

The Battle of Long Swamp was the Last Battle of the Revolutionary War

By Jeannette Holland Austin



Major Elijah Clarke

After the Treaty of Paris was signed which officially ended the Revolutionary War, there was a battle with some Indians in Nelson, Georgia. Throughout the war, the British had used various tribes against the rebels. In Pickens, a band of Tories who had settled there in 1776 along with their Cherokee wives systematically committed atrocities along the Georgia frontier.

This band of whites and Cherokees were mounted raiders and generally killed all men, women and children when attacking a farmstead. By 1780, all of Georgia and most of South Carolina had fallen into the hands of the British. Yet, Elijah Clarke and thirty men passed through the Native American lands to continue the fight in the Carolinas. Actually, they were frontier guerrillas who spasmodically attacked the British at Musgroves Mill, Cedar Springs, Woffords Iron Works, Augusta, Fishdam Ford, Long Cane, Blackstocks. His campaigns were partially responsible for the success of the patriots at the Battles of Kings Mountain and Cowpens.

The news that the war had ended did not reach Georgia in time to prevent Colonel Andrew Pickens and Major Elijah Clarke from leading small army of

Georgia and Carolina Mounted Rifles plus a company of Creek Indian Mounted Rifles on a raid into the North Georgia Mountains. All of the Patriots were dressed in the uniform of the Creek Mounted Rifles. The first two villages which the army of General Pickens visited, did not contain any whites.

The third one did. After the first attack the Cherokees and whites surrendered but in the process allowed the Tories to escape. As a peace offering, the Cherokee chief offered Pickens a Treaty written in English, which gave the Americans the Creek-owned lands in northeast Georgia. After that, the Mounted Rifles discovered the place where the Tory guerillas were hiding and attacked.

At the end of the skirmish, all of the Tories who had not been killed in battle were hung on the spot including the wounded. All during the service of Major Clarke he had received wounds, as well as catching the smallpox and the mumps then running rampart in the ranks. After the war, for his devoted service throughout, Clarke was given a plantation and several thousands of acres in land grants.