the Alabamas fled in all directions. This is supposed to have been about 1620. Gaining a firm foothold in this new region, enjoying health, increasing population and prosperity, they advanced to the Ockmulgee, Oconee and Ogechee, and established a town where now reposes the beautiful city of Augusta, Georgia. With the Indians of Georgia they had combats but overcame them all. The Muscogees and Alabamas under the influence and in the presence of Bienville, the French Governor, became lasting friends. The Alabamas then joined the Muscogees and returned to their homes on the Alabama, Tallapoosa and Coosa Rivers. The Muscogees were living on the Ohio River when DeSoto and army passed through Alabama in 1540. They had heard of him and the strange people with him and that they were like those they had seen and fought in Mexico. The Tookabatches also joined the Muscogees confederacy. The reputation of the Muscogees had acquired for strength and a warlike spirit, induced other tribes who had become weak, to seek an asylum among them. The Uchee Tuskegees, Ozeills, the remaining band of the Natchez, the Muscogees, who appear to have been a wise and hospitable race, adopted these and a host of others—smaller bands, and thus became greatly strengthened. Tookabatcha, the Capitol of their confederacy, was situated on the west bank of the Tallapoosa. The chiefs were chosen from the Wind or mother tribe, in early days, but since 1800 the Hickory Ground and Tookabatches have both supplied chief rulers. The Muscogee confederacy had one great chief, and subordinates. They had seventy-nine towns, the ones in Alabama were as follows: Tookabatcha, Talese or Tulsie, Ofuskie, Hilubie, Attoussee, Eufaula, Coweta, Cusseta,

Hitchetee, Wetumpka, Tuskegee and Ockmulgee. Bienville planted a colony in Alabama in 1702 and founded the present city of Mobile in 1711. When the English began to explore the country and transport goods to all parts of it, they gave all the inhabitants the name of Creeks, from the many beautiful creeks and rivers flowing through the vast domain of the Muscogees. In 1714, Bienville erected Ft. Toulouse, one hundred years afterwards General Jackson, on the same spot, established Fort Jackson, now Tuskegee, where the notorious chief and warrior, William Weatherford, of the Creek confederacy, voluntarily surrendered to General Jackson, on the same spot where his grandmother Sehoy Marchand, the daughter of Captain Marchand, of Ft. Toulouse, who was born about 1722.

Her father, it will be seen later on, was killed by his own soldiers. Her mother was of the Wind family from whom the chief rulers were formerly chosen. Capt. Marchand, the commandant of Ft. Toulouse, was married to Sehoy, of the Wind family, about 1720. From this marriage they had one child, a daughter whom they named Sehoy. Capt. Marchand was killed by his own soldiers during an attack on him and his officers while at breakfast. They were afterwards shot to death. Lachlan McGillivray, a Scotch boy of sixteen summers, had read of the wonders of America. He ran away from his rich parents at Durmaglass, Scotland, and took passage for Charleston, S. C., arriving there safely in 1735 with no property but a shilling in his pocket, a suit of clothes, a stout frame, an honest heart, a fearless disposition and cheerful spirits. About this period the English were conducting an extensive commerce with the Muscogees, Cherokees and Chickasaws. McGillivray went to the extensive quarters of the packhorse traders in the suburbs of Charleston, there he saw hundreds of packhorses, pack-saddles and men ready to start to the wilderness. The keen eyes of the traders fell on this smart Scotch boy, who, they saw would be useful to them. Arriving at the Chattahoochie his master, as a reward for his activity and accomodating spirit, gave him a jack knife, which he sold to an Indian, receiving in exchange a few deer skins, these he sold in Charleston on his return. The proceeds of this adventure laid the foundation of a large fortune.

In a few years he became the boldest and most enterprising trader in the whole country. He extended his commerce to Ft. Toulouse in the Muscogee or Creek nation. At the Hickory grounds a few miles above the fort, at the present town of Wetumpka, Alabama, he found a beautiful girl by the name of Sehoj Marchand, of whose father we have already given an account. Her mother was a full-blooded Creek woman of the Wind tribe. Sehoj when first seen by Lachland McGillivray was a maiden of sixteen, cheerful in countenance, bewitching in looks and graceful in form. It was not long before Lachland and Sehoj joined their destinies in marriage. The husband established a trading house at Little Tallassee, four miles above Wetumpka, on the east bank of the Coosa and then took home his beautiful wife. From their marriage they had five children, namely; Sehoj, Alexander, Sophia and Jeanette and Elizabeth. While pregnant with her second child, she repeatedly said she dreamed of piles of books and papers, more than she had ever seen at the fort. She was delivered of a boy who received the name of Alexander, and who, when grown to manhood, wielded a pen that commanded the admiration of Washington and his Cabinet, and which influenced the policy of all Spanish America. Lachlan McGillivray with his alliance with the most influential family in the nation, extended his commerce. He became wealthy and owned two plantations well stocked with negroes, upon the Savannah at Augusta, Ga., and Little Tallassee, and at Mobile he had large stores. When his son was fourteen he took him to Charleston and put him at school, and afterwards, in a counting-house, but he having no fondness for this, but a thirst for books, he finally put him under the tutorship of a profound scholar, of his name but no kin. Alexander became master of the Latin and Greek tongues, and a good belle lettres scholar, Alexander was now a man. He thought of his mother's house by the side of the beautiful Coosa, his blow-gun and the Indian lads of his own age with whom he fished and bathed, while young, of the old warriors who had so often recounted to him the deeds of his ancestors; he thought of the bright eyes of his sisters, Sehoj, Elizabeth, Sophia, and Jeannet, so one day he turned his back upon civilization and his horse's head toward his native land. About this time the Chiefs of the Creeks were getting into

trouble with the people of Georgia and with anxiety they awaited the time when Alexander McGillivray could, by his descent from the Wind family, assume the affairs of their government. His arrival was most opportune. The first time we hear of him after he left Charleston, was of his presiding at a grand national Council at the town of Coweta upon the Chattahoochie, where the adventurous Leclerc Milfort of France was introduced to him; he was at this time about thirty years of age. He was in great power for he had already become an object of attention on the part of the British authorities of the Floridas, when Col. John Tate, a British officer who was stationed upon the Coosa, had conferred upon Alexander McGillivray the rank and pay of a Colonel, and he and Tate were associated together in the interests of King George. Col. Tate, according to Pickett's history of Alabama, had now become acquainted with the most gifted and remarkable man that was ever born upon the soil of Alabama. Col. Tate was a Scotchman, of captivating address, and an accomplished scholar. He afterwards married Sehoy, the sister of Alexander McGillivray. They had one child whom they named David, who became a good, wealthy and distinguished citizen of Alabama, and was the grandfather of the writer. Pickett of Alabama was a reliable and truthful chronicler, going to great expense and labor in writing this history of Alabama which is considered authentic. There may be some errors but perhaps the best history that has ever or will ever be written of the State. He lived in the Creek nation for twenty years, understood their customs and language. In relation to the invasion of DeSoto of Alabama, he said he derived much of his information in regard to the route of that earliest discovered, from the statements of General Alexander McGillivray who was the great grand uncle of the writer. General McGillivray ruled that country with eminent ability from 1776 to 1793. On Page 75, Vol. 1 Pickett's History of Alabama, he says: "Alexander McGillivray, whose blood was Scotch, French and Indian, was made a Colonel in the British service, afterwards a Spanish Commissary with the rank of Colonel, then a Brigadier General by President Washington in 1790, with full pay of that office. He was a man of towering intellect and vast information. In 1784 McGillivray was induced to form an alliance with Spain, for various reasons,

the chief of which was that the Whigs of Georgia had confiscated his estates, banished his father, threatened him with death, and his nation with extermination, who were constantly enroaching upon Creek soil. The Spaniards wanted no lands, desired only his friendship. They offered him promotion and commercial advantages. When he had signed the treaty they made him a Spanish Commissary with the rank and pay of Colonel. In 1790 Col. Alex. McGillivray met with the secret agent sent out by Washington from New York to the Creek nation in Alabama. He, with his two nephews, David Tate, and Lachland Durant, and two negro servants, Paroband and Jonah, 24 warriors and chiefs, set out from Little Tallassee, on the Coosa, for New York, proceeding on horse-back they arrived at Stone Mountain in Georgia where they were joined by the Coweta and Cusseta chiefs.

Reaching the house of General Pickens, in South Carolina, the party received the warmest welcome; there they were joined by the Tallassee King. They again set out. Arriving at Guilford, C.H., N. C., they passed on through Richmond and Fredericksburg in Virginia, where they were treated with much kindness and consideration by prominent and distinguished citizens. Arriving at Philadelphia they were hospitably entertained for three days. Entering a sloop at Elizabeth Point they landed at New York, where the Tammany Society received them in full dress of their order. They marched up Wall Street by the Federal Hall—Congress was then in session—and next, to the house of the President, to whom they were introduced with much pomp and ceremony. They were sumptuously and elegantly entertained by the Secretary of War and Gen. Clinton at the city Tavern, which finished the day. When it became known that McGillivray had departed for New York, great excitement prevailed in Florida and Louisiana. Correspondence began with the Captain General at Havana and ended by his dispatching from east Florida an agent with a large sum of money to New York, ostensibly to buy flour but really to embarrass the negotiations with the Creeks. Washington, appraised of the presence of this officer, had his movements so closely observed that the object of his mission was defeated. Washington, communicating with the Senate advised that the negotiations with McGillivray should

he considered informally, as all overtures hitherto offered by the Commissioners had been rejected. Embarrassments existed because the commerce of the Creeks was in the hands of a British Company who made their importations from England into Spanish ports. It was necessary that it should be diverted into American channels, but McGillivray's treaty at Pensacola in 1784, could not be disregarded without breach of faith and morals on his part, but, finding, by the informal intercourse with them, that McGillivray and the Chiefs were ready to treat upon advantageous terms, Henry Knox was appointed to negotiate with them, and a treaty was concluded by him on the part of the United States, and on the other side by McGillivray and the delegation representing the whole Creek nation. It stipulated that a permanent peace should be established between the Creeks and the citizens of the United States; that the Creeks and Seminoles should be under the protection solely of the American government and that they should not make treaties with any State or the inhabitants of any State and that the boundary line between the Creeks and Georgia was to be that claimed by the latter treaty which they had at Augusta and Shoulderbone. Thus did Alex. McGillivray at last surrender the Oconee land about which so much blood had been shed and so much former negotiation had been wasted. It provided that after two years from date, the commerce of the Creek Nation should be carried on through the parts of the United States, and in the meantime through the present channel; that the Chiefs of the Ocfuskees, Tookabatches, Tallassees, Cowetas, Cussetas, and Seminoles, should be paid annually one hundred dollars each, and provided handsome medals and that Alex. McGillivray should be constituted agent of the United States, with the rank of Brigadier General, and the pay of twelve hundred dollars per annum; that the U. S. should feed, clothe, and educate Creek youths at the North, not exceeding four at one time. Thus McGillivray secured to himself new honors and a good salary, by a second treaty which left him in a new position to return home. Even in the presence of Washington and his able Cabinet the Chieftains pushed hard for favorable terms, and received them, says Pickett: "I am indebted to Col. John A. Campbell, an eminent lawyer of Mobile, and Alfred Hennan, a distinguished member of the New Orleans bar, for

placing in my hands papers filed in the district court of Louisiana, containing the letters of Alexander McGillivray to Panton, dated Little Tallassee, Ala., Sept. 20th., 1788, and August 10th., 1789, which have been copied in history at length." I also found among this file the secret treaty written upon sheep skin, signed by Washington, McGillivray and the Chiefs. A celebrated lawsuit brought in this court by the Johnson and other claimants, with the heirs of McGillivray vs. the heirs of Panton, a wealthy Scotchman, of Pensacola and at one time a partner and great friend of McGillivray. This suit was the means of preservation of those historical papers. Pickett says he has only introduced a few of McGillivray's letters to show the strength and high order of his mind. The American State papers contain many of his ablest letters addressed to Congress and the Secretary of War. The writer has a personal recollection of Judge J. A. Campbell of Mobile. It will be seen that General McGillivray is a great grand uncle of the writer. I say this without egotism or the expectation of the praise of men, for which I care nothing one way or the other. His father, Lachland McGillivray, who had been active and influential royalist—the Whigs of Georgia and Carolina felt his weight—when the British were forced to evacuate Savannah, he sailed with them to his native country, having scraped together a vast amount of money. He took an affectionate farewell of his family (Mrs. Sophia Durant and her boy, Lachland, were present on that sad occasion). His plantations, negroes, stock of cattle and stores, he abandoned, in the hope that his daughters, son and wife, Sehoy, then living, upon the Coosa, might be suffered to inherit them, but the Whigs of Georgia confiscated the whole of this valuable property. A few negroes who had fled to the Nation, were added to those already at the residence of Sehoy; thus Alex. McGillivray and sisters were deprived of a large patrimony. He had displayed eminent ability in his dealings with the rival powers, the American, English, and Spanish, who, he felt, cared nothing for the Creeks except for self-aggrandizement. He was humane and generous to the distressed, whom he always sheltered and protected. He had many noble traits, nor the least of which was his unbounded hospitality to friend and foe. He had good houses at the Hickory Grounds and Little Tallassee, also called "Apple Grove," his birth place, where he entertained

distinguished government agents and persons traveling through his extensive domain, with ample grounds and all the comforts desirable. He said he prompted the Indians to defend their lands, "although I look upon the U. S. as our most naturally ally." He could not resent the greedy encroachments of the Georgias, to say nothing of their scandalous and illiberal abuse. He also says, "If Congress will form a government southward of the Altamaha, I will be the first to take the oath of allegiance." This he said in a letter to his friend Panton at Pensacola, in relation to his treaty with Washington. "In this do you not see my cause of triumph in bringing these conquerors of the old and the masters of the New World, as they call themselves, to bend and supplicate for peace at the feet of a people whom shortly before they had despised and marked out for destruction." In 1792 Gen. McGillivray gave up his home to Capt. Oliver, a Frenchman, whom he had so well established in the affections of his people.

He then moved to Little River, Baldwin County, Ala., where lived many wealthy and intelligent people whose blood was a mixture of white and Indian. This colony had formed at an early period for the benefit of their large stock of cattle. His death and the bloody scenes that followed. Gen. McGillivray continued to visit Gov. Carondelet at New Orleans. He owned a trading house at Manchac, La. In returning from New Orleans late in the summer of 1792, a violent fever detained him long in Mobile, recovering, he went to Little Tallassee where he wrote his last letter to Major Seagrove. He appeared to deplore the unhappy disturbances which existed and ascribed them to the influence of the Spaniards over affairs. He had often responded to the letters of the Secretary of War in relation to carrying out the provisions of the N. Y. treaty, and he had explained to the Chiefs and had urged them to comply, but the Spanish influence defeated his recommendations, etc. Pickett says, "This remarkable man was fast approaching dissolution, he had long been afflicted. He spent the winter upon Little River, which divides Monroe and Baldwin Counties, Ala., the account of his death will here by given in the language of the great Scotch merchant, in a letter dated Pensacola, April 10th, 1794, and addressed to Alexander's father, Lachland McGillivray, at Dun-

maglass, Scotland. "I found him deserted by the British, without pay, without money, without property except sixty negroes and three hundred head of cattle, and he and his Nation threatened with destruction by the Georgians unless they agreed to cede them the better part of their country, I pointed out a mode that succeeded beyond expectations." "He died 17th., of Feb. 1793 of inflamed lungs, and stomach troubles; no pains, no attention was spared to save the life of my friend, but he breathed his last in my arms, I had advised, I supported, I pushed him on to be the great man he was." Spaniards and Americans felt his weight and this enabled him to lead me after him so as to establish this house with more solid privileges than without him. He had three children now left without a father or mother and with no friends except you and me. Panton possessed great wealth, owned large stores and vessels in his immense trade. General McGillivray was interred with Masonic honors, in the splendid garden of William Panton, in the city of Pensacola. He was a severe loss to that man and the Spanish government. His death was deeply regretted by the Indians everywhere. The great Chieftain who had long been their pride and who had elevated their nation, and sustained them in their trials now lay buried in the sands of the Seminoles. Gen. McGillivray was six feet high, remarkably erect in person and carriage, and was a charming entertainer. He had a bold and lofty head; his eyes were dark and piercing and he was often spoken of and looked upon with admiration. His fingers were long and tapering and he wielded a pen with great rapidity. His face was handsome and indicative of quick thought and much sagacity. Unless interested in conversation he was disposed to be taciturn, but he was always polite and respectful. When a British Colonel he dressed in British uniform, and when in the Spanish service he wore the military dress of that country. When Washington appointed him Brigadier General he sometimes wore the uniform of the American army, but never in the presence of the Spaniards. Pickett calls him the "tallyrand of the South." Col. Tate, a British officer, married his sister, Sehoy in 1768, as mentioned before, and they had one child whom they named David, born in 1778 at Little Tallassee on the Coosa River, at the residence of his uncle, Alex McGillivray. When a boy he was taken North by his uncle, Gen. McGillivray, and placed at school