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CAPTAIN PAUL DEMERE AT FORT LOUDOUN, 1757-1760

By RICHARD G. STONE, JR.

It was in the heat of summer that Paul Demere (pronounced Dĕ'mĕrĕ) came to Fort Loudoun. A captain in the army of King George II of Great Britain, he brought a reinforcement of about fifty regulars from South Carolina to what is now East Tennessee on August 4, 1757. The new commandant's charge, the first British garrison west of the Appalachian mountain barrier, lay on the south bank of the Little Tennessee a short distance above the point where that river is joined by the Tellico, and five miles downstream from Chota, most important of the Overhill towns of the Cherokee Indian nation. The nearest British outpost was Fort Prince George, two hundred and fifty miles away among the Cherokee Lower Towns in present-day Pickens County, South Carolina.

Paul Demere replaced his brother Raymond, who had built the fort the previous fall and winter and had commanded it through its first difficult year. After trying wilderness service, Raymond was anxious to return to the amenities of coastal society. Thus it was Paul Demere who was left to a three-year command filled with tension, frustration, and misunderstandings, ending finally with the massacre of the commander and some twenty-five of his men on August 10, 1760.

Fort Loudoun seemed essential both to the royal province of South Carolina and to the Cherokee people. By this period, the Indians depended on the whites for weapons, salt, clothing, powder, and shot in return for which they traded valuable deerskins. The fort was established by South Carolina to safeguard this commerce from the French who had posts at New Orleans, Mobile, Fort Massac (near the mouth of the Tennessee), and Fort Toulouse on the Alabama River. For the Cherokees Fort Loudoun supervised traders licensed by South Carolina, protected Cherokee women and children in time of war, and enhanced the prestige of Chota, whose fire king or principal chief, Old Hop, wanted continued recognition by Cherokees and British alike as paramount chief, or emperor, of his nation.

Despite their dependence on the white man's trading goods, the Cherokees acknowledged no political subordination to the English except a vague recognition of King George II as a very distant protector. Old Hop, as leader of the nation, regarded and treated the provincial governors of George as his equals and in his dealings with them and their representatives showed a keen sense of protocol. Whatever its cost, Fort Loudoun was cheap because it helped secure the Southern frontier through the first five years of the French and Indian War. The French had powerful allies; the Creeks in the Alabama country and the Shawnees in the Ohio Valley. Had the Cherokees joined them while the outcome of the war was still in doubt, the result could have been tragic for the British colonies.¹

Probably no available regular officer was better qualified to command Fort Loudoun than Paul Demere. The Demere brothers were French Huguenots but the dates and places of their births are unknown. Both had spent many years as career officers, beginning their service as enlisted grenadiers under the command of Lord Harrington at Gibraltar in the 1720's. In 1738, they were reassigned to the 42nd Regiment, of James Oglethorpe, in Georgia, where it was necessary to maintain regulars because of the colony's role as frontier buffer between the British colonies and Spanish Florida. Such duty required campaigning in Georgia and Florida throughout King George's War. Paul Demere received his commission as a lieutenant in 1740. Unfortunately his experience was not so broadening as that of Raymond, who undertook two diplomatic missions to St. Augustine for General Oglethorpe and a third for Governor James Glen of South Carolina in 1749. During the 1750's, while commanding Fort Frederica, Georgia, Raymond often acted as a military advisor to Glen.

¹ For general accounts of the story of Fort Loudoun see Philip M. Hamer, *Fort Loudoun on the Little Tennessee* (Raleigh, N. C., reprinted from *North Carolina Historical Review*, July, October, 1925); Paul Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun* (Vonore, Tenn., 1958, and "Fort Loudoun: The After Years, 1760-1960," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XX (December, 1961), 303-22; John R. Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier: A study of Indian Relations, War, Trade, and Land Problems in the Southern Wilderness, 1754-1775* (Ann Arbor, 1944); David H. Corkran, *The Cherokee Frontier: Conflict and Survival, 1740-1762* (Norman, 1962); Stanley J. Folmsbee, Robert E. Corlew, and Enoch Mitchell, *History of Tennessee*, 2 vols. (New York, 1960), I, 65-91; Robert L. Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765* (Kingsport, 1940); M. Eugene Sirnans, *Colonial South Carolina: A Political History, 1663-1763* (Chapel Hill, 1966); David D. Wallace, *South Carolina: A Short History, 1520-1948* (Chapel Hill, 1951); and Samuel C. Williams, *Dawn of Tennessee Valley and Tennessee History* (Johnson City, 1937).

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Paul Demere seems to have spent most of his career as a line officer. When, at the conclusion of King George's War, the 42nd Regiment was broken up, the brothers elected, along with one hundred and fifty veterans, to remain in America and accept service in the Independent Regulars, three companies of which took over the former duties of the 42nd. Probably the Demeres decided to remain in the colonies because such service offered greater opportunity than would have been theirs in England. Advancement in the Army then depended more on influence than upon merit. Promotion was by purchase and then only when vacancies were available. Without powerful connections and independent wealth, advancement beyond field grade commissions was almost impossible. Neither Demere rose above a captaincy. Fortunately for them, America offered non-military opportunities. Both acquired property, and it is reported that upon his death in 1766, Raymond left a substantial fortune, including twenty-five slaves, considerable livestock, and handsome personal effects.

Paul Demere attained his captaincy during a trip to England in 1753. Upon returning to America the following year, he took command of a company-sized detachment of the Independent Regulars who had been sent to assist Virginia, which was concerned about a French and Indian threat to control of the forks of the Ohio. Demere succeeded Captain James Mackay who had led the company through the battle of Great Meadows, Pennsylvania, that July. After wintering at Fort Cumberland, Maryland, Demere's command was attached to the 48th Regiment of Colonel Thomas Dunbar for service in western Pennsylvania with the army of General Edward Braddock. Demere served with Braddock throughout the 1755 campaign which ended in a disastrous ambush and the general's death near Fort Duquesne. Dunbar, who replaced Braddock, withdrew the army to eastern Pennsylvania. In the fall, Demere delivered his troops to General William Shirley's regiment at Albany, New York, and then returned to the South for reassignment.²

Thus he was available to Governor William Henry Lyttelton, who had replaced Glen in South Carolina, for assignment to the com-

² Ellsworth Brown, "The Fort Loudoun Years of Captain Paul Demere" (unpublished manuscript in possession of the Fort Loudoun Association, Vonore, Tennessee), 1-4. For details of Raymond Demere's estate see Brown, "The Fort Loudoun People—Raymond Demere" (unpublished manuscript in possession of the Fort Loudoun Association), 7.

mand of Fort Loudoun. When he took command, Paul Demere was a mature, experienced, and competent field officer. He expected to do his best as commander of a garrison in a dangerous wilderness, far from possible help, but he was hardly prepared for the delicate role of ambassador of the governor of South Carolina to the proud, volatile Cherokee nation.

Demere's troubles began before his arrival at Fort Loudoun. In his first report to Lyttelton, August 18, 1757, he described the five-week journey from Charles Town (now Charleston) to the Overhill country. Four weeks of rain had "made the Rivers and Creeks swell very much." Near Great Tellico, where there were, he had learned from a trader, several pro-French Savannah (Shawnee) Indians, Demere's small party had been subjected to a harrowing experience. As they approached the town, Demere reported, they were met by a great many men and women. Suddenly they

heard [a] call Halt, Immediately I ordered the Packhorsemen to go on and I came to the Rear, I ordered to not keep Close, and in [a] few minutes appeared 25 Indians with Arms and Hatchets, and black painted. I assure your Excellency, that at first I thought they would attack us, I ordered the Linquist to ask the Head man what he wanted and what he meant to come in that manner after the King's forces. He said he wanted Rum, and they would have it. I told him that if I had Rum they should not have a drop, and I advised him to go back with the rest of his People and if they should follow us any more, I should look upon them as Enemies and use them as Such I assure your Excell[ency] that I look on the Tellico people almost as the greatest enemies we have

Shortly afterward, Tellico Cherokees, under the influence of "one French John and a Savannah Indian," killed and scalped the pregnant wife of one of Demere's soldiers as she followed behind the main column.³

Routine at first, Demere's problems intensified as time passed. As representative of Governor Lyttelton, he had to arbitrate trader disputes. Supplies ran short; the Indians were suspicious of the traders. The latter complained that the Cherokees failed to bring in enough deerskins to pay for their purchases. Trying to mollify both sides proved a thankless task.

³ South Carolina Indian Affairs (Transcript in McClung Collection, Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee), VI (1757), 74-78. Hereafter cited S.C.I.A.

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Cherokees constantly visited the fort demanding assistance on small personal matters. Demere wrote on October 11, 1757:

It is impossible for me to describe how tormented I am Every Day with the Indians, some brings their Guns to be Mended & it must be done because the [Little] Carpenter told them it should be So, and you promised him: Some bring Hatchets to be mended[;] other[s] Padlocks to have keys made for them; others want Salt, others Sometimes Meal, and great many other Things, which is granted, but Thank God they are very quiet in all the Towns.⁴

Even in the wilderness, the commandant had social obligations. For instance, on September 14 he went to Chota for the annual green corn dance. With Old Hop he watched the festivities in the town square. Overhead flew the cross of St. George on a flagstaff made for the occasion by Fort Loudoun carpenters. The Cherokees "began their sort of Dancing, some time after, the Women were called who Appeared in their Best Apparel." While Demere and the Fire King sat together, a three-man embassy arrived from the Catawba tribe. They were welcomed and seated. Demere tried to leave but Old Hop insisted that he remain for the feast, "& immediately two or three hundred Baskets were layd on the ground, of several sorts, every one Began to Eat very hearty." The dancing went on for four more days but Captain Demere found it convenient to send subordinates to represent him for the remainder of the celebrations.⁵

Indian diplomacy was a constant responsibility and concern for the captain. During his first weeks in command, he received headmen from all of the Overhill towns. In his first report to Lyttelton, he said he had told the chiefs that

your intentions were to do them all the Good that was in your Power, as long as they should behave themselves well and be friends and would not Protect the Savannahs [Shawnees] and other French Indians that are our Enemies, to which the [Little] Carpenter replied that he and the other great men in the Circle were of that Opinion and looked on those Indians as our and their Enemies, and would destroy them as much as laid in their Power, and would not suffer them in their Towns and blamed very much the Tellico People. The Conclusion of the whole was, that we should give a Cagg [keg] of rum to each Town, except Tellico. . . .⁶

⁴ Paul Demere to Lyttelton, October 11, 1757, William Henry Lyttelton Collection (Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor). Hereafter cited Lyttelton Papers. Microcopies of some of the letters are in possession of the Fort Loudoun Association, Vonore, Tennessee. Little Carpenter (Attakullakulla) was the chief diplomat and "Second Man" of the Cherokee Nation.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Demere to Lyttelton, August 18, 1757, S.C.I.A., VI, 74-78.

Unfortunately, promises were not always followed by performance. When thirty-six friendly Cherokees brought five scalps to the fort they demanded rewards. Demere discovered that when

Presents appointed for scalps by the Assembly were brought to them they would not take them, and said their young men had weared out their Cloaths and [there] was no encouragement to serve us, we did what we could to pacify them and asked them what they wanted, they said 36 shirts 36 match Coats 36 pr Boots and 36 Flapps, besides 5 Guns and 10 hats, which we were obliged to give them to make them easy and they were satisfied. As there were not enough Presents in the Store for Scalps, I have given of my own, 10 match coats 20 shirts, 21 pr boots and 26 Flapps. As we have no more Presents to give them and we expect Indians going to War, I hope your Excellency will supply us soon that we may not be at a loss, and make them easy.

Demere's chagrin must have been great when he learned from the pro-British Little Carpenter, "Second Man" and chief diplomat of the nation, that the scalps came from the Chickasaws, a tribe friendly to the English.⁷

Demere pushed hard on projects to improve the post. He reported the completion of a guard house "with a double chimney," as well as two new cornhouses capable of storing 1,200 bushels. That winter, a food shortage caused by confused commissary arrangements assailed Fort Loudoun. Demere reported that he had been "Obliged to send to all the traders and Indian Towns to purchase what provisions I cou'd gett, I gott about 400Wt Bacon and 400Wt of pork at an Exorbitant price, and there is not now half that Quantity left on this side the Mountains."⁸ The preceding summer, General John Campbell, Earl of Loudoun and British commander-in-chief in America, had agreed to provide sustenance for all combatant troops at royal expense, but required the provinces where the troops were stationed to pay the costs of delivery. Frequently, Demere found himself issuing certificates to pay for labor or delivery of provisions only to have them disallowed or scaled down by the South Carolina House of Commons in Charles Town, an action which showed little comprehension of the value of Fort Loudoun to the province.⁹

In 1758, French influence increased substantially, abetted by local town rivalries with Chota. Much trouble arose far from Demere's

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Demere to Lyttelton, February 20, 1758, Lyttelton Papers.

⁹ Brown, "Paul Demere," 20-22.

control, but one incident on June 21 involved him directly. Demere was busily engaged in recruiting Cherokees to join the expedition of General John Forbes against Fort Duquesne. His zeal led him to quarrel with the Little Carpenter. The Second Man said that his people did not want to go to war before fall because signs pointed to "sickness and Death to many & Vast fatigue to the whole. . . ." When the captain upbraided him, the Carpenter, "In great Passion . . ." called Demere "Skeenee, that is Rogue. . . ." ¹⁰

Later, when the Carpenter did join Forbes, a misunderstanding caused the general to have him arrested, further insulting the Second Man. That incident and others rankled a proud people. With Cherokee disaffection growing daily in the isolated wilderness, Captain Demere could only ask, "I should be infinitely obliged to your Excellency that if we had any good Success to the North you would let me know it, for I begin to think that I am now in another world."¹¹ It is not surprising that on January 27, 1759, he should write, "When your Excellency shall think proper to have me relieved I shall be infinitely obliged if you lett me know Some time before."¹²

News of Forbes' and other British victories actually made conditions on the Little Tennessee more tense because the French now redoubled their efforts to hold Louisiana and check English expansion from the southern colonies. Demere and his staff worried that the French garrison that had escaped down the Ohio from Fort Duquesne would foment trouble. Perhaps they might stir up raids by the Chickasaws of the Mississippi country, or reinforce Fort Toulouse, or even establish a French base within easy reach of Fort Loudoun. Goaded by his fears, Demere tried unsuccessfully to send Oconostota, the Great Warrior of the Cherokees, to Fort Toulouse to gather intelligence. Not until spring did he persuade other Cherokees to undertake the mission. Meanwhile, the Reverend William Richardson, a Presbyterian missionary who had acted as chaplain to the fort, left hastily for the Lower Towns. Demere surmised that Richardson feared to remain longer in the Overhills.¹³

¹⁰ Demere to Lyttelton, June 29, 1758, Lyttelton Papers.

¹¹ Demere to Lyttelton, October 15, 1758, *ibid.*

¹² Demere to Lyttelton, January 27, 1759, *ibid.*

¹³ Demere to Lyttelton, January 26, 1759, *ibid.* See also Williams, *Dawn*, Chapter 18.

In April, 1759, a Creek chief called the Great Mortar established himself in the Overhill country, working feverishly to attract the Cherokees into a French alliance. With widespread Cherokee resentment of the British, the Mortar plowed fertile ground. Demere informed the governor that

they had a Great Meeting [at Chota] where all the head Men were present, and the Mortar, finding that his Proposals were not Approved by the Warriours, he began to drop his bad talks, deny'd that his Name was the Mortar, that [instead] he was Call'd the Wolf & a friend to the English, & the next day went away, but said that he wou'd soon return.¹⁴

Writing in the same vein, a month later, Demere reported to Lyttelton that Oconostota had told him "the Mortar . . . only wanted a spot of Ground to plant and settle, and to go hunting and to deal with Our white People because Every thing was very dear and scarce in the Creek Nation."¹⁵ Surely the captain was not so easily taken in. At that very moment, the Mortar's oratory was swaying the Cherokees from the British. He worked to form a Creek-Cherokee coalition against the southern colonies. Ironically, the Creek half of the alliance failed to develop. Edmund Atkin, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the South, concluded trade agreements with the Creeks which demonstrated France's inability to compete with British Indian commerce.¹⁶

It was too bad that Atkin did not improve the Cherokee trade as well. On June 2, 1759, Demere complained about his ever present shortage of trade goods:

I wish Mr. Pinckney [the provincial commissary] would send Knives, Hatchets and more Pint [paint], and I could dispence very well with Gartering, Cadis & Pea Bottons. Some time ago two Warriours were Saying that I did not give them Pint Enough to go to War, I told them I gave them what I had, they Said that their great Man above would not think they were Warriours if they were not painted.¹⁷

In addition to supply shortages, Demere now had a major headache in keeping his competent translator. The "linguister's" salary had been recently ordered reduced from £25 to £15 per month. This threat-

¹⁴ Demere to Lyttelton, April 6, 1759, Lyttelton Papers.

¹⁵ May 2, 1759, *ibid.*

¹⁶ Corkran, *Cherokee Frontier*, 172-73.

¹⁷ Demere to Lyttelton, June 2, 1759, Lyttelton Papers.

ened Demere with the loss of the services of William Shorey. The captain reported to the governor:

Not knowing when I can get another, I have prevailed upon him to stay till I hear from your Excellency, & I begg your Excellency will Consider of it & let me know it, as I cannot be without a Linguister —the Indians flocking to the fort every Moment. . . .¹⁸

A month earlier, Demere had written:

Even the bad [translators] ones they get from the Traders 15pds. pr. Month, and that I employ is the best Linguister in the Nation; therefore I must be[g] of your Excellency to take my Case into Consideration or else I must be intirely ruined.¹⁹

As the influence of the Mortar grew, that of the Little Carpenter decreased among the Cherokees. The Second Man had returned from his embarrassments and frustrations in the Forbes campaign in March, 1759. Governor Francis Fauquier of Virginia had the Carpenter released from his arrest. He had further mollified the Cherokee with guarantees of peace and trade between the Old Dominion and the Nation. But this wise policy was doomed to failure.

Lyttelton called the Carpenter to Charles Town in April. Although given a hospitable reception the Second Man was put on notice that the governor held him responsible for the good behavior of his people. It was a subdued Little Carpenter who returned to the Nation; even as his relationship with South Carolina deteriorated, his own people repudiated his policies.

During the summer Settico Cherokees raided the North Carolina frontier, probably following the urgings of the Great Mortar. Demere demanded the lives of the responsible Indians, but found that the Settico leader's relationship to Oconostota prevented their arrest. The commandant did manage to recover eight of thirteen scalps taken in the raid which he then had buried in the fort. He moved to punish Settico by withdrawing the town's licensed trader.

Several developments brought the situation from one of growing hostility to open warfare. Fauquier noted the situation and decided to postpone Virginia's planned Cherokee trade. Lieutenant Richard Coytmore at Fort Prince George, following the orders of Lyttelton, angered the Lower Town Cherokees by trenchant demands for their marauders. And on August 14, Lyttelton cut off all shipments of

¹⁸ Demere to Lyttelton, June 1, 1759, *ibid.*

¹⁹ Demere to Lyttelton, May 2, 1759 (one of two letters of that date), *ibid.*

ammunition to the Cherokees. Such a step threatened the very existence of a people to whom powder and shot were essential for the autumn hunting season. Supplies must be had, if not from South Carolina, then from Forts Massac and Toulouse.

The Cherokees made a peace overture in October when Oconostota led a delegation to Charles Town. Feeling that the Indians must now be chastised, the governor spurned their offers. Authorized to raise a militia force of fifteen hundred men for three months' service, Lyttelton left for the Cherokee country on October 23. At Congarees, now Columbia, he had Oconostota and a number of chiefs put under guard. Upon arriving at Fort Prince George on December 9, Lyttelton had Oconostota and more than twenty other Cherokees confined to a room meant to hold only six people.

The Carpenter arrived to parley on December 19. Lyttelton, aware that his force was already growing restive, agreed to a pact calling for the release of Oconostota and most of the chiefs. Twenty-two Cherokee hostages were to be held at Prince George until the guilty Setticos could be found and turned over to the British for punishment. By the end of December Lyttelton and his army had withdrawn from the Lower Towns, an ignominious departure for one who had desired to show the Cherokees the heavy hand of British might.

In the wake of Lyttelton's abrupt leave taking the Cherokees began open warfare. They did not consider themselves bound by an unratified treaty forced on them under duress. Oconostota sought revenge against Lieutenant Coytmore whom he held partly responsible for having put him in Lyttelton's power the preceding fall. On February 16, 1760, the Great Warrior enticed Coytmore out of the fort to have him ambushed. Upon Coytmore's death that afternoon, his soldiers massacred the twenty-two Cherokee hostages.

With the frontier in agony Lyttelton now had no choice but to call out his militia, to beg Fauquier and Governor Arthur Dobbs of North Carolina for help, and to obtain regulars from General Jeffrey Amherst, now commander in chief. Virginia responded to Lyttelton's appeal by sending Colonel William Byrd, III, with a force of rangers and militia to relieve Fort Loudoun. Unfortunately, they came no nearer to the fort than the Holston River in southwestern Virginia. Nor did relief come from a force of thirteen hundred regulars under

Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Montgomery which arrived in Charles Town on April 5 and 6, and which raided the Cherokee Middle Towns in western North Carolina early in June. Montgomery made no attempt to rescue Demere and his garrison. His withdrawal doomed the defenders of Fort Loudoun.

Paul Demere and his men were fated to suffer the fears and deprivations of a year under siege before the end came in August, 1760. From the very time of the stoppage of powder and shot by Lyttelton in August, 1759, the little world of Fort Loudoun, deep inside a now hostile Cherokee nation, was a beleaguered garrison.²⁰ During that time, Demere and his garrison endured demoralizing isolation, near starvation, and constant peril. Nothing in the commandant's power could have extricated his men from their misery. He had had clashes with Indian chiefs and was on poor terms with many of them. But the events forcing the frontier into war were not his fault. Demere was only a tool carrying out the Indian policy of Lyttelton and Atkin. He managed his command competently, maintaining it in health and discipline. He could not be blamed for mistakes made far away.

During the year of the siege, altercations and severe fighting occurred in the Carolinas. Atrocities were perpetrated by both sides. In June, 1760, a force of British regulars under Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Montgomery penetrated the Cherokee Middle Towns in western North Carolina but made no attempt to withdraw Demere and his garrison. Montgomery's departure doomed the defenders of Fort Loudoun.

The post was in some ways well prepared for an Indian siege. When built, it had been equipped with twelve cannon to guarantee security from any direct assault. Paul Demere had made several improvements since taking command. He had had a well dug inside the palisades in 1758, and the moat lined with thorny bushes. But there was not, and there could not be, enough food on hand to sustain the defenders indefinitely.²¹

On August 25, 1759, Oconostota broke off relations with Demere. The Great Warrior demanded ammunition. Demere would have granted the request, but he was powerless to counteract Lyttelton's

²⁰ Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 25-28; Corkran, *Cherokee Frontier*, 174-95.

²¹ Brown, "Paul Demere," 30-31; Kelley, *Historic Fort Loudoun*, 30-31.

orders. Soon after, the Cherokees set up a blockade on the trail from Fort Loudoun back to Fort Prince George. Near Tellico they intercepted a small pack train with provisions. One man was killed. The closing of the supply line signalled "great danger." After the Green Corn dance ended on September 7, small numbers of Indians concealed themselves outside the fort to intimidate its people from venturing out. Soon they killed and scalped a private who was gathering wild grapes and sent his scalp to Fort Toulouse to purchase ammunition. Fearing a Cherokee attempt to drive off the post's beef cattle, Demere ordered them slaughtered, salted, and casked. Meanwhile he managed to gather six to seven hundred bushels of corn.²²

On October 27, Captain John Stuart brought a reinforcement of about fifty South Carolina provincials with one thousand pounds of powder and three thousand pounds of bullets. But Stuart had little food to feed the extra mouths he added to Demere's 132 regulars and their dependents. Nor were his men particularly well equipped; they envied the regulars their uniforms. For the moment the garrison supplemented the limited resources at hand by buying food from Indian women who still came freely in and out of the fort.²³

Even with reinforcements, the state of Fort Loudoun became steadily more perilous. Only rarely were Demere and Stuart able to communicate with the outside. In November, Charles McLemore, the express rider, turned back from a mission to carry out correspondence; in January he declined even to set out. Old Hop refused to permit a friendly Indian to carry dispatches. Fortunately for Demere's peace of mind, the trader John Elliott, who had transported Fort Loudoun's guns in 1756, did manage to get in and out again in December²⁴ but was killed in a massacre near Keowee a short time later.

With the passage of time, the Cherokees waged an increasingly effective war of nerves. White men were safe only inside the palisades. Demere became anxious to grasp any straw that proffered hope; perhaps the Little Carpenter could capture some Frenchmen to be

²² Brown, "Paul Demere," 53; Demere to Lyttelton, August 28, September 13, 1759, Lyttelton Papers.

²³ Brown, "Paul Demere," 53-54; John Stuart to Lyttelton, November 15, 1759; Demere to Lyttelton, November 3, 23, December 3, 1759, Lyttelton Papers.

²⁴ Demere to Lyttelton, December 4, 1759, January 26, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Brown, "Paul Demere," 54-55.

exchanged for Cherokee hostages held elsewhere.²⁵ Such notions were no more than exercises in futility.

At the end of January, 1760, Abraham, a slave, earned his freedom by slipping through the Cherokees' grasp to deliver letters to Charles Town and return with supplies. He eventually made two extremely dangerous round trips. On the first he caught smallpox in Charles Town; then, on the second trip, he was wounded by an Indian and nearly killed. Demere hoped that a supply of ribbon brought in by Abraham might be bartered with friendly Cherokees for food, but even those Indians had little to spare and were watched very closely by the warriors.²⁶ In March the Cherokees began to snipe daily at the fort and rumors circulated that a large Creek war party was on its way.²⁷

By June it was clear that Fort Loudoun must soon be either saved or lost. On the sixth, Demere sent a dispatch by James Branham, a half-breed, to Colonel Montgomery, whose force was raiding the Middle Towns. In it, he complained that there was "not a Day but some Indians are Sculking about the Fort and others are constantly upon a Hill on the opposite side of the River to watch when any one goes for water, to fire at them." Ominously for the post, the Little Carpenter had told Demere on June 2, that

he was not the Person of who to ask News for, said he, "the Indians hide everything from me, and say that I am the White People's Friend;" and that he wished soon to see the Army coming that his people might be well beat, for they were too Audacious. I then asked him if he knew where the Great Warrior was gone, he said, that he heard, that he was gone after some Enemies Tract that they had discovered, & that he doubted very much if it was so. Therefore he advised me to be upon my Guard.

In the same message, Demere reported that Lieutenant Maurice Anderson, the fort's surgeon, accompanied by another white man, had left the post. The two

had not gone above Fifty Yards on the side of a Little Hill, till they were fired at by some Indians that were behind a Little Log: That Moment Forty or Fifty of the Men run out with their Arms to their assistance; but it was too late, for they were both dead & Scalped:

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 58; Demere to Lyttelton, January 26, 1760, Lyttelton Papers.

²⁶ *Ibid.*; Demere to Lyttelton, January 29, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Brown, "Paul Demere," 59. The province of South Carolina appropriated £500 to purchase Abraham's freedom in 1761. On June 6, 1760, Demere erroneously reported Abraham's death. *Ibid.*, 63.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

and immediately the Savages that were round the Hills, fired on the Fort from all sides, but they were so well hid, that we could not have the Satisfaction of killing any of them.

On June 5, the Carpenter had told Demere that

The Great Warrior had sent for the Towns of Tellico and Chattue [Chota?] to his Assistance, and that he intended to Attack the Fort in the Night, to burn down the Puncheons, and put us everyone to Death; I told him, that I wished they would Attempt such a thing for then we should have an opportunity to fire at them close enough to destroy a good number of them.

In a postscript, Demere pithily described the plight of his command.

The Indians never cease Night and Day of lurking about the Fort, to hinder us from having any Intelligence. It is impossible now to get anything from the Towns. The Indians that are watching got orders to kill any Woman that come to the Fort: And as our Provisions are very scant, I shall be obliged tomorrow to reduce our Men to one Quart of Corn for three Men per day.²⁸

Demere received no reply from Montgomery. On July 7, the command ran out of flour and had to start butchering horses. Oconostota spurned all of Demere's efforts to arrange a truce. Even Stuart's reputed influence with the Indians proved useless, since his closest friend among them, the Little Carpenter, no longer had power.

With food running out and being essentially cut off from succor, the garrison lost heart when it learned of Montgomery's retreat. The Cherokees boasted that they had beaten him badly and run him out of the country. August came—the fort had been besieged for a year. Feeling unable to do any more, Demere called a council of war on August 6. The officers gave "their *unanimous* opinion" in a written statement:

That it was impracticable to maintain the fort any longer; and that such terms as could be procured from the *Indians*, consistent with honour, should be immediately accepted of, and the fort abandoned.²⁹

The next day Stuart and Lieutenant James Adamson went to the Cherokee leaders at Chota. They returned with a capitulation agreement on which Oconostota and Standing Turkey, successor of the recently deceased Old Hop as emperor, had already made their marks. It permitted the able-bodied soldiers to march with arms and baggage to Fort Prince George or to Virginia. The fort, with guns, ammunition, and spare small arms, would be left to the Indians. The Cherokees

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 62-64.

²⁹ *South Carolina Gazette*, September 23, 1760.

were to try to provide horses for the march and to care for those soldiers too sick to leave until they were well enough to return to Fort Prince George. Demere added his signature to the document and dispatched by Charles McLemore either the original or a certified copy to Acting Governor William Bull in Charles Town.³⁰

Two days later the garrison abandoned Fort Loudoun. The men covered fifteen miles before stopping near Great Tellico at Cane Creek. A promised Cherokee escort quickly faded away. The following morning, Demere's command resumed its journey. Soon Stuart and an advanced party met seven hundred war-painted Cherokees. Flushed from concealment, they poured a deadly volley into the main body of the whites. The British soldiers, having starved too long, were in no condition to fight; they threw down their arms. The Cherokees killed all of the officers except Stuart and perhaps twenty-five men. Paul Demere was hit twice by the first volley. The Indians quickly scalped him and forced him to dance while still alive. They finished his murder by chopping off first one arm, then the other, then finally his legs. The remaining whites were stripped and beaten in their faces with the scalps of the dead. After making the prisoners dance, the Cherokees took them to their own towns. Some remained among the Indians, others were taken to Fort Prince George, a few were even sent to New Orleans, and some escaped. One who did was Captain Stuart, whom the Little Carpenter took under his wing. When he learned that he would be required to direct the guns of Fort Loudoun against Fort Prince George, Stuart persuaded the Carpenter to guide him to Virginia and freedom. Less than half of the garrison of Fort Loudoun shared Stuart's good fortune in returning to his own people. Why the Cherokees broke the pact they had made with Stuart and Adamson is unclear. They may have wanted revenge for British atrocities elsewhere. Furthermore, they accused Demere of hiding twelve bags of powder in the fort, but these may not have been discovered until after the massacre.³¹

Even as Oconostota and Standing Turkey besieged the fort, the British conquered Canada and drove France from North America. In

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, October 18, 1760; Brown, "Paul Demere," 64-67.

1761 British regulars returned to the southern frontier to bring the war there quickly under control. Paul Demere and his men were soon forgotten. Largely unappreciated by the British army and by the province of South Carolina, they had done their best to carry out their impossible assignment.⁸²

⁸² See Brown, "The Fort Loudoun People—Raymond Demere," for family information. According to his account (p. 6) both brothers were survived by one son each. Both were named Raymond. Paul's son Raymond served as an American officer in the Revolution.

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