

# ANNALS OF THE WEST:

EMBRACING A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF

PRINCIPAL EVENTS

WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN THE

WESTERN STATES AND TERRITORIES,

FROM THE

DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

TO THE

YEAR EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX.

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warfare that had been suffered by the white settlers had aroused so malignant a spirit of revenge that they soon became as remorseless, and often more brutal, than their savage enemies. Their expeditions against the Indians were mere marauding parties, held together only by the common thirst for revenge; and it is probable that any discipline calculated to restrain that feeling could not have been enforced. It is unfortunate for the reputation of Brodhead, that his name is associated with the massacre of prisoners, and the murder of ambassadors, but it is probable that he could not prevent, and therefore did not share, the guilt of those excesses.

Early in the summer of 1781, Gen. Geo. Rogers Clark wrote to Col. Archibald Lochry, the county lieutenant of Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, desiring him to raise one hundred or more volunteers, and one company of cavalry, to join his expedition.

Colonel Lochry consulted Captain Orr upon the propriety of such an enterprise, and the possibility of compliance with his request. "I believed," said he, "it was possible for such a force to be raised, and immediately volunteered to be one of the party." Holding a captain's commission of militia, Orr had no power to order them from home, but by his own exertions, and mostly at his own expense, raised a company of volunteer riflemen. Captains Stokely and Shannon commanded each a company of rangers, and Captain Campbell a company of horse. The party amounted to about one hundred and twenty or twenty-five men. Col. Lochry was the only field officer in command.

The force was rendezvoused at Carnahan's block house, eleven miles west of Hannastown, on the 24th of July, and on the next day set out for Fort Henry, (Wheeling,) by way of Pittsburgh, where it was arranged that they should join the army under Clark. Arriving there, Clark had gone twelve miles down the river, leaving for them some provisions and a traveling boat, with directions to follow him thither. After preparing some temporary boats for the transportation of the men and horses, which occupied ten days, they proceeded to join Clark. Arriving, they found he had gone down the river the day before, leaving a Major Craycroft, with a few men and a boat for the transportation of the horses, but without either provisions or ammunition, of which they had an inadequate supply. Clark had, however, promised to await their arrival at the mouth of the Kanawha, but on their reaching that point they found that he had been obliged, in order to prevent desertion among his men, to proceed down the river, leaving only a letter affixed to a pole, directing them to follow. Their provisions and

forage were nearly exhausted; there was no source of supply but the stores conveyed by Clark; the river was low, they were unacquainted with the channel, and could not therefore hope to overtake him. Under these embarrassing circumstances, Col. Lochry dispatched Captain Shannon with four men, in a small boat, with the hope of overtaking the main army, and of securing supplies, leaving his company under the command of Lieut. Isaac Anderson; but before they had proceeded far they were taken prisoners by the Indians, and with them was taken a letter to Clark, detailing the situation of Lochry's party. About the same time Lochry arrested a party of nineteen deserters from Clark's army, whom he afterward released, and they immediately joined the Indians.

The savages had been indeed apprised of the expedition, but had previously supposed that Clark and Lochry were proceeding together, and through fear of the cannon which Clark carried, refused to make an attack. Apprised now by the capture of Shannon and his men, and by the reports of the deserters, of the weakness of Lochry's party, they collected in force below the mouth of the Great Miami, with the determination to destroy them.

They placed their prisoners in a conspicuous position on the north shore of the river, near, it is said, the head of Lochry's island, and promised to spare their lives on condition they would hail their companions as they passed, and induce them to surrender.

They, however, wearied with their slow progress, and in despair of reaching Clark's army, landed on the 25th of August, about ten o'clock, at a very attractive spot on the same shore, at an inlet which has since borne the name of Lochry's creek,\* a short distance above the point where the Indians were waiting them. Here they removed their horses ashore, and turned them loose, to enable them to feed sufficiently to keep them alive until they could be taken to the falls, some one hundred and twenty miles distant. One of the party had previously killed a buffalo, and all, except a few set to guard the horses, were engaged around the fires which they had kindled, in preparing a meal from it. Suddenly they were assailed by a volley of rifle balls from an overhanging bluff, covered with large trees, on which the Indians immediately appeared in great force. The men thus surprised seized their arms, and defended themselves as long as their ammunition lasted, and

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\* Lochry's creek empties into the Ohio between nine and ten miles below the mouth of the Miami, and Lochry's island, near the head of which the prisoners were confined to decoy their friends, is three miles below the creek.

then attempted to escape by means of their boats. But they were unwieldy, the water was low, and the force too much weakened to make them available, and the whole party, unable to escape or defend themselves, were compelled to surrender.

Immediately the Indians fell upon and massacred Col. Lochry and several other prisoners, but were restrained by the arrival of the chief who commanded them, the celebrated Brant,\* who afterward apologized for the massacre. He did not approve, he declared, of such conduct, but it was impossible entirely to control his Indians; that the murder of Lochry and his men was perpetrated in revenge for the massacre of the Indian prisoners taken by Brodhead's army on the Muskingum, a few months before. At the time of their surrender, Lochry's party consisted of only one hundred and six men. Of these, forty-two were killed, and sixty-four were taken prisoners. The Indians engaged numbered three hundred or more, and consisted of various tribes. Among these the prisoners and plunder were divided, in proportion to the number of warriors of each engaged.

The next day they set out on their return to the Delaware towns. There they were met by a party of British and Indians, commanded by Col. Caldwell, and accompanied by the two Girtys and M'Kee, who professed to be on their way to the falls to attack Gen. Clarke. They remained there two days. Brant, with the greater part of the Indians who had captured them, returned with Caldwell toward the Ohio. A few only remained to take charge of the prisoners and spoils. These they separated, and took to the towns to which they had been assigned. There they remained in captivity until the next year, which brought the revolutionary struggle to a close. After the preliminary articles were signed, on the 30th of November, 1782, they were ransomed by the British officers in command of the northern posts, to be exchanged for British prisoners, and sent to the St. Lawrence. A few of them had previously escaped, a few deserted from Montreal, and the remainder, in the spring of 1783, sailed from Quebec to New York, and returned thence home by way of Philadelphia, having been absent twenty-two months. More than one-half of the number who left Pennsylvania under Col. Lochry never returned.†

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\* It may be uncertain whether Brant was the leader of the Indians at this place. There is no other evidence that he was in the west at that time.

† This statement is derived from a MS. of Gen. Orr, of Kittanning, written from the recollection of his father, Captain Orr, who was in the party, and is corroborated by a

Kentucky was, previous to 1781, organized as a county of Virginia. In that year it was divided into three counties—Jefferson, Lincoln and Fayette. Courts were organized under the laws of Virginia, and a corps of civil and military officers elected. Surveyors for each of the new counties were appointed, whose duty it was to superintend the entry and location of land under the provisions of the law. One only of these was opened, and the inconvenience and delay thus occasioned to the emigrants, who were already settling the new lands, to which they were attracted by their fertility and cheapness, produced discontent. For already, in spite of the difficulties of the West, and the hostility of the Indians, population was beginning to pour into the region south of the Ohio. Particularly it is noticed, that there was in that year a large emigration of young unmarried women into that country, and the consequent establishment of many new families, and the growth of a better and more settled population. The pioneers of the West who then, and earlier, established themselves in all the region west of the mountains, were obliged to undergo many hardships, and to encounter much danger, and to endure much suffering.

For all that region was settled with tears and blood. The measures the colonial governments adopted for defense of the settlers were so ill-concerted, that they were nearly all that period exposed to the incursions of the savages; nor was their condition improved by the Declaration of Independence, for the continental authorities were so fully occupied with the war that they could afford them no relief. As a consequence, they grew up a brave, hardy race, with all the vices and virtues of a border life, and with habits, manners and customs necessary to their peculiar situation, and suited to their peculiar taste. Rev. Joseph Doddridge, D. D., whose early life was spent amidst the scenes and habits of the West, has well described the manners and customs of its early inhabitants. He says:

“A correct and detailed view of the origin of societies, and their progress from one condition or point of wealth, science and civilization to another is interesting, even when received through the

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MS. of Ensign Hunter, who was also a sharer in it. Captain Orr was wounded, by having his arm broken in the engagement; was carried off prisoner to Sandusky, where he remained for several months. At length, finding they could not cure his wound, the Indians took him to the hospital at Detroit, whence he was transferred to Montreal, in the winter, and exchanged with other prisoners at the end of the war. Afterward, in 1806, he was appointed a judge of Armstrong county, Pa., which station he held till his death, in 1833, in his 89th year.