

HISTORY UNDER THE WATERS:

Fort Prince George

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Did you know that under the waters of Lake Keowee lies an 18th century fort?

Fort Prince George was located along the Keowee River, across from the Cherokee village of Keowee. The fort played a central role in trading and defense along the Cherokee Path. The South Carolina Provincial Assembly considered a fortification amid the lower towns of the Cherokee vital to stabilize conditions on the frontier of the province, and in 1748, Royal Governor James Glen promised a fortification to protect both Cherokee and white settlers from the Creek and other invading enemies.

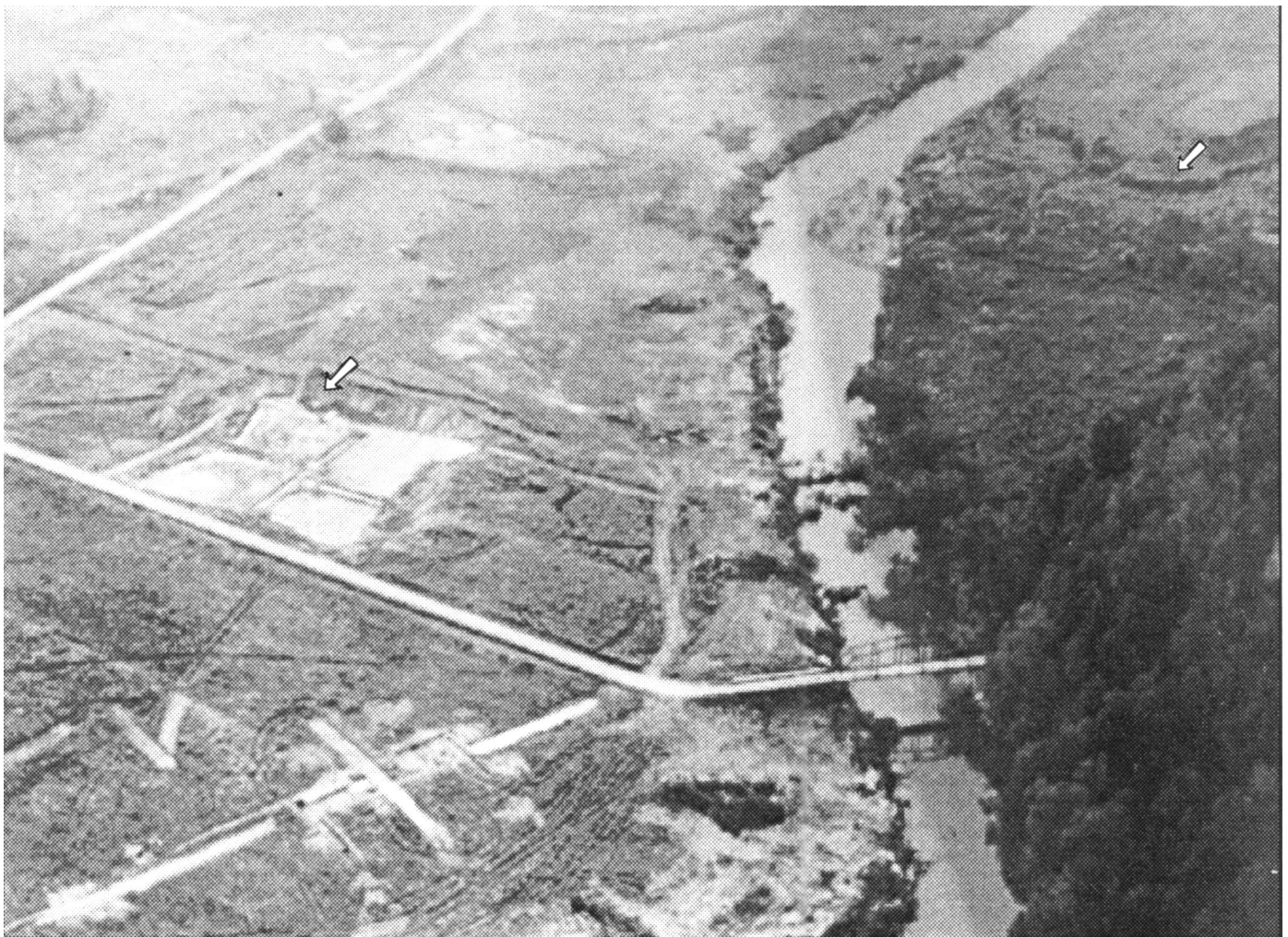
The fort was a 200 foot square, constructed with mud and wooden palisades and was surrounded by a deep trench.

Construction of the fort was completed in 1753. Inside the fort were located a guardhouse, a storehouse, a kitchen, a magazine, a barracks, and the commandant's residence. In 1756, the fort was completely rebuilt.

By 1758, relations with the Cherokee had deteriorated. A delegation of Cherokee Chiefs went to Charleston to pursue peace with the crown; however, they were seized and sent back to Fort Prince George as hostages.

January 1760 proved a point of no return for relations between Cherokee and the crown, and war commenced. On

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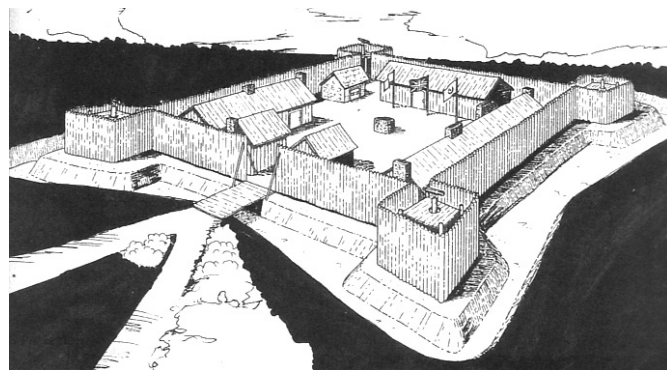
February 16, 1760, the commander of Fort Prince George, Lieutenant Richard Coytmore, was lured outside the walls for a parlay and was killed. His outraged men retaliated by executing several Cherokee hostages confined in the fort.

Fort Prince George was under siege for several months until Colonel Archibald Montgomery arrived in June. The fort served as the starting point for the 1762 campaign against the Cherokee middle towns.

In 1764, elements of the Sixtieth Regiment of Foot, also

known as the Royal American Regiment, assumed garrison duty. Tensions began to mount between Great Britain and the North American colonies. By 1768, Fort Prince George was completely abandoned.

In the early 1960s, Duke Power Company planned construction of a large nuclear power facility in the area of Fort Prince George. Assistant State Archaeologist John Combes conducted a dig to find the remains of the old fort in 1966. In 1968, when the dig was almost complete, the rising waters of Lake Keowee pushed the archaeologists out, and they were unable to complete the project. During the dig they found musket balls, cannonballs, utensils, bottles, and three skeletal remains, which included Lieutenant Richard Coytmore.



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