

**AN ADDRESS**

**IN**

**COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT**

**OF KENTUCKY:**

**DELIVERED**

**At Boonesborough the 25th May, 1840,**

**BY**

**JAMES T. MOREHEAD.**

---

**FRANKFORT, KY.  
A. G. HODGES.....STATE PRINTER.  
1840.**

This page in the original text is blank.



COUNTY OF MADISON, May 29th, 1840.

HON. JAMES T. MOREHEAD,

*Dear Sir:*—On behalf of the several Committees appointed by the Counties of Madison and Clarke, in relation to the Celebration at Boonesborough, on the 21st instant, of the 65th Anniversary of the first settlement of Kentucky, we have to request that you will furnish for the press, a copy of the very appropriate and eloquent address delivered by you on that interesting occasion.

In making this request, we take pleasure in assuring you, that we not only express the wishes of the several Committees, but of the whole community, and that we are

Most respectfully, and sincerely, yours, &c.

DANIEL BRECK, J. B. HOUSTON,  
DAVID IRVINE, JOHN MARTIN,  
W. H. CAPERTON, A. W. MILLS,  
ARCHIBALD WOODS, PATTON D. HARRISON.

---

FRANKFORT, 5th June, 1840.

*Gentlemen:*

In complying with your request to furnish you a copy of my address at Boonesborough, on the 25th ultimo, on the occasion of the Celebration of the first settlement of Kentucky, I beg to be permitted to express my acknowledgements for the favorable terms in which you have been pleased to speak of it, and the gratification I shall feel, should it contribute, in any degree, to diffuse acquaintance with the early history of our Commonwealth.

I have the honor to be,

With great respect,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES T. MOREHEAD.

DANIEL BRECK, Esq., and others,  
Committee, &c.

This page in the original text is blank.

## A D D R E S S .

---

WE meet under circumstances of peculiar felicitation. From various parts of our beloved Commonwealth, we have come up to the place which has been known in past, as it will continue to be known in all future time, as the first permanent residence of those extraordinary men, who, with fortitude and perseverance unexampled in the history of the human race, dislodged the aborigines of the soil we inhabit, and prepared it, under the pressure of almost incredible hardships and sufferings, for the abode of free and intelligent man. The descendants of the pioneers have assembled to discharge pious obligations of high and solemn import, to their memory. On the spot where we now are, there was convened, sixty-five years ago, the first Legislative Assembly of the great Valley of the West. It was composed of seventeen delegates or representatives of not more than one hundred and fifty constituents, then the probable number of the people of Kentucky. The day on which they began their perilous labors, in an uninhabited and savage wilderness, of which the red man and the buffalo had until then been the sole and unmolested possessors,—a middle point of time, between the commencement and completion of the first rude fortress built by our ancestors for protection and defence—has been selected as the one most appropriately to be dedicated by the citizens of Kentucky to the commemoration of the earliest and most interesting event of their history

The importance of that event,—the dignity of the occasion—the interest and impressiveness of the spectacle now presented to view—all combine to inspire us with sentiments of profound gratitude to Heaven, that we have lived to see this day: and our prayers are due to the great disposer of human events, who shielded our fathers and has hitherto watched over us, that He will preserve our institutions for generations to come, and that through His divine agency we may be permitted to perpetuate this anniversary by a solemn annual dedication of it to the purposes of gratitude and thanksgiving and joy.

Anxious for the indulgence I have often received from my fellow citizens, and sustained by the confidence that it will not be withheld, I proceed to the performance of the duty which they have assigned to me.

The seventeenth century was distinguished by the settlement of the North American colonies, and the successful establishment of their institutions. To say nothing of the causes by which those events were superinduced, or of their influence upon the political affairs of mankind, it may be observed that no revolution either of manners or pursuits could be more thorough and perceptible, than that which was experienced by the primitive emigrants from the old world to the new. They were the subjects of a misgoverned but time honored state, in which the few remaining relics of feudalism gave proof of the progress of modern amelioration; and no sooner had they landed on the shore of the new world, than they found themselves the occupants of a wilderness, untrodden by the foot of civilized man, infested by savages, unsparing in cruelty and greatly superior in numbers, and bounded only by oceans that encircled the continent. In this exposed condition, years

of calamity and of suffering passed over them. Indolence, vice and famine produced their inevitable consequences—anarchy and discord and death. The restraints of government—the feebleness of their resources—the paucity of their numbers,—their remoteness from the parent country—the strength and fierceness of the surrounding native tribes—all contributed to impair their energies and damp their hopes—but notwithstanding the weight of such powerful retardments, before the close of the first half century after their emigration, the settlements had spread from the coasts to the interior; the colonial institutions had taken deep root in the soil—and an impulse was given to the progress of the colonies which was never afterwards to be overcome. The characteristics of the colonists in the mean time had undergone such a change as was necessary to adapt them to the emergencies of their new condition. The extension of their population westward, while it enlarged the boundaries of civilization, tended at the same time, to enure the adventurous emigrants to scenes of toil and of danger; and to engender the habits and modes of life and action, of rude and unpolished man. If the mass of the people of the colonies, even of those that were most densely settled, were deprived of the luxuries and superfluities of life, the inhabitants of the frontier preferred a livelihood acquired by the contingent and hazardous employment of a hunter, to the cultivation of the soil, or the practice of any mechanical occupation. While the force of circumstances propelled them on the one hand, into hostile contact with the natives, in respect to whom their position was necessarily antagonistical, they were urged, on the other, to depend for protection and security on their personal prowess and intrepidity alone; and to seek the means of support, in the midst of ferocious

and wily enemies, whose stealthy incursions no vigilance could elude; whose implacable resentment, no other sacrifice than that of blood could appease. The dextrous use of the rifle, therefore, became an acquisition of indispensable importance. The instinct of self-preservation pointed it out as a weapon necessary at once for annoyance and defence; and in a country abounding with every species of game, the frequent visitations of scarcity and want, taught them to rely on that trusty implement as a most valuable auxiliary in furnishing subsistence to their families and themselves.

In the progress of little more than a century and a half from the colonization of Virginia to the breaking out of hostilities with the parent country in 1775, the population of the colonies had swelled to three millions. A nation had sprung up, claiming attention for its thriftiness and enterprise, its increasing commercial and agricultural resources, its intelligence and devotion to civil liberty. All the circumstances of its early career were favorable to the formation of those traits of character, that fitted it for the conflict which the rashness and violence of the maternal councils threatened and precipitated—favorable also to the enlargement of the colonial possessions, by the conquest of distant and unexplored regions, the occupancy of which was still in bold and warlike Indian tribes. The existing generation was admirably qualified for the distinguished part it was to perform on a new theatre of human affairs. Born in the wilderness, it might almost be said to have been nurtured in hardship—to have been disciplined in the hunter's camp,—to have been educated in the school of exposure and of peril. Wave after wave of civilization, as the colonial settlements expanded, wafted the aboriginal tribes still farther westward, and their places were sup-



plied by the hardy backwoodsmen, who, from taste and inclination, sought homes and employment on the confines of the settlements. However the interior inhabitants of the colonies may have been comparatively secure from the inroads of the savages, the weak and scattered settlements on the border were exposed to incessant conflicts, by night and by day, against fearful odds with their desperate and deadly foe. Not only was the power of endurance, however, strengthened by the invigorating habits of a frontier life, but a constant participation of its nerve-trying scenes, and a consequent familiarity with its perils and vicissitudes, imparted to them charms, superior in the estimation of the tenant of the wilderness, to the soft endearments of polished society, or to the selfish and tranquil pursuits of ambition and wealth. The free born wanderer of the woods knew, only to disclaim, the artificial restraints of society, and as he roamed through the dark and majestic forest, or scaled the dizzy heights of the mountains, or traced the meanderings of some noble river, his attachments for his chosen pursuits increased with the increase of years, and he yielded himself to their enjoyment with the proud satisfaction that he was the free and untaxed proprietor of the boundless domains of nature around him.

This absorbing preference of the frontier life characterized the whole class of original western emigrants; and although the prevailing passion of that period for adventure and discovery, may have given impulse to their extraordinary career, to the predominant influence of their preference for that mode of life is chiefly attributable the steady and unwavering perseverance, with which amidst all the discouragements and difficulties that encompassed them, they maintained their ground

and eventually effected the conquest of the magnificent regions of the West.

Although the territory comprehended within the limits of Kentucky was embraced by the patent of James I, to the Virginia company, yet for more than a hundred and fifty years after Virginia was settled, Kentucky, abounding in every thing calculated to tempt the cupidity or the enterprise of men, was as little known to the inhabitants east of the Alleghanies, as the terra incognita of antiquity. We have the assurance of history, that prior to the year 1767, no citizen of Virginia had ventured to cross the great Laurel Ridge, which was the apparent western boundary of that colony. An exploring party, it is true, under the direction of Dr. Walker, had some years before, crossed the Cumberland Mountain from Powell's Valley and passed hastily along the northeastern portion of Kentucky; but their discoveries extended no farther than the country bordering on the Sandy river which now separates us from Virginia, and the party returned as ignorant of Kentucky, as if no exploration had been made. Long anterior to the year 1767, the vast regions of the northwest and south had been successfully explored from the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, under the auspices of the French and Spanish governments, and settlements were made at various places in the discovered countries—at Vincennes, Peoria, Cahokia, Kaskaskia, and Fort Chartres on the Mississippi. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, Ferdinand De Soto, the celebrated discoverer of the lower Mississippi, visited the country between Pensacola and North Carolina, passing through Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee—and thus became acquainted with the southern parts of the continent.\* In June 1673 Father Mar-

---

\* De Soto died on the 21 May, 1542. "To conceal his death," says Bancroft, [History U. S., 1. 57] "his body was wrapped in a mantle, and in the stillness of midnight, was



quette, a French Missionary, stood on the banks of the Upper Mississippi; and having descended that river to its junction with the Arkansas, returned to Chicago on Lake Michigan, passing up the river Illinois. After him, the enterprising but unfortunate La Salle, resolved upon a further exploration of the regions of the northwest: and with that view, built in 1769 on Lake Erie, the first large vessel that ever ploughed its beautiful waters. He proceeded up the Lakes to Michilimackinac, where he left his ship and embarking in canoes, sailed along the coast until he reached the southern extremity of Lake Michigan. From there he crossed over the portage to the Illinois, and descended that river and the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. In 1717 "the company of the West," under whose auspices Fort Chartres was established, became entitled, by virtue of a grant from Louis XIV, to the immense territory, comprizing Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas;\* and a chain of posts was established by the French government, to connect their possessions in Canada with those in Louisiana by a line of communication from Quebec to New Orleans.

Although surrounded, as we have seen, by settlements at every point of the compass, and composing a part of the extensive territory embraced by the patent of the Virginia company, Kentucky remained a dangerous and unexplored wilderness—unexplored, if we concede the expedition of Dr. Walker to have been an entire failure—and scarcely known by tradition to the restless and enterprising inhabitants of the New World, until the year

---

silently sunk in the middle of the stream. The discoverer of the Mississippi slept beneath its waters. He crossed a large part of the continent in search of gold, and found nothing so remarkable as his burial place."

\* Hall's Sketches, 1. 143.

1767.\* No habitation had been reared by civilized hands within her borders. The foot of the white man had never touched her soil to appropriate or subdue it. The keen glance of discovery which had penetrated every other region of the west, had not ventured into the recesses of her majestic forests and her tangled canebrakes. The nations of the red men themselves had never lived within the limits of the dark and bloody ground. "The first explorers of this region," says a historian of the west,† "found no Indians settled upon the shores of the Ohio." "Throughout the whole length of that beautiful river, no vestige of an Indian town is to be found." The favorite resort of the elk and the buffalo, and the haunt of every imaginable beast of prey, Kentucky was at once the hunting ground and the battlefield of ferocious tribes of savages, numerous memorials of whose bloody conflicts, attest the desperation with which their respective titles were disputed to the sovereignty over the soil. It was truly a spell-bound land: and the spell continued until it was dissolved in blood. If we consider how enchanting must have been the aspect of the country, as it was presented to the eye of one of its principal discoverers, when "from the top of an eminence on the banks of the Red river, he saw with pleasure, the beautiful level of Kentucky,"‡ our astonishment may be

---

\*"The country beyond the Cumberland mountain, still [in 1767] appeared to the dusky view of the generality of the people of Virginia, almost as obscure and doubtful, as America itself to the people of Europe, before the voyage of Columbus. A country there was—of this none could doubt, who thought at all; but whether land or water, mountain or plain, fertility or barrenness preponderated; whether inhabited by men or beasts or both or neither, they knew not. If inhabited by men, they were supposed to be Indians,—for such had always infested the frontiers: And this had been a powerful reason for not exploring the regions west of the great mountain, which concealed Kentucky from their sight."—Marshall, vol. 1, p. 7.

† Hall's Sketches, vol. 1, p. 233.

‡ Boons's Narrative, 1784.

awakened that *such* a country should have remained so long obscure and unknown: but we may *not* be astonished that a region, teeming with all the bounties of Providence for the red man's peculiar enjoyment, associated with recollections of the glorious exploits of his ancestors in the fields of nature and of battle, and endeared to him by strong and deeply rooted superstitions, should have been relinquished only when it could no longer be maintained either by stratagem or force; only with the extinguishment of every ray of hope of its eventual extrication from the dominion of the invader. Nor need we be astonished that in the prosecution of the effort to expel the invader from their common hunting grounds, all motives for jealousy and collision among the conflicting tribes, should, for the occasion, have been laid aside, and that the cause of vengeance against the white man should have been a common cause.

During the twenty years that intervened between the first permanent settlement and the successful termination of General Wayne's campaign in 1794, there was no peace for the devoted inhabitants of Kentucky. Day after day, for twenty years, the sun rose but to witness in his course incessantly-recurring scenes of danger and of bloodshed, the bare recital of which chills us with horror at the distance of half a century from the period of their occurrence. Suns set and night came, but with the darkness came no respite from the anxious thoughts, the unwearied watchings, the ever present perils of the white man. If he left in the morning his cabin or his camp—the rude spot to which he had appropriated the endearing name of home—no assurance was allowed to gladden the prospect of his return, that the one would not be in ruins or the other deluged in blood. The few and meagre records that have been transmitted of the

events of those trying years, contain little else than daily reiterations of some hair-breadth escape, or some mournful tragedy; and so frequent and familiar were violent deaths by the rifle or the tomahawk, so common were scenes of devastation and massacre, that the tranquil disembodying of the spirit from disease, was a curious and interesting spectacle, which was witnessed by women as well as men, with mingled emotions of wonder and admiration and awe.\* It is scarcely too much to say in the emphatic language of a very accurate historian, "that hecatombs of white men were offered by the Indian to the God of battles in their desperate and ruthless contention for Kentucky."† Yet the undaunted emigrants maintained their ground; and while the mountains and the valleys rang with the yells of a vastly outnumbering foe, and the forests glittered with the gleams of the tomahawk, and death was ambushed in every canebrake, and danger lurked in every imaginable shape, the intrepid backwoodsmen, with their characteristic fearlessness, enjoyed life, hunted game, levelled forests, built forts and villages, opened roads, administered justice, married wives, spent sociable evenings, and laid all the foundations of a future commonwealth.

It is due to the occasion that has convened us together, that we should unfold the prominent events in the early history of Kentucky which led to consequences so interesting to us all, and it is due to the memory of the wonderful men who achieved them, that we exhibit their characters for the admiration of mankind.

Historians do not agree as to the precise date of the visit of Dr. Walker,‡ to Powell's Valley, and from thence

\* See Appendix, note A.

† Butler, p. 19.

‡ Butler, 18, says in 1747, and adds "Dr. Walker so informed John Brown, Esq. of Frankfort." Marshall, l. 6, says "about the year 1758."



across the Cumberland mountain to the Big Sandy river. Whatever may have been the period, it cannot be an important enquiry, when we know that he traversed the northeastern border only, and saw but a small and mountainous part of the country. I have said that it was *no* exploration of Kentucky, as is manifest from the fact, that the party returned dissatisfied, and with such an unfavorable opinion of the region through which they passed, as to be deterred from any attempt to revisit it.\* The facts connected with Dr. Walker's excursion that *do* interest us, however, and about which there is no disagreement, are, that he gave their present appellations to the Cumberland river and to the pass through the mountain of the same name; that he crossed the main northern branch of the Kentucky, which he called by the sweet name of Louisa, by which title the main Kentucky river as well as the country were respectively known for many years afterwards, and was recognized by Henderson in the treaty at Wataga in March 1775.† At what time, for what reason or by what means the Indian appellation of Kan-tuck-ee, was afterwards substituted, and applied exclusively to both the river and the soil, we have no means of determining.

The first successful attempt to explore the Kentucky country was made by John Finley, a backwoodsman of North Carolina, in 1767. He was attended by a few companions, as adventurous as himself, whose names have escaped the notice of history. They were evidently a party of hunters, and were prompted to the bold and hazardous undertaking, for the purpose of indulging in their favorite pursuits. Of Finley and his comrades, and of the course and extent of their journey, little is now known. That they were of the pure blood, and en-

---

\* Marshall, 1, 6. Butler, 18. † Butler, Appendix, 504.

dowed with the genuine qualities, of the pioneers, is manifestly undeniable. That they passed over the Cumberland, and through the intermediate country to the Kentucky river, and penetrated the beautiful valley of the Elkhorn, there are no sufficient reasons to doubt. It is enough, however, to embalm their memory in our hearts, and to connect their names with the imperishable memorials of our early history, that they were the first adventurers that plunged into the dark and enchanted wilderness of Kentucky,—that of all their cotemporaries they saw her first—and saw her in the pride of her virgin beauty—at the dawn of summer—in the fullness of her vegetation—her soil, instinct with fertility, covered with the most luxuriant verdure—the air perfumed with the fragrance of flowers, and her tall forests looming in all their primeval magnificence.

How long Finley lived, or where he died, the silence of history does not enable us to know. That his remains are now mingled with the soil that he discovered, there is some reason to hope, for he conducted Boone to Kentucky in 1769—and there the curtain drops upon him forever. It is fit it should be raised. It is fit that justice, late and tardy that it be, should be done to the memory of the *first* of the pioneers. And what can be more appropriate, than that the first movement should be made for the performance of such a duty, on the day of the commemoration of the discovery and settlement of the Commonwealth?

The return of the hunters to North Carolina created a general sensation. The glowing accounts they gave of the country they had visited,—of its extraordinary beauty, its surpassing fertility, and above all, of the unexhaustible abundance of wild game which it furnished, fired the hearts of the inhabitants of the frontier. After

a twelvemonth or more had elapsed, Finley's roving habits conducted him to the Yadkin river in the vicinity of the residence of Daniel Boone, whose life, although he was then but twenty-two years of age,\* had already developed the features of that extraordinary character, which subsequently distinguished his career, and secured him a conspicuous rank among the remarkable men of the period in which he lived. The simple narrative of Finley's adventures was sufficient to fix the determination of the future conqueror of the wilderness; and it was resolved that they would explore Kentucky together. In the ensuing spring they set off on their journey. "It was on the 1st of May 1769," says Boone himself,† whose phraseology I prefer to adopt, "that I resigned my domestic happiness, and left my family and peaceable habitation on the Yadkin river, in North Carolina, to wander through the wilderness of America, in quest of the country of Kentucke, in company with John Finley, John Stuart, Joseph Holden, James Mooney, and William Cool."

What can be more striking, than the predominance of the passion for adventure—the controlling influence of devotion to the hunter's life—exhibited in this touching annunciation of the motives and objects of the youthful pioneer? He had not long been married. His father had removed from the advancing settlements of the Schuylkill to the unbroken forests of North Carolina. Boone after his marriage plunged deeper into the wilderness—and with the characteristic fidelity of the sex, his wife followed the hazardous fortunes of her husband. On a remote and sequestered spot near the head waters of the Yadkin, he built cabins, and cleared fields, and

---

\* Boone "was born about the year 1746." Marshall, 1. 17. Flint's *Life of Boone*, 1.  
 † Boone's *Narrative* 1784. *Am. Mus.* 2, 321.

found employment for his rifle. But it was not long before the tide of emigration, sweeping in every direction from the Atlantic coasts, reached the frontier of North Carolina; and Boone found himself in imminent danger of being surrounded by civilized neighbors, whose settlements threatened to disturb the range and divide the empire of the wilderness. He became a discontented man; and after his imagination had been dazzled by Finley's description of his romantic excursion, he resolved "to leave his family," to "resign his domestic happiness," to abandon "his peaceable habitation on the Yadkin," and become "a wanderer through the wilderness of America, in quest of the country of Kentucke," several hundred miles distant from the colonial settlements, and swarming with savages, the implacable enemies of his race and nation! How uncontrollable must have been the passion for adventure! The result will show, that it was his "ruling passion, strong in death."

The little party of half a dozen hunters with no other equipage than their knapsacks, and no weapons but their rifles, proceeded on the toilsome and perilous journey, until "on the 7th of June, after travelling," says Boone, "through a mountainous wilderness, in a western direction, we found ourselves on Red river, where John Finley had formerly been trading with the Indians, and from the top of an eminence saw with pleasure the beautiful level of Kentucke."

After the marvellous accounts which Boone had received from Finley of the country in which he now found himself, we may well imagine what were the emotions that swelled the bosom of the satisfied adventurer, as from the top of the eminence on which he stood, he surveyed the beautiful and boundless level that for the first



time was presented to his view. It must indeed have been a bright and enrapturing prospect! Kentucky lay before him in her matchless attractions; in his own expressive language, "a second paradise." All the visions of his imagination were realized at a glance. Boone was a lover of the beauties of nature, and has painted, himself, the picture of what he saw. He "passed through a great forest, in which stood myriads of trees." "Nature was here," he continues, "a series of wonders and a fund of delight. She displayed her ingenuity and industry in a variety of flowers and fruits, beautifully colored, elegantly shaped, and charmingly flavored; and we were diverted with numberless animals, presenting themselves perpetually to our view." "Herds of buffaloes, more numerous than the cattle of the settlements, browsed on the leaves of the cane and cropped the herbage on those extensive plains. We saw hundreds in a drove."

The party encamped on the Red river, one of the tributaries of the Kentucky; and having made a shelter to defend them from the inclemency of a very rainy season, "began to hunt and reconnoitre the country."

On the 22d December, as Boone and Stuart rambled on the banks of the Kentucky river, a company of Indians rushed out of a thick cane brake and made them prisoners. After seven days captivity and confinement, they were so fortunate as to make their escape; and returning to their old camp, they found it plundered, and their comrades "dispersed or gone home." Neither history nor tradition furnishes any account of the fate of those men—

"Nor trace nor tidings of their doom declare,  
Where lived their grief, or perished their despair."

Finley was one of them; and I do not discover that his

name is ever again mentioned in the annals of those times.\* But their places were soon providentially supplied. "About this time," says Boone, from whose narrative I have extracted these details, "my brother Squire Boone and another adventurer, who came to explore the country shortly after us, were wandering through the forest, and accidentally found our camp." Without doubt it was a cheering accident, and the meeting must have been as cordial as it was unexpected: but its consolations were of short duration. Soon after this fortunate accession to their numbers, John Stuart was killed by the savages, and "the man," continues the narrative, "who came with my brother, returned home by himself."

The brothers were now left alone. The winter was far advanced, and it was necessary that something should be done to protect them from the weather. They built a small cottage, of such materials as their tomahawks could supply, and occupied it, without molestation, until the spring.

With the year 1769, ended the first scene of the deep and bloody tragedy of the settlement of Kentucky. It was an ominous prelude to the events that were to follow, and mournfully prefigured that the future commonwealth was to be born in convulsions and baptized in blood.

On the return of spring, the intrepid hunters found themselves involved in a very serious dilemma. Their store of ammunition was nearly exhausted, and their rifles were their only means of security and support.—Without them they must starve, or fall unarmed and

---

\* Of all the pioneers, the least justice has been done to Finley. And yet he was the first of them all. Would it not be one step toward rescuing him from undeserved obscurity, if the Legislature of Kentucky would avail itself of the first occasion that offers, to name a county after him?

defenceless under the hatchets of the savages. The imprudence—nay the actual hazard—of a protracted delay in the wilderness became every passing day, more obvious and alarming. Still, the thought of surrendering their favorite retreat—of exchanging their lonely and dangerous pastimes for the less acceptable enjoyments of domestic and social life, was painful to minds constituted as theirs were; and the alternative to which they resorted, displayed another feature of the wonderful character of the backwoodsmen of that period. It was resolved that Squire Boone should revisit the settlements, return with all practicable despatch with horses and ammunition, and rejoin his brother at the camp. The arrangement having been made, the brothers exchanged a mournful leave, and after the lapse of a few days, Daniel Boone was a solitary wanderer in the wilderness of Kentucky.

He has described in his autobiography, this interesting crisis of his life, in terms so touching and impressive, that I adopt his language. “On the 1st of May 1770,” he relates, “my brother returned home for a new recruit of horses and ammunition, leaving me alone, without bread, salt or sugar, or even a horse or dog. I passed a few days uncomfortably. The idea of a beloved wife and family, and their anxiety on my account, would have disposed me to melancholy, if I had further indulged the thought.”

The thought was *not* indulged by the “rough stoic of the woods.” If his mind did sometimes revert to the distant inmates of his “peaceable habitation on the Yadkin,” the homage of a momentary sigh was all that was consistent with his nature or his destiny to pay to the endearments of the domestic circle. He was alone, in the midst of a howling wilderness, where every object that he saw admonished him, that he must encourage

other feelings than those of melancholy and gloom. If there ever was a time in the evolution of his wayward fortunes, when he stood in need of all his vigilance and self-possession, this was that time. His movements were watched—his trail was pursued—his camp, during intervals of his absence, was visited by the Indians. Every flying moment was a moment of peril to his life.

But with all this, there was much in the peculiar circumstances that surrounded him, to inspire him with resolution—to give buoyancy to his spirits and excitement to his mind. The energies of his body derived ample support from the prosecution of his discoveries and the employments of the chase; and his fancy revelled in the pleasures of those picturesque scenes that were daily unfolding and dissolving before his sight. With the pencil of an artist he has pourtrayed one of those scenes.

“One day I undertook a tour through the country, when the diversity of the beauties of nature I met with, in this charming season,” (it was in the month of May, 1770,) “expelled every gloomy thought. Just at the close of day \* \* \* \* I had gained the summit of a commanding ridge, and looking around with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains and beauteous tracts below. On one hand I surveyed the Ohio, rolling in silent dignity, and marking the western boundary of Kentucke, with inconceivable grandeur: At a vast distance I beheld the mountains lift their venerable brows and penetrate the clouds. All things were still. I kindled a fire near a fountain of sweet water, and feasted on the loins of a buck which a few hours before I had killed. \* \* \* My excursion had fatigued my body and amused my mind. I laid me down to sleep and did not awake until the sun had chased away the night.”—He concludes this vivid and beautiful description by declaring, that “no



populous city, with all the varieties of commerce and stately structures, could afford him so much pleasure, as the beauties of nature he found in this country." \*

On the 27th July, Squire Boone returned, according to his engagement, to the old encampment. He came, as he had gone, alone,—bringing with him the “horses and ammunition,” which it was the object of his visit to the settlements to procure. That he should have cherished even the most latent expectation of finding his brother alive on his return, bespeaks a confidence in his destiny, which not all the skill of Daniel Boone, accomplished as he was in the arts of Indian warfare, could justify. Miracles were not wrought in the eighteenth century to assure mankind of a Divine agency in human affairs; and who could have supposed, that any other doom but that of extermination, awaited the bold usurper of the Indian hunting ground—wandering from preference of a hunter’s life, companionless, in a distant and savage wilderness—depending upon his rifle for food—upon the beasts of the forest for raiment—and for personal safety upon the subtlety with which he avoided danger, and the valor and dexterity with which, when present, he met or repelled it—above all, marked and hunted as a victim by artful and fiendlike foes, instigated to vengeance by a keen sense of wrong inflicted by the invasion of a favorite domain, from which they had not yet been driven by the power of the white man?—Yet Daniel Boone lived to act his part in the future conquest of Kentucky; and from the period of his brother’s return until the ensuing spring, the self exiled hunters continued to explore the country—giving names in their progress to the different rivers—and in March 1771, retraced their steps to North Carolina with a determina-

---

\* See Appendix, note B.

tion to bring their families as soon as practicable to the wilderness.

There for the present I leave them. Other actors now appear on the stage, and events in other quarters demand attention.

In the interval between the first successful exploration of Kentucky in 1767 and the commencement of the year 1770, intelligence had extensively spread through Virginia and North Carolina of the character of the region west of the Alleghany, and the attention of enterprising men was strongly attracted by it. In the latter year, a party of forty hunters from Holston, Clinch and New rivers, conducted by Colonel James Knox, equipped themselves and set off on an expedition on this side of the Cumberland mountain. Nine only reached Kentucky. Passing through what is now familiarly known as the middle section of the State, they explored the country lying on the Cumberland and Green rivers and returned home after a protracted and arduous journey. They subsequently became distinguished from other exploring parties of that adventurous period by the appellation of "*the long hunters.*"

From various causes Boone lingered on the Yadkin until the 25th September, 1773. In the meantime the spirit of emigration and enterprize was roused in Virginia, and several surveying and exploring parties visited the wilderness in the spring of that year: whose movements, as this was an intermediate space of time between the discovery and settlement of Kentucky, deserve particular notice.

In May, 1773, Thomas Bullitt, Hancock Taylor, James, George, and Robert M'Afee, James McCoun, Jr. and Samuel Adams—all citizens of Virginia—descended the Ohio river in canoes, with the intention of appropri-

ating lands and making settlements. The party continued in company until they reached the confluence of the Kentucky with the Ohio river. There they separated Captain Bullitt pursued his voyage to the falls of Ohio, where he encamped above the mouth of Beargrass, and in the following August laid off the present flourishing city of Louisville. He surveyed also Bullitt's Lick in the county which was afterwards called after his name.

Taylor and the McAfees proceeded up the Louisa or Kentucky river, about twenty one miles, to the junction of Drennon's creek, on the bank of which, after they had ascended it a short distance, they discovered a lick adjacent to a fine medicinal spring. There they met one of their comrades,\* who had ventured to cross the country from some point on the Ohio, in anticipation of the arrival of the party: from which circumstance, I suppose, Drennon's Lick acquired the name by which it is now known as one of the most agreeable and salutary watering places of the west.

In quick pursuit † of Bullitt and Taylor, another surveyor, James Douglass, descended the Ohio river to the falls. He stopped at the mouth of one of its small tributaries, and went "over land a mile and a half" to the celebrated Big Bone Lick, in the county of Boone, where he paused for a time, to examine the rare and wonderful spectacle that the spot exhibited. The remains of the Mastodon, accounts of whose existence in North America were once regarded as fabulous, were found scattered in great number around a spacious mineral spring.

---

\* The name of the individual was *Drennon*--Butler 24. Marshall makes no mention of this circumstance.

† The exact time is no where stated, by either Butler or Marshall. They both say, "during the same year"—and the latter adds, "in the rear of Capt. Bullitt." *Marsh.* 1, 37. Butler 22.

“Here,” says the Historian,\* “Douglass remained, forming his tent poles of the ribs of the enormous animals that formerly frequented this remarkable spot, and on these ribs blankets were stretched for a shelter from the sun and rain. Many teeth were from eight to nine and some ten feet in length; one in particular, was fastened in a perpendicular direction in the clay and mud, with the end six feet above the surface of the ground, and so deep that an effort was made by six men in vain to extract it. The lick extended to about ten acres of land, bare of timber, grass or herbage, and so much trodden, and eaten, as to be depressed below the original level. \* \* \* \* Through the midst of the lick ran the creek, and on each side of it a never failing stream of salt water, whose fountains were in the open field. To this lick, from all parts of the neighboring country were diverging roads made by the wild animals that resorted to it for the salt, of which both the earth and water were impregnated.”

Leaving Drennon's Lick, the party of the McAfees took one of the traces—for so they were called by the early settlers—opened by the buffaloes through the forests and canebrakes in their peregrinations from one watering place to another; and crossed the Kentucky river at a ford half a mile below Frankfort, near the spot now covered by one of the noblest public works of the age. They surveyed and appropriated on the 16th July, 1773, six hundred acres of land, including the valley in which Frankfort is situated. It was the first survey ever made on the Kentucky river.

These are minute details: but they indicate the progress of events during an interesting period in the an-



nals of Kentucky. It would be an agreeable employment to follow the movements of these enterprising adventurers, with the same minuteness of detail along the whole line of their journey. Their achievements entitle them to be classed with the earliest and most distinguished pioneers of the State, and to be remembered, on this occasion, by the sons and daughters of the pioneers with peculiar pride. The names of the Taylors and McAfees are bright and honored names in our history. But the limits assigned to an address like this require, that I should pass over much, that it is the province of the historian to record.

The company prosecuted their journey from the mouth of Benson in the direction to Lexington—crossed the Kentucky river several miles above Frankfort—proceeded westwardly until they discovered Salt river: and descending that river to the mouth of Hammond's creek, they surveyed from thence to the mouth of the stream on which Harrodsburgh stands. Taylor now left them to join Captain Bullitt at the falls, and the party of the McAfees shaped their course homeward toward the Cumberland Gap. The former, a surveyor by profession, was necessarily much exposed to attack by the Indians, and fell, on the banks of the Kentucky river, a victim to their ferocity. The latter, having survived all the obstacles and perils of their way-faring, reached their homes in safety—removed with their families to Kentucky in 1779—built McAfees' station in the present county of Mercer; and maintained a character of the highest respectability for intelligence, patriotism and piety, which they transmitted to their children.

Towards the close of the year, 1773,\* John Floyd

---

\* Marsh. 1, 38. Butler 23. It may be, however, not until the year following. Of the latter opinion is Mr. Nathaniel Hart, Sen., of Woodford—who is in possession of any of Col. Floyd's papers.

came to Kentucky, like Bullitt and Taylor, on a surveying excursion. A deputy of Col. William Preston, principal surveyor of Fincastle county—of which the region in Virginia, west of the mountains, was then a part—he made many surveys on the Ohio, and belonged to the party that was recalled by Lord Dunmore,\* in consequence of the dangers attending the performance of their official duties. Col. Floyd returned in 1775, and became a conspicuous actor in the stirring scenes of the drama. Alternately a surveyor, a legislator and a soldier, his distinguished qualities rendered him at once an ornament and a benefactor of the infant settlements. No individual among the pioneers was more intellectual or better informed; none displayed, on all occasions that called for it, a bolder and more undaunted courage. His person was singularly attractive. With a complexion unusually dark, his eyes and hair were deep black, and his tall spare figure was dignified by the accomplishments of a well bred Virginia gentleman.† Connecting himself with the fortunes of the Transylvania company, he became their principal surveyor, and was chosen a delegate from the town of St. Asaph to the assembly that met at Boonesborough, on the 24th May, 1775, to make laws for the infant colony. He accompanied Boone in the pursuit and rescue of his daughter and her companions, whom the savages had decoyed and captured in July, 1776—and his cotemporaneous account of that thrilling occurrence does equal credit to his soldiership and his pen.‡ In all the stations, civil and military, to which he was called, he acquitted himself with honor, and came at last to a violent death by the hands of the savages in 1783.

---

\* Marsh. 1, 38.

† Mar. 1, 38.

‡ See Appendix—Note C.

The current of emigration in the year 1774, was checked by the troubles in which Virginia was involved with the Indians by her then Governor, Lord Dunmore. The preparations for the campaign which terminated with the bloody battle of Point Pleasant on the 10th October, had absorbed the thoughts of the western adventurers, and hundreds flew to the standard of Virginia. But still there were accessions to the ranks of the emigrants, and among them there came, in the early part of that year, an individual, who possessing qualities of a high and generous nature, is conspicuous in history, as the builder of the "first log cabin," that was ever raised in the wilderness of Kentucky. The individual I speak of is—James Harrod. Bold, resolute, athletic,—inured to the life of a backwoodsman,—familiar with its dangers and capable of supporting its hardships—he was singularly adapted to the position that he was to occupy. His open, manly countenance—his robust, commanding person, inspired confidence both in his integrity and prowess, and his conciliatory address won for him the respect and affection of his associates. Expert in the use of the rifle, he was a successful hunter, and a skillful and dangerous antagonist of the Indian. If he was an unlettered, he was not an ignorant man. The defects of his education were supplied by the masculine energy of his natural endowments, and at a period when the cultivation of the intellect was not only impracticable but was deemed subordinate to the discipline of the body, his claim of rank, as a leader of the pioneers, was universally allowed. His attention to the safety and wants of his companions was as unremitting, as his magnanimity was proverbial. If he received information that a party of hunters had been surprised by the savages,—“Let us go and beat the red rascals,” was his instantaneous or-

der ; and the command and its execution were synonymous with him. If a plough horse were missing—having strayed from the station,—and the owner, unaccustomed to the range, or unwilling to encounter the risk of making search for him, was idle in consequence, Harrod would disappear, and it would not be long before the horse would be driven to the owner's premises. Of a restless and active temperament, the dull routine of life in a station, was unsuited to him. He loved, like Boone, the free and unrestrained occupation of a hunter. While others were standing still for want of employment, disdainng repose he would range through the forest, hunt the wild game, or attach himself to expeditions into the Indian country or exploring parties on the frontier. Having built his cabin on the scite of the beautiful village of Harrodsburgh in the spring or summer of 1774, we find him on the 10th October with Colonel Lewis at the Point, giving, by a decisive victory over the north-western tribes of savages, a death blow to their supremacy. On the return of spring he is again at his chosen station in the wilderness, fortifying himself against their incursions, and as we shall presently see, representing his little settlement in the Transylvania Assembly. Thence forward Harrodsburg became a prominent place of refuge and resort : and she has never ceased to insist upon the validity of her claims to precedence, as the honored spot of the first settlement of Kentucky.

Harrod survived the stormy scenes of his manhood. But age could not tranquilize the restless elements of his character. In after times when peace and quiet had ensued, and the range of the buffalo was filled up with a civilized and enterprizing population, and he had become the father of an interesting family, the veteran pioneer would turn away from the scenes of domestic and social



life, and plunge again into the solitudes of the wilderness, to indulge himself in the cherished enjoyments of his earlier years. From one of those excursions, into a distant part of the country, he never returned.

Such are some of the outlines of the character of James Harrod—one of the pioneers of Kentucky. It gives me pleasure to add that his venerable relict, the faithful partner of his difficult fortunes—still lives, to enjoy, in the midst of posterity, the affectionate regards of all who know her.

Simon Kenton was another of those brave and enterprising spirits who, in the year 1774, commenced his remarkable career among the early emigrants. It is not my purpose to bestow on it any other than a passing notice. It would be a vain attempt on my part to give new interest to a character, which has been drawn before me by an accomplished hand.\* Commencing with his flight from the home of his childhood—caused by a mistaken impression of the issue of a boyish rencontre with his rival for a lady's affections, which induced him to renounce his paternal name of Butler and assume that by which alone he is known in history,—and closing with the peace of 1794, his career exhibits those wonderful alternations of good and bad fortune—of bold adventure—of desperate conflicts with the savages—of capture—imprisonment—torture and escape—which nowhere can be found so strongly exemplified as in the eventful annals of the settlers of Kentucky. Destitute of every polite accomplishment, either of mind or manners, and cast upon the arena of life under circumstances extremely unpropitious to success,—few men were better taught in the knowledge of the world, or the wiles

---

\* Mr. McClung, in his *Sketches of Western Adventure*.

of Indian warfare; and few of his associates maintained a more respectable rank in society. He lived to witness the wonderful transformation which the lapse of a few years produced in the manners and condition of the inhabitants of the west; to see the wilderness converted into a cultivated garden and parcelled off into powerful and prosperous States—and to find a reward, for all his toils and sacrifices, in the consciousness of having contributed to the happiness of millions of his fellow-men.

From the fall of 1773 to the commencement of 1775, the emigrants from North Carolina associated with Boone, remained in a great degree stationary. They had made an effort to penetrate into Kentucky, but were driven back by the Indians, and kept by them in check, in the settlements on Clinch river, during the whole of the year 1774. Boone was not, however, himself inactive. Having been made favorably known to Lord Dunmore, he was selected by him to repair to the rapids of the Ohio river, to conduct from thence the party of surveyors to whom allusion has been made, as having been recalled from their dangerous position on the frontier. The service was undertaken, and Boone, with Michael Stoner as his sole companion, traversed the pathless region between the settlements and the falls, and piloted the party safely to Virginia. The remainder of the year was employed in the command of three frontier stations, to which he was assigned by Lord Dunmore, with the commission of captain.

We are brought in the progress of events to the year 1775,—a year memorable as the epoch of the first settlement of Kentucky—memorable for the struggle by which that settlement was maintained—memorable for the great events that were transpiring in other parts of the Continent. The elements were now gathering of

that fearful convulsion which shook the American Colonies to their centre, and subsided with the acknowledgment of the independence of our country. Misled by the counsels of an infatuated Ministry, the Parliament of Great Britain had assumed pretensions to which no people on earth could submit and be free; and born to freedom, the inhabitants of the colonies were not the men to surrender its blessings without a conflict. The battle of Lexington, on the 19th of April, 1775, severed one of the ties that bound us to the parent country, and in the succeeding month of May, the second Provincial Congress convened at Philadelphia. While these events were in progress on the eastern side of the mountains, and were absorbing the attention of the people there, Boone and a party of bold companions, were cutting their way through the wilderness to Boonesborough; and while the Congress at Philadelphia, on the 24th of May, had resolved themselves into a committee of the whole, to consider the State of America, a miniature assembly of seventeen representatives of the hunters of Kentucky, were gravely considering, on the same day, and on the spot where we are now assembled, of the affairs of a "new born colony," of the existence of which the members of the Eastern assembly had probably never heard.

The influence of the movements of these hardy emigrants on the successful result of the great contest of our ancestors for independence, has never been fully appreciated. The bold and persevering attempts to settle Kentucky, by withdrawing the western tribes of savages, from a participation in the efforts to subjugate the colonies to matters of vital concernment to themselves, weakened, without doubt, the force of the blow aimed by Great Britain at American liberty, and thus contributed to the success of the revolution. In the view thus

presented, Kentucky is not without just claims to the rank, of having been, substantially, a portion of the confederacy of 1776.

In the autumn of the year, 1774, there originated in North Carolina, one of the most extraordinary schemes of ambition and speculation, which was exhibited in an age pregnant with such events. Eight private gentlemen—Richard Henderson, William Johnston, Nathaniel Hart, John Luttrell, David Hart, John Williams, James Hogg, and Leonard Henley Bullock, conceived the project of purchasing a large tract of country in the west from the Cherokee Indians, and provisionary arrangements were made, with a view to the accomplishment of their object, for a treaty to be held with them in the ensuing year. This was the celebrated Transylvania company, which formed so singular a connexion with our early annals. In March, 1775, Colonel Henderson, on behalf of his associates, met the chiefs of the Cherokees, who were attended by twelve hundred warriors, at a fort on the Wataga, the south eastern branch of the Holston river. Boone, by the solicitation of the company, was present at the treaty. A council was held, the terms were discussed, the purchase was consummated. A deed of conveyance was solemnly executed, which, after reciting that the chiefs and head men of the Cherokees were “the Aborigines and sole owners, by occupancy from the beginning of time, of the lands on the waters of the Ohio river, from the mouth of the Tennessee river, up the said Ohio to the mouth or emptying of the great Canaway or New river, and so across by a southward line to the Virginia line, by a direction that shall strike the Holston river, six English miles above the long island therein,” proceeds to convey to the grantees by name, for the consideration of ten thousand



pounds, the territory lying on the Ohio, "beginning at the mouth of Kentucky, Chenoca,\* or what by the English is called Louisa river—from thence running up the said river and the most northwardly branch of the same to the head spring thereof—thence a south east course to the top ridge of Powell's Mountain—thence westwardly along the ridge of said mountain unto a point from which a north west course will strike the head spring of the most southwardly branch of Cumberland river—thence down the said river, including all its waters, to the Ohio river—thence up the said river, as it meanders, to the beginning"—including the whole tract of country between the Cumberland and Kentucky rivers.

That this company contemplated the establishment of a separate and independent government, on terms of relationship to the government of Great Britain, not materially dissimilar from the other colonies, is manifest from the whole tenor of their proceedings. Disregarding the principle, which, whether well or ill founded, Virginia had previously asserted by law, and which became the rule of action of the government of the United States, that the right to extinguish the Indian title to the soil, appertained to the sovereign alone, the Transylvania company claimed to derive their title by a valid purchase "from the Aborigines and immemorial possessors—the sole and uncontested owners of the country—in fair and open treaty, and without the violation of any British or American law." † This claim they set forth shortly after the establishment of the colony, accompanied with

---

\* I quote from the deed in Butler, Appendix 503, 2d Ed. Mr. Hall (Sketches 1, 251) interprets the word "Chenoc." †

† Hall's Sketches, Appendix 2, 223.

a declaration "to give it up only with their lives," in a memorial addressed to the continental congress of 1775, "requesting that Transylvania might be added to the number of united colonies." "Having their hearts warmed with the same noble spirit that animates the colonies"—such is their language in the memorial—"and moved with indignation at the late ministerial and parliamentary usurpations, it is the earnest wish of the proprietors of Transylvania to be considered by the colonies as brethren, engaged in the same great cause of liberty and mankind. And, as by reason of several circumstances, needless to be here mentioned, it was impossible for the PROPRIETORS to call a convention of the settlers in such time as to have their concurrence laid before this congress, they here pledge themselves for them, that they will concur in the measures now adopted by the proprietors."

Preparatory to the organization of a government for the new State, Boone was despatched to open a road from the settlements to Kentucky. "Having collected a number of enterprising men," says the pioneer, "I soon began the work. We proceeded, till on the 20th March, we came within fifteen miles of where Boonesborough now stands—where the Indians attacked us and killed two and wounded two more." Three days afterward, they were again attacked and lost two other companions. Still they persevered, and without further molestation reached the Kentucky river. On the first of April, 1775, they began to erect the fort.

Of its plan and dimensions Boone gives no account. He speaks of it only as having been built "at a salt lick, sixty yards from the river." A diagram of it is extant, drawn by Colonel Henderson, which would place it adjacent to the river, with one of the angles resting on its

bank near the water, and extending from it in the form of a parallelogram. The dimensions of the enclosure are not specified; but "if we allow," says Mr. Hall, "an average of twenty feet for each cabin and opening, the length of the fort must have been about two hundred and sixty, and the breadth one hundred and fifty feet;" and this, it is supposed, is not an inaccurate estimate. In a few days after they began their work, one of the men was killed by the Indians, and it was not finished until the fourteenth of June, just two months and a half from the day of its commencement.

On the first of April, Henderson and his associates arrived in Powell's Valley, one of the western settlements of North Carolina, attended by forty armed men,\* and as many pack horses. They were on their way to Boonesborough, the future seat of government of the territory. They moved slowly, however, for on the eighth of April they were still in the valley. There, it has been said,† they fell in with Colonel Benjamin Logan, who was allured by the glittering prospects presented by the newly discovered country to men of enterprize, and was journeying in the same direction. The two parties travelled in company for several days, but took different routes on their arrival in Kentucky. Logan turned his course westwardly in the direction to St. Asaph, in the present county of Lincoln—where he settled himself and built a station, which was called after him. Henderson pursued the road which Boone had opened to the place of his destination.

The removal of Colonel Logan to Kentucky was an

\* Mr. Hall adds—"And an additional number, probably of non-combatants."—Sketches I, 253.

† Marsh. I.

event of such importance as to require something more than a passing notice. It was scarcely possible for an individual of pretensions like his, to have attached himself to the exposed settlements in 1775, without taking an immediate position at the head of affairs. Like Boone and Harrod and Kenton, he was uneducated; but he had a quick perception of expedients—much prudence and caution—unyielding perseverance—determined valor; and combining these necessary qualifications of a successful pioneer with superior strength and activity of person, he seemed to have been formed by nature for great emergencies. The life of a backwoodsman—beset with difficulties and dangers at every step, put all these powers into constant and severe requisition. An incident or two, related by the historians, will illustrate the manner in which he acquitted himself on occasions that called for the display both of courage and conduct of the rarest kind.

The year 1777, was a fearful and trying period in the affairs of the emigrants. There was an evident determination on the part of the savages, by a series of incursions, to annihilate the settlements, and thus put forever to rest the question of its permanent occupancy. Their purpose was indicated by successive attacks, of great violence and in large bodies, on the several stations, and by the pertinacity with which those attacks were prolonged. On the 20th of May, 1777—the historians have carefully preserved the date—Logan's fort was invested by a force of a hundred Indians, and on the morning of that day, as some of the females belonging to it were engaged, outside of the gate, in milking the cows, the men who acted as a guard for the occasion, were fired upon by a party of the Indians who had concealed themselves in a thick canebrake. One man fell



dead on the spot; another was wounded mortally; and a third so badly as to be disabled from making his escape. The latter, whose name was Harrison, after a violent exertion, ran a few paces, and fell. His struggles and exclamations attracted the notice and awakened the sympathies of the inmates of the station. The frantic grief of his wife gave additional interest to the scene. The heart of the sturdy pioneer, insensible to fear, was alive to the impulses of humanity; and Logan resolved to save the life of his comrade at the hazard of his own. He appealed in vain to the men around him to join in an attempt to rescue their wounded friend. One man at length consented, and rushed with Logan from the fort; but he had not gone far, before he shrunk from the imminence of the danger, and fled. Logan dashed on—alone and undaunted—reached, unhurt, the spot where Harrison lay agonized with his wound—threw him on his shoulders, and made a safe and triumphant retreat amidst incessant volleys of the enemy's fire arms.

The siege was maintained with unusual obstinacy, and it was as obstinately resisted. One of the principal inconveniences to which the settlers were sometimes exposed, was the difficulty of procuring powder and lead for their rifles. The want of those necessary articles began to be sensibly felt by the besieged party; and their fears, arising from this circumstance, were heightened almost to despondency, when they reflected what little probability there was of obtaining them from the neighboring stations. There were still no indications that the siege would be abandoned; and a protracted resistance seemed impracticable. What hope was there for relief? The distant settlements on the Holston would furnish them with a supply; but who would venture to go there? And even if men could be found rash and desperate enough

to undertake the journey, how improbable was it that the trip could be accomplished in time for the relief to be available? Logan stepped forward, in this extremity of their condition, to become the savior of his little garrison. He left the fort under cover of the night, attended by two faithful companions of his own selection, crept cautiously and safely through the Indian lines—moved with incredible rapidity over mountain and valley—arrived at the settlement on the Holston—procured the necessary supply of powder and lead—immediately retraced his steps, and was again in the fort in ten days from the time of his departure. He returned alone. The delay that would occur in the transportation of the stores, induced him to entrust them to the charge of his companions; and his presence at St. Asaph was all important to the safety of its inhabitants. His return reanimated their drooping hopes, and inspired a confidence which sustained them until they were relieved.

When Col. Henderson arrived at Boonesborough, he found the fort unfinished. But he proceeded, without delay, to organize his government. He opened a land office—appointed its officers—and summoned a legislative assembly to meet him at his capital, on the 23d May, 1775. The writs of election were directed to four stations or settlements—Boonesborough, Harrodsburgh, the Boiling Spring, and the town of St. Asaph.

The delegates met on the day appointed. Boonesborough was represented by Daniel Boone, Squire Boone, William Cocke, Samuel Henderson, William Moore, and Richard Callaway. Harrodsburgh, by Thomas Slaughter, John Lythe, Valentine Harmon, and James Douglass. The Boiling Spring settlement, by James Harrod, Nathan Hammond, Isaac Hite, and Azariah Davis; and the town of St. Asaph, by John Todd, Alexander Spots-

wood Dandridge, John Floyd and Samuel Wood—in all, seventeen. The assembly was organized by choosing unanimously Thomas Slaughter of Harrodsburg as Speaker, and Mathew Jouitt, Clerk. After the performance of divine service by the Rev. Mr. Lythe, one of the delegates from Harrodsburg, the House waited on the proprietors to acquaint them of their proceedings; and Colonel Henderson, in behalf of himself and his associates, opened the Assembly with a speech, “a copy of which,” says the journal, “to prevent mistakes, the Chairman procured.”

So singular a state paper—addressed to so singular a body—deserves an attentive consideration. That the proprietors of the colony confided in the strength and integrity of their title to the soil which they purchased, and “were ordaining laws and regulations for the future conduct of the inhabitants thereof” in good faith, there is no valid reason to doubt. That the President was addressing a legislative body, convened from four towns or settlements, “in the fifteenth year of the reign of His Majesty King of Great Britian” — so their journal reads—and in a wilderness, which contained at the moment a population not exceeding one hundred and fifty souls, must awaken solicitude to know what the speaker had to communicate.

The attention of the Legislature is first called to the importance of the duties they were delegated to discharge, and their powers are distinctly traced to the only legitimate source of all political power—the people. “You are called and assembled, at this time,”\* said President Henderson, “for a noble and honorable purpose—a purpose, however ridiculous and idle it may appear at first view to superficial minds, yet is of the

---

\* Butler. Appendix, second edition.

most solid consequence—and if prudence, firmness, and wisdom are suffered to influence your councils and direct your conduct, the peace and harmony of thousands may be expected to result from your deliberations.”

“You are placing,” he continued, “the first corner stone of an edifice, the height and magnificence of whose superstructure are now in the womb of futurity, and can only become great and glorious, in proportion to the excellence of its foundation. These considerations, gentlemen, will no doubt animate and inspire you with sentiments worthy the grandeur of the subject.”

He then referred them to “their peculiar circumstances in a remote country, surrounded on all sides with difficulties, and equally subject to one common danger, threatening their common overthrow,” and suggested that such a consideration should “secure to them an union of interests, and consequently that harmony of opinion, so essential to the forming of good, wise and wholesome laws”—and proceeded to say: “If any doubt remain amongst you, with respect to the force and efficacy of whatever laws you now or hereafter make, be pleased to consider that all power is originally in the people; make it their interest, therefore, by impartial and beneficial laws, and you may be sure of their inclination to see them enforced.”

After some further general observations, the business part of the address is taken up: and in calling their attention to the objects of their legislation, he specified “as the first in order, from its importance, the establishing of Courts of Justice or tribunals for the punishment of such as may offend against the laws,” and “recommends the most dispassionate attention, while they take for their guide as much of the spirit and genius of the laws of England as can be interwoven with



those of this country ;” for, he added, “ we are all Englishmen, or what amounts to the same, our selves and our fathers for many generations, have experienced the invaluable blessings of that excellent constitution.”

He then proposed the adoption of “ some plain and easy method for the recovery of debts, and determining matters of dispute in respect to property, torts and injuries ;” and moved with just indignation by a proclamation of Lord Dunmore, in which he denounced “ one *Richard Henderson, and other disorderly* persons his associates, who under pretence of a purchase from the Indians, contrary to the aforesaid orders and regulations of his Majesty, do set up a claim to the lands of the crown within the limits of the colony” of Virginia, the President of Transylvania thus enforces his recommendation of “ a method for the recovery of debts” and “ determining matters in dispute in respect to property and torts”—“ These things are so essential,” he declared, “ that if not strictly attended to, our name will become odious abroad, and our peace of short and precarious duration. It would give honest and disinterested persons cause to suspect, that there were some colorable reason at least for the unworthy and scandalous assertions, together with the groundless insinuations, contained in an infamous and scurrilous libel lately printed and published concerning the settlement of this country—the author of which avails himself of his station, and under the specious pretence of a proclamation, pompously dressed up and decorated in the garb of authority, has uttered invectives of the most malignant kind ; and endeavors to wound the good name of persons, whose moral character would derive little advantage by being placed in competition with his ; charging them amongst other things equally untrue, with a design “ of forming an asylum for debtors

and other persons of desperate circumstances—placing the proprietors of the soil at the head of a lawless train of abandoned villians, against whom the regal authority ought to be exerted, and every possible measure taken to put an immediate stop to so dangerous an enterprize.”

His next topic was “the establishing and regulating a militia”—which he justly regarded “as of the greatest importance.” “Nothing I am persuaded,” he said, “but the entire ignorance of the savage Indians of our weakness and want of order, has hitherto preserved us from the destructive and rapacious hands of cruelty, and given us at this time an opportunity of forming secure defensive plans, to be supported and carried into execution by the authority and sanction of a well-digested law.”

Lastly, he adverted to “sundry other things highly worthy of their consideration—and demanding redress.” Among them he suggested, “the wanton destruction of our game, the only support of life among many of us, and for want of which the country would be abandoned ere to morrow, and scarcely a probability remain of its ever becoming the habitation of any christian people.” And he concluded with the usual assurance of the concurrence of the proprietors in every measure, which could, “in the most distant and remote degree, promote the happiness or contribute to the grandeur, of the new-born country.”

Such were the topics of the first speech ever delivered to a legislative assembly on this side of the Alleghany mountains. The tone of its sentiments was manly and dignified—its argument sensible and persuasive—its suggestions were well chosen and judiciously adapted to the condition of the settlements—and in one respect it is a model of executive messages of modern times—it

was not too long for general perusal. We cannot but observe, however that the measures recommended by Col. Henderson, with so much earnestness, were intended for a more advanced stage of his republic; for it is not very easy to perceive how laws for the establishment of courts of justice—the recovery of debts, and the training of militia, could be efficiently executed in a community of such limited population—the whole of which were enclosed within the walls of four stations—each remote from the others—and subject to hourly assaults by a savage foe.

The assembly responded to the speech of the President in terms of the most respectful confidence, according to the manner that obtained in our own government when Washington was at its head, and appointed Mr. Todd, Mr. Cocke, and Mr. Harrod a committee to present their answer. The answer assured the proprietors, “that their speech had been received, with minds truly thankful, for the attention and care they had expressed towards the good people of the infant colony;” claimed for the assembly the “absolute right, as a political body, without giving umbrage to Great Britain or any of the colonies, to frame rules for the government of their little society;” declared that “the establishing tribunals of justice should be a matter of their first contemplation,” that it would be “their chief care to copy after the happy pattern of the English laws;” that “next to the restraint of immorality, their attention would be directed to the relief of the injured as well as the creditor,” in order that it might not be “in the power of calumny and scurrility to say, “that their country was an asylum for debtors or any disorderly persons;” promised “to be cautious to preserve the game,” and “to regu-

late the militia as well as the infancy of their institutions would permit.”

The President expressed, in a formal reply, “the infinite satisfaction” of the proprietors, “on the happy presage of the future felicity of the infant colony;” and avowed his confidence “that every difficulty must give way to perseverance, whilst their zeal for the public good, was tempered with that moderation and unanimity of opinion, so apparent in the conduct” of the assembly.

After these polite interchanges of official courtesy, the House, (for there was but one body,) commenced its business.

I cannot, I think, be mistaken in supposing, that some curiosity has been excited to look into the proceedings of this anomalous assembly; to ascertain with what fidelity they attended to the proposals of the President’s speech, and what laws were deemed by them necessary, “to promote the happiness and contribute to the grandeur of the new-born country.” A few extracts from their journal, will be satisfactory.

On motion made, leave was given to Mr. Todd to bring in a bill for the establishment of courts of judicature, and regulating the practice therein; and it was ordered that Mr. Todd, Mr. Dandridge, Mr. Callaway and Mr. Henderson do bring in a bill for that purpose.

On motion of Mr. Douglass, leave was given to bring in a bill for regulating a militia; and a committee was appointed to prepare it, of which Col. Floyd was appointed chairman.

On motion of Mr. Daniel Boone, leave was given to bring in a bill “*for preserving game and so forth,*” and a committee was appointed for that purpose, of which Mr. Daniel Boone was chairman.



These measures having been reported and read the first time, the House adjourned.

On the next day Mr. Robert M'Afee was chosen sergeant at arms: and the first order that appears on the journal is, "That the sergeant at arms bring John Guess before the convention to answer for an insult offered Col. Richard Callaway."

The bills that had been reported on yesterday were now read a second time; and by leave of the House several others were introduced; among them a bill by Mr. Todd "for establishing writs of attachment," "which was read by the clerk and passed the first time."

The Rev. Mr. Lythe, obtained leave to bring in a bill to *prevent profane swearing and Sabbath breaking*. After it was read the first time, it was ordered, says the journal, "to be recommitted; and that Mr. Lythe, Mr. Todd and Mr. Harrod be a committee to make amendments."

Mr. Todd, Mr. Lythe, Mr. Douglass and Mr. Hite were appointed a committee, to draw up a compact between the proprietors and the people of the colony.

Mr. Guess was then brought before the assembly and was reprimanded by the speaker.

Mr. Todd and Mr. Harrod were appointed a committee, to wait on the proprietors to know what name for the colony would be agreeable: and reported that it was their pleasure, that it should be called **TRANSYLVANIA**.

A bill for improving the *breed of horses* "was brought in by *Captain Boone*"—which was read and referred for consideration.

A bill for the punishment of criminals was also reported, and

On motion of Squire Boone leave was given to bring in a bill to *preserve the range*.

The several bills referred to were passed—signed by the proprietors, and became laws.

After a session of three days, the assembly adjourned until the first Thursday of the following September; but before their adjournment, a solemn compact\* between the proprietors and the people of the colony—declaring “the powers of the one and the liberties of the other”—was signed and sealed by Richard Henderson, Nathaniel Hart and John Luttrell, representing the company, and on behalf of the colonists by Thomas Slaughter, speaker of the assembly.

The enquiry presents itself, where did this assembly of the primitive legislators of Kentucky hold its sessions? A manuscript diary of the events of that interesting period, kept by Col. Henderson himself, has been recently brought to light, after an obscurity of more than half a century, and furnishes an answer to the question. “About fifty yards from the (Kentucky) river,” says that journal of the 13th May, ten days before the assembly met, “behind my camp and (near) a fine spring a little to the west, stands one of the finest elms, that perhaps nature ever produced. This tree is produced on a beautiful plain, surrounded by a turf of fine white clover, forming a green to its very stock. The trunk is about four feet through to the first branches, which are about nine feet from the ground. From thence it regularly extends its large branches on every side, at such equal distances as to form the most beautiful tree that imagination can suggest. The diameter of the branches from the extreme end is one hundred feet; and every fair day, it describes a semicircle on the heavenly green around it, of upwards of four hundred feet in circuit.

---

\*See Appendix—note E.

At any time between the hours of ten and two, one hundred persons may commodiously seat themselves under its branches. This divine tree, or rather one of the proofs of the existence from all eternity of its divine author, is to be our church, our council chamber," and he might have added—hall of legislation—for it was under its canopy, that the legislature of Transylvania met to deliberate.

On the day succeeding that of their adjournment, "divine service," the same journal records, "was performed by the Rev. Mr. Lythe, of the church of England." And it was under the shade of the same magnificent elm, that the voices of these rude hunters, rose in accents of prayer and thanksgiving to the God of their fathers—that the verdant groves of the land of the savage and the buffalo, first rang with the anthems of the christian's worship, and echoed back the message of the Redeemer of the world. It was fit it should be so.

"The groves were God's first temples: Ere man learned  
To hew the shaft and lay the architrave,  
And spread the roof above him; ere he framed  
The lofty vault to gather and roll back  
The sound of anthems—in the darkling wood  
Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down  
And offered to the mightiest, solemn thanks  
And supplication."

But the time was rapidly approaching when the glowing visions of the Transylvania company were to be dissolved in air. Virginia when she was a colony had declared by law,\* "that the agents of the crown alone could purchase from the Indians, and that such purchases should be for the public benefit:" and the declaration of Independence having transferred to the Common-

---

\*See Girardin's History of Virginia, 342.

wealth all the rights of the crown, the same exclusive privilege of purchasing the lands of the natives, was asserted in her constitution of 1776. Three years had not elapsed from the date of that instrument, before the title of the Transylvania company was annulled by a solemn legislative act. But Col. Henderson and his companions had rendered an important service to the State. Their extinguishment of the Indian title enured by law to her benefit. They had contributed largely to the settlement and defence of the western frontier; and as an indemnification for "their charge and trouble and for all advantage to the Commonwealth therefrom," a tract of land twelve miles square and containing two hundred thousand acres, situated on the Ohio below the mouth of the Green river, was granted to them by the legislature of Virginia in October 1778.

In the year 1775, intelligence was received by a party of hunters who were accidentally encamped on one of the branches of Elkhorn, that the first battle of the revolution had been fought in the vicinity of Boston between the British and provincial forces, and in commemoration of the event, they called the spot of their encampment—Lexington. That spot is now covered by one of the most beautiful inland cities on the continent. But no settlement was then made. Boonesborough and Harrodsburgh continued to be the prominent places of security, and consequently of rendezvous for the thickening crowds of emigrants and travellers to the wilderness. Prior to the fall of this year, no females had ventured across the mountains. The pioneers now determined to bring their families to the stations. "*Soon after the 14th of June, 1775,*" says Boone, "I removed my family to the fort;" and he adds, that "his wife and daughters were the first white women that stood on the banks



of the Kentucky river." The first domestic circle of Harrodsburgh was formed by Mrs. Denton, Mrs. McGary, and Mrs. Hogan in the month of September 1775. They attended their husbands, who came from the backwoods of North Carolina, and who had joined Boone's company in Powell's Valley when he was removing his family to Boonesborough. The companies parted at the head of Dick's river.\* So that Mrs. Boone, Mrs. McGary, Mrs. Denton and Mrs. Hogan came to Kentucky together, and the fame of the adventure belongs equally to them all. It was an adventure, indeed, of consummate daring! Where in the annals of female heroism, shall we find its parallel? Laying for the moment out of view the hazards of the journey—what shall we say of its terrors, its exposures, its fatigues? The intrepidity of the female character in moments of extremity of distress or danger, has become proverbial among men. But here was intrepidity of another sort. Here was a voluntary and deliberate encounter of scenes of hardship and of suffering—it might be of violence, of torture and of death—from which the stout hearted pioneer himself might well have recoiled with dread. To us who live in the present age of unexampled improvement—when the comforts of life spring up with magical rapidity around us—when by the powerful and familiar agency of steam, space and distance have been overcome—when the mountains, no longer barriers to social and commercial intercourse, have bent their lofty heads at the behest and for the convenience of man—when artificial highways, as smooth and almost as level as the pavements of a city, radiate from the centre to the extremities of a populous republic, the realities of such an adventure

---

\*Butler, page 29.

are wholly beyond conception. There was no array of chariots and equipage to conduct the dauntless band of female emigrants to the "country of Kentucke." There were no joyous faces of friends and acquaintance, to welcome them with smiles to the "dark and bloody ground." Their prospects were not brightened with the hope, of finding comfort and tranquility when they reached their journey's end. No. Their journeying was on foot or on the pack-saddle. The reception that awaited them might for aught they knew, be the bloody welcome of the fierce and infuriate savage. The long and dreary vista before them was overhung with dark and dreadful forebodings, of surprise and pillage and murder by the way. Yet these valiant mothers of a race as brave came to the wilderness! Sons and daughters of Kentucky what a parentage may you boast!

Col. Richard Callaway removed his family to Boonesborough during the same fall. Several other families came with him; and in March, 1776, Mrs. Logan, the wife of Col. Logan, joined her husband at St. Asaph. There were other female accessions; but these show that the pioneers had now secured a foothold in the country, and that the practicability of its permanent settlement was no longer a matter of doubt. That desirable event, although it was not destined to be consummated without additional sacrifices on the part of the emigrants, was facilitated by the entrance on the theatre of his his usefulness and fame, of a great and illustrious actor of whom it is proper that I should now speak.

General George Rogers Clark came to Kentucky for the first time in 1775. His second visit was in the spring of 1776, when the minds of many of the inhabitants were agitated by the claim of the Transylvania

company to the tract of country, over which, as we have seen, they had attempted to establish a proprietary government. Dissatisfaction had arisen from numerous causes, which I need not pause to enumerate. They will be found embodied in "a petition of the inhabitants and some of the intended settlers of that part of North America, now denominated Transylvania," addressed "to the honorable the Convention of Virginia."\* The Virginia settlers in general, did not recognize the validity of the company's jurisdiction, and declined making investments in their land office. The emigrants from North Carolina, many of whom were brought by Col. Henderson to the country, were satisfied with the titles derived from him, and made their purchases accordingly. There were others, and a numerous class, who, with a proper foresight of results, preferred to take possession of such lands as suited them, and await the perfection of their claims, until the pending conflict of opinion should be determined and the rightful sovereignty declared. On the 6th June, 1776,† a meeting was held at Harrodsburgh to take the subject into consideration, and Col. Clark and Gabriel John Jones were selected to repair to the seat of government of Virginia, and to express to the General Assembly, the wishes of the citizens that those gentlemen should be permitted to take their seats as representatives in that body, "from the western parts of Fincastle county on the Kentucky river."

The delegates accepted the singular commission, with no expectation certainly, that the request of their constituents in that respect would be complied with. On their arrival, in Bottetourt, one of the western counties

---

\* 2 Hall's Sketches, App.

† See Appendix—note F.

in Virginia, they ascertained that the General Assembly had adjourned, and Jones returned to the settlements on the Holston. Clark remained—to promote other designs than those connected with his mission. That distinguished man—Patrick Henry—was then the Governor of Virginia, and was absent from the seat of government, on a visit to Hanover. Clark availed himself of his proximity to the place of his residence, to obtain an interview. He disclosed the objects of his mission, and the defenceless condition of the frontier, and having disposed the Governor favorably to his views, he procured from him letters of introduction to the Executive Council at Williamsburgh, and proceeded to that capital. His first business was to apply to the council for a supply of gunpowder for the Kentucky stations. But what thought had Virginia of “the western parts of Fincastle county, on the Kentucky river?” What certainty was there, that the settlements on the frontier were not within the chartered limits of North Carolina? The cautious and timid council consented to *lend* the powder, provided Clark would be personally bound for its value, *in the event that the Legislature of Virginia should not recognize the inhabitants of Kentucky as citizens of that State; and provided, moreover, that he would pay the cost of its transportation!* The offer on those terms was without hesitation declined. The delegate from Kentucky then represented to them, that the British were endeavoring to engage the Indians in the impending war; that the people of the frontier stations might be exterminated for the want of the means of defence, and if that event happened, that the arms of the savages might be turned against the Virginia settlements on the eastern side of the mountains. The council now



went a little further, and ordered the powder to be delivered; but still adhered to their original terms. Clark persisted in rejecting them; and indignant that such injustice should be done to his constituents, he formed the determination, before he left the council chamber, to re-visit Kentucky and exert himself for the formation of an independent State. He restored the order of the council for the delivery of the powder, accompanied with a written assurance that he was utterly unable to convey military stores to such distant points through an enemy's country: that the inhabitants of Kentucky must look elsewhere for assistance than to their native State; and concluded by declaring that a country which was not worth defending, was not of sufficient value to be claimed. This last step was decisive of the whole movement. On the reception of the letter, Clark was sent for; and an order of council was made for the conveyance of the powder to Pittsburgh, "to be safely kept and delivered to Mr. George Rogers Clark or his order, for the use of the said inhabitants of Kentucki." Such were the relations between Virginia and Kentucky in 1776, and such the light in which the latter was regarded by the government of the parent Commonwealth.

At the ensuing session of the General Assembly, Clark and Jones presented the memorial of the inhabitants of Kentucky, requesting that their delegates might be permitted to take seats in that body. It prayed also that the settlements on the western frontier, might be considered as included within the territorial limits of Virginia, and that a company of riflemen should be sent to their relief. The petition setting forth their causes of complaint against the government of Transylvania, was offered at the same time. The general assembly took all these subjects into earnest consideration. They did

not, of course, recognize the delegates as legislators, but they were received and treated with great civility as citizens, and the grievances of their constituents were most respectfully heard. Col. Henderson was himself at Williamsburgh, maintaining the validity of his purchase, and consequently of the title of the company, to the land contained in the deed from the Cherokees. He was a man of considerable abilities, of persuasive eloquence, of interesting manners, and wielded an influence which was not without its weight in the councils of Virginia. But Clark was a competitor whose powers were not easily overcome. After a severe contest, the general assembly declared against the title of the Transylvania company, and on the 7th December, 1776, passed a law to establish the county of Kentucky.

The delegates prepared, after these events, to return to Harrodsburgh. But hearing that the powder which the council had furnished was still at Pittsburgh, they resolved to take that place in their route, and superintend in person the transmission of an article so necessary to the safety of the people of the stations. On their arrival at Pittsburgh, they discovered that a body of Indians had collected there, ostensibly for the purpose of negociation, but employed, as they believed, in acquiring information of the movements of the emigrants, to enable them to intercept the passage of boats down the Ohio river, which was then, as it is now, the principal thoroughfare of trade and transportation from the east to the west. It became important, therefore, that Clark and his colleague should counteract by the celerity of their movements, these mischievous designs of the Indians. They procured and manned a boat—descended the river with all possible expedition—landed at Limestone creek, the present site of the city of Mays-

ville—carefully concealed the powder on its banks—and set out immediately to Harrodsburgh for an escort to convey it to the stations. Thus far they had met with no interruption; but they were now about to penetrate the haunted wilds of Kentucky, and who could answer for their safety? Halting on their journey at a cabin, that sheltered a settler whose name was Hinkston, they ascertained from a party of surveyors, that Col. John Todd was in the vicinity with a small company under his command. On the reception of this intelligence Clark waited a short time, for his arrival, but becoming hopeless of meeting him, he resumed his journey with two of his men, leaving the remainder of his little party with his colleague. Soon after his departure Col. Todd arrived at Hinkston's, and confident of the sufficiency of his force, although he had but ten men along with him, he resolved upon an attempt to remove the powder from Limestone. The historian has not defined the position of Hinkston's cabin; it was probably not remote from the stream which now bears his name in the county of Bourbon. Todd marched on until he approached the Blue Licks, that fatal spot so notorious in our annals, and was attacked by a party of Indians who were in pursuit of Clark. A skirmish ensued which resulted in the defeat of Col. Todd, and the loss of several of his men. Jones, who had attached himself to the company, was among the number of the slain. Clark pushed on to Harrodsburgh, from whence he sent a detachment to Limestone for the powder, which was conveyed safely to the station.

This rapid narrative of the first important service rendered by General Clark to the country of his adoption, exhibits the commencement of a career, as heroic as it was successful in the wide field of western adven-

ture—a career, which although displayed under the auspices of a single State, forms one of the most brilliant episodes in the story of our national achievements.

Commencing with the date of his return from Virginia toward the close of the year 1776, he embodied in a journal some hasty memoranda of the principal occurrences of the year 1777, and the venerable relic has been kindly placed into my hands.\* The information communicated by it justifies me in repeating, that the year 1777 was one of severe trial to the emigrants. Scarcely a day elapsed, without bringing with it an attack on some one of the stations, or a skirmish with the savages, or the surprise of a hunting party—seldom unaccompanied with loss of lives. Boonesborough, Harrodsburgh, and Logan's fort—the three prominent settlements—were successively besieged with great obstinacy. During a period of more than six weeks, the Indians seem never for a moment to have abandoned the country. They hovered around the stations—haunted the traces that led to them—skulked through the forests—concealed themselves in canebrakes—always ready to avail themselves of whatever advantages might occur. Yet the whole effective military force of the settlers consisted at this time of about one hundred men.—Boonesborough contained twenty two—Harrodsburgh sixty five—Logan's fort fifteen. Wonderful as it may appear, under all these discouragements, the lands adjoining the forts were cleared and cultivated—the settlements continued to be the resort of adventurers—the population of the country increased—its civil institutions were established—and the embryo Commonwealth was gradually acquiring the strength and proportions of an independent body politic.

---

\* See Appendix—note G.



Early in the spring of 1777, John Todd, John Floyd, Benjamin Logan, John Bowman and Richard Callaway were appointed justices, and Levi Todd, clerk, of the county court, which held its first session at Harrodsburgh.

On the fifth of March the militia were embodied into a regiment, the requisite officers commissioned, and Col. Bowman was placed in the command.

The county being entitled by law to a representation in the General Assembly of Virginia, on the nineteenth of April John Todd and Richard Callaway were elected the first burgesses; and thus the municipal organization of Kentucky was effected in the midst of dangers—threatening destruction to the whole population.

The year 1778 opened with other aspects. The Indians disappeared from the stations, and an interval of tranquility and repose occurred. The guardian genius of Kentucky had watched over the birth and “stood by the cradle,” of her municipal institutions. The same master spirit was now engaged to defend them. While the inhabitants of the stations were planting their corn-fields with their rifles in their hands, and defending their position against the incursions of the savages, instigated by agents of the British government, Virginia was mingling in the furious strife of the revolution. Little leisure was allowed to her to discuss the claims of her remote backwoodsmen, either upon her generosity or her justice. She had pledged herself, with an indomitable purpose, to the support of the one great cause of colonial liberty and independence, and all her energies were put in requisition for the redemption of the pledge. If for a moment only, she had turned aside from the pursuit of that object, to sound the depths of her financial policy, to investigate all the measures conducive to success, she would have

perceived, at a glance, in the enlargement of her western settlements abundant reasons for affording them protection—reasons no less imposing than the replenishment of her treasury, and the diversion of the Indian tribes from a participation in the general conflict. What Virginia had not time to consider, the far-reaching mind of Clark considered for her. He had, as an adventurer, visited Kentucky in 1775. As her delegate, he had claimed her recognition by the authorities of the parent State in 1776—through his agency her institutions were established. He had returned to the frontier to participate in the struggles of the feeble stations for existence. The British government was then in possession of the military posts of Detroit, Vincennes and Kaskaskia, and diffused an influence among the north-western Indian tribes which, if properly directed, might have operated most prejudicially to the American cause. With characteristic forecast, Clark perceived that to these sources of influence, were mainly attributable the habitually inflamed passions and unremitted depredations of those savages, and especially the determined and systematic onsets which, throughout the year 1777, were made on the frontier stations. The reduction of these posts, became, therefore, in his estimation, a cardinal object of policy. He believed that upon their destruction the fate of the settlements depended. He had moreover become apprized, that a plan had been conceived by the Governor of Vincennes, to be carried into execution on the return of spring, to combine a large British and Indian force for offensive operations against Kentucky, the consequences of which, if successful, years of persevering effort might not retrieve. With these convictions deeply impressed upon his mind, he determined to recommend to the Governor and council of Virginia, an

immediate expedition into Illinois. Not sufficiently assured of a favorable reception of his views, in his absence from the seat of government, he left Kentucky on the first of October, 1777, and repaired in person to Williamsburgh, to enforce by argument, and if need be by entreaty, the policy of his scheme. The same illustrious patriot, with whom Clark had obtained an interview in Hanover, and who had favored his application for powder in 1776, still presided over the councils of Virginia. Nothing could have been more fortunate for the success of his designs. There was a congeniality in the minds of those great men which presaged the best results, and Clark addressed himself a second time to Governor Hénry. The Governor entered at once into the consideration of the subject. He not only brought it before his council, but he consulted Jefferson and Mason and Wythe—those sage counsellors who had already given earnest of that wisdom and patriotism which exalted them to the highest rank among their country's benefactors—and after the most minute survey of the whole ground of the application, a warm and decisive approval was given, to the proposition for the Illinois campaign.' On the second of January, 1778, Clark received instructions from the Governor and council, to raise a force adequate at once for the defence of Kentucky, and the reduction of the British post at Kaskaskia. The sum of twelve hundred pounds was placed at his disposal—recruiting officers were dispatched in various directions for men—and orders were given to the agent of Virginia, at Pittsburgh, to furnish the necessary boats and supplies. The details of the expedition—its secret preparations—the opposition it encountered from many of the settlers—its progress—its embarrassments—and its success—belong to history. The

result was as glorious as the conception was opportune and sagacious. By a masterly movement, Kaskaskia was taken on the fourth of July, without bloodshed—almost without resistance—the British Governor was made a prisoner while in his own chamber, and the standard of Virginia waved in triumph over the ancient capital of Illinois.

Events, however, of a less auspicious character, were transpiring, in the mean time, in another direction: and the settlements, once more fearfully endangered, were to owe their safety to the misfortunes of Daniel Boone. On the first of January, 1778, Boone and a company of thirty men had gone to the Blue Lick, “to make salt for the different garrisons in the country,” and on the seventh of February, when on a hunting excursion, he encountered a party of Indians, who, together with some Frenchmen, were on their way to Boonesborough. Boone was taken; and on the next day he was conducted to the lick where his companions were, and all were made prisoners—twenty eight in number including himself—three having been previously sent to the fort with the salt that had been made. Satisfied with their acquisition, the Indians retreated across the Ohio to the old town of Chillicothe on the little Miami river. From thence Boone was taken to Detroit. On the twenty fifth of April he was brought back to Chillicothe—adopted into an Indian family—treated with great clemency and affection—and having gained the friendship of the chief of the Shawanese, he was released in a great measure from the restraints and severities of Indian captivity.

The Indians were now preparing for a violent attack upon the settlements in Kentucky. Early in June “four hundred and fifty of the choicest warriors,” says Boone, “were ready to march against Boonesborough, painted



and armed in a fearful manner." Alarmed at these preparations he determined to make his escape, and "on the sixteenth of June, before sunrise, he went off secretly and reached Boonesborough on the twentieth—a journey of one hundred and sixty miles." He found the fortress "in a bad state"—and lost no time in making it defensible. He "repaired the flanks, gates and posterns, formed double bastions," and completed the whole in ten days.

On the eighth of August, the "Indian army of four hundred and forty four warriors, commanded by Capt. Duquesne and eleven other Frenchmen, and their own chiefs," demanded the surrender of the garrison. Two days were allowed, at Boone's request, to consider the proposition. "On the ninth, in the evening," he says, "I informed the commander, that we were determined to defend the fort, while a man was living:" and most courageously was that determination maintained.

The siege continued for the space of nine days—and an almost incessant firing was kept up night and day. On the twentieth of August the enemy disappeared, having lost thirty seven men killed, and a great number wounded. The defence of the fort does infinite credit to the spirit and gallantry of the Kentuckians, and saved the frontier from depopulation.

The easy and complete conquest of Kaskaskia served to stimulate Col. Clark to fresh enterprizes. The village of Cahokia, about sixty miles distant, was next taken, and the inhabitants acknowledged their allegiance to the government of Virginia. He now directed his views to the important post of Vincennes; but despairing of taking possession of it by force of arms with so small an army, he availed himself of the influence which he had acquired over M. Gibault, a Roman Ca-

tholic Priest, who had remained steadfast in his attachment to the interests of the colonies, to engage him in a project, remarkable alike for its singularity and its success. It was to substitute at the post the authority of Virginia for that of Great Britain—not by violence—but by a peaceful and voluntary renunciation, of the allegiance of the inhabitants to the British sovereign. In an interview between Clark and the reverend gentleman, the former affected to entertain the purpose of ordering an expedition against Vincennes from the falls of Ohio, which he represented to be the head quarters of the main Virginia army, of which the Illinois regiment was only a detachment; and he requested the latter to communicate to him whatever information he possessed that would facilitate his movements. M. Gibault readily consented to comply with the request. He informed Col. Clark that the Governor of Vincennes was absent on a visit to Detroit—that the necessity of the proposed expedition from Kentucky might probably be superseded by other designs—that with the approbation of Colonel Clark, he would assume the business on himself, and that he had no doubt of being able to bring that place over to the American interest without bloodshed, and without the necessity of marching an army against it. It may be supposed, that Col. Clark did not yield either a tardy or reluctant assent, to a proposition so suitable to the accomplishment of his views. He acceded to them unhesitatingly, and associating in the undertaking at M. Gibault's request, a layman of the same religious persuasion, on the fourteenth of July he dispatched them to Vincennes. In a few days after their arrival the inhabitants were assembled—a consultation took place between the minister and his flock—a treaty was concluded—the authority of the British government dis-

claimed—and the oath of allegiance administered in the name of the Commonwealth of Virginia. After this fortunate termination of their mission, the negotiators returned to Kaskaskia, and were received with acclamations by the whole community. Clark was equally gratified and surprised. The peaceful accomplishment of an object so important not only to the frontier settlements of Virginia, but to himself—could not have been otherwise than in the highest degree agreeable to him; and having renewed his engagement with the troops for another term of service, he posted a garrison at Kaskaskia under the command of Capt. Williams—another at Cahokia under Capt. Bowman, by whose gallantry it was taken, and Capt. Leonard Helm was appointed to the command of Vincennes, with the authority of “agent for Indian affairs *in the department of the Wabash.*”

Such were the dispositions made by the conqueror of Illinois, of the strongholds of the immense region which his policy and arms had acquired. What a sudden change his prospects had undergone in the lapse of a few months! On the first of January he was an humble suitor before the executive authorities of Virginia, claiming justice for the unprotected settlements of Kentucky, and disclosing plans for the suppression of the British influence over the savages. In the following August he was in possession of a territory now embraced by two powerful States—he had established the government of Virginia over two of those military posts, which it was his great object to subdue, and he had stationed a garrison in each. But his authority over Vincennes was destined to expire in a few months after it was acquired. It was impossible for him situated as he was, so to dispose of his forces, few in number and occupying positions considerably remote from each other, as to assign

to the post at Vincennes, a garrison adequate to its protection, and Capt. Helm, a brave and admirable officer, found himself a mere nominal commander—at the mercy of the first enemy that might approach him.

On the twenty ninth of January, 1779, Col. Clark received intelligence, that Gov. Hamilton, at the head of four hundred men from Detroit had, in the previous month of December, re-taken Vincennes; and that his purpose was to have continued his march to Kaskaskia, but that owing to the severity of the season, that movement had been postponed until the spring.

Clark at once determined on the course which it became him to pursue. He knew, he said, if he did not take Hamilton, Hamilton would take him, and he announced his purpose of marching forthwith to Vincennes. He first despatched Capt. Rogers, another meritorious officer, in whom he had great confidence, on board of a large boat, which he supplied with two four pounders, four swivels, and forty six men, with directions to force his way up the Wabash, and await below the mouth of White river, further orders from him, and on the seventh of February, 1779, he set out himself with one hundred and seventy men for the post. After an arduous march—conducted under the most difficult and embarrassing circumstances—in the midst of winter—over swamps covered with water, oftentimes so deep as to reach the armpits—across creeks and rivers swollen by floods—through an unbroken wilderness devoid of the means of subsistence—furnishing not even nature's supply of wild game—the resolute little band, weakened almost to prostration by hunger, cold and fatigue, but buoyed up by the example of their commander, arrived on the twentieth of February in sight of the place of their destination, without any knowledge on the part of



Gov. Hamilton of the movements of the expedition. That most unwelcome intelligence was for the first time communicated by Clark himself, in a letter addressed to the inhabitants of the village, declaring his purpose of taking possession of the fort that night, and warning all those who adhered to the cause of his Britannic majesty, to repair to the fort and fight like men, under pain of being vigorously dealt with, if, after so frank a notification, they were found giving assistance to the enemy. So sudden and so positive an annunciation was calculated to surprise, if it did not alarm, the Governor. It conveyed an assurance of confidence in his own strength, and of equal confidence in the weakness of his adversary—a circumstance which, coupled with the fact, that the name of the leader of the Virginia forces—fresh from the field of his successes—was of itself a source of intimidation, especially to the inhabitants of Vincennes, contributed in no slight degree to the successful termination of the enterprise. Col. Clark took a position on the heights adjacent to the town, in full view of the garrison, and after making some demonstrations of strength which he did not possess, exhibited by successive marches and countermarches around the acclivities of the hill on which he had stationed his troops, he moved forward to take possession of the place. I pass over the particulars of the attack. It was conducted with equal skill and boldness. The American commander at length demanded a surrender of the fort. The demand was rejected by the Governor in the most decisive manner. But his firmness suddenly gave way. He ascertained that his cannon—which was his main reliance for defence—had become useless—the citizens of Vincennes were well disposed toward the assailing army—he was alarmed for the consequences, should the fort fall into

the hands of the Americans without condition—and he applied to Col. Clark for a truce of three days. While the latter deemed it inexpedient to allow the request, he proposed a personal conference with Governor Hamilton. An interview accordingly took place between the commanders at the village church. Clark repeated his demand of a surrender of the garrison at discretion. Hamilton offered to capitulate, upon condition that the British army should be regarded as prisoners of war, entitled as such to the protection of their lives and property. The feelings of the parties rose with the interchange of their respective propositions. An interruption ensued, and the conference closed with a declaration by Colonel Clark, that in fifteen minutes he would storm the fort. It was with evident reluctance that the Governor was about to part from his adversary on such unpleasant terms. The conversation at his instance was renewed—another scene of excitement occurred—and Clark at last consented to reconsider the proposed terms of capitulation. They were submitted by him to his officers for consideration; and after discussion, it was resolved that the demand of Col. Clark for an unconditional surrender would not be insisted on; the proposition of the British Governor was deemed reasonable, and he was immediately informed that it would be acceded to. A capitulation accordingly took place. On the twenty fourth of February, 1779, the garrison of Fort Sackville were surrendered as prisoners of war, and on the next day the fort was occupied by the American army. Thirteen rounds of cannon—representing the thirteen united colonies—proclaimed the joy of the victors, and the star spangled flag of Virginia was once more displayed over Vincennes.

The Virginia commander now fixed his eye upon De-

troit. But I cannot pursue him in his extraordinary career. It is for the biographer, not for me, to recount the scenes of his eventful life, and present it in full lustre to the admiration of posterity. If he was one of the pioneers of the wilderness, he was likewise the main pillar of its defence in the tender years of our institutions, when a fearful combination of hostile circumstances threatened to overthrow them, and with them to destroy the settlements in Kentucky. The series of victorious movements which has been already noticed, executed with so much rapidity and tact, and under so many embarrassments and difficulties, would bear comparison with those of the most distinguished generals of the age. The capture of Vincennes and the discomfiture of the designs of Governor Hamilton, first to re-take Kaskaskia, next to annihilate the Kentucky stations, and lastly to invade and lay waste the western counties of Virginia, redounded to the security of the whole frontier, and it may be said without extravagance, materially to the success of the struggle for independence. His renown is associated with the glory of the State, of which he was an ornament and ought to have been the pride. He laid the foundations of a Commonwealth, and by his genius and valor added a territory large enough for an empire to the dominions of his native State. He died in poverty and neglect—of a broken heart—in the sixty sixth year of his age.\*

I return to the occurrences that were transpiring in Kentucky. On the first of April, 1779, a block house was erected in Lexington, and a settlement commenced by Robert Patterson. "He was joined," says a historian,† "by the McConnells, the Lindsays, and James Mas-

---

\* See Appendix—note H.

†Butler, 101.

terson;" and in the autumn of the same year,\* Major John Morrison removed his family from Harrodsburgh. Col. Patterson was "an early and meritorious adventurer, much engaged in the defence of the country." He was in the battle of the Blue Lick, and became a member of the convention that met at Danville in 1785, to deliberate upon the proposed separation from Virginia.

In the same year Bryant's Station was settled on the Elkhorn. The original proprietors abandoned it; but it continued to be occupied by other more resolute men—among whom was Col. Robert Johnson, one of the distinguished defenders of the same station in 1782.

In October, 1779, the Legislature of Virginia passed a law, "establishing the town of Boonesborough in the county of Kentucky." Fifty acres of land adjoining the lots which had previously been laid off, were vested in Richard Callaway, Charles Minn Thruston, Levin Powell, Edmund Taylor, James Estre (Estill,) Edward Bradley, John Kennedy, David Gist, Pemberton Rollings and Daniel Boone, as trustees, and they were required to cause a plan of the town together with the plan of the township as already laid off, to be returned to the court of the county to be recorded. The trustees or any six of them were empowered to convey the lots to the persons first making application, "subject to the condition of building on each of them a dwelling house, sixteen feet square at least, with a brick, stone or dirt chimney, to be finished for habitation, within three years from the date of the respective deeds," and for a failure to build within the stipulated period, the trustees were authorized to sell the lots and apply the money to the repairing of the streets or any other pur-

---

\*Memoirs of Rice by Dr. Bishop, 151.



pose for the benefit of the town. The law also required that six hundred and forty acres should be surveyed, adjoining the land allotted for building, the title to which was vested for a common in the trustees, in trust for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town.

The trustees declined to act, and by an amendatory law \* Thomas Kennedy, Aaron Lewis, Robert Rhodes, Green Clay, Archibald Woods, Benjamin Bedford, John Sappington, William Irvine, David Crews, and Higginson Grubbs were appointed in their places. Even with the assistance of these bountiful provisions, Boonesborough never rose to any importance among the villages of Kentucky. It was the first, and perhaps on that account, in the earlier period of her history the doomed fortress, against which the savages seem to have directed their most determined efforts, and having withstood them, through a series of years of difficulty and danger, it lost the precedence which circumstances had given to it, and sunk with the disappearance of the enemy whose incursions it had so successfully resisted. Time has passed roughly over the consecrated spot of the first settlement of Kentucky. The "lots and streets" of Boonesborough have ceased to be known by their original lines and landmarks. The work of the pioneers has perished. Scarce a vestige remains of their rudely built cabins and their feeble palisades. The elm under whose shade they worshipped and legislated and took counsel of each other for safety and defence, no longer survives to spread its ample canopy over our heads. But the soil on which they stood is under our feet. The spring which slaked their burning thirst, at every pause in their conflicts with the remorseless foe, is at our side.

---

\* In 1787—3 Litt. L. 539.

The river from whose cliff the Indian levelled his rifle at the invaders of his hunting ground, still rolls its "arrowy" current at our back. These are memorials that cannot fail. How replete with interest are the reminiscences they awaken! They remind us of Boone and his adventurous companions, plying the forest with their axes, and throwing their quick and anxious glances around them, as if the reverberation of every stroke might be the tocsin of their doom—of Henderson and Hart and Williams, the self styled proprietors of the "new born country," poising themselves on their title to the soil, hurling defiance at a royal Governor, claiming admission into the confederacy of united colonies, and "placing the corner stone of a" political "edifice" that would only be "great and glorious in proportion to the excellence of its foundations"—of Slaughter and Todd and Floyd and Harrod and Callaway, the lawgivers and defenders of the frontier—of Lythe, the peaceful "Minister of the church of England," whose sacred vocation could not exempt him from the death of the tomahawk; and while we are thus reminded of the men, by whose valor and perseverance this fair land was won, and by whose agency its institutions were planted, *who* does not feel himself borne down by the weight of the obligations of respect and gratitude, which their services have imposed? Honor to the memory—peace to the ashes of the first settlers of Kentucky!

The year 1779 was remarkable for the large additions that were made to the population of the settlements. Hundreds of families from the interior of the parent Commonwealth, and from the neighboring colonies sought homes and estates in the western forests. Virginia had at length awakened to the incalculable value of her unappropriated domain, and for the fourfold purpose of

encouraging the migration of foreigners, promoting population, increasing the annual revenue, and creating a fund for discharging her public debt,\* she established her land office, and offered her lands “on the western waters,” to all who in consideration of money or of faithful military service, might think proper to avail themselves of the terms of the law. I should wander from my subject, if I were to stop to discuss the provisions of that memorable system, or to animadvert on the unnumbered woes to which it gave birth. No citizen of Kentucky can be a stranger to its fruits.† A court of commissioners was created, with plenary powers, to adjudicate without appeal upon the incipient land titles of the country, and William Fleming, Edmund Lyne, James Barbour and Stephen Trigg, citizens of Virginia, but not of the county of Kentucky, were appointed the commissioners. The court was itinerant, and held its sessions for the convenience of the settlers, at the several stations. It was opened at St. Asaph, on the 13th of October, 1779, and the first claim presented for adjudication was that of Isaac Shelby, for “a settlement and pre-emption for raising a crop of corn in the country in 1776.” The mention of the name of this distinguished citizen must arrest for a few moments the narrative of events.

Isaac Shelby was a native of Maryland, and was born on the 11th of December, 1750. Commencing life at a period when the facilities of education were not generally diffused, reading, writing, arithmetic and surveying formed the sum of his acquirements. The exercises of the chase and the use of fire arms were ordinary pre-requisites of a successful career, and to them he was

---

\*Preamble of the Law of 1779, 1 Litt. L. 406.

†See Appendix note I.

accustomed from early boyhood. At the age of twenty one, he removed to one of the western counties in Virginia, and in the campaign of 1774, was a lieutenant of the company which his father commanded in the bloody battle of Point Pleasant. He came to Kentucky in 1775, and accepted from the Transylvania company the appointment of deputy surveyor. A pioneer, a statesman, and a soldier of the revolution, we find him in 1776 "raising a crop of corn" in Kentucky—in 1779 a member of the Virginia legislature, and on the 7th of October, 1780, at King's Mountain, driving before him at the head of his regiment, the enemies of his country. But his services were not limited to this enumeration of them. Throughout the war of the revolution he was usefully employed in the several capacities of captain of a minute company—commissary of supplies, and colonel of a regiment. By the extension of the line of boundary between North Carolina and Virginia, his residence was thrown into the limits of the former State, and he was elected in 1782 a member of her General Assembly. In the ensuing spring he removed permanently to Kentucky, and from that period became identified with the perils of her infancy, with the hopes of her riper years—with her honor, her welfare and her fame. He was married in 1783 in the fort at Boonesborough, to a daughter of Captain Nathaniel Hart, one of the proprietors of Transylvania. He was a member of the conventions of 1787 and 1788 that met at Danville to consider and adjust the terms of separation from Virginia. After the adoption of the constitution of 1792 he became the first Governor of Kentucky, and was elected a second time in 1812, shortly after the declaration of war by the United States against Great Britain. A measure so important to the dignity and honor of the repub-



lic could not but meet his decided concurrence, and he accorded to the authorities of the federal government the most energetic co-operation. In all his patriotic determinations, in that respect, he was supported by the whole people of Kentucky. The proximity of the inhabitants of the northwestern frontier of the United States, to the British American dominions, brought them in direct contact with the savage allies of the British government, and the surrender of Detroit threw the door wide open to their depredations and cruelties. Kentucky had *no* frontier. Hundreds of miles separated her from the seat of hostilities. She was surrounded by a cordon of States, protecting her soil from invasion and her people from massacre. But she had a heart to sympathize for the sufferings of remote and defenceless backwoodsmen exposed to all the horrors of Indian warfare. She had experienced those horrors herself, until the tomahawk and the scalping knife had become familiar weapons in the hands of her own soldiery in their conflicts with the savages. Alive also to the honor of the whole country, she felt that its rights had been outraged, beyond endurance, by the government of Great Britian, and that its character demanded that they should be maintained. No sooner therefore was the momentous declaration announced, that the United States were at war with the offending nation, than the shout to support it rang throughout the length and breadth of the Commonwealth. Ardent and impulsive to a fault, her population almost in a body sprang to their feet at the first summons of their chief magistrate to the field.\* The old, the middle aged and the young, men of every class and party, without distinction, vied with each oth-

---

\*See Appendix—note J.

er for precedence—not in rank—but in service—and seven thousand of her brave and hardy sons rushed to the standard of their country. The tragedy of the Raisin tells the sad story of the fate of a gallant detachment of the northwestern army, which was overpowered by superior numbers and sacrificed. If the disasters of that campaign covered the State with mourning, they did not damp the spirit or paralyze the energies of her people. Another call was made upon their patriotism—another army flew to the frontier to avenge the slaughter of their brethren—another bloody catastrophe signaled the attempt. The heart of the venerable Shelby was touched—not subdued—by these misfortunes of his country. The fire of the revolution broke out afresh in his aged bosom, and he resolved to take the field in person. By a provision in the constitution of Kentucky, the chief magistrate, although commander-in-chief of the armies of the Commonwealth, is forbidden to assume that position in actual service, unless by the express permission of the representatives of the people: and he applied to the legislature for leave to abandon, for a season, the post of civil duty, and place himself, at the age of sixty three, at the head of Kentucky's quota of a new force to be raised for the defence of the northwestern frontier. The leave was granted—a third appeal was made to the gallantry of his fellow citizens—their broken spirits rallied at the sound of the veteran's voice—and the appeal was answered by the rushing of other thousands to his standard. I forbear to pursue the history of that celebrated campaign. If any thing could enhance the eclat of an expedition that terminated so gloriously for the American arms—in the death of Tecumseh, the terror and scourge of the frontier—in the defeat of more than one thousand of his warriors—in the

capture of the British army, and the conquest of a British province, it is the fact, that "the Governor of an independent State," covered with the laurels of many a well fought field in "the times that tried men's souls," and "greatly superior in years," to the commander-in-chief of the American forces, "placed himself nevertheless under his command, and was not more remarkable for zeal and activity, than for the promptitude and cheerfulness with which he obeyed his orders."\* Shelby returned with his army to Kentucky, and having served out his official term with fidelity to his constituents and honor to himself, he determined to devote the remainder of his life to the cultivation of the soil. He was not permitted, however, to enjoy the repose which was so suitable to his age and inclinations. Although he declined the offer made to him by President Monroe of a seat in his cabinet, he accepted in 1818, from the same high source, a commission to negotiate, in conjunction with General Jackson, a treaty with the Chickesaw Indians for the purchase of a large tract of country lying within the limits of Tennessee and Kentucky, the Indian title to which had not until that time been extinguished. That service performed, he retired to his farm in Lincoln, where he remained, without interruption from public engagements, until his death, which took place on the 18th day of July, 1826—in the seventy sixth year of his age.

---

\* "In communicating to the president through you, sir, my opinion of the conduct of the officers who served under my command, I am at a loss how to mention that of Governor Shelby, being convinced that no eulogium of mine can reach his merit.—The Governor of an independent State, greatly my superior in years, in experience and in military character, he placed himself under my command, and was not more remarkable for his zeal and activity, than for the promptitude and cheerfulness with which he obeyed my orders."—*Extract from a letter of Gen. Harrison to the Secretary of War, dated, Detroit, 9th October, 1813.*

“Great men,” said Mr. Burke, “are the guide posts and land-marks in the State.” The life of Isaac Shelby is a signal example of unblemished personal integrity and enlarged public usefulness, which may be safely imitated by all those who aspire to become benefactors of their country. Starting into active life without the aid of fortune or education, he pursued the gradations of military rank from the lieutenancy of a militia company to the command of a regiment—he rose from the humble station of a surveyor among the pioneers to the governorship of a great Commonwealth—and was distinguished in all the posts to which he was called. His mind, like his body, was strong and vigorous: boldness, energy, decision, were its leading characteristics. Capable of thinking for himself, he investigated every important subject that came within the range of his private or public duties, with candor and deliberation; and having formed his opinions, he followed them with unshaken firmness. He spoke and wrote as he thought—with great force and vigor—always expressing his opinions with manly frankness, and a lofty disdain of personal consequences. His manners—derived from the school in which he was brought up—were plain and simple, and commanded, without any affectation of dignity, the universal deference of his associates. He was sincere but not profuse in his professions of attachment—faithful and steadfast to his friends when those attachments were once formed. Elevating himself in the discharge of his official duties above the influence of private considerations, he sought and rewarded merit for his country’s sake. If such was his character as a public man, he maintained all the relations of life with equal credit and success. His death produced a sensation, which told with great emphasis of the loss of a public benefactor.



To what extent the policy of Virginia in establishing her land office and disposing in the manner she did of her waste and unappropriated lands on the western waters, effectuated all the objects that the law contemplated, may be a subject of interesting enquiry—but it does not necessarily appertain to this occasion. Its influence “in promoting the population” of the settlements, which was one of the avowed purposes of the law, has been already noticed. “Three hundred large family boats,” it may be added\* “arrived in the spring of 1780 at the falls,” and there were as many as “six stations on Beargrass creek” alone, containing a “population of six hundred men.” The court of commissioners—after having held alternate sessions at St. Asaph, Harrodsburgh, Boonesborough, the falls of Ohio, and Bryant’s station, announced on the 26th April, 1780, that its powers had expired and adjourned without day. Of the various kinds of claims authorized by law, about three thousand were granted during the seven months that the court was in session at the several stations.†

After an effort, so successful, “to promote the population” of the new county, the statesmen of Virginia, with enlightened munificence, next resolved upon the adoption of measures “for the diffusion of knowledge among her remote citizens.” In the month of May 1780, twelve years before Kentucky became an independent State, a law was passed by the General Assembly “to vest certain escheated lands, in the county of Kentucky, in trustees for a public school.” That law is

---

\* Butler, 99.

† 1 Marshall, 101. Mr. Marshall furnishes specimens of the forms of the certificates of title granted by the court—which to those who are not familiar with the character of our land titles may not be without interest. See Appendix note K.

worthy of peculiar regard, not only because it was enacted at a most interesting crisis in the affairs of our country, but because it distinguishes the legislation of our ancestors, in a manner to confer enduring honor upon their memory. The preamble recited, that “whereas it is represented to this General Assembly that there are certain lands within the county of Kentucky, formerly belonging to British subjects, not yet sold under the law of escheats and forfeitures, which might at a future day be a valuable fund for the maintenance and education of youth, AND IT BEING THE INTEREST OF THIS COMMONWEALTH ALWAYS TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE EVERY DESIGN, WHICH MAY TEND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND, AND THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE, EVEN AMONG ITS REMOTE CITIZENS, *whose situation in a barbarous neighborhood and a savage intercourse, might otherwise render unfriendly to science;*” and it was therefore enacted, “that eight thousand acres of land, within the said county of Kentucky, late the property” of those British subjects,\* should be vested in trustees, “as a free donation from this Commonwealth for the purpose of a public school, or seminary of learning, to be erected within the said county, as soon as its circumstances and the state of its funds will permit.”

Three years afterwards, the “public school” alluded to in the law just recited, was incorporated in due form, with the title of the Transylvania Seminary, and such endowments were conferred as was consistent with the straitened finances of the colony. With a view to its organization, the second Monday in November, 1783, was appointed “for the first session of the trustees, to be holden”—I quote the language of the charter—“at John Crow’s station in Lincoln county.”

---

\* Their names were Robert McKenzie, Henry Collins, and Alexander McKee.

“A seminary of learning in a barbarous neighborhood”—a wilderness, still resonant with the warwhoop of the savage—chartered in the midst of a great political convulsion—organized at a frontier station—on the extreme verge of civilized society! Such were the auspices under which the first literary institution of Kentucky and of the west, was established—an institution, which having nursed to maturity the intellect of the Commonwealth—having in the progress of sixty years filled her assemblies with law givers—her cabinets with statesmen—her judicial tribunals with ministers of justice—her pulpits with divines—and crowded the professional ranks at home and abroad with ornaments and benefactors of their country, is suffered now in its old age, and in the meridian of our strength and prosperity, to languish—I will not say to sink—for the want of adequate patronage and support.

I pass over the military events of the year 1780—the efforts of Gov. Hamilton to retrieve the loss of Illinois and restore the confidence of his allies, by a demonstration upon the settlements on the Licking—the incursion of Col. Byrd with a large Canadian and Indian force—the capture of Ruddle’s and Martin’s stations—the escape of Boone from the lower Blue Lick and the death of his brother—the expeditions of Clark and Logan against the Shawanese, and their gallant reprisals by the destruction of the Indian villages on the Miami. These movements show that five years of constant and obstinate resistance, on the part of the settlers, had not yet confirmed their possession of the wilderness. The conquest of Vincennes and Kaskaskia gave strength to their footholds, and security to a long line of exposed frontier, but the British fortress at Detroit still remained, and its commander continued to wield a most baneful

influence over the fierce tribes of the northwest—which not ten additional years of battle and of bloodshed were sufficient to destroy. Yet in the midst of accumulated troubles, the municipal affairs of the country were not overlooked by the legislative authorities of Virginia. In November, 1780, Kentucky was divided into three counties—Fayette county comprised the whole of the territory lying “north of a line beginning at the mouth of the Kentucky river, and up the same and its middle fork to the head, and thence southeast to the Washington line.” The region “on the south side of the Kentucky river, west and north of a line beginning at the mouth of Benson’s big creek, and running up the same and its main fork to the head, thence south to the nearest waters of Hammond’s creek, and down the same to the town fork of Salt river, thence south to Green river, and down the same to its junction with the Ohio,” was called Jefferson: And “all the residue of the county of Kentucky”—Lincoln. By what singular inadvertence or caprice it happened, that the name of Kentucky was wholly lost in this allotment of her territory, I am unable to explain.

Thus far I have treated of the origin and progress of the settlement of that part of Kentucky, which owing as well to its adjacency to Virginia and its consequent facility of access, as to the abundance of its wild game, and the fertility of its soil, first attracted the attention of that peculiar class of men, who led the way to its discovery and settlement. But there is another part which remains to be noticed, extending south from the Green river to the line of boundary between the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, which although last settled, contains now an intelligent, public spirited and enterprising population, and is rising rapidly on the strength of its resources, to wealth and importance, of



whose exploration and occupancy the historians of Kentucky have given no account. It is not with any expectation that, from the scanty materials at my command, I can supply the omission in a satisfactory manner, that I venture to make the attempt. But it is due to the occasion—it is due perhaps to myself—that the few but indisputable facts which I have been enabled to collect, from the depositions of witnesses, contained in the records of courts of justice—should not be withheld, if they answer no purpose more valuable than to point to the pathway of a more extensive and more thorough investigation.

If “the Green river country” was explored as early as 1770—and that it was, there seems to be no reason to doubt\*—ten years elapsed before any permanent settlement was made. A station was established in 1780, on the Red river, a tributary of the Cumberland, whose confluence with the main stream is near the line of latitude of thirty six degrees, thirty minutes—It was called Maulding’s station, after the leader of a little band of emigrants from Virginia. He had four sons—bold, hardy, enterprizing men—habituated from boyhood to the hunter’s life—devoted to its pursuits—and capa-

---

\*Mr. Butler has the following note, page 101: “Judge Underwood informs the author, that his uncle, Edmund Rogers, had observed the following circumstances, before there was any settlement south of Green river. “There was a beech tree standing in a bottom on the margin of the east fork of the south branch of Little Barren river, about a quarter of a mile from Edmunton, in Barren county, which had upon it the name of “James McCall, of Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, June 8th, 1770.” These words were cut in very handsome letters, with several initials of other names. Also on the Sulphur fork of Bay’s fork of Big Barren river, at or near the Sulphur Lick, now in Allen county, southeast of Bowlinggreen, the following words were found by the same ancient settler, cut in the bark of a beech tree—“James McCall dined here on his way to Natchez, June the 10th, 1770.” Judge Underwood when a boy, has frequently seen these memorials of early visitors to Kentucky. The party must, in all probability, have perished; unless some record of their visit may be preserved in North Carolina.”

ble of enduring its hardships. They "became acquainted with the surrounding country in the same year," and were in the habit of visiting the several "Muddy river licks." One of them settled in 1784 on Whippoorwill creek, a branch of the Red river in the present county of Logan. There were other settlements on the Elk fork of the same river, in the vicinity of each other, one of which was composed in 1785 of six families: and these were the germs of the subsequent population of the adjacent country. In 1792 the county of Logan was severed from Lincoln by an act of the Kentucky Legislature, and in that year several cabins were built in the town of Russellville, which became the seat of justice of the whole territory south of the Green river.

In 1780 Col. Clark descended the Ohio from the Rapids with his Virginia regiment, and established Fort Jefferson at the point where the line of latitude of thirty six degrees thirty minutes strikes the left bank of the Mississippi. The Chickasaw Indians then had title to the country west of the Tennessee, and was exasperated by such a movement of apparent hostility. Between that tribe and the colonies an unbroken friendship had existed during the war of the Revolution, which it was exceedingly important to preserve. The fort was abandoned therefore as soon as their dissatisfaction was known, and the immediate consequence was, the restoration of their attachment and confidence.

In 1785, \*Andrew McFadin built a station on Big Bar-

---

\*I take the following statement from the deposition of James Doughty, in the cause of Gossom versus Sharp's Devises, determined by the Court of Appeals of Kentucky.

"When I first came here," says the venerable pioneer, "it was not Warren county. The country was not settled. McFadin's station was the only settlement except Chapman's. The next was Nashville. There was also a settlement on Little Barren river. I lived at McFadin's station, and was employed by him as a hunter to kill game." He came to the county in 1794.

ren river, distant some four or five miles above the present flourishing town of Bowlinggreen, which from its position on the main trace that led from the settlements on the north of the Green river to those on the Cumberland and the Red rivers was, for several years, a convenient and secure resting place for travellers in each direction. I have never understood that these southern settlements were at any time disturbed by the savages—a fact which is attributable to the peaceful disposition of the Chickasaws, and the remoteness of the belligerent tribes. The settlements farther north were less fortunate. In the year 1780 there were two stations on the right bank of the Green river—Pitman's station, near the mouth of Sinking or Pitman's creek, and Glover's—where Greensburgh now stands. They were about five miles apart, and equally weak and indefensible. In February, 1781, "they were broken up by the Indians"—the inhabitants, it is probable, having escaped with their lives. Skagg's settlement on Brush creek was made about the same time, and there was another a few miles distant on Little Barren River.\*

Such is the substance of my information in respect to the settlement of the "Green river country." In recurring to the scenes through which the northern settlers were yet to pass, before they experienced a consummation of their long deferred hopes of tranquility and peace, I proceed at once to the occurrences of the year 1782, when the hostile elements seem to have gathered into one dark and portentous cloud to break in torrents over their heads. They were beset by a succession of defeats and disasters of such fearful import, as to excite well founded apprehensions of the fate of the settle-

---

\* See Appendix—note L.

ments, and indeed so deep and prevalent were they, that in a moment of despondency, a meeting was held at Harrodsburgh to consider of the propriety of an abandonment of the country in mass.

The reverses of the year commenced early in the spring by an attack on Strode's station,\* which was succeeded by another on Estill's station in the month of March, by a party of five and twenty Wyandots—who killed one man, took a negro prisoner, and disappeared. Capt. James Estill—a man whose skill and gallantry eminently fitted him to bear a conspicuous part in the conquest of the wilderness—was the commander of the last mentioned station. He was absent on a military excursion for the protection of the settlements, and having received intelligence of the investment of the fort and the escape of the savages, he immediately hastened in pursuit of them, with a company of brave, active, spirited men. The Indians crossed the Kentucky river—directed their course toward the Ohio—and were overtaken about two miles from the Little Mountain, the present site of the village of Mountsterling, just as they had reached the right bank of Hinkston's branch of Licking river. As soon as they were discovered, Capt. Estill halted his company on the left bank, and formed them in front of the Indian line. They counted no more than twenty five men: the number of the Indians was exactly equal. If the former were resolute and eager for battle, the latter were proverbial for their martial qualities and disregard of death. If the Kentuckians were practised and skillful in the use of the rifle, they had no superiority in that respect over their enemy. At the moment of the discovery of the Indians, several guns

---

\* In the present county of Clarke—near Winchester.



were fired upon them, and their chief was severely wounded. The first impulse of his warriors was to save themselves and him by a precipitate flight : but his voice of encouragement was heard and obeyed, and both parties prepared for action on the ground they occupied. Capt. Estill perceived upon a rapid survey of the adjacent ground, a valley stretching from the creek behind the Indian line, and deeming it easily accessible, he ordered Lieutenant Miller and six men to cross the creek, assume a position in the enemy's rear, and open a fire upon them. Instead of executing the order, Miller led the detachment entirely off the ground. Estill's line was now reduced to nineteen men. Notwithstanding the disparity of force, the battle raged with great obstinacy for more than an hour. Nothing in the annals of Indian warfare has exceeded the coolness and determination with which it was conducted on both sides. The nearness of their lines enabled the combatants to select their respective antagonists, and as each concealed himself, according to the Indian mode, behind some adjacent tree, the firing was kept up with the utmost deliberation, and with fatal effect. There was no occasion for the display of military skill and discipline—no marching and countermarching—no shifting of position, unless that may be so regarded which consisted in creeping stealthily from one tree to another with a view to a more advantageous position, or to a closer approximation of the contending ranks. As the smoke of their rifles disclosed their places of concealment, each man fired when he saw his adversary, or withheld his fire until he could direct it with unerring and deadly aim. In this desultory manner the action was continued—neither party having ventured to charge upon the other, and both having suffered severely in killed and wounded.

The Wyandot chief was not ignorant of the advantage which Miller's defection had secured to him, and he rightly judged that several of Estill's men had fallen. His wound had not prevented him from an active participation in the engagement. He was recognized, during its progress, by his loud voice and the gaudy trappings which he displayed, as he flew from tree to tree with a velocity that defied the aim of the most expert riflemen. At length he gave the order to charge, and the whole body of his surviving warriors rushed with their characteristic impetuosity upon the weakened line of their adversaries, and compelled it to give way. A total rout ensued. Captain Estill and his gallant Lieutenant South, were both killed in the retreat. Four men were wounded and fortunately made their escape. Nine fell under the tomahawk and were scalped. The Indians also suffered severely. Their loss, it was believed, amounted to one half of their warriors.\*

Thus terminated this bloody combat, and thus fell in the ripeness of his manhood, Captain James Estill, one of Kentucky's bravest and most beloved defenders. It may be said of him with truth, that if he did not achieve the victory—he did more—he deserved it. Disappointed of success—vanquished—slain—in a desperate conflict with an enemy of superior strength and of equal valor, he has nevertheless left behind him a name of which his descendants may well be proud—a name which will live in the annals of Kentucky, so long as there shall be found men to appreciate the patriotism and self devotion of a martyr to the cause of humanity and civilization. The intelligence of his defeat spread grief and dismay through the disheartened settlements. As yet

---

\* See Appendix—note M.

the savages had been victorious in no engagement of equal numbers. The result therefore was ominous—and indeed it proved to be the prelude to more aggravated disasters. Emboldened by their successes, “the Indians,” says Boone, “continued their hostilities. On the tenth of August two boys were taken from Hoy’s station. They were immediately pursued by Capt. Holder and seventeen men, who were also defeated with the loss of four men killed and one wounded. Several stations which had lately been erected were continually infested.” “In a field near Lexington one of the settlers was killed, and as the Indian ran to scalp him, he was himself shot from the fort and fell dead upon his enemy.” “Every day,” continues Boone, “we experienced recent mischiefs.” The time was near at hand, when those mischiefs were to increase in enormity to an almost insupportable extent.

Seven years of incessant strife and hardship had now elapsed, since the pioneers had entered, with the view to possess, the wilderness. It is impossible to look back upon the struggles of these unconquerable men, and forward to those which they were yet to encounter, without the strongest emotions of sympathy for their sufferings, and admiration of the fortitude with which they were sustained. Scarcely had their confidence time to recover from the shock it received by the defeat of Captain Estill, when new and more appalling dangers befel them, from the sudden incursion of a larger force than had at any time threatened the settlements. It consisted of a combination of Shawanese, Cherokees, Wyandots, Miamis and Pottawatamies, stimulated by the counsels of Simon Girty—the most abandoned incendiary of modern times. They embodied themselves about the first of August at the old town of Chillicothe, for a des-

perate effort against the Kentucky stations. Girty was their commander. He was by birth a white man, of American extraction. He had lived in Pennsylvania, and having been thwarted in his schemes of promotion and aggrandizement, he abandoned the society of civilized men for a more congenial companionship with savages, and burning with indignation and revenge, threw himself into the arms of the Wyandots, one of the most ferocious of their tribes. He became an Indian by adoption—acquired their habits—participated in their deliberations—inflamed their passions—and goaded them on to deeds of inhuman atrocity. I called him an incendiary. He was worse—he was a monster. No famished tiger ever sought the blood of a victim with more unrelenting rapacity, than Girty sought the blood of a white man. He could laugh, in fiendish mockery, at the agonies of a captive, burning and writhing at the stake. He could witness, unmoved, the sacrifice of unoffending women and children. No scene of torture or of bloodshed was sufficiently horrible to excite compassion in his bosom. Once only was he known to interpose his influence to rescue a prisoner from his doom. He saved the life of Simon Kenton, and yet it has been doubted whether this sole redeeming act of his apostacy was the result of humanity, of caprice, or of shame. Kenton and Girty had served together as spies in the expedition of Lord Dunmore. They had been associates, therefore; and as far as it is possible for a demon to be a friend, Girty had cherished a friendship for his companion in arms. The better opinion seems to be, that his motives on that occasion were upright and humane—and for the honor of human nature let it be admitted that they were. Still he was worse than a blood thirsty savage, and his memory deserves, as it has received, unmitigated execration.



Such was the man who conducted the swarm of northern savages on this fatal expedition. They marched with such celerity and caution that their movements were wholly unobserved, until on the night of the fourteenth of August, Bryant's station on the Elkhorn was surrounded by an army of near six hundred warriors. Information had been received at the fort, on the previous evening, of Capt. Holder's defeat, and the garrison was preparing to march at day break the next morning, to the relief of Hoy's station. Instead, therefore, of finding the fort as he supposed he would, reposing in the confidence of security, unconscious of the approach of an enemy, he found the men under arms ready to receive him. The lights were not extinguished, and "notes of preparation" were heard, during the whole night. All that he saw betokened that the settlers were resorting to the most vigorous measures of defence. If these indications induced him to suppose that his approach had been anticipated, his arrangements for attack were most injudiciously concerted. He concealed a considerable body of Indians near the spring which supplied the station with water. Another party was ordered to assume a position in full view of the garrison—to display itself at a given time and open a fire upon them—with the hope of enticing them to an engagement outside of the walls. If this stratagem proved successful, the remainder of the forces were so disposed as to seize the opportunity which the withdrawal of the garrison afforded, to storm one of the gates and take forcible possession of the fort. The inhabitants, all the while, were wholly unapprized of their danger. Their preparations having been finished, at the appointed time of departure, they threw open their gates and were in the act of setting out on their excursion, when a sudden firing announced the

presence of an enemy, and the gates were instantly closed. A salutation so unexpected produced some sensation of dismay: but it was momentary only. Among the inhabitants of Bryant's station, there were some experienced champions of the frontier. The Johnsons and the Craigs were of the number; men who did not turn pale at the sight of an enemy—who were familiar with the wiles of Indian warfare, and not apt to be intimidated by any sudden emergency. Every effort was now made to protect the station.\* The gates—the bastions—the loopholes were manned—the breaches in the palisades were repaired—and messengers were forthwith despatched to the adjoining stations to communicate intelligence of the siege, and to procure assistance. The attack proceeded alone from the party to whom Girty had assigned the duty of making it. But it was soon discovered that the assailants composed an inconsiderable number of the Indian army, and that its main body lay concealed on the opposite side of the station. The object of the attack was now very clearly perceived. Veteran backwoodsmen were at no loss to conclude, that the movement was a feint to mask other designs—that the purpose of the Indians was to lure the garrison from the defence of the fort, by the prospect of an engagement on equal terms—and that done, the main body of the army would force their way into it, with no other obstacle to encounter than its weak and undefended gates. The garrison determined to take advantage of their knowledge of these designs, and Girty became entangled in the meshes of his own net. Thirteen young men of the fort were sent in pursuit of the assailing Indians, who had in the mean time fallen back,

---

\*Mr. McClung has preserved a singular anecdote of female intrepidity connected with this siege, which I have transcribed—See Appendix—note N.

with orders to bring on a fierce and active engagement, but to avoid being drawn off to an inconvenient distance, while the remainder of the garrison consisting of not more than thirty men would arrange themselves in such manner as to receive the attack of the principal army. The stratagem was eminently successful. The sound of the guns in the right quarter, again and again repeated, and gradually becoming less audible in the distance, assured Girty of the progress of his designs. He started abruptly to his feet, and rushed with headlong fury to the nearest gate, followed by five hundred warriors. Volley after volley of well directed rifles from the interior of the station, convinced the bloody renegade that he was himself the dupe of an artifice, and, struck with consternation, the whole Indian army precipitately fled. The gallant young backwoodsmen returned in safety from the sortie, and were received with joyful acclamation within the walls.

The siege from this time was prosecuted without disguise, and a regular but ineffectual firing was kept up on both sides for several hours. At two o'clock in the evening, a reinforcement, consisting of about fifty men on horse back and on foot—arrived from Lexington. The Indians were apprised that they were on the march, and prepared to receive them. The road from Lexington to the besieged station ran close along side of a fence, which formed one line of enclosure of a large field of corn, and opposite to it was a dense forest. On each side of the road a detachment of three hundred Indians lay concealed, awaiting the arrival, and confident of the sacrifice, of the whole re-inforcement. The attack upon the fort had subsided when the horsemen came in sight—not an Indian was to be seen. As they entered the avenue between the forest and the

fence, the Indians commenced their fire upon them. They dashed on, at full speed toward the station, amidst showers of bullets from both lines of the ambuscade, which was not farther apart than thirty feet, and reached the gate without the loss of a man. The remainder of the party, being on foot, advanced in a different direction and with different fortune. They attempted to pass through the field, and screened by the stalks and blades of corn then full grown, they would probably not have been discovered; but at the first fire of the Indians, they hurried impetuously and without a moment's reflection, to the spot where they supposed their companions were engaged, into the very arms of danger. Their guns being uncharged, the Indians instantly turned upon them with uplifted tomahawks. An immediate retreat was the consequence. I omit the details of the skirmish that accompanied it. The larger number succeeded in making their escape out of the field, and concealed themselves in an adjoining canebrake—Six only were killed and wounded. Girty joined in the pursuit. A ball from the rifle of one of the retreating party, struck him on the side, and he fell—apparently dead upon the ground. But the measure of his crimes was not yet full. The ball lodged in his shotpouch, and his life was prolonged.

The day was now closing, and the station was unscathed. It was stronger than on the night of the fourteenth, when the investment took place. The hopes of the Indians began to give way. They had experienced sore disappointment. A severe loss had been sustained in the unavailing attempt to storm the fort in the morning, and they had signally failed in their anticipated discomfiture of the Lexington re-inforcement. Besides it was probable, that other and more formidable re-



inforcements were expected, and the allied army might be overpowered and defeated. The chiefs were in favor of an immediate decampment—all but Girty, the most ferocious of them all. Foiled in his efforts to reduce the garrison by force, he had the vanity to believe that he could obtain possession by negotiation. Vain and preposterous credulity! Little did he know of the character of his adversaries, if he supposed that he could achieve by threats or persuasion what he had failed to do by arms. Crawling to a stump adjacent to one of the bastions, with a loud voice he demanded to be heard. He spoke in terms of commendation of their manly defence of the station—but a further resistance, he said, was impracticable. He alluded to the numbers and fierceness of his followers—threatened the garrison with his artillery, which he hourly expected to arrive—reminded them of the danger of falling into the hands of the savages, if the fort were taken by violence—promised life and safety, if a prompt surrender were made—and having announced the terrible name of the speaker, he concluded with a solemn declaration *upon his honor* that he would be faithful to his assurances. The garrison listened without conviction and without fear. Their answer was decisive of their determination to defend the fort at all hazards. Piqued at the language of the young backwoodsman who delivered it,\* Girty returned to his quarters, and immediate preparations were made for the abandonment of the siege. Morning dawned upon a deserted camp. The renegade and his warriors were on the retreat to their villages.

Information of the attack on Bryant's station having spread with great rapidity through the settlements, the

---

\* See Appendix—note O.

militia were immediately summoned to its defence, and on the eighteenth of August, a respectable force from the adjacent stations was upon the ground. Col. John Todd from Lexington, was the commanding officer. The officers next to him in rank, were Lieutenant Colonel Trigg, of Harrodsburgh, Lieutenant Colonel Boone, of Boonesborough, and Majors Harlan, McGary and Levi Todd. Such were the commanders, and Kentucky contained no better materials than composed the rank and file of this gallant but devoted band. Col. Logan had been notified of the siege, and it was believed that he was on the march with a considerable re-inforcement. Eager for a conflict and ignorant of the strength of the enemy, the majority of the officers determined to pursue them forthwith without awaiting his arrival. On the evening of the day of their rendezvous at Bryant's station, they set off in great haste on the Indian trail, and followed it with the utmost ardor and impatience to the Licking river. There, for the first time, the troops in front of the line saw, from the southern bank of the river, a small party of Indians slowly winding their way up the hill on the northern shore. The Indians perceived that they were discovered, but manifested no anxiety to hasten their pace. They paused—threw a momentary glance at the advancing column of the Kentucky troops—then with great deliberation moved on, until they were lost to the view on the other side of the hill. The pursuing army came to an immediate halt. The occasion called for the utmost caution and deliberation, and a council of officers was summoned to consult upon the propriety of their future movements. The demeanor of the Indians who had just disappeared over the ridge, was not the only circumstance that awakened suspicion of impending mischief. Other circumstances had been

observed upon the march. The Indians had taken the main buffalo trace to the lower Blue Lick. The chops of their hatchets were frequently to be seen, marking distinctly the direction of their march. These indications, together with their leisurely movements—the small number of their camp fires—the circumscribed limits of their camps—evinced to the practised judgment of the older pioneers, a confidence of superior numbers and a settled purpose to invite pursuit. But these were not the only causes of uneasiness. The place where they now were, was remote from the settlements, and if they should be defeated, timely assistance was impracticable. Whoever has been on the spot where the battle of the Blue Lick was fought will readily understand how their sensations of uneasiness, once excited, could have been increased by the natural objects around them. The country on both sides of the Licking, was singularly wild and irregular. The trace along which they marched, conducted through narrow and difficult passes of almost inaccessible hills. Directly opposite to the place where they paused to deliberate, the hill on which the Indians were seen, jutted in between two parallel lines of an abrupt bend of the river. It was of considerable elevation, and in the valley at its base about two hundred yards from the northern shore, rose a spacious fountain of mineral water. It had been the resort of buffaloes and other wild animals so long and in such numbers, that the southern slope of the hill was bare of soil and vegetation—presenting an aspect of nakedness and sterility, which contrasted strongly with the foliage of the adjacent forests. About a mile and a half from the spring, at the place of nearest approximation of the lines of the river, two ravines, stretching obliquely to the right and left communicated with it.

They were separated by a narrow ridge over which the buffalo trace led. In those ravines, the Indians posted themselves in ambush.

The council of officers was held under circumstances, extremely adverse to a dispassionate consideration of the emergency of their situation. While they were assembled at Bryant's, some discussion had arisen among them, in respect to the expediency of waiting for Col. Logan's troops, and the determination to proceed had occasioned some unjust surmises, that the commanding officer was anxious for the distinction of prosecuting the expedition without him. Whether apprised of these dissensions or not, the first movement of Col. Todd in the council, was certainly well calculated to allay them. He called on Colonel Boone for his advice. The opinion of one, distinguished for his prudence and circumspection, as well as his long and intimate acquaintance with the movements of the savages, could not fail to have great weight. Besides his well known caution and experience, Boone was familiar with the circumjacent country. He had made salt at the lick. He had hunted in its vicinity. It was there that he fell into the hands of the savages in 1778. *Whose* judgment, then, could have been entitled to greater confidence? His opinion was, that the army of the Indians consisted of from three to five hundred warriors. The reasons for that opinion have been already given. He alluded to the ravines, and suggested the probability that the Indians there lay in wait to receive them. To obviate all difficulties, he deemed it most expedient that they should suspend their march, until Col. Logan's re-inforcement came up—but in the event they determined to proceed, he advised that the troops should be divided into two companies—one of which should march up the river—



cross it beyond the ravine, and be prepared to attack the enemy in the rear: while the other should advance from the position they then occupied, to the high ground where he supposed the ambuscade was formed, and thus he concluded, by an efficient co-operation of the two parties, the Indians themselves might be surprised and defeated. If, however, this proposition were unacceptable, he next insisted that before they continued their march, an effort should be made to ascertain, if practicable, the exact position of the enemy by a close examination of the adjoining country. Before any judgment was pronounced by the council upon the expediency of either movement, all further proceedings were arrested by the indiscreet zeal of one of the officers, who had participated in the dissatisfaction that has been mentioned. Scarcely had Boone submitted his opinions, when Major McGary "raised the warwhoop," and spurring his horse into the river, called vehemently upon all who were not cowards to follow *him*, and *he* would show them the enemy. Presently the army was in motion. The greater part suffered themselves to be led by McGary—the remainder, perhaps a third of the whole number, lingered a while with Todd and Boone in council. All at length passed over, and at Boone's suggestion, the commanding officer ordered another halt. The pioneer then proposed, a second time, that the army should remain where it was, until an opportunity was afforded to reconnoitre the suspected region. So reasonable a proposal was acceded to, and two bold but experienced men were selected, to proceed from the lick along the buffalo trace to a point half a mile beyond the ravines, where the road branched off in different directions. They were instructed to examine the country with the utmost care on each side of the road, especially the spot where it

passed between the ravines, and upon the first appearance of the enemy to repair in haste to the army. The spies discharged the dangerous and responsible task. They crossed over the ridge—proceeded to the place designated beyond it, and returned in safety without having made any discovery. No trace of the enemy was to be seen. The little army of one hundred and eighty two men\* now marched forward—Col. Trigg was in command of the right wing, Boone of the left, McGary in the centre, and Major Harlan with the party in front. Such is Boone's account of the positions of the several officers.† He does not define Col. Todd's. The historians have assigned him to the right with Col. Trigg.‡ The better opinion seems to be that he commanded the centre.|| As they approached the ravines it became apparent that Boone's anticipations were well founded, and that the vigilance of the spies had been completely eluded. The enemy lay concealed in both ravines in great numbers. The columns marched up within forty yards of the Indian line before a gun was fired. The battle immediately commenced with great fury, and most destructive effects on both sides. The advantage of position and overwhelming numbers soon determined it in favor of the savages. The first fire was peculiarly severe upon the right. Col. Trigg fell, and with him nearly the whole of the Harrodsburgh troops. Boone manfully sustained himself on the left. Major Harlan defended the front until only three of his men remained. He also fell, covered with wounds. The Indians now

---

\* Butler, 125, on the authority of Gen. Clark.

† See Boone's letter to the Governor of Virginia. Appendix—note P.

‡ I Marshall, 139.

|| See Appendix—note Q.

rushed upon them with their tomahawks, spreading confusion and dismay through their broken and disabled ranks. The whole right, left and centre gave way, and a mingled and precipitate retreat commenced. Some regained their horses—others fled on foot. Col. Todd was shot through the body, and when he was last seen, he was reeling in his saddle, while the blood gushed in profusion from his wound. The Indians were then in close pursuit. There was but one convenient way of escape, and that was in the direction to the lick where the army had crossed the river. To that point, the larger number of the fugitives hurried with tumultuous rapidity, down the naked slope of the hill. No sooner had they reached it, than the Indians were upon them. I shall not attempt to describe the dreadful scene of terror and of blood that ensued. It is enough, that many brave men perished on that fatal day. Of the one hundred and eighty two who went into the battle, one third were killed and seven were made prisoners. The extent of the Indian loss is not certainly known. It is represented to have been equally severe.\*

The fugitives met the van of Col. Logan's party, after they had passed Bryant's on their march toward the Blue Lick. On the reception of the melancholy intelligence, the veteran pioneer burst into tears. Instantly he returned to the station to await the arrival of another company, and as soon as it came up he resumed his march. He did not reach the battle ground until two days after the engagement. He found it strewed with the mangled bodies of the slain, and having paid to their remains the last debt of humanity, he repaired without delay to the settlements.

---

\* 1 Marshall, 142, who says "61 were killed and a number wounded."

The news of this grievous disaster went, like a dagger, to the hearts of the people of Kentucky. The loss in numerical strength alone was most severely felt at a time when the stations were in such frequent danger: but the death of such men as Todd and Trigg and Harlan was universally lamented as a great public calamity. Col. Todd had acquired deserved distinction among the settlers for his intelligence and public spirit. He had been a member of the Transylvania Assembly, in 1775, and was elected, after the establishment of the county of Kentucky, one of its first burgesses to the General Assembly of Virginia. If he had lived, he would undoubtedly have taken rank with the most distinguished men of his time.\* Col. Trigg and Major Harlan were equally admired, for the many estimable qualities that fitted them for extensive usefulness as citizens as well as soldiers. The former came to Kentucky in the fall of 1779, as a member of the court of land commissioners, and after the dissolution of that body in the spring of 1780, he selected the new county as his permanent home. Major Harlan was early associated with the defenders of the frontier. He took an active part in the Illinois campaigns, and it was said of him by General Clark, "that he was one of the bravest and most accomplished soldiers that ever fought by his side." Such an eulogy from such a man may safely be regarded as dispensing with the necessity of any additional commendation from me. A general sympathy was felt for Colonel Boone. His son was wounded in the action and died on the retreat. The pioneer himself narrowly escaped.

---

\* As these pages are going to the press, I have received some interesting facts connected with Col. Todd's life, which I have not had time to prepare for the text of the address. See Appendix—note R.



His position devolved upon him the duty of bringing on the engagement, and having discharged that duty with his accustomed fidelity, he devoted himself with true paternal solicitude, after the fortune of the day was determined, to the rescue and preservation of his son. Taking him under his charge, and availing himself of his acquaintance with the surrounding country, he avoided the road which the mass of the fugitives pursued in the retreat, and crossed the Licking at the mouth of Indian creek, a mile or two below the Lick. But the wound which the stripling soldier had received was mortal. Boone clearly perceived that the hand of death was upon him; and abandoning him to his fate, he consulted his own safety by eluding the pursuit of the savages.

General Clark was no sooner apprised of Col. Todd's defeat, than he determined on an expedition into the Indian country. He summoned a council of officers of his brigade to meet him at the falls of Ohio, and arrangements were made without delay for the campaign. Notwithstanding the reverses of the spring and summer, the patriotism of the settlers was found equal to the emergency, and a thousand mounted riflemen assembled at the mouth of the Licking river in September, 1782. General Clark took the command in person. Colonels Floyd and Logan were his subordinates. Boone, as usual, was along—probably as a volunteer. The army marched with so much rapidity, that when they approached the nearest Indian village, they found themselves within a short distance of the camp of a party of warriors, who were on their return from the bloody field of the Blue Lick. Two straggling Indians discovered their approach, and instantly communicating the alarm, “the savages,” says Boone, “fled in the utmost

disorder, evacuated their towns, and left their territory to our mercy." General Clark took immediate possession of the old town of Chillicothe, and of several other villages on the Miami river—reduced the whole to ashes—laid waste the fields of corn—desolated the country in his march, and returned to Kentucky with the loss of only four men.

This was the last expedition in which Daniel Boone was engaged for the defence of the settlements of Kentucky: and before I proceed to the remaining topics of this already protracted discourse, I propose to follow to its termination the subsequent career of this remarkable man.

The definitive treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain in 1783, confirmed the title of the former to Independence, and Boone saw the standard of civilization and freedom securely planted in the wilderness. He rejoiced in the prospect of being permitted to resume the peaceful habits of a hunter, and to apply himself to the more profitable business of entering and surveying lands, which, next to the defence of the frontier, was the principal employment of the Kentucky emigrants, after the opening of the surveyor's offices in the fall of 1782. Upon the establishment of the court of commissioners in 1779, he "laid out the chief of his little property to procure land warrants, and having raised about twenty thousand dollars in paper money with which he intended to purchase them, on his way from Kentucky to Richmond he was robbed of the whole, and left destitute of the means of procuring more."\* This heavy misfortune did not fall upon himself alone. Large sums had been entrusted to him by his friends for

---

\*See Boone's memorial to the Legislature of Kentucky in 1812.

similar purposes, and the loss was extensively felt.\* “Unacquainted with the niceties of the law, the few lands he was enabled afterwards to locate,” he informs us, “were through his ignorance generally swallowed up, and lost by better claims.” Dissatisfied with these impediments to the acquisition of the soil, he left Kentucky, and settled himself at the mouth of the Kenhawa. It was during his residence there in 1794, that for the first time he was made acquainted with the resources of the immense region beyond the Mississippi. The fertile and extensive prairies of the far west—abounding with game—awakened his imagination to new sources of enjoyment, and “he passed over to the Spanish province of Upper Louisiana.” In 1795 he was a wanderer on the banks of the Missouri—a voluntary subject of the King of Spain.

---

\*The receipt that follows, has been furnished to me by my friend Nathaniel Hart, Jr., Esq., of Woodford. I am indebted to him also for the perusal of the letter, from which the subjoined extract is taken. The receipt is in Capt. Hart's hand writing. The signature is Boone's. It is plainly and very well written. They both explain the transaction to which allusion is made in the text: the money mentioned in the receipt, being part of the sum of which the pioneer was robbed.

“Received of Nathaniel Hart twenty six hundred and forty six pounds, ten shillings, Virginia money, to be advanced on warrants at Williamsburgh. Also, three hundred pounds, to be given to Mrs. Hart, if she wants: otherwise, to be advanced in warrants. Witness my hand this 12th day of February, 1780.

“DANIEL BOONE.”

Extract of a letter from Col. Thomas Hart, late of Lexington, Kentucky, to Capt. Nathaniel Hart, dated Grayfields, August 3, 1780.

“I observe what you say respecting our losses by Daniel Boone. I had heard of the misfortune soon after it happened, but not of my being a partaker before now. I feel for the poor people who perhaps are to lose even their pre-emptions: but I must say, I feel more for Boone, whose character, I am told, suffers by it. Much degenerated must the people of this age be, when amongst them are to be found men to censure and blast the reputation of a person so just and upright, and in whose breast is a seat of virtue too pure to admit of a thought so base and dishonorable. I have known Boone in times of old, when poverty and distress had him fast by the hand: and in these wretched circumstances, I have ever found him of a noble and generous soul, despising every thing mean; and therefore, I will freely grant him a discharge for whatever sums of mine he might have been possessed of at the time.”

His fame as a pioneer had preceded him—"The reception he met with from the Spanish Governor was equal to his expectations." Ten thousand acres of land was allotted to him, by metes and bounds, for his own use on the Missouri river; but with his habitual indifference to the accumulation of property, he neglected to complete the title, "*because that could only be done at New Orleans.*" He was immediately honored with the confidence and favor of the Governor of Louisiana—accepted the appointment of "Syndic or chief of the district of St. Charles," and continued to discharge the duties of that office during the remaining period of the Spanish jurisdiction over the territory. He hailed with joy the purchase of Louisiana by the United States, "for it was the country," he declared, "and not the government that he had gone in pursuit of"—and when the commissioners appointed by the government of the United States met at St. Louis to adjust the land titles derived from Spain within the ceded territory, the Syndic of St. Charles laid his claim before them for confirmation. The usual condition of a Spanish grant was an actual residence upon the land. Boone had not complied with the condition. He had been assured by the Governor that compliance in his case "should be dispensed with, in consequence of his public trust requiring his residence elsewhere." The fact was made known to the commissioners, but adhering to the strict letter of their instructions, they rejected his claim "for want of cultivation and residence."

Boone appealed to Congress for redress, and contemporaneously with his application to that body, he presented a memorial\* to the General Assembly of Ken-

---

\* On the 18th of January, 1812.



tucky, soliciting their "aid and influence" in its support. The memorial contained "an imperfect sketch of his labors" in the wilderness commencing with the year 1769, "and of his claims to the remembrance of his country in general." He spoke of his struggles "in the fatal fields which were dyed with the blood of the early settlers, amongst whom were some of his dearest connexions." "The history of the settlement of the western country," he said, "was his history." He alluded to the "love of discovery and adventure" which had induced him to expatriate himself, "under an assurance of the Governor residing at St. Louis that ample portions of land should be given to him and to his family." He mentioned the allotment of the land to him—his failure to consummate the title, and his unsuccessful application to the commissioners of the United States. "Of the vast extent of country" which he had discovered and explored, "he was unable to call a single acre his own," and "he had laid his case before Congress." "Your memorialist," he said, "cannot but feel, so long as feeling remains, that he has a just claim upon his country for land to live on, and to transmit to his children after him. He cannot help, on an occasion like this, to look toward Kentucky. From a small acorn she has become a mighty oak, furnishing shelter to upwards of four hundred thousand souls. Very different is her appearance now, from the time when your memorialist, with his little band, began to fell the forest, and construct the rude fortification at Boonesborough." The venerable pioneer did not look toward Kentucky in vain. The memorial was referred to a committee of the Senate, consisting of Messrs. Y. Ewing, Hopkins, Caldwell, Southgate, Bullock and Walker, and the committee reported the following preamble and resolutions, which

passed without a division, through both branches of the Legislature.

“The committee, to whom was referred the memorial of Daniel Boone, beg leave to recommend the following resolution to be adopted.

“The Legislature of Kentucky, taking into view the many eminent services rendered by Col. Boone in exploring and settling the western country, from which great advantages have resulted not only to this State but to his country in general; and that from circumstances over which he had no control, he is now reduced to poverty—not having, so far as appears, an acre of land out of the vast territory he has been a great instrument in peopling—believing, also, that it is as unjust as it is impolitic that useful enterprise and eminent services should go unrewarded by a government where merit confers the only distinction—and having sufficient reason to believe that a grant of ten thousand acres of land, which he claims in Upper Louisiana, would have been confirmed by the Spanish government, had not said territory passed, by cession, into the hands of the General Government—wherefore,

“*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, That our Senators in Congress be requested to make use of their exertions to procure a grant of land in said territory to said Boone, either the ten thousand acres to which he appears to have an equitable claim, from the grounds set forth to this legislature, by way of confirmation, or to such quantity, in such place, as shall be deemed most advisable by way of donation.*”

On the tenth of February, 1814, the Congress of the United States confirmed his title “to a thousand arpens

---

\*See Session Acts, 1811-'12, 258.

of the land claimed by him, in virtue of a concession made to him under the Spanish grant, bearing date on the twenty eighth of January, 1798.”

Boone was now far advanced in years. The remainder of his life was devoted to the society of his children, and the employments of the chase—to the latter, especially. When age had enfeebled the energies of his once athletic frame, he would wander, twice a year, into the remotest wilderness he could reach—employing a companion whom he bound by a written contract, to take care of him—and bring him home alive or dead.\* In April, 1816,† he made such an excursion to Fort Osage, a hundred miles beyond the place of his residence, and having spent a fortnight there, he set off on a journey to the river Platte. Three years thereafter, a patriotic solicitude to preserve his portrait, prompted a distinguished American artist‡ to visit him at his dwelling near the Missouri river, and from him I have received the following particulars. He found him in a small, rude cabin, indisposed and reclining on his bed. A slice from the loin of a buck, twisted around the rammer of his rifle within reach of him as he lay, was roasting before the fire. Several other cabins, arranged in the form of a parallelogram, marked the spot of a dilapidated station. They were occupied by the descendants of the pioneer. Here he lived in the midst of his posterity. His withered energies and locks of snow indicated, that the sources of existence were nearly exhausted. On the twenty sixth of September, 1820, at the Charette village, he breathed his last. The Legislature of Missouri was in session at St. Louis when the event was announced. A resolution was immediately passed, that

---

\*10 Niles' Register, 361.

†Ib.

‡ Chester Harding, Esq., of Boston.

in respect for his memory, the members would wear the usual badge of mourning for twenty days, and an adjournment was voted for that day.\*

The life of Daniel Boone is a forcible example of the powerful influence, which a single absorbing passion exerts over the destiny of an individual. Born with no endowments of intellect to distinguish him from the crowd of ordinary men, and possessing no other acquirements than a very common education bestowed, he was enabled nevertheless to maintain, throughout a long and useful career, a conspicuous rank among the most distinguished of his cotemporaries; and the testimonials of the public gratitude and respect, with which he was honored after his death, were such as are never awarded by an intelligent people, to the undeserving. In his narrative, dictated to Filson in 1784, he described himself as "an instrument *ordained* to settle the wilderness." There are certainly passages in his history corroborative of this conclusion. His preservation during a solitary sojournment of three months in the wilderness—the marked forbearance and lenity of the savages toward him, especially on the last occasion of his being their prisoner—his escape at a most important juncture for the defence of his station—would seem to indicate the interposition of a superior agency in his behalf. In 1778, when such formidable preparations were making at the old town of Chillicothe for the invasion of Kentucky, his seasonable return to Boonesborough, saved the inhabitants from the grasp of the savages—and if Boonesborough had fallen, little doubt can be entertained that every station on the frontier would have shared its fate. But it is needless to speculate upon a subject,

---

\*19 Niles' Register, 152.



about which contradictory opinions may be formed. There are those who will coincide with the pioneer, in the judgment which he has passed on his own pretensions. His instrumentality in the settlement of the wilderness, great and efficacious as it most unquestionably was, may be traced to other and more proximate causes, having their origin in the elements of his own peculiar character. He came originally to the wilderness—not to settle and subdue it—but to gratify an inordinate passion for adventure and discovery—to hunt the deer and buffalo—to roam through the woods—to admire the “beauties of nature”—in a word, to enjoy the lonely pastimes of a hunter’s life, remote from the society of his fellow men. He had heard with admiration and delight, Finley’s description of the “country of Kentucke,” and high as were his expectations, he found it “a second paradise.” Its lofty forests—its noble rivers—its picturesque scenery—its beautiful valleys—but above all, the plentifulness of “beasts of every American kind”—these were the attractions that brought him to it. He came, therefore, not to establish the foundations of a great State, nor to extend the empire of civilization, but because it *was* a wilderness—and *such* a wilderness, as realized, in its adaptation to his inclinations and habits, the brightest visions of his fancy. Having, for reasons like these, chosen it for his abode, nothing was more natural than that he should be willing to risk much to defend it; and the peculiar warfare by which the settlements *were* to be preserved, put in requisition precisely such powers of mind and body as those that he possessed. He united, in an eminent degree, the qualities of shrewdness, caution and courage, with uncommon muscular strength. He was seldom taken by surprise—he never shrunk from danger, nor cowered beneath the pressure

of exposure and fatigue. In every emergency he was a safe guide and a wise counsellor—because his movements were conducted with the utmost circumspection, and his judgment and penetration were proverbially accurate. Powerless to originate plans on a large scale, no individual among the pioneers could execute, with more efficiency and success, the designs of others. He took the lead in no expedition against the savages—he disclosed no liberal and enlarged views of policy for the protection of the stations, and yet it is not assuming too much to say, that without him, in all probability, the settlements could not have been upheld, and the conquest of Kentucky might have been reserved for the emigrants of the nineteenth century.

With all his qualities as an antagonist of the red man, Boone was no lover of war. He took no delight in the glory of a conqueror. If he idolized his rifle, it was because it contributed to the enjoyment of his darling pastimes—not because it was an instrument for shedding human blood. His character, on the contrary, was pacific. But, at the same time, it was unsocial. He had few of the sympathies that bind men and families together, and consecrate the relations of society. During two whole years, he abandoned his family for no other purpose than to amuse himself in the wilderness. Yet he was not an unkind husband; on one occasion, we know, he endangered his own, to save the life of his son: and I am not aware, that he was ever suspected of treachery in his friendships. At the period of his greatest vigor and usefulness, he was remarkable for his taciturnity; but as he grew older, he became an agreeable companion—remembering, with distinctness, remote events, especially those with which he was connected, and dwelling upon them with manifest satisfac-

tion. His manners were simple and unobtrusive—exempt from the rudeness characteristic of the backwoodsman. In his person there was nothing peculiarly striking. He was five feet, ten inches in height—and of robust and powerful proportions. His countenance was mild and contemplative—indicating a frame of mind altogether different from the restlessness and activity that distinguished him. His ordinary habiliments were those of a hunter—a hunting shirt and moccasins uniformly composing a part of them. Throughout his life, he was careless of his pecuniary interests. The loss of his lands in Kentucky was chiefly attributable to inattention. When he emigrated to Louisiana, he omitted to secure a title to a princely estate on the Missouri, because it would have cost him the trouble of a trip to New Orleans. He would have travelled a much greater distance to indulge his cherished propensities as an adventurer and a hunter. He died, as he had lived, in a cabin—and perhaps his trusty rifle was the most valuable of his chattels.

Such was the man to whom has been assigned the principal merit of the discovery of Kentucky, and who filled a large space in the eyes of America and Europe. Resting on the solid advantages of his services to his country, his fame will survive when the achievements of men, greatly his superiors in rank and intellect, will be forgotten.

With the expedition of General Clark against the Miami villages, I close my narrative of the military operations of the settlers for the defence of Kentucky. It has already, I fear, been drawn out to an inconvenient length, regarding the legitimate limits of an address like this, and to extend it farther would be an unwarrantable encroachment on the historian's prov-

ince. Girty's invasion was the last of a formidable character with which the settlements were disturbed. The surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, on the nineteenth of October, 1781, terminated the American revolution. The colonies thus far had been engaged in a common cause, the triumph of which, it was fondly hoped, would lead to a general cessation of hostilities with Great Britain and her allies. Kentucky had borne her part, feeble and defenceless as she was, in the great struggle. Peace was now announced, and the thirteen united colonies took their position among the independent nations of the earth. But Kentucky was not a recipient of the common benefits which these glorious events were so well calculated to produce. She was neither at peace nor independent. An inexorable enemy still hovered around her borders, and in small but frequent marauding parties, continued to ravage her territory and murder her people. She was still a province of Virginia, separated by a wide and infested wilderness from the seat of the parent government. If military aid were required for her defence, the time that would elapse before it could be furnished, rendered it, to a great extent, unavailable. Virginia, moreover, ardently desired to be at rest. A seven years incessant conflict had exhausted her finances and enfeebled her strength. She required leisure to resuscitate both. If, therefore, assistance could be obtained at all, it was apparent that it would be sparingly and reluctantly afforded. Superadded to these considerations, the land titles of the settlers could only be consummated at the seat of government, and that was at a remote distance from the "western waters," where the lands and the surveyors' offices were situated. Other embarrassments were experienced—other grievances complained of—which remain



to be noticed at the proper time. Under the influence of all these circumstances, the people of the frontier began to think seriously of a separation from the parent Commonwealth. In the autumn of the year 1784, intelligence was communicated to Colonel Logan, that the Cherokees intended to make an incursion into the southern part of the State, while the savages of the north, it was believed, were meditating a renewal of hostilities from that quarter. To counteract these movements by the adoption of some systematic plans for the protection of the country, a public meeting of the inhabitants, upon Logan's suggestion, was convened at Danville. The subject having been freely discussed, the meeting was brought to the conclusion, that the most effectual mode of averting the blows about to be aimed at the settlements, was to invade the enemy's country with a competent force, and destroy their villages. But the question arose, who possessed authority to *order* the expedition and to make provision for the necessary supplies? The executive power was at Richmond, and the laws had vested no such authority in the officers of the militia or the magistracy of the counties. Expeditions of the kind proposed, had, it is true, been ordered before that time from Kentucky, but they were composed of volunteers who furnished their own supplies—they had been brought about by necessity—during a period of general war—and when a strong sense of impending danger impelled every good citizen to take the field. Now the danger was not so immediate—the same urgent necessity did not exist, and the people of old Virginia, having thrown aside their armor, were courting repose. The movement, therefore, might not be approved by the government, and if condemned, the result might be a refusal to pay the expenses of the expedi-

tions. Such, at least, we are informed,\* was the reasoning of those who composed the Danville assembly. But there was one subject about which they had less difficulty. The proceedings of the meeting, it was argued, had disclosed the inefficiency of the existing laws for the protection of the frontier, but little doubt could be entertained of the ability of the settlers, under a well regulated system, to protect themselves. If they possessed the physical power to do that, it was all important to their security, that they should possess facilities to wield it at pleasure, otherwise they were deprived of the privilege of self preservation. The occasion which had now called them together, displayed the magnitude of evil of which they complained. Their implacable enemy had threatened their northern and southern borders—and although they were not at the doors of their fellow citizens, yet a month might elapse before every western station would be struggling for existence against vastly superior numbers. There was safety in preventing, as well as in repelling, aggression, and experience had convinced the settlers, that the most successful method of guarding against invasion, was to become invaders themselves. The General Assembly was alone competent to relieve them from the embarrassments of their condition, and the meeting adjourned, after recommending to the people a convention of delegates from the several counties, to be held at Danville, on the twenty seventh of December, 1784. A circular letter was prepared and disseminated, advising an election of suitable persons to the convention, and that each militia company in the district† should choose one delegate. No

---

\* I Marsh. 191.

† I omitted to state, in the proper place, that in March, 1783, the three counties of Fayette, Jefferson and Lincoln, were formed into a judicial district, called the district

intimation was given in the letter, that a separation from Virginia would be a subject for discussion. The avowed object of the convention was to adopt measures of self defence, and to present their grievances, in the most imposing form, to the Legislature. The proposition was every where favorably received—the elections took place—and on the day appointed, the convention met at Danville. That estimable citizen, Samuel McDowell, was elected President, and Thomas Todd, late one of the justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, was appointed Clerk. The names of the members of this convention have been omitted by the historians, and have not, probably, been preserved. The first subject that engaged their attention, was the one which had been discussed by the preceding assembly—the defence of the country, and the subsisting powers, municipal and military, of the local governments. Ten days were occupied with their deliberations. It was the opinion of a decided majority, that although much could be done for their relief by the General Assembly, yet that permanent security consisted alone in a separation from Virginia, and the formation of an independent government. There was a small minority of a different opinion, and the majority, in as much as they were not elected with a view to the agitation of the subject, did no more than adopt a resolution expressive of their views, and recommending that, at their elections for burgesses, in the following April, the people should

---

of Kentucky. It "was opened at Harrodsburgh," says Mr. Butler, "by John Floyd, and Samuel McDowell, as Judges. George Muter did not attend until 1785. The two former, appointed John May their clerk. Walker Daniel was likewise appointed by the Governor of Virginia, Attorney General. This constitutes"—he continues—"the third legislative alteration of Kentucky. 1. The *county* of Kentucky. 2. The three counties sinking the name of Kentucky. 3. The district, reviving the name of Kentucky, to go out, we trust, no more forever." Butler's Kentucky, 141.

also choose delegates to a second covention to be held at Danville in May, vested with full power to determine on the expediency of applying to the legislature of Virginia for an act of separation. The delegates were chosen,\* and the convention met on the twenty third of May, 1785. It was composed of men of high respectability—† the greater part distinguished for talent and intelligence. Their proceedings were characterized by dignity, moderation and unanimity, and by a strict regard to parliamentary rules and usages. They resolved, as the opinion of the convention—

First—That a petition be presented to the assembly, praying that this district may be established into a State separate from Virginia.

Second—That when so established, it ought to be taken into union with the United States of America, and enjoy equal privileges in common with those States.

Third—That this convention recommend to their constituents to elect deputies from their respective counties, to meet at Danville on the second Monday in August next, to serve in convention, and to continue, by adjournment, till the first day of April next, to take further under their consideration, the state of the district.

---

\* In January, 1785, the county of Nelson was established. It made the fourth county of the district, and was composed of all that part of Jefferson, lying South of Salt river.

† The years 1783, and 1784—(*Imlay's description of Kentucky*, 44)—brought out vast numbers of emigrants from all parts of America; particularly the latter year—when, it was supposed, that in Kentucky alone, not less than twelve thousand souls became settlers.”

† The following are their names: Samuel McDowell, George Muter, Benjamin Logan, Willis Green, Harry Innis, Christopher Greenup, James Speed, Robert Todd, James Baird, Levi Todd, James Trotter, Ebenezer Brooks, Richard Steele, Isaac Morrison, James Garrard, John Edwards, Caleb Wallace, Richard Terrell, George Wilson, Robert Clark, Robert Johnson, Edward Payne, Isaac Cox, Richard Taylor, James Rogers, Mathew Walton, and Messrs. Morton and Kincheloe. The christian names of the latter gentlemen, my informant did not recollect.



Fourth—That the election of delegates for the proposed convention, ought to be on the principle of equal representation.

The fifth resolution referred the petition to the assembly, in conformity with the first resolution, together with all matters connected with the subject of their deliberations, to the next convention.

They published an address “to the inhabitants of the district of Kentucky”—in which they vindicated the propriety of the proposed severance of the Commonwealth, and assigned, with great force, the causes which rendered such a measure indispensable to the welfare of the people. They stated, that in the course of their enquiries, they found that several laws had passed the legislature of Virginia, which, although of a general nature, were in their operation particularly oppressive on the people of the district—and they alleged, that from their local situation, they were deprived of many benefits of government, which every citizen had a right to expect—in proof of which, they appealed to facts.

They had no power, they said, to call out the militia—their sure and only defence—to oppose the wicked machinations of the savages, unless in cases of actual invasion.

They could have no executive power in the district, either to enforce the execution of the laws, or to grant pardons to objects of mercy—because such a power would be inconsistent with the policy of government, and contrary to the present constitution.

They were ignorant of the laws that were passed, until a long time after they were enacted, and in many instances until they had expired—in consequence of which, penalties might be inflicted for offences never designed, and delinquents escaped the punishment due to their crimes.

They were compelled to prosecute suits in the high court of appeals at Richmond, under every disadvantage for the want of evidence, want of money, and want of friends.

It was impossible, they declared, for the inhabitants of the district, at so remote a distance from the seat of government, ever to derive equal benefits with the citizens in the eastern parts of the State.

They suggested that it was generally admitted, that the district ought, at some period, not far distant, to be separated from Virginia, and the only question was, whether they were then of sufficient ability, either to fill the different offices of government or provide for its support? In answer to the first branch of this enquiry, they insisted, that sound principles and plain sense would suffice for every laudable purpose of government; and they had generally found, that the liberty of the citizen and the laws of the land, were in the highest reverence at the foundation and rise of States, before the public morals are corrupted by wealth and licentiousness. In reference to their ability to support their government, they had then, they said, several valuable funds, and if they suffered them to be exhausted by delay, they would be stripped of every resource but that of internal taxation. They did not hesitate, therefore, to pronounce it as their opinion, that the present, was preferable to any future period, for the separation to take place.

These were some of the reasons that justified the measure they had unanimously proposed, and it will not be denied that they were sufficiently cogent and satisfactory. The third convention met on the eighth of

the following August.\* The papers which had been referred to them by a resolution of the preceding convention, were now considered and discussed—and a report was made thereon by a committee appointed for that purpose. The report contained a declaration of grievances similar to those already mentioned, which was unanimously adopted. In lieu of the petition prepared by their predecessors, a fervid appeal was made to the patriotism and magnanimity of the parent Commonwealth, in the form, and with the title, of an address to the General Assembly. It was the production of an individual of great distinction and influence, and a member of the convention from Fayette—General James Wilkinson. It commenced with the acknowledgement of the importance of the measure which had been proposed by the convention, and of the filial affection with which they approached the assembly. “The settlers of this distant region”—such was its language—“taught by the arrangements of Providence, and encouraged by the conditions of that solemn compact, for which they had paid the price of their blood, to look forward to a separation from the eastern parts of the Commonwealth, have viewed the subject leisurely at a distance, and examined it with caution on its near approach. Irreconcilable as has been their situation, to a connexion with any community beyond the Appalachian mountains other than the Federal union; manifold as have been the grievances flowing therefrom, which have grown with their growth and increased with their population, they

---

\* The names of the members are as follow: Samuel McDowell, George Muter, Christopher Irvine, William Kennedy, Benjamin Logan, Caleb Wallace, Harry Innis, John Edwards, James Speed, James Wilkinson, James Garrard, Levi Todd, Isaac Morrison, John Coburn, James Trotter, John Craig, Robert Patterson, Richard Terrell, George Wilson, Benjamin Sebastian, Philip Barbour, Isaac Cox, Andrew Hynes, Mathew Walton, and James Rogers.

have patiently waited the hour of redress, nor even ventured to raise their voices in their own cause, until youth, quickening into manhood, hath given them vigor and stability.”

“It is not,” it continued, “the ill directed or inconsiderate zeal of a few—it is not that impatience of power, to which ambitious minds are prone—nor yet the baser consideration of personal interest, which influence the people of Kentucky.”—“They are incapable of cherishing a wish unfounded in justice, and are now impelled by expanding and irremediable grievances, universally seen, felt and acknowledged, to obey the irresistible dictates of self preservation, and seek for happiness by means honorable to themselves, honorable to you, and injurious to neither.”

The convention, therefore, with the consent and by the authority of their constituents, prayed that an act might pass, at the ensuing assembly, declaring and acknowledging the sovereignty and independence of Kentucky. George Muter and Harry Innis, the one Chief Justice, the other Attorney General of the district, were deputed to present the address to the General Assembly, and to use their personal exertions to facilitate the passage of a law in conformity therewith.

There was another subject that awakened the anxieties of the convention, and drew from them an address to their constituents. They had received accounts from Post St. Vincennes, that indicated a disposition in the savages for general war—and looking nearer home, they found their borders infested, and constant depredations committed on their property. “*Blood,*” they declared, “*had been spilled from the eastern to the western extremity of the district.*” They called, therefore, in the name and behalf of the people, on the county lieutenants forth-



with to carry into operation the law for regulating and disciplining the militia; and recommended to the officers to assemble in their respective counties, and concert plans for the defence of the country, or for carrying expeditions against the hostile nations of Indians.

The deputies of the convention proceeded to Richmond, in discharge of the duties assigned them. "The spectacle" was now exhibited "of a sovereign power, solely intent to bless its people, agreeing to a dismemberment of its parts, in order to secure the happiness of the whole."\* On the tenth of January, 1786, the General Assembly passed "an act concerning the erection of the district of Kentucky into an independent State." After declaring that the partition of the Commonwealth was "rendered expedient by the remoteness of the more fertile, which must be the more populous, part of the district—and by the interjacent natural impediments to a convenient and regular communication therewith"—it provided that a convention, to be held at Danville on the fourth Monday of September, should be elected by the free male inhabitants of the district—each of the seven counties to be entitled to five representatives. As soon as two thirds of them should assemble, they were authorized to consider, and by a majority of voices to determine, whether it was expedient for, and the will of, the good people of the district, that the same should be erected into an independent State, upon the terms and conditions which the act set forth: and if, on those terms and conditions, the convention approved of the separation, they should proceed to fix a day, subsequent to the first day of September, 1787, on which the authority of Virginia and of her laws, over the

---

\*The language of the address of the convention to the General Assembly.

proposed State, should cease and determine forever—provided, that prior to the first day of June, 1787, the Congress of the United States assented to the partition, released Virginia from her federal obligations arising from the district as a part of her territory, and admitted the proposed State into the Federal union.

The election of delegates to the new convention was held in August, 1786—but the people of the district had again been summoned to the field, to suppress the hostilities of the savages, and when the day arrived for the meeting of the convention, a quorum of its members failed to attend. To those who were in attendance, this was a perplexing circumstance. Assuming, however, the name of a committee of their body, they prepared and signed a memorial, setting forth the disappointment and the exigencies that had produced it, and praying the General Assembly for such an alteration of the terms of the act of separation, as the occasion seemed to require. The memorial was committed into the hands of John Marshall, Esq., then a young attorney of Richmond, since the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and whose glory it is, to have established upon foundations, as durable as the pillars of the government, the constitutional jurisprudence of his country. The memorial was presented by him to the General Assembly, and strengthened by his friendly cooperation, was favorably received. In October, 1786, another act was passed, “making further provision for the erection of the district of Kentucky, into an independent State.” The preamble recited, that it appeared that the representatives elected in pursuance of the first act, had been hindered by unforeseen events from meeting at the time proposed, and determining the question referred to them—that no such determination could

then take place within the time necessary for its receiving the assent of Congress prior to the first of June next—that it continued to be the purpose of the General Assembly that the district of Kentucky should become an independent State, and it was therefore enacted that the convention should meet in September, 1787, to determine, by a concurrence of *two thirds* of the whole number elected, upon the expediency of the separation. The first of January, 1789, was substituted as the day when the authority of Virginia was to cease over the district, and the assent of Congress was to be procured before the fourth of July, 1788. On the seventh of September, 1787, the fifth convention met at Danville, and unanimously determined the question submitted to them, favorably to the separation.\* They then adopted an address “to the honorable the Congress of the United States of America,” in which they set forth, with great earnestness, their claims to independence. The numerous causes which had conspired to postpone them, had excited the public mind, and a fresh and absorbing topic—the free navigation of the Mississippi river—had, in the mean time, entered into their deliberations. It is difficult, at this day, to appreciate the feelings of jealousy and distrust, with which the people of the whole western country then regarded the possible contingency, of being deprived of the benefits of that great channel of their commerce. The inhabitants of Kentucky desired a separation from Virginia, but the convention assured Congress, that whatever might be their anxiety to effect it, in the constitutional mode prescribed by the law under which they acted, they would not consider themselves in any manner answerable for the future conduct

---

\*See Appendix—Note S.

of their constituents, if they were unsuccessful in their application. Confiding, therefore, implicitly in the justice and liberality of that body, they claimed, in conformity with the act of the General Assembly of Virginia, to be permitted to enjoy equal privileges with the other of the United States of America, and to be styled the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The deep solicitude they felt to become independent, was also displayed in their eagerness to hasten the consummation of that event, and in the measures they employed to ensure it. They resolved that a convention should be elected in the ensuing April, to continue in appointment until the thirty first of December, 1788, "with full power and authority to frame and establish a fundamental constitution of government for the proposed State, and to declare what laws should be in force therein, until the same should be abrogated or altered by the legislative authority acting under the constitution, so to be framed and established;" and they requested their representatives in the legislature, to use their endeavors to have an inhabitant of the district appointed a delegate to Congress for the ensuing year. Accordingly, John Brown, Esq., was elected. He was the only member of that body from Kentucky, before the adoption of the Federal Constitution. He came to the district in 1782, and soon became distinguished for his talent and public spirit. After the new government was organized under that constitution, he was chosen one of the first Senators in Congress from Kentucky—and no higher proof need be adduced of the public approbation of his services than the fact, that he was continued in that high office, by successive re-elections, until the year 1805, when he retired from public life.\*

---

\*See Appendix—Note T.



If the feelings of the inhabitants of the district were alive to the subject of separation, the minds of the people of the United States were in great agitation, respecting the important change which was about to take place in the aspect of their national affairs. On the seventeenth of September, 1787, after very protracted deliberations, the convention of the States adopted the present Federal constitution, and by a contemporaneous resolution, directed it to be laid before Congress, declaring their opinion "that it should be submitted to a convention of delegates chosen in each State by the *people thereof*, under a recommendation of its legislature for their assent and ratification." Congress received the report of the convention on the twenty eighth of September, 1787, and resolved that it be transmitted to the legislatures of the States, in conformity to the resolves of the convention. It devolved upon Kentucky to take her part in these movements. Delegates were chosen\* in the several counties of the district to the convention of Virginia, that met at Richmond in June, 1788, to sit in judgment on the great questions at issue between the parties that were formed in reference to them, and on

---

\* I am indebted to Mr. Butler—*Hist. Ky.*, 166—for the interesting information that follows:

"Through the courtesy of Messrs. Brown and Marshall, the author is enabled to present the reader with the names of the Kentucky members of the Virginia Convention, which ratified the present Constitution of the United States. From *Fayette*, Humphrey Marshall and John Fowler; *Jefferson county*, Robert Breckenridge and Rice Bullock; *Lincoln county*, John Logan and Henry Pawling; *Nelson county*, John Steele and Matthew Walton; *Mercer county*, Thomas Allen and Alexander Robertson; *Madison county*, G. Clay and William Irvine; *Bourbon county*, Henry Lee and John Edwards. The Constitution of the United States was published in the *Kentucky Gazette*, Oct. 27th 1787. The only members of the Virginia legislature from Kentucky, whose names the author has been able to obtain, are John Brown, Benjamin and John Logan, Squire Boone, Swearingen, Thomas, John and Robert Todd, James Harrod, William McClung, John Steele, James Garrard, John Edwards, John Jewitt, William Pope and Richard Taylor."

the twentieth of the same month, Virginia gave her sanction to the proposed form of government. Ten States had now adopted the constitution, and no doubt remained that the new government would go into operation.

On the twenty eighth of July, 1788, the sixth convention assembled at Danville, to form a constitution of government for the new State of Kentucky. Another sad disappointment awaited them. Scarcely were they organized, before they received intelligence that Congress had declined, for the present, to entertain their petition, and had referred the question of admitting Kentucky into the confederacy to the new government. The vexation of the convention and of the people was openly and vehemently expressed. Many gave vent to their feelings in terms strongly savoring of disaffection to the government. The offspring of excitement and chagrin, a proposition was even made to submit the affairs of the district to the people themselves, in their primary capacity, and to ascertain their opinions through the medium of each company of militia. But the more judicious majority discarded it as disorganizing. The convention, after a long and animated discussion, came to a widely different determination. They recommended to the people to elect another assembly to meet in the November following, and to continue in office until the first of January, 1790—"delegating to them full powers, to take such measures for obtaining the admission of the district as a separate and independent member of the United States of America, and the navigation of the Mississippi, as may appear most conducive to those purposes—to form a constitution of government, and organize the same when they shall judge necessary, and to do and accomplish whatsoever, on a consideration of the State of

the district, may, in their opinion, promote its interests." It is obvious, that these measures were indicative of an unsettled and anxious state of the public mind—but they conduced to no violent consequences.

The third day of November, 1788, was set apart, by a resolution of their predecessors, for the meeting of the convention. On the fourth, a majority of the members appeared and took their seats, and the house proceeded to business. The resolution of Congress postponing the admission of Kentucky into the Union, until after the fourth of March, 1789, was read and referred. An address to Congress was reported from a committee appointed to prepare it, of which General Wilkinson was the Chairman, and Mr. Innis presented another to the General Assembly of Virginia. In the former, the convention recounted the difficulties and dangers of the settlement of Kentucky—and asserted, in an especial manner, the claim of the western people, to the free navigation of the Mississippi river. It was a right naturally and essentially annexed to the possession of the western country, and they called upon Congress to stretch forth their hands to save them. "We are a member," they said, "that would exert every muscle for your service. Do not cut us off from your body. By every tie of consanguinity and affection, by the remembrance of the blood we have mingled in the common cause, by a regard to justice and policy, we conjure you to procure our right."

In the latter, they threw themselves on the justice and liberality of the General Assembly, which they had so often experienced, solicited "the friendly interposition of the parent State with the Congress of the United States, for a speedy admission of the district into the federal union," and prayed "them to urge that

honorable body in the most express terms, to take effectual measures for procuring to the inhabitants the free navigation of the Mississippi, without which, the situation of a large part of the community would be wretched and miserable." On the tenth of November the convention adjourned. In January, 1789, Virginia passed a third act for the separation of the district, containing some new conditions which created universal dissatisfaction. On the twentieth of July of that year, the convention met, and after declaring, in the most explicit manner, that the alteration of the terms of the compact was injurious and inadmissible, they resolved to present a memorial to the General Assembly, urging such a change in the terms last proposed, as would make them equal to those formerly offered by Virginia and accepted by the district of Kentucky. The General Assembly of Virginia readily consented to relax the conditions and passed a law for that purpose. But the new act referred the whole subject of separation to another convention to be chosen in 1790. It can be no wonder, after such a constant succession of disappointments, that the people should have become impatient and irascible. It had required almost as much time to consummate their anxiously desired separation from Virginia, as to conquer the wilderness. The period however approached when that event was to be consummated. On the twenty sixth of July, 1790, according to the direction of the act of the General Assembly last referred to, another convention commenced its session at Danville. George Muter was elected President—and the convention declared, by a resolution, that "it was expedient for, and the will of, the good people of the district of Kentucky, that the same be erected into an independent State, on the terms and conditions specified in



an act of the Virginia Assembly, passed on the eighteenth of December, 1789:" and after the acceptance of those terms and conditions in a formal manner, they resolved "that on the first day of June, 1792, the said district shall become a State separate from, and independent of, the government of Virginia, and the articles of separation a solemn compact binding on the people of Kentucky." Alexander Scott Bullitt, Esq., reported from a committee selected for the purpose, an address to the General Assembly of Virginia, announcing the acceptance of the conditions of the law, and soliciting the co-operation of her representatives in Congress in the effort to obtain the admission of Kentucky into the Union. A memorial addressed to the President of the United States was also reported, by James M. Marshall, Esq., acknowledging the attachment of the convention to the federal government—declaring the causes and motives which had led to the proposed separation from the parent Commonwealth—asserting the competency of Kentucky for self government—and soliciting the passage of an act of Congress for her admission into the confederacy, within the time limited by the act of Virginia, and in conformity with the Constitution of the United States. The address and memorial having been adopted by the convention, they proceeded finally to declare, that in the month of December, 1791, on the respective court days of the counties of the district, and at the respective places of holding courts therein, representatives, to continue in office for seven months, should be elected by the free male inhabitants of each county above the age of twenty one years—each county to be entitled to five representatives, making the whole number forty five—that they should compose a convention, to be held in Danville on the first monday of April,

1792, to frame and establish a constitution or form of government, and also to determine what laws should remain in force until altered or abrogated by the legislative authority, acting under the constitution so to be framed or established.

In his speech to both houses of Congress, on the eighth of December, 1790, President Washington said—“since your last sessions, I have received communications by which it appears, that the district of Kentucky, at present a part of Virginia, has concurred in certain propositions contained in a law of that State, in consequence of which, the district is to become a distinct member of the Union, in case the requisite sanction of Congress is added. For this sanction application is now made. I shall cause the papers on this very important transaction to be laid before you. The liberality and harmony with which it has been conducted, will be found to do great honor to both the parties; and the sentiments of warm attachment to the union and its present government, expressed by our fellow citizens of Kentucky, cannot fail to add an affectionate concern for their particular welfare to the great national impressions under which you will decide on the case submitted to you.” The House of Representatives replied: “We shall bestow on this important subject the favorable consideration which it merits; and with the national policy which ought to govern our decision, shall not fail to mingle the affectionate sentiments which are awakened, by those expressed in behalf of our fellow citizens of Kentucky. And the Senate “assured him of their disposition to concur, in giving the requisite sanction to the admission of Kentucky, as a distinct member of the Union,” “anticipating the happy effects to be expected from the sentiments of attachment toward the Union

and its present government, which have been expressed by the patriotic inhabitants of that district.”

On the fourth day of February, 1791, Congress *enacted and declared*, “that on the first day of June, 1792, a new State, by the name and style of the State of Kentucky, shall be received and admitted into this Union, as a new and entire member of the United States of America.”

Nothing now remained but the action of Kentucky herself, in order to bring to a close her long and arduous struggles to obtain independence. On the first Monday of April, 1792, the convention assembled at Danville to frame the constitution, and elected Col. Samuel McDowell, to preside over their deliberations, and Thomas Todd their Clerk. It was a grave and dignified assembly, composed of some of the best materials of the district—abounding as it did in talent, integrity and patriotism. George Nicholas was its brightest luminary. If he was not a transcendent orator according to the Demosthenian process of resolving eloquence into action alone, his powers of argumentation were of the highest order, and his knowledge of the laws and institutions of his country, placed him in the first rank of the distinguished men, by whose wisdom and patriotism they were established. He had acquired eminence in his profession before he left Virginia. A member of the convention that ratified the Constitution of the United States, he was the associate of Madison, of Randolph and of Henry, and he came to Kentucky in the fullness of his fame, and in the maturity of his intellectual strength. One of his colleagues, from the county of Mercer, was the Rev. David Rice, a minister of the Presbyterian church. Having received his education under the care of the Rev. Samuel Daveis, a most learned and eloquent pulpit

orator of his day, he emigrated to Kentucky in 1783, in order to devote himself to the ministry. He sought a place in the convention, in the hope of being able to infuse into its deliberations a zeal for the gradual extirpation of slavery in Kentucky, for which purpose he wrote and published a tract, entitled, "Slavery inconsistent with justice and good policy," containing his views at large upon that interesting subject. His learning, his piety, his grave and venerable deportment, and his high rank in the church to which he belonged, gave to his opinions deserved influence, and he supported them in debate with considerable ability. There were several other men of great worth and distinction, whom it is necessary barely to mention. These were Isaac Shelby, Col. Benjamin Logan, James Garrard, afterwards Governor of the Commonwealth, John Edwards, one of her first Senators in Congress, Alexander S. Bullitt and Robert Breckinridge, the one the first Lieutenant Governor, and the other, the first Speaker of the House of Representatives, Caleb Wallace, who became a Judge of the Supreme Court, Samuel McDowell the President of the convention, and others of less distinction who had been selected for their sound, practical views of public policy.\*

---

\* MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION OF 1792.

*Fayette county*—Hubbard Taylor, Thomas Lewis, George S. Smith, Robert Fryer, James Crawford.

*Jefferson county*—Richard Taylor, John Campbell, Alexander S. Bullitt, Benjamin Sebastian, Robert Breckenridge.

*Bourbon county*—John Edwards, James Garrard, James Smith, John McKinney, Benjamin Harrison.

*Nelson county*—William King, Mathew Walton, Cuthbert Harrison, Joseph Hobbs, Andrew Hynes.

*Madison county*—Charles Cavender, Higginson Grubbs, Thomas Clay, Thomas Kennedy, Joseph Kennedy.

*Mercer county*—Samuel Taylor, Jacob Froman, George Nicholas, David Rice, Samuel McDowell.



The journal of the proceedings of the convention has probably perished. I have been unable, after diligent enquiry, to ascertain its fate. On the nineteenth of April they closed their labors, and on the first of June following, the district of Kentucky was an independent State.

The constitution of 1792, having been superseded by that of 1799, is now no farther a subject of interest than as it may cast light upon the policy of the men who framed it, and I shall do no more than glance at some of its prominent provisions. Following the precedent furnished by the Constitution of the United States, the powers of government were divided into three distinct departments. The legislative power was vested in a General Assembly to consist of a Senate and House of Representatives. The representatives were elected annually by the qualified electors of each county. The Senate was differently chosen. The electors qualified to vote for representatives, were to choose at the designated places of election, as many persons as they were entitled to have for representatives for their respective counties, and those persons were to constitute the electors of the Senate. They were required to assemble at the place appointed for convening the General Assembly, and "proceed to choose, by ballot, as Senators, *men of the most wisdom, experience and virtue*, above the age of twenty seven years of age, and residents in the State two whole years next preceding the election." "*No minister of religious societies, member of Congress, or other person, holding any office of profit under the Uni-*

---

*Lincoln county*—Benjamin Logan, John Bailey, Isaac Shelby, Benedict Swope, William Montgomery.

*Woodford county*—John Watkins, Richard Young, William Steele, Caleb Wallace, Robert Johnson.

*Mason county*—George Lewis, Miles W. Conway, Thomas Waring, Robert Rankin, John Wilson.

ted States or this Commonwealth, except attornies at law, justices of the peace, militia officers and coroners, could be a member of either house during his continuance to act as minister, in Congress or in office.”

The supreme executive power was vested in a Governor—to be chosen for four years by the electors of the Senate, at the same time and place, and in the same manner that the Senators were elected.

All free male citizens of the age of twenty one years, having resided in the State two years, or in the county in which they offered to vote one year next before the election, were permitted “to enjoy the rights of an elector”—and all elections were required to be *by ballot*.

The judicial power, both as to matters of law and equity, was vested in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts as the legislature might, from time to time, ordain and establish. To the supreme court was given original and final jurisdiction, in all cases respecting the titles to land under the then land laws of Virginia, and in all cases concerning contracts for land prior to the establishing of those titles. In all other cases it was allowed appellate jurisdiction only—with such exceptions and under such regulations as the legislature should make, for the due administration of justice.

Sheriffs and coroners were to be chosen by the citizens of each county qualified to vote for representatives, and to hold their offices for three years.

All laws in force in Virginia, of a general nature, and not local to the eastern part of that State, were declared to be in force in Kentucky, until they were altered or repealed by the legislature: and the compact with Virginia was adopted as a component part of the constitution.

I omit the provisions defining and regulating the pow-

ers of the departments, as well as the declaration of rights. There is little to distinguish them from the usual forms of the American constitutions. But it is due to the statesmen of 1792, that their views upon the great question, which at the period of the establishment of the federal government, received a large share of the public attention, and agitated the councils of the national convention in 1787, should not be overlooked in a historical review of their proceedings. Slavery, it is well known, was a part of the political institutions of Kentucky, when she became a county, and then a district of Virginia. There were those in the convention, who were its avowed and earnest opponents, and favored a well regulated system of gradual emancipation. But while the institution of slavery was retained, probably as a deformity which it was better to bear than attempt to eradicate, several provisions were incorporated into the constitution having a direct reference to the prohibition of the traffick in human flesh. After the convention had determined that the toleration of slavery should be admitted by the constitution, it was properly incumbent on them to protect the tenure by which property in slaves was held, with the necessary guards against legislative encroachment. The General Assembly, therefore, were deprived of the "power to pass laws for the emancipation of slaves without the consent of their owners, or without paying their owners, previous to such emancipation, a full equivalent in money."

They were deprived also of the power to "prevent emigrants to this State, from bringing with them such persons as are deemed slaves by the laws of any one of the United States, so long as any person of the same age or description shall be continued in slavery by the laws of this State." But the constitution required im-

peratively, that laws should be passed to permit owners of slaves to emancipate them—and it then declared that the legislature “shall have full power to prevent slaves being brought into this State as merchandize”—“to prevent any slave being brought into this State from a foreign country, and to prevent those from being brought into this State who have been, since the first day of January, 1789, or may hereafter be, imported into any of the United States from a foreign country.” I should fail to do justice to the authors of these provisions, if I neglected to add, that “full power” was likewise granted to the General Assembly “to pass such laws as may be necessary, to oblige the owners of slaves to treat them with humanity, to provide for them necessary clothing and provisions, to abstain from all injuries to them extending to life or limb, and in case of their neglect or refusal to comply with the direction of such laws, to have such slave or slaves sold for the benefit of the owner or owners.”

On the fourth day of June, 1792, the first General Assembly met at Lexington. Isaac Shelby, the Governor elect, presented himself before them in person, and delivered his inaugural address. James Brown, the late distinguished representative of the United States at the court of France, was appointed Secretary of State, George Nicholas Attorney General, and George Muter, Benjamin Sebastian and Caleb Wallace, judges of the court of Appeals.

The government was now organized, and Kentucky assumed her position in the confederacy of American States.

Seventy years have elapsed since Finley and his adventurous companions first penetrated the dark and bloody ground. If, from the eminence on which we



stand, we take a retrospect of the wonderful career of the pioneers, we cannot fail to be suitably impressed with the constancy and heroism with which, for nearly a quarter of a century, they met and withstood the innumerable perils and difficulties of their situation: and if we compare with theirs the present condition of their descendants, we are at a loss how to fix an adequate value upon their labors to the cause of human happiness. Within the narrow limits of the life of man, a wilderness has been transformed into cultivated fields, and a great Commonwealth has sprung up, containing a population of more than seven hundred thousand souls—rich in the productions of industry and art—abounding in the comforts of civilized life—adorned by the refinements of society, and flourishing under the auspices of wise and benignant political institutions. The hordes of savages that inhabited the extensive region stretching from the western boundary of Pennsylvania to the Mississippi river, have disappeared, and have been succeeded by other political communities, the luxuriance of whose growth is still more extraordinary. Less than forty years ago, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, with their millions of inhabitants and their twenty nine representatives in the national councils, were territorial dependents on the federal government. If we are permitted to derive conclusions from the events of our past history, we may form some conceptions, inadequate though they may be, of what, with the blessing of God upon us, the future is to accomplish, in giving extension to the numbers, addition to the strength, wisdom and power to the intellect, glory to the career, of this vast empire of freemen in the west. The men to whom, above all others, we are indebted for these inappreciable benefits, are the pioneers of Kentucky. *They* have passed away,

but their services will not be forgotten. If, in the performance of the part which has been allotted to me on this interesting occasion, I have succeeded in illustrating their claims upon the gratitude of their country, I shall be abundantly rewarded for the labor of the effort I have made. The reward will be inconceivably heightened, if, before the close of this anniversary, the descendants of the pioneers should solemnly resolve to construct, upon the spot where Kentucky began to be, **A MONUMENT TO THEIR MEMORY.**

This page in the original text is blank.

This page in the original text is blank.



## A P P E N D I X .

---

### NOTE A.—PAGE 14.

#### I.

The following incident has been communicated to me by Orlando Brown, Esq., to whom it was related by his deceased uncle, Dr. Samuel Brown :

“An old lady who had been in the forts, was describing to Dr. Brown the scenes she had witnessed in those times of peril and adventure: and, among other things, remarked, that during the first two years of her residence in Kentucky, the most comely sight she beheld, was seeing a young man dying in his bed a natural death. She had been familiar with blood and carnage and death, but in all those cases the sufferers were the victims of the Indian tomahawk and scalping knife; and that, on an occasion when a young man was taken sick and died, after the usual manner of nature, she and the rest of the women sat up all night, gazing upon him as an object of beauty.”

#### II.

My friend, Capt. Samuel Daviess, of Harrodsburgh, has furnished me with the interesting details that follow :

There is an incident in the early settlement of Kentucky which has not been heretofore noticed. In the fall of the year 1779, Samuel Daviess, who resided in Bedford county, Virginia, moved with his family to Kentucky, and lived for a time, at Whitley's station in Lincoln. After residing for some time in the station, he removed with his family to a place called Gilmer's Lick, some six or seven miles distant from said station, where he built a cabin, cleared some land, which he put in corn next season, not apprehending any danger from the Indians, although he was con-

sidered a frontier settler. But this imaginary state of security did not last long; for on a morning in the month of August, in the year 1782, having stepped a few paces from his door, he was suddenly surprised by an Indian's appearing between him and the door, with tomahawk uplifted, almost within striking distance. In this unexpected condition, and being entirely unarmed, his first thought was, that by running around the house, he could enter the door in safety, but to his surprise, in attempting to effect this object, as he approached the door he found the house full of Indians. Being closely pursued by the Indian first mentioned, he made his way into the corn field, where he concealed himself, with much difficulty, until the pursuing Indian had returned to the house.

Unable as he was to render any relief to his family (there being five Indians) he ran with the utmost speed to the station of his brother James Daviess—a distance of five miles. As he approached the station—his undressed condition told the tale of his distresses, before he was able to tell it himself. Almost breathless, and with a faltering voice, he could only say, his wife and children were in the hands of the Indians. Scarcely was the communication made when he obtained a spare gun, and the five men in the station, well armed, followed him to his residence. When they arrived at the house, the Indians, as well as the family, were found to be gone, and no evidence appeared that any of the family had been killed. A search was made to find the direction the Indians had taken; but owing to the dryness of the ground, and the adroit manner in which they had departed, no discovery could be made. In this state of perplexity, the party being all good woodsmen, took that direction in pursuit of the Indians, which they thought it most probable, they would take. After going a few miles, their attention was arrested by the howling of a dog, which afterwards turned out to be a house-dog that had followed the family, and which the Indians had undertaken to kill, so as to avoid detection, which might happen from his occasionally barking. In attempting to kill the dog, he was only wounded, which produced the howling that was heard. The noise thus heard, satisfied them that they were near the Indians, and enabled them to rush forward with the utmost impetuosity. Two of the Indians being in the rear as spies, discovering the approach of the party, ran forward where the other Indians were with the family—one of them knocked down the oldest boy, about eleven years old, and while in the act of scalping him, was fired at, but without effect. Mrs. Daviess, seeing the agitation and alarm of the Indians, saved herself and sucking child, by jumping into a sink hole. The Indians did not stand to make fight, but fled in the most precipitate manner. In that way the family was rescued by nine o'clock in the morning, without the

loss of a single life, and without any injury but that above mentioned. So soon as the boy had risen on his feet, the first word he spoke was, "*curse that Indian, he has got my scalp.*" After the family had been rescued, Mrs. Daviess gave the following account of the manner in which the Indians had acted. A few minutes after her husband had opened the door and stepped out of the house, four Indians rushed in, whilst the fifth, as she afterwards found out, was in pursuit of her husband. Herself and children were in bed while the Indians entered the house. One of the Indians immediately made signs, by which she understood him to inquire how far it was to the next house. With an unusual presence of mind, knowing how important it would be to make the distance as far as possible, she raised both her hands, first counting the fingers of one hand then of the other—making a distance of eight miles. The Indian then signed to her, that she must rise: she immediately got up, and as soon as she could dress herself, commenced showing the Indians, one article of clothing and then another, which pleased them very much: and in that way, delayed them at the house nearly two hours. In the mean time, the Indian who had been in pursuit of her husband, returned with his hands stained with poke berries, which he held up, and with some violent gestures, and waiving of his tomahawk, attempted to induce the belief, that the stain on his hands was the blood of her husband, and that he had killed him. She was enabled at once to discover the deception, and instead of producing any alarm on her part, she was satisfied that her husband had escaped uninjured.

After the savages had plundered the house of every thing that they could conveniently carry off with them, they started, taking Mrs. Daviess and her children—seven in number, as prisoners, along with them. Some of the children were too young to travel as fast as the Indians wished, and discovering, as she believed, their intention to kill such of them as could not conveniently travel, she made the two oldest boys carry them on their backs. The Indians, in starting from the house, were very careful, to leave no signs of the direction they had taken, not even permitting the children to break a twig or weed, as they passed along. They had not gone far, before an Indian drew his knife and cut off a few inches of Mrs. Daviess' dress, so that she would not be interrupted in travelling.

Mrs. Daviess was a woman of cool deliberate courage, and accustomed to handle the gun so that she could shoot well, as many of the women were in the habit of doing in those days. She had contemplated, as a last resort, that if not rescued in the course of the day, when night came and the Indians had fallen asleep, she would deliver herself and children by killing as many of the Indians as she could—thinking that in a night attack as

many of them as remained, would most probably run off. Such an attempt would now seem a species of madness; but to those who were acquainted with Mrs. Daviess, little doubt was entertained, that if the attempt had been made, it would have proved successful.

The boy who had been scalped, was greatly disfigured, as the hair never after grew upon that part of his head. He often wished for an opportunity to avenge himself upon the Indians for the injury he had received. Unfortunately for himself, ten years afterwards, the Indians came to the neighborhood of his father and stole a number of horses. Himself and a party of men went in pursuit of them, and after following them for some days, the Indians finding that they were likely to be overtaken, placed themselves in ambush, and when their pursuers came up, killed young Daviess and one other man; so that he ultimately fell into their hands when about twenty one years old.

The next year after the father died; his death being caused, as it was supposed, by the extraordinary efforts he made to release his family from the Indians.

I cannot close this account, without noticing an act of courage displayed by Mrs. Daviess, calculated to exhibit her character in its true point of view.

Kentucky, in its early days, like most new countries, was occasionally troubled by men of abandoned character, who lived by stealing the property of others, and after committing their depredations, retired to their hiding places, thereby eluding the operation of the law. One of these marauders, a man of desperate character, who had committed extensive thefts from Mr. Daviess as well as from his neighbors, was pursued by Daviess and a party whose property he had taken, in order to bring him to justice. While the party were in pursuit, the suspected individual, not knowing any one was pursuing him, came to the house of Daviess, armed with his gun and tomahawk—no person being at home but Mrs. Daviess and her children. After he had stepped in the house, Mrs. Daviess asked him if he would drink something—and having set a bottle of whiskey upon the table, requested him to help himself. The fellow not suspecting any danger set his gun up by the door, and while drinking, Mrs. Daviess picked up his gun, and placing herself in the door, had the gun cocked and levelled upon him by the time he turned around and in a peremptory manner ordered him to take a seat, or she would shoot him. Struck with terror and alarm, he asked what he had done. She told him, he had stolen her husband's property, and that she intended to take care of him herself. In that condition, she held him a prisoner, until the party of men returned and took him into their possession.



## III.

*Letter from Nathaniel Hart, Sr., Esq., of Woodford.*

SPRING HILL, .... 1840.

DEAR SIR:

Connected with your address delivered at the celebration of the first settlement of Kentucky at Boonesborough, the circumstances attending the escape and defence of Mrs. Woods about the year 1784 or '5, near the Crab Orchard, in Lincoln county, may not be without interest. I have a distinct recollection of them. Mr. Woods, her husband, was absent from home, and early in the morning, being a short distance from her cabin, she discovered several Indians advancing towards it. She reached it before all but one, who was so far ahead of the others, that before she could close and fasten the door, he entered. Instantly he was seized by a lame negro man of the family, and after a short scuffle, they both fell—the negro underneath. But he held the Indian so fast, that he was unable to use either his scalping knife or tomahawk, when he called upon his young mistress to take the axe from under the bed, and dispatch him by a blow upon the head. She immediately attempted it: but the first attempt was a failure. She repeated the blow and killed him. The other Indians were at the door endeavoring to force it open with their tomahawks. The negro rose, and proposed to Mrs. Woods to let in another, and they would soon dispose of the whole of them in the same way. The cabin was but a short distance from a station, the occupants of which, having discovered the perilous situation of the family, fired on the Indians, and killed another, when the remainder made their escape.

This incident is not more extraordinary than one that happened, in the fall or winter of 1781-'2, to some families belonging to our own fort at the White Oak Spring. My father settled this fort in 1779. It was situated about a mile above Boonesborough and in the same bottom of the river. It was composed principally of families from York county, Pennsylvania—orderly, respectable people, and the men good soldiers. But they were unaccustomed to Indian warfare, and the consequence was, that of some ten or twelve men, all were killed but two or three. During this period, Peter Duree, the elder, the principal man of the connexion, determined to settle a new fort between Estill's station and the mouth of Muddy creek, directly on the trace between the Cherokee and Shawanese towns. Having erected a cabin, his son-in-law John Bullock and his family, and his son Peter Duree, his wife, and two children removed to it, taking a pair of hand mill stones with them. They remained for two or three days shut up in their cabin, but their corn meal being ex-

hausted, they were compelled to venture out, to cut a hollow tree in order to adjust their hand mill. They were attacked by Indians—Bullock, after running a short distance, fell. Duree reached the cabin, and threw himself upon the bed. Mrs. Bullock ran to the door to ascertain the fate of her husband—received a shot in the breast, and fell across the door sill. Mrs. Duree, not knowing whether her husband had been shot or had fainted, caught her by the feet, pulled her into the house and barred the door. She grasped a rifle and told her husband, she would help him to fight. He replied that he had been wounded and was dying. She then presented the gun through several port holes in quick succession—then calmly sat by her husband and closed his eyes in death. You would conclude that the scene ought to end here—but after waiting several hours, and seeing nothing more of the Indians, she sallied out in desperation to make her way to the White Oak Spring, with her infant in her arms, and a son, three or four years of age, following her. Afraid to pursue the trace, she entered the woods, and after running till she was nearly exhausted, she came at length to the trace. She determined to follow it at all hazards, and having advanced a few miles further, she met the elder Mr. Duree, with his wife and youngest son, with their baggage, on their way to the new station. The melancholy tidings induced them, of course, to return. They led their horses into an adjoining canebrake, unloaded them, and regained the White Oak Spring fort before daylight.

It is impossible at this day to make a just impression of the sufferings of the pioneers about the period spoken of. The White Oak Spring fort in 1782, with perhaps one hundred souls in it, was reduced in August to three fighting white men—and I can say with truth, that for two or three weeks, my mother's family never unclothed themselves to sleep, nor were all of them, within the time, at their meals together, nor was any household business attempted. Food was prepared, and placed where those who chose could eat. It was the period when Bryant's station was besieged, and for many days before and after that gloomy event, we were in constant expectation of being made prisoners. We made application to Col. Logan for a guard, and obtained one, but not until the danger was measureably over. It then consisted of two men only. Col. Logan did every thing in his power, as county Lieutenant, to sustain the different forts—but it was not a very easy matter to order a married man from a fort where his family was, to defend some other—when his own was in imminent danger.

I went with my mother in January, 1783, to Logan's station to prove my father's will. He had fallen in the preceding July. Twenty armed men were of the party. Twenty three widows were in attendance upon the court, to obtain letters of adminis-

tration on the estates of their husbands who had been killed during the past year. My mother went to Col. Logan's, who received and treated her like a sister.

I have drawn these statements in haste, without time to correct them, and am, with esteem, &c.

NATHANIEL HART.

JAMES T. MOREHEAD, Esq.

---

NOTE B.—PAGE 23.

Lest it may be supposed that the picture of Kentucky, given by the pioneer in the narrative from which I have quoted, is overdrawn, I offer in its support the descriptions written and published about the same period, by Imlay and Filson.

Capt. Imlay was "an officer in the American army during the war" of the revolution, as he informs us, and "a commissioner for laying out lands in the back settlements." His book, entitled "A topographical description of the western territory of North America," "in a series of letters to a friend in England," was published in New York in 1793. He was "an early witness to the settlement of Kentucky," and perhaps a participant of the hardships through which the early settlers had to pass. He thus describes the country, as it was presented to his view in the spring season of the year.

"Every thing here assumes a dignity and splendor I have never seen in any other part of the world.

You ascend a considerable distance from the shore of the Ohio, and when you would suppose you had arrived at the summit of a mountain, you find yourself upon an extensive level. Here an eternal verdure reigns, and the brilliant sun of latitude 39 deg., piercing through the azure heavens, produces in this prolific soil an early maturity which is truly astonishing.

Flowers full and perfect, as if they had been cultivated by the hand of a florist, with all their captivating odours, and with all the variegated charms which color and nature can produce, here, in the lap of elegance and beauty, decorate the smiling groves. Soft zephyrs gently breathe on sweets, and the inhaled air gives a voluptuous glow of health and vigor, that seems to ravish the intoxicated senses. The sweet songsters of the forest appear to feel the influence of the genial clime, and in more soft and modulated tones warble their tender notes in unison with love



and nature. Every thing here gives delight; and, in that mild effulgence which beams around us, we feel a glow of gratitude for the elevation which our all bountiful Creator has bestowed upon us.

Far from being disgusted with man for his turpitude or depravity, we feel that dignity which nature bestowed upon us at the creation—but which has been contaminated by the base alloy of meanness, the concomitant of European education, and what is more lamentable is, that it is the consequence of your very laws and governments.

You must forgive what I know you will call a rhapsody, but what I really experienced after travelling across the Alleghany mountains in March, when it was covered with snow, and after finding the country about Pittsburgh bare, and not recovered from the ravages of winter. There was scarcely a blade of grass to be seen, every thing looked dreary and bore those marks of melancholy which the rude hand of frost produces. I embarked immediately for Kentucky, and in less than five days landed at Limestone, where I found nature robed in all her charms.”

In Filson’s “Discovery, Settlement and present State of Kentucky,” published as a supplement to “Imlay’s Description,” and written in 1784, a no less glowing account is given. “The country,” says Mr. F. (page 15) “is in some parts nearly level: in others not so much so; in others again hilly, but moderately—and in such places there is most water. The levels are not like a carpet, but interspersed with small risings and declivities, which form a beautiful prospect.” “The soil” (page 22) “is of a loose, deep, black mould, without sand, in the first rate lands about two or three feet deep, and exceedingly luxuriant in all its productions,” “The country in general may be considered as well timbered, producing large trees of many kinds, and to be exceeded by no country in variety. Those which are peculiar to Kentucky are the sugar tree, which grows in all parts and furnishes every family with great plenty of excellent sugar. The honey-locust is curiously surrounded with large thorny spikes bearing broad and long pods in the form of peas, has a sweet taste, and makes excellent beer. The coffee tree greatly resembles the black oak, grows large, and also bears a pod, in which is enclosed coffee. The papwa (pawpaw) tree does not grow to a great size, is a soft wood, bears a fine fruit, much like a cucumber in shape and size, and tastes sweet.” He proceeds to mention the cucumber tree, the black mulberry, the wild cherry, and the buck-eye—



and "some other kinds of trees not common elsewhere." He then speaks of the "fine cane, on which the cattle feed and grow fat. This plant in general grows from three to twelve feet high, of a hard substance, with joints at eight or ten inches distance along the stalk, from which proceed leaves resembling those of the willow. There are many canebrakes so thick and tall, that it is difficult to pass through them. Where no cane grows there is an abundance of wild rye, clover and buffalo grass, covering vast tracts of country and affording excellent food for cattle. The fields are covered with abundance of wild herbage not common to other countries. Here are seen the finest crown-imperial in the world, the cardinal flower, so much extolled for its scarlet color, and all the year, excepting the winter months, the plains and valleys are adorned with a variety of flowers of the most admirable beauty. Here is also found the tulip-bearing laurel-tree, or magnolia, which has an extensive smell, and continues to blossom and seed for several months together." "The reader," he concludes, "by casting his eye upon the map, and viewing round the heads of Licking from the Ohio, and round the heads of Kentucky, Dick's river, and down Green river to the Ohio, may view in that great compass of above one hundred miles square, the most extraordinary country on which the sun has ever shone."

---

NOTE C.—PAGE 28.

*Letter from Col. Floyd to Col. Preston, dated*

BOONESBOROUGH, July 21, 1776.

*My Dear Sir:*

The situation of our country is much altered since I wrote you last. The Indians seem determined to break up our settlement: and I really doubt, unless it is possible to give us some assistance, that the greater part of the people may fall a prey to them. They have, I am satisfied, killed several whom, at this time, I know not how to mention. Many are missing, who some time ago went out about their business, of whom we can hear nothing. Fresh sign of Indians is seen almost every day. I think I mentioned to you before, some damage they had done at Lee's town. On the seventh of this month, they killed one Coop-

er on Licking creek, and on the fourteenth, a man whose name I know not, at your salt spring on the same creek.

On the same day they took out of a canoe within sight of this place, Miss Betsey Callaway, her sister Frances, and a daughter of Daniel Boone—the two last about thirteen or fourteen years old, and the other grown. The affair happened late in the afternoon. They left the canoe on the opposite side of the river from us, which prevented our getting over for some time to pursue them. We could not that night follow more than five miles. Next morning by daylight, we were on their track; but they had entirely prevented our following them, by walking some distance apart through the thickest cane they could find. We observed their course, and on which side we had left their sign—and travelled upwards of thirty miles. We then supposed they would be less cautious in travelling, and making a turn in order to cross their trace, we had gone but a few miles when we found their tracks in a buffalo path—pursued and overtook them in going about ten miles, just as they were kindling a fire to cook. Our study had been how to get the prisoners, without giving the Indians time to murder them after they discovered us. We saw each other nearly at the same time. Four of us fired, and all rushed on them, by which they were prevented from carrying any thing away except one shot gun without any ammunition. Mr. Boone and myself had each a pretty fair shot, as they began to move off. I am well convinced I shot one through the body. The one he shot dropped his gun—mine had none. The place was covered with thick cane, and being so much elated on recovering the three poor little heart-broken girls, we were prevented from making any further search. We sent the Indians off almost naked—some without their moccasins, and none of them with so much as a knife or tomahawk. After the girls came to themselves sufficiently to speak, they told us there were only five Indians—four Shawanese and one Cherokee. They could speak good English, and said they should then go to the Shawanese towns. The war club we got was like those I have seen of that nation. Several words of their language, which the girls retained, were known to be Shawanese. They also told them that the Cherokees had killed or driven all the people from Wataga and thereabout, and that fourteen Cherokees were then on the Kentucky waiting to do mischief. If the war becomes general, of which there is the greatest appearance, our situation is truly alarming. We are about finishing a large fort, and intend to keep possession of this place as long as possible. They are, I understand, doing the same thing at Harrodsburgh, and also on Elkhorn, at the Royal spring. The settlement on Licking creek, known by the name of Hinkston's, has been broken up; nineteen of the settlers are now here on their way in—Hinkston among the rest. They all seem

deaf to any thing we can say to dissuade them. Ten at least, of our own people, are going to join them, which will leave us with less than thirty men at this fort. I think more than three hundred men have left the country since I came out, and not one has arrived, except a few *cabiners* down the Ohio.

I want to return as much as any person can do: but if I leave the country now, there is scarcely one single man who will not follow the example. When I think of the deplorable condition a few helpless families are likely to be in, I conclude to sell my life as dearly as I can in their defence, rather than make an ignominious escape.

I am afraid it is in vain to sue for any relief from Virginia; yet the convention encouraged the settlement of this country, and why should not the extreme parts of Fincastle be as justly entitled to protection as any other part of the country. If an expedition were carried on against those nations who are at open war with the people in general, we might be in a great measure relieved, by drawing them off to defend their towns. If any thing under Heaven can be done for us, I know of no person who would more willingly engage in forwarding us assistance than yourself. I do, at the request and in behalf of all the distressed women and children and other inhabitants of this place, implore the aid of every leading man who may have it in his power to give us relief.

I cannot write. You can better guess at my ideas from what I have said than I can express them.

I am, dear sir,

Yours most affectionately,  
to my last moments,

J. FLOYD.

---

NOTE E.—PAGE 48.

I.

Articles of compact between the proprietors and people of Transylvania.—(1 *Hall's Sketches of the West*, 271.)

Whereas, it is highly necessary, for the purpose of the proprietors and the security of the people of this colony, that the powers of the one and the liberties of the other be ascertained; We, Richard Henderson, Nathaniel Hart, and J. Luttrell, on behalf of ourselves, as well as the other proprietors of the colony of Transylvania, of the one part—and the representatives of the people of said colony, in convention assembled, of the other part—do

most solemnly enter into the following contract or agreement, to wit:

1. That the election of delegates in this colony be annual.
2. That the convention may adjourn, and meet again on their own adjournment: Provided, that in cases of great emergency, the proprietors may call together the delegates before the time adjourned to; and, if a majority do not attend, they may dissolve them and call a new one.
3. That, to prevent dissension and delay of business, one proprietor shall act for the whole, or some one delegated by them for that purpose, who shall always reside in the colony.
4. That there be perfect religious freedom and general toleration: Provided, that the propagators of any doctrine or tenets, evidently tending to the subversion of our law, shall, for such conduct, be amenable to, and punished by, the civil courts.
5. That the judges of the superior or supreme courts be appointed by the proprietors, but be supported by the people, and to them be answerable for their misconduct.
6. That the quit-rents never exceed two shillings sterling per hundred acres.
7. That the proprietors appoint a sheriff, who shall be one of three persons recommended by the court.
8. That the judges of the superior courts have, without fee or reward, the appointment of the clerks of this colony.
9. That the judges of the inferior courts be recommended by the people, and approved by the proprietors, and by them commissioned.
10. That all other civil and military officers be within the appointment of the proprietors.
11. That the office of surveyor-general belong to no person interested, or a partner in this purchase.
12. That the legislative authority, after the strength and maturity of the colony will permit, consist of three branches, to wit: the delegates or representatives chosen by the people; a council, not exceeding twelve men, possessed of landed estate, who reside in the colony, and the proprietors.
13. That nothing with respect to the number of delegates from any town or settlement shall hereafter be drawn into precedent, but that the number of representatives shall be ascertained by law, when the state of the colony will admit of amendment.
14. That the land office be always open.
15. That commissions, without profit, be granted without fee.
16. That the fees and salaries of all officers appointed by the proprietors, be settled and regulated by the laws of the country.
17. That the convention have the sole power of raising and appropriating all public moneys, and electing their treasurer.



18. That, for a short time, till the state of the colony will permit to fix some place of holding the convention which shall be permanent, the place of meeting shall be agreed upon between the proprietors and the convention.

To the faithful, and religious, and perpetual observance of all and every of the above articles, the said proprietors, on behalf of themselves as well as those absent, and the chairman of the convention on behalf of them and their constituents, have hereunto interchangeably set their hands and affixed their seals, the twenty seventh day of May, one thousand seven hundred and seventy five.

RICHARD HENDERSON. [Seal.]  
 NATHANIEL HART. [Seal.]  
 J. LUTTREL. [Seal.]  
 T. SLAUGHTER, Ch'mn. [Seal.]

## II.

In connexion with what has been said in the text of the proprietors of the colony of Transylvania, it may be considered proper that I should subjoin some notice of them individually. I have to regret that my information is so limited, as to render what I shall say of them, in a great degree, unsatisfactory. Of Col. Henderson I know nothing, except what I have found in a book of somewhat questionable authority, of which I proceed to give a short account. Previously to the year 1775—the exact time is uncertain—there came to America an individual, who is fully entitled to the distinction of having been the first of the race of British travellers in the United States, of whom the present age has been so productive. He calls himself J. F. D. Smyth, Esq.\* He landed in Virginia, and *travelled* through that State, viewing as he went, with a very inquisitive eye, the soil and its productions, the cities and villages, the institutions, the manners

---

\* He is the Dr. Smyth to whom allusion is made by Mr. Girardin, in his *History of Virginia*, as having been engaged with Cameron and Connolly, in furthering a scheme of Lord Dunmore, in the fall of 1775, which “contemplated an active co-operation of the Indians with the disaffected in the back settlements,” for an invasion of Virginia. As they were proceeding to Detroit, “the destined theatre of their operations,” they were taken into custody, about five miles from Hagerstown, and thrown into prison. They were taken to Philadelphia, and detained in custody by the Congress, for a considerable time. See Girardin’s *History of Va.*, page 75—and Appendix thereto—No. 4.

and customs of the people. He found himself at length in Tarburg, North Carolina, and from thence "struck out" into a fine settlement called Nutbush, from a creek of that name which runs through it. At the house "of one Williams's, a lawyer who was said to be, and was very much like a mulatto," he "happened to fall in company, and have a great deal of conversation with, one of the most singular and extraordinary persons and eccentric geniuses in America, and perhaps in the world." It was Col. Henderson, afterwards President of Transylvania.

The result of the conversation was a strong solicitude to visit Kentucky. Accordingly, he crossed over the Alleghany mountains, and "fell upon the Warrior's branch" of the Kentucky river. Directing his course down that stream, he "reached the foot of the great ridge of the Ouasiotto mountains." He ascended those mountains, and "from the brow or edge of the summit looking back," he saw "the huge Alleghany's which he had crossed"; and "on the other edge of the summit, as he advanced, a champaign country, covered with prodigious woods, but at the same time in full verdure, and intersected with vast rivers and prodigious water courses, which all terminated in the mighty, majestic Ohio. Some of the course of this amazing and beautiful river, was also to be discovered by a chasm or break in the woods, where it flowed in awful, solemn silence."

He "descended the Ouasiotto mountains, and in a short time fell into the great War path which had been used by the Indians time out of mind."

He describes the Warrior's branch as "a considerable river, and after its confluence with two more rivers, neither of which is so large as itself, forms the Kentucky." "In five easy days journeys," he at length arrived "at the famed settlement" of Colonel Henderson at Boonesborough, on the eighth day of June. He was kindly and hospitably received: walked over and admired his plantation—visited several improvements in the neighborhood—explored the country to the confluence of the Kentucky with the Ohio river—descended the latter river to the falls—and proceeded from thence to New Orleans. It is not long before Mr. Smyth is at Pittsburgh—he is arrested as a spy and imprisoned, and, according to his own account, was most unjustifiably

dealt with. He returned to England, and in 1784, published his tour in the United States of America. From it the foregoing information concerning him has been derived. He thus speaks of Col. Henderson:

“His father is still alive, a poor man, whose residence is in the settlement of Nutbush, where he was at this time on a visit.

This son was grown up to maturity before he had been taught to read or write, and he acquired those rudiments of education, and arithmetic also, by his own indefatigable industry.

He then obtained the inferior office of constable; from that was promoted to the office of under-sheriff; after this he procured a license to plead as a lawyer, in the inferior or county courts, and soon after in the superior, or highest courts of judicature.

Even there, where oratory and eloquence is as brilliant and powerful as in Westminster-hall, he soon became distinguished and eminent, and his superior genius shone forth with great splendor, and universal applause.

He was, at the same time, a man of pleasure, gay, facetious, and pliant; nor did his amazing talents, and general praise, create him a single enemy.

In short, while yet a very young man, he was promoted from the bar to the bench, and appointed Associate Chief Judge of the province of North Carolina, with a salary adequate to the dignity.

Even in this elevated station, his reputation and renown continued to increase.

But having made several large purchases, and having fallen into a train of expence that his circumstances and finances could not support, his extensive genius struck out on a bolder tract to fortune and fame, than any one had ever attempted before him.

Under pretence of viewing some back lands, he privately went out to the Cherokee nation of Indians, and, for an insignificant consideration (only ten wagons loaded with cheap goods, such as coarse woollens, trinkets, some fire-arms, and spirituous liquors,) made a purchase from the chiefs of the nation, of a vast tract of territory, equal in extent to a kingdom; and in the excellence of climate and soil, extent of its rivers, and beautiful elegance of situations, inferior to none in the universe. A domain of no less than one hundred miles square, situated on the back or interior part of Virginia, and of North and South Carolina; comprehending the river Kentucky, Cherokee, and Ohio, besides a variety of inferior rivulets, delightful and charming as imagination can conceive.

This transaction he kept a profound secret, until such time as he obtained the final ratification of the whole nation in form. Then he immediately invited settlers from all the provinces, offer-

ing them land on the most advantageous terms, and proposing to them likewise, to form a legislature and government of their own; such as might be most convenient to their particular circumstances of settlement. And he instantly vacated his seat on the bench.

Mr. Henderson by this means established a new colony, numerous and respectable, of which he himself was actually proprietor as well as governor, and indeed legislator also; having framed a code of laws, particularly adapted to their singular situation, and local circumstances.

In vain did the different governors fulminate their proclamations of outlawry against him and his people: in vain did they offer rewards for apprehending him, and forbid every person from joining, or repairing to his settlement; under the sanction and authority of a general law, that renders the formal assent of the governors and assemblies of the different provinces absolutely necessary to vindicate the purchase of any lands from the Indian nations. For this instance, being the act of the Indians themselves, they defended him and his colony, being in fact as a bulwark and barrier between Virginia, as well as North and South Carolina and him; his territory lying to the westward of their nation."

### III.

Nathaniel Hart, whose name is so intimately connected with the first settlement of Kentucky, was born in the year 1734, in Hanover county, Virginia. Thomas Hart lived and died in Hanover, leaving five sons, of whom Nathaniel Hart was the youngest, and one daughter. After his father's death, which occurred in 1775, the whole family removed to Orange county, North Carolina, where Nathaniel Hart married in 1760, and continued for many years engaged in mercantile business. About the years 1770 and 1771, Capt. Hart commanded a company of Infantry which was actively engaged in the suppression of an insurrection in North Carolina (the purpose of which was, to shut up the courts of justice and prostrate government itself) and was handsomely complimented by the officers of the government, for the gallant and spirited behaviour of the detachment under his command.

Shortly after this, Daniel Boone, who resided in the same section of the country, returned from his long hunt of three years in Kentucky, and by his glowing description of its beauty, and the fertility of its soil, soon excited in others the spirit of an enterprise, which in point of magnitude and peril, as well as constancy and heroism displayed in its execution, has never been paralleled in the history of America. Capt. Hart (who knew Boone and con-



fided in his statements) was active in the formation of a company containing four of his immediate family, and four of his friends, with Col. Henderson as its legal head, for the purpose of undertaking the purchase and settlement of the wilderness of Kentucky. As soon as the company was organized, Capt. Hart set out alone on a trip to the Cherokee towns, on Holston, to ascertain, by a previous conference with the Indians, whether the purchase could be effected. After a propitious interview, he returned to N. Carolina, taking with him a delegation of the Indian chiefs who remained to escort the company back to the treaty ground, when, on the 17th of March, 1775, they negotiated the purchase of Transylvania from the Indians, and immediately departed for the Kentucky river. From this period Capt. Hart spent most of his time in Kentucky, although he did not attempt to bring his family out till the fall of 1779. In August, 1782, as he was carelessly riding out in the vicinity of the fort, he was killed and scalped by a small party of Indians who made their escape, although warmly pursued by Col. Boone. His widow survived him about two years. Their descendants all reside in Kentucky.

In the final settlement of the affairs of Henderson & Co., the company allowed Capt. Hart 200 pounds for extraordinary services rendered and risk incurred, by him in the settlement of Kentucky.

---

NOTE F.—PAGE 53.

*To the honorable the Convention of Virginia*

The petition of the inhabitants, and some of the intended settlers, of that part of North America now denominated Transylvania, humbly sheweth.

Whereas some of your petitioners became adventurers in that country from the advantageous reports of their friends who first explored it, and others since allured by the specious shew of the easy terms on which the land was to be purchased from those who stile themselves proprietors, have, at a great expense and many hardships, settled there, under the faith of holding the lands by an indefeasible title, which those gentlemen assured them they were capable of making. But your petitioners have been greatly alarmed at the late conduct of those gentlemen, in advancing the price of the purchase money from twenty shillings to fifty shillings sterling per hundred acres, and at the same time have increased the fees of entry and surveying to a most exorbitant rate; and, by the short period prefixed for taking up the lands, even on those extravagant terms, they plainly evince their inten-

tions of rising in their demands as the settlers increase, or their insatiable avarice shall dictate. And your petitioners have been more justly alarmed at such unaccountable and arbitrary proceedings, as they have lately learned, from a copy of the deed made by the Six Nations with Sir William Johnson, and the commissioners from this Colony, at Fort Stanwix, in the year 1768, that the said lands were included in the cession or grant of all that tract which lies on the south side of the river Ohio, beginning at the mouth of Cherokee or Hogohege river, and extending up the said river to Kettaning. And, as in the preamble of the said deed, the said confederate Indians declare the Cherokee river to be their true boundary with the southard Indians, your petitioners may, with great reason, doubt the validity of the purchase that those proprietors have made of the Cherokees—the only title they set up to the lands for which they demand such extravagant sums from your petitioners, without any other assurance for holding them than their own deed and warrantee; a poor security, as your petitioners humbly apprehend, for the money that, among other new and unreasonable regulations, these proprietors insist should be paid down on the delivery of the deed. And, as we have the greatest reason to presume that his majesty, to whom the lands were deeded by the Six nations, for a valuable consideration, will vindicate his title, and think himself at liberty to grant them to such persons, and on such terms as he pleases, your petitioners would, in consequence thereof, be turned out of possession, or obliged to purchase their lands and improvements on such terms as the new grantee or proprietor might think fit to impose; so that we cannot help regarding the demand of Mr. Henderson and company as highly unjust and impolitic, in the infant state of the settlement, as well as greatly injurious to your petitioners, who would cheerfully have paid the consideration at first stipulated by the company, whenever their grant had been confirmed by the crown, or otherwise authenticated by the supreme legislature.

And, as we are anxious to concur in every respect with our brethren of the united Colonies, for our just rights and privileges, as far as our infant settlement and remote situation will admit of, we humbly expect and implore to be taken under the protection of the honorable Convention of the Colony of Virginia, of which we cannot help thinking ourselves still a part, and request your kind interposition in our behalf, that we may not suffer under the rigorous demands and impositions of the gentlemen stiling themselves proprietors, who, the better to effect their oppressive designs, have given them the color of a law, enacted by a score of men, artfully picked from the few adventurers who went to see the country last summer, overawed by the presence of Mr. Henderson.

And that you would take such measures as your honors in your wisdom shall judge most expedient for restoring peace and harmony to our divided settlement; or, if your honors apprehend that our case comes more properly before the honorable the General Congress, that you would in your goodness recommend the same to your worthy delegates, to espouse it as the cause of the Colony. And your petitioners, &c.

James Harrod, Abm. Hite, Jun., Patrick Dorane, Ralph Nailor, Robert Atkinson, Robert Nailor, John Maxfeld, Samuel Pottinger, Barnerd Walter, Hugh McMillion, John Kilpatrick, Robert Dook, Edward Brownfield, John Beesor, Conrod Woolter, John Moore, John Corbie, Abraham Vanmetre, Samuel Moore, Isaac Pritchard, Joseph Gwyne, Charles Creeraft, James Willie, John Camron, Thomas Kenady, Jesse Pigman, Simon Moore, John Moore, Thomas Moore, Herman Consoley, Silas Harland, Wm. Harrod, Levi Harrod, John Mills, Elijah Mills, Jehu Harland, Leonard Cooper, William Rice, Arthur Ingram, Thomas Wilson, William Wood, Joseph Lyons, George Uland, Michael Thomas, Adam Smith, Samuel Thomas, Henry Thomas, William Myars, Peter Paul, Henry Simons, William Gaffata, James Hugh, Thos. Bathugh, John Conway, William Crow, William Feals, Benjamin Davis, Beniah Dun, Adam Neelson, William Shephard, Wm. House, John Dun, John Sim, Sen., John House, Simeon House, Andrew House, William Hartly, Thomas Dean, Richard Owan, Barnet Neal, John Severn, James Hugh, James Calley, Joseph Parkison, Jediah Ashraft, John Hardin, Archibald Reves, Moses Thomas, J. Zebulon Collins, Thomas Parkison, Wm. Muckleroy, Meridith Helm, Jun., Andrew House, David Brooks, John Helm, Benjamin Parkison, William Parkison, William Crow.—(See 2 *Hall's Sketches—Appendix*, 236.

---

NOTE G.—PAGE 58.

*Diary of Geo. Rogers Clark, from December 25, 1776.*

HARRODSBURGH, Dec. 25, 1776.

*Dec. 25.*—Ten men going to the Ohio for powder—met on the waters of Licking creek by Indians, and defeated—John G. Jones, William Graden and Josiah Dixon were killed.

*Dec. 29.*—A large party of Indians attacked McClelland's Fort and wounded John McClelland, Charles White, Robert Todd and Edward Worthington—the two first mortally.

*Dec. 30.*—Charles White died of his wound.



*Jan. 6, 1777.*—John McClelland died of his wound. 30th—moved to Harrodsburgh from McClelland's Fort.

*Feb.*—Nothing remarkable done.

*March 5.*—Militia of the county embodied—6th, Thos. Shores and William Ray killed at the Shawanese Spring—7th, the Indians attempted to cut off from the fort a small party of our men. A skirmish ensued—we had four men wounded and some cattle killed. We killed and scalped one Indian and wounded several—8th, brought in corn from the different cribs until the 18th day—9th, express sent to the settlement. Ebenezer Corn & Co. arrived from Captain Linn on the Mississippi—18th, a small party of Indians killed and scalped Hugh Wilson, about half a mile from the fort near night, and escaped—19th, Archibald McNeal died of his wounds received on the 7th inst—28th, a large party of Indians attacked the stragglers about the fort, killed and scalped Garret Pendergrest, killed or took prisoner, Peter Flin.

*April 7.*—Indians killed one man at Boonesborough, and wounded one—8th, Stoner arrived with news from the settlement—16th, Doran Brown & Co. arrived from Cumberland river—19th, John Todd and Richard Callaway elected Burgesses. James Berry married to widow Wilson—20th, Ben Linn and Samuel Moore sent express to the Illinois—24th, 40 or 50 Indians attacked Boonesborough, killed and scalped Daniel Goodman, wounded Capt. Boone, Capt. Todd, Mr. Hite and Mr. Stoner. Indians, 'tis thought, sustained much damage—29th, Indians attacked the fort and killed ensign McConnell.

*May 6.*—Indians discovered placing themselves near the fort. A few shots exchanged—no harm done. 12th, John Cowan and Squire Boone arrived from the settlement. 18th, McGary and Haggin sent express to Fort Pitt. 23d, John Todd & Co. set off for the settlement. 23d, a large party of Indians attacked Boonesborough fort; kept a warm fire until 11 o'clock at night; began it next morning and kept a warm fire until midnight, attempting several times to burn the fort; three of our men were wounded—not mortally; the enemy suffered considerably. 26th, a party went out to hunt Indians; one wounded Squire Boone and escaped. 30th, Indians attacked Logan's Fort; killed and scalped William Hudson, wounded Burr Harrison and John Kennedy.

*June 5.*—Harrod and Elliot went to meet Col. Bowman & Co.; Glen and Laird arrived from Cumberland; Daniel Lyons, who parted with them on Green river, we suppose was killed going into Logan's Fort. Jno. Peters and Elisha Bathey we expect were killed coming home from Cumberland. 13th, Burr Harrison died of his wounds received the 30th of May. 22d, Ben. Linn and Samuel Moore arrived from Illinois; Barney Stagner, Sen., killed



and beheaded half mile from the fort. A few guns fired at Boone's.

*July 9.*—Lieutenant Linn Married—*great merriment*. 11th, Harrod returned. 23d, express returned from Pittsburgh.

*August 1.*—Col. Bowman arrived at Boonesborough. 5th, surrounded ten or twelve Indians near the fort—killed three and wounded others; the plunder was sold for upwards of £70. 11th, John Higgins died of a lingering disorder. 25th, Ambrose Grayson killed near Logan's Fort, and wounded two others: Indians escaped.

*September 2.*—Col. Bowman & Co. arrived at this place; court held, &c. 8th, 27 men set out for the settlement. 9th, Indians discovered—a shot exchanged—nothing done. 11th, 37 men went to Joseph Bowman's for corn, while shelling they were fired on; a skirmish ensued; Indians drew off, leaving two dead on the spot and much blood; Eli Gerrard was killed on the spot and six others wounded. 12th, Daniel Brayan died of his wounds received yesterday. 17th, express sent to the settlement; Mrs. Sanders died. 23d, express arrive from Boone's and say, that on the 13th Capt. Smith arrived there with 48 men—150 more on the march for this: also, that General Washington had defeated Howe—*Joyful news, if true*. 26th, brought in a load of corn—frost in the morning. 29th, bought a horse—price £12; swapped with I. Shelby—boot £10; Silas Harland and James Harrod, dr. to £18 of powder, 22 lead. 30th, intended to start for settlement—*horses lost*.

*Wednesday, Oct. 1.*—I start for the settlement—22 men; got to Logan's, 20 miles. 2d, Capt. Montgomery arrived at Logan's with 38 men, and say that Capt. Watkins would be in in a day or two. 3d, started on our journey; Capt. Powlin and company likewise—76 in all, beside women and children, and took beeves from Whitley of G\*\*\*\*\*; camped at Pettit's, 16 miles. 4th, rain in the morning; camped on Skaggs' creek, 18 miles. 5th, early start; spies killed a buffalo; camped one half mile from the Hazle Patch, 9 miles across Rockcastle river, 20 miles—*all safe*. 6th, early start; camped on Laurel river; marched 14 miles; killed a beef. 7th, waited for Scaggs—he not coming to us we killed a few deer. 8th, Scaggs came to us and went back for his skins. 9th, lost our beeves; marched three miles; crossed Laurel river, and camped on the bank. 10th, early start; camped on Richland creek, 17 miles, where we met Capt. Charles G. Watkins on his march to Boone's with 50 men and families; scarce of food. 11th, marched to Cumberland ford, 18 miles; killed two buffaloes; Indians about us. 12th, crossed the R. and C. mountains; encamped in Powell's valley, 4 miles from the gap; in the whole 19 miles. 13th, late start; got to Martin's, 18 miles. 14th, left

Capt. Pertin; marched 15 miles. 15th, crossed Powel's river; marched 20 miles; camped on the south side of Powel's mt. 16th, got to the Rhye Cox, 9 miles. 17th, to Blackamoore's, 6 miles. 18th, parted with the company; lodged at More's fort, 20 miles. 19th, lodged at Capt. Kincaid's, 22 miles. 20th, crossed Clinch mountain; met Mr. Maulding, and heard from my friends; lodged at Col. Campbell's, 24 miles. 21st, lodged at Jasper Kinders's; got my horse shod on the way; breakfast and fed, 1s. 3d., 22 miles. 22d, cloudy morning, no rain; lodged at Sawyer's; expenses, 1s. 3d., 28 miles. 23d, falling in company with Capt. Campbell, an agreeable companion, we travelled 33 miles; lodged at Cook's; poor fare; expenses, 6s. 6d. 24th, sold my gun to Mr. Love, £15; swapped horses with I. Love; gave £7. 10s. boot; lodged at H. Neelie's, 25 miles. 25th, received a letter from Capt. Bowman, informing me that he had an order of court to carry salt to Kentucky \*\*\*\*; lodged at Bottetourt, 25 miles—412 miles from Harrodsburgh. 26th, rain; staid at Lockhart's tavern. 27th, rain; expenses £1. 4s. 28th, rain; start after breakfast; rained slowly all day; lodged at Bartlett's; expenses 4s., 25 miles. 29th, parted with my companion, Capt. Campbell; lodged at J. McLung's; 5s., 28 miles. 30th, crossed the Blue Ridge; lodged at Blacke's, at foot of the Mt.; 5s., 23 miles. 31st, bought a pair of shoes in Charlottesville; lodged at \*\*\*\*, 35 miles—15 miles from Charlottesville.

*Saturday, Nov. 1*—Got to my father's at about 10 o'clock at night—all well—55 miles, in the whole, 620 miles from Harrodsburgh. 2d, staid at my father's. 3d, started for Williamsburg; lodged at Mr. Gwathmey's, 40 miles. 4th, lodged at Warren's; 1s. 6d., 29 miles. 5th, got to Williamsburg; lodged at Anderson's; had a confirmation of Burgoine's surrender. 6th, bought a ticket in the State Lottery, £3, number 10,693, first class. 7th, went to the Auditor's; laid before them the Kentucky accounts; they refused to settle them without the consent of the council. 8th, got an order from the council to settle them. 9th, Sunday, went to church. 10th, passed the accounts with the Auditors, except my own, which they refuse to settle without the consent of the council. 18th, settled with the Auditors; drew the money of the Treasurer, £726; bought a piece of cloth for a jacket, price £4. 15s., buttons, &c. 3s. 19th, left Williamsburg after breakfast—expenses £9. 18s.; lodged at Warren's. 20th, got to Mr. Gwathmey's—expenses 13s. 21st, staid at do. 22d, came to my father's.

## NOTE H.—PAGE 69.

The life and campaigns of General George Rogers Clark would be a most valuable accession to our western history, and I am gratified to be able to state that the materials for such a work are in a state of preparation by L. Bliss, Jr., Esq. of Louisville. That gentleman has been so obliging as to submit to my perusal the autograph memoir of the distinguished soldier, commencing with the period of his visit to Kentucky in 1776, and closing with the year 1777. I have drawn freely upon it, although Mr. Butler's delightful narrative of the Illinois campaigns covered pretty much the same ground.

I have alluded in the text to a letter addressed by General Clark to "the inhabitants of Vincennes," communicating to Governor Hamilton, the first intelligence of his approach. It is a singular paper, and I take the liberty to insert it.

*"To the Inhabitants of Vincennes.*

"Being now within two miles of your village with my army, determined to take your fort this night, and not being willing to surprise you, I take this step to request such of you as are true citizens, and willing to enjoy the liberty I bring you, to remain still in your houses; and those (if any there be) that are friends to the King of England, to repair instantly to the fort, join their troops and fight like men. And if any such should hereafter be discovered, that did not repair to the garrison, they may depend on severe punishment. On the contrary, those that are true friends to liberty may expect to be well treated. As such, I once more request that they will keep out of the streets, for every person found under arms on my arrival, will be treated as an enemy."

"I had various ideas," says the venerable auto-biographer, "on the supposed result of this letter. I knew it could do us no damage—that it would cause the lukewarm to be decided—encourage our friends and astonish our enemies—that they would of course suppose our information good, and our forces so numerous, that we were sure of success."

---

NOTE I.—PAGE 73.

Capt. Imlay's account of the policy and operation of the land laws of Virginia, indicates, it may be supposed, the opinion generally entertained, at the period of their adoption, of their salutary influence.

"A land office," he says, "was opened by the State granting warrants for any quantity of unlocated land upon condition of certain sums of depreciated continental currency, paid into the Treasury, at so much per hundred acres." *"It was necessary in the management of this business, that care should be taken to prevent that perplexity and litigation, which the vague manner in which that business was executed in many instances, would produce."*

For this purpose, he says, "surveyors were appointed," and "commissioners were sent to adjust the claims of settlement and pre-emption; *by which means order was preserved*, and the government of a district of country, separated at that time more than two hundred miles from any other settled country—a country which had grown up under the devastation of a most barbarous civil war, and under the miseries of famine and distress" established—And the order and quiet which prevailed in 1784, were sufficient to have induced a stranger to have believed, that he was living under an old settled government. *Such is the science of jurisprudence, when it works upon simple and substantial springs. Hence arises harmony without expence, and equity without litigation. Here are no musty forms to lead you into labyrinths of doubt and perplexity—no contradictory cases and reports to distract your opinions. Our decisions are governed by acts of the legislature, decreed upon the elementary principles of truth and justice.*"—*Imlay's description of Kentucky, pp. 32, 36.*

If the author had lived till the present time, he would have had occasion to retract these opinions. Willingly would he have exchanged "decrees" founded "on elementary principles of truth and justice," for the "musty forms" and "contradictory cases" of the common law. "Harmony without expence!" "Equity without litigation!" "Angels and ministers of grace defend us" from another series of "descisions" governed "by acts of the legislature."

The principal act upon this subject was passed in may, 1779. It was entitled, "an act for establishing a land office, and ascertaining the terms and manner of granting waste and unappropriated lands."

"In creating a sinking fund in aid of the annual taxes to discharge the public debt," it was enacted\* "that any person might acquire title to so much waste and unappropriated lands as he or she might desire to purahase, on paying the consideration of forty pounds for every hundred acres, and so in

---

\*See Revised Code of Virginia, 1819, 366.



in proportion for a greater or smaller quantity." The money was made payable to the Treasurer, who was required to give a receipt for the purchase money—and upon presentation of that receipt to the Auditor, a certificate was issued by him showing the quantity of land purchased. The certificate was lodged in the land office, and the register of that office granted a warrant authorizing the land to be surveyed. Surveyors were appointed in every county, "to be nominated, examined and certified able by the President and professors of William and Mary College," by whom, or by their deputies, the surveys were to be made. Upon a return of a plat and certificate of the survey of the land to the Register's office, it was made the duty of the Register to record them, and to make out a grant for the land, which, when signed by the Governor with the seal of the Commonwealth annexed, consummated the purchaser's title.

Col. Thomas Marshall was appointed surveyor of the county of Fayette—George May of Jefferson, and James Thompson of Lincoln.

Col. Marshall was a gentleman of high standing in Virginia. He had been a member of the General Assembly in 1774, and was one of that band of patriots, who, with Washington and Henry, resolved to resist the assumptions of the British government at the hazard of all that was dear to men. He attached himself in 1775 to the army, and in the capacity of Major, was conspicuous for his gallantry in the battle of the great Bridge on the ninth of December, 1775.\* In the following year he was placed at the head of the third Virginia regiment on continental establishment,† and distinguished himself in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. In 1778 he took the command of the Virginia regiment of State artillery, which he retained for three years. It was during that period that he first came to Kentucky—having received a special permission from the Governor. His object was to "locate land warrants, as a provision for a numerous family which he intended to remove to the country on the restoration of peace."‡ He opened his office of surveyor and commenced the discharge of its duties in November, 1782, and

---

\* Girardin's *History of Virginia*, 35.

† 1 Marsh. 345.

‡ 1 Ib. 104.

from that period, became a citizen of Kentucky." It does not fall within the range of my subject, to speak of the part that he took in the political movements of the district. He was a prominent member, from the county of Fayette, of some of the early conventions.

Of Mr. May and Mr. Thompson, the historians furnish no other information, than that they acted as surveyors, and I am unable to add to it.

---

NOTE K.—PAGE 79.

"Michael Stoner, this day appeared, and claimed a right to a settlement and pre-emption to a tract of land lying on Stoner's fork, a branch of the south fork of Licking, about twelve miles above Licking station, by making corn in the country in the year 1775, and improving the said land in the year 1776; satisfactory proof being made to the court, they are of opinion that the said Stoner has a right to a settlement of four hundred acres of land, including the above-mentioned improvement, and a pre-emption of one thousand acres adjoining the same, and that a certificate issue accordingly."

"Joseph Combs, this day claimed a right to a pre-emption of one thousand acres of land lying on Combs', since called Howard's creek, about eight miles above Boonesborough, on both sides of the creek, and about three, or four miles, from the mouth of it, by *improving* the said land, by building a cabin on the premises in the month of May, 1775. Satisfactory proof being made to the court, they are of opinion that the said Combs, has a right to a pre-emption of one thousand acres, including the said improvement, and that a certificate issue accordingly."

"Robert Espie, this day appeared and claimed a pre-emption of four hundred acres of land, he being a settler in this country, *who made corn in the year 1773*, as appears by testimony, lying on the waters of Paint Lick, near the land of William Kennedy, at a spring, with the R. A. cut on each tree. The court are of opinion that the said Espie has a right to the pre-emption of four hundred acres of land, according to law—and that a certificate issue for the same."—*See 1 Marshall's History of Kentucky, page 100.*

## NOTE J.—PAGE 75.

Gen. Charles Scott was at the time alluded to in the text, the Governor of Kentucky, having been elected in August, 1808. He was an officer of the Revolution, came to Kentucky in 1786, and commanded an expedition against the Indians in that year. (See I Marshall's History of Kentucky, page 373.) He was a great favorite of the people of Kentucky—a faithful public officer—a man without fear and without reproach.

## NOTE L.—PAGE 85.

I extract from the address of my friend Dr. Drake, delivered before the Union Literary Society of Miami University, the following incidents which, I understand, were communicated to him by the Hon. John Rowan:

“In the latter part of April, 1784, my father, with his family, and five other families, set out from Louisville, in two flat-bottomed boats, for the Long Falls of Green river. The intention was to descend the Ohio river to the mouth of Green river, and ascend that river to the place of destination. At that time there were no settlements in Kentucky, within one hundred miles of the Long falls of Green river (afterwards called Vienna.) The families were in one boat and their cattle in the other. When we had descended the river Ohio about one hundred miles, and were near the middle of it, gliding along very securely, as we thought, about ten o'clock of the night, we heard a prodigious yelling, by Indians, some two or three miles below us, on the northern shore. We had floated but a little distance farther down the river, when we saw a number of fires on that shore. The yelling still continued, and we concluded that they had captured a boat, which had passed us about mid-day, and were massacring their captives. Our two boats were lashed together, and the best practicable arrangements made for defending them. The men were distributed by my father, to the best advantage, in case of an attack, they were seven in number, including himself. The boats were *neared* to the Kentucky shore, with as little noise by the oars as possible. We were afraid to approach too near the Kentucky shore, lest there might be Indians on that shore also. We had not yet reached their uppermost fire (their fires were extended along the bank, at intervals, for half a mile or more,) and

we entertained a faint hope that we might slip by unperceived. But they discovered us when we had got about mid-way of their fires, and commanded us to *come to*. We were silent, for my father had given strict orders that no one should utter any sound but that of his rifle; and not that until the Indians should come within powder-burning distance. They united in a most terrific yell, and rushed to their canoes, and pursued us. We floated on in silence—not an oar was pulled. They approached us within less than a hundred yards, with a seeming determination to board us. Just at this moment, my mother rose from her seat, collected the axes, and placed one by the side of each man, where he stood with his gun, touching him on the knee with the handle of the axe, as she leaned it up by him against the side of the boat, to let him know it was there, and retired to her seat, retaining a hatchet for herself. The Indians continued hovering on our rear, and yelling, for near three miles, when, awed by the inferences which they drew from our silence, they relinquished farther pursuit. None but those who have had a practical acquaintance with Indian warfare, can form a just idea of the terror which their hideous yelling is calculated to inspire. I was then about ten years old, and shall never forget the sensations of that night; nor can I ever cease to admire the fortitude and composure displayed by my mother on that trying occasion. We were saved, I have no doubt, by the judicious system of conduct and defence, which my father had prescribed to our little band. We were seven men and three boys—but nine guns in all. They were more than a hundred. My mother, in speaking of it afterwards, in her calm way, said, we had made a *providential escape*, for which we ought to feel grateful.”—See *Oxford Addresses*, page 219.

---

NOTE M.—PAGE 88.

I have not followed, scrupulously, the accounts given by the Kentucky historians, of the battle of the Little Mountain. My information is derived from gentlemen of high character in Madison county, on whose testimony the utmost reliance may be placed.



## NOTE N.—PAGE 92.

"The more experienced of the garrison felt satisfied that a powerful party was in ambuscade near the spring, but at the same time they supposed that the Indians would not unmask themselves, until the firing upon the opposite side of the fort was returned with such warmth, as to induce the belief that the feint had succeeded.

Acting upon this impression, and yielding to the urgent necessity of the case, they summoned all the women, without exception, and explaining to them the circumstances in which they were placed, and the improbability that any injury would be offered them, until the firing had been returned from the opposite side of the fort, they urged them to go in a body to the spring, and each to bring up a bucket full of water. Some of the ladies, as was natural, had no relish for the undertaking, and asked why the men could not bring water as well as themselves? observing that *they* were not bullet-proof, and that the Indians made no distinction between male and female scalps!

To this it was answered, that women were in the habit of bringing water every morning to the fort, and that if the Indians saw them engaged as usual, it would induce them to believe that their ambuscade was undiscovered, and that they would not unmask themselves for the sake of firing at a few women, when they hoped, by remaining concealed a few moments longer, to obtain complete possession of the fort. That if *men* should go down to the spring, the Indians would immediately suspect that something was wrong, would despair of succeeding by ambuscade, and would instantly rush upon them, follow them into the fort, or shoot them down at the spring. The decision was soon over.

A few of the boldest declared their readiness to brave the danger, and the younger and more timid rallying in the rear of these veterans, they all marched down in a body to the spring, within point blank shot of more than five hundred Indian warriors! Some of the girls could not help betraying symptoms of terror, but the married women, in general, moved with a steadiness and composure, which completely deceived the Indians. Not a shot was fired. The party were permitted to fill their buckets, one after another, without interruption, and although their steps became quicker and quicker, on their return, and when near the gate of the fort, degenerated into a rather unmilitary celerity, attended with some little crowding in passing the gate, yet not more than one fifth of the water was spilled, and the eyes of the youngest had not dilated to more than double their ordinary size."—See *McClung's Sketches*, page 62.

## NOTE O.—PAGE 95.

“A young man by the name of Reynolds, highly distinguished for courage, energy, and a frolicsome gaiety of temper, perceiving the effect of Girty’s speech, took upon himself to reply to it.

To Girty’s inquiry, “whether the garrison knew him? Reynolds replied, “that he was very well known; that he himself had a worthless dog, to which he had given the name of ‘Simon Girty,’ in consequence of his striking resemblance to the man of that name; that if he had either artillery or reinforcements, he might bring them up and be d—d; that if either himself, or any of the naked rascals with him, found their way into the fort, they would disdain to use their guns against them, but would drive them out again with switches, of which they had collected a great number for that purpose alone; and finally, he declared, that *they* also expected reinforcements; that the whole country was marching to their assistance; and that if Girty and his gang of murderers remained twenty four hours longer before the fort, their scalps would be found drying in the sun upon the roofs of their cabins.”

*See McClung’s Sketches, page 66.*

## NOTE P.—PAGE 100.

## BATTLE OF THE BLUE LICKS.

*Letter from Daniel Boone to the Governor of Virginia.*

BOONE’S STATION, FAYETTE Co., Aug. 30, 1782.

SIR:—Present circumstances of affairs cause me to write to your Excellency as follows: On the 16th instant a large number of Indians, with some white men, attacked one of our frontier stations, known by the name of Bryant’s Station. The siege continued from about sunrise till about ten o’clock the next day, when they marched off. Notice being given to the neighboring stations, we immediately raised 181 horsemen commanded by Col. John Todd, including some of the Lincoln county militia, commanded by Col. Trigg, and having pursued about forty miles, on the 19th inst. we discovered the enemy lying in wait for us. On this discovery we formed our columns into one single line, and marched up in their front within about forty yards before there was a gun fired. Col. Trigg commanded on the right, myself on the left, Maj. McGary in the centre, and Major Harlan the advance party in the front. From the manner in which we had formed, it fell to my lot to bring on the attack. This was done with a

very heavy fire on both sides, and extended back of the line to Col. Trigg, where the enemy was so strong that they rushed up and broke the right wing at the first fire. Thus the enemy got in our rear, and we were compelled to retreat with the loss of seventy-seven of our men and twelve wounded. Afterwards we were reinforced by Col. Logan, which made our force four hundred and sixty men. We marched again to the battle ground, but finding the enemy had gone we proceeded to bury the dead. We found forty three on the ground, and many lay about which we could not stay to find, hungry and weary as we were, and somewhat dubious that the enemy might not have gone off quite. By the sign we thought the Indians had exceeded four hundred; while the whole of this militia of the county does not amount to more than one hundred and thirty. From these facts your Excellency may form an idea of our situation. I know that your own circumstances are critical, but are we to be wholly forgotten? I hope not. I trust about five hundred men may be sent to our assistance immediately. If these shall be stationed as our county lieutenants shall deem necessary, it may be the means of saving our part of the country; but if they are placed under the direction of Gen. Clark, they will be of little or no service to our settlement. The Falls lie one hundred miles west of us, and the Indians northeast; while our men are frequently called to protect them. I have encouraged the people in this county all that I could, but I can no longer justify them or myself to risk our lives here under such extraordinary hazards. The inhabitants of this county are very much alarmed at the thoughts of the Indians bringing another campaign into our country this fall. If this should be the case, it will break up these settlements. I hope, therefore, your Excellency will take the matter into your consideration, and send us some relief as quick as possible. These are my sentiments without consulting any person. Col. Logan will, I expect, immediately send you an express, by whom I humbly request your Excellency's answer—in the meanwhile I remain,

Subscribed

DANIEL BOONE.

---

NOTE Q.—PAGE 100.

The Hon. R. Wickliffe, of the Senate of Kentucky, has no doubt that such was Col. Todd's position. I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the same gentleman, for several particulars of the action, not generally known. He derived them from individuals who were engaged in it.

## NOTE R.—PAGE 102.

I am indebted to the Hon. R. Wickliffe, for the following particulars of Col. John Todd:

He was the eldest of three brothers, and a native of Pennsylvania. He was educated in Virginia, at his uncle's—the Rev. John Todd—and, at maturity, entered upon the study of the law, and finally obtained a license to practice. He left his uncle's residence, and settled in the town of Fincastle, in Virginia, where he practiced law for several years; but Daniel Boone and others having discovered Kentucky, Col. Todd lured with the descriptions given him of the fertility of the country, about the year seventy five, came first to Kentucky, where he found Col. Henderson and others at Boonesborough. He joined Henderson's party, obtained a pre-emption right, and located sundry tracts of land in the now county of Madison, in Col. Henderson's land office. He afterwards returned to Virginia; and, in the year 1786, again set out from Virginia with his friend, John May, and one or two others, for Kentucky. They proceeded some distance together on the journey, when, for some cause, Mr. May left his servant with Col. Todd, to proceed on to Kentucky, and returned to Richmond, Virginia. Col. Todd proceeded on to the place where Lexington now stands, and in its immediate vicinity, improved two places—the one in his own name, and the other in that of his friend, John May—for both of which he obtained certificates for settlements and pre-emptions, of 1,400 acres. These pre-emptions adjoin, and lie in the immediate vicinity of the now city of Lexington. It appears from depositions, taken since his death, that he accompanied Col. Clark, since Gen. Clark, in his expedition against Kaskaskia and Vincennes, and was at the capture of those places. After the surrender of those places, it is supposed that he returned to Kentucky; of this there is no record or living evidence; but it appears from a letter written by General Clark, that Colonel Todd was appointed to succeed him in the command at Kaskaskia. Under an act of the Virginia legislature, passed in 1777, by which that part of Virginia conquered by Clark, and all other of her territory northwest of the Ohio river, was erected into the county of Illinois, of which John Todd was appointed Col. commandant and county Lieutenant, with all the civil powers of Governor. He was further authorized, by enlistment or volunteers, to raise a regiment for the defence of the frontier. His commission and many papers, all show that he immediately entered upon the duties of his office, and was seldom absent from his government, up to the time of his death. The regiment was only raised for one year, but was continued in service until about 1779, when the State of Virginia



raised four additional regiments—two for the eastern, and two for the western part of Virginia. It is supposed that Col. Joseph Crockett was promoted to the command of one of these regiments, and Colonel Todd was appointed to the other; no commission has been found, appointing him a Col. in the regular service; but depositions on file in Richmond, and old papers show that he was acting as a regular Col. from about the time the regiments were expected to be raised.

In the spring of 1780, Col. Todd was sent a delegate to the legislature of Virginia from the county of Kentucky: while attending on the legislature, he married Miss Hawkins, and returned again to Kentucky, and settled his wife in the fort at Lexington; but again visited the county of Illinois, and was engaged continually in the administration of its government and in other military affairs, so that he was seldom with his family, until the summer of 1782, when, in the month of August, the Indians besieged Bryant's Station in great force.

[I pass over the account of the battle of the Blue Lick, which is the same as that given in the text.]

Col. Todd fell in the midst of his usefulness, and in the prime of life, leaving a wife, an only child, (and that a daughter,) about twelve months old. That daughter was born in Lexington, and is supposed to be now the eldest female ever born in that place. She is the wife of R. Wickliffe, Esq., who has still in his family the Col's body servant—George; who, at the advanced age of eighty-odd years, retains his health, hearing, and intelligence, perfectly. George has passed through many trying scenes, with his master and others, and often speaks with great accuracy. He assisted, he says, to build the forts of Harrodsburg, Wilson's Station, and Lexington, and several times narrowly escaped with his life, when the parties he was with were attacked by the savages.

Col. Todd was a man of fine personal appearance and talents, and an accomplished gentleman; was universally beloved, and died without a stain upon his character, and it is believed without even one enemy upon earth. From the year 1778, he might be considered as residing in Illinois, (himself,) until he married in the year 1780. When he married, settling his family in Lexington, he was up to the time of his death enabled to stay but little with them. It is believed, that besides aiding in the councils held by Clark, and accompanying him in one or more of his expeditions, he passed the dangerous regions from Lexington to Kaskaskia twice (and often four times) in every year.

An anecdote, illustrative of the benevolence of his heart, was told by his widow, after his death, to his child: That, during the winter succeeding their marriage, the provisions of the fort at

Lexington became exhausted to such an extent, that, on her husband's return home with George one night, almost famished with hunger, she had been able to save for him a small piece of bread, about two inches square, and about a gill of milk, which she presented to him; on which he asked, if there was nothing for George? She answered, not a mouthfull. He called George, and handed him the bread and the milk, without taking any of it himself.

George was tendered his liberty by the daughter, on her arriving at age, and often since, but he has wisely preferred to remain with the child of his benefactor, in the state in which he left him.

---

NOTE S.—PAGE 125.

I.

*The names of the members of the Convention in 1787, held in Danville.*

*Jefferson county*--Richard Easton, Alexander Breckinridge, Michael Lackasang, Benjamin Sebastian, James Meriwether.

*Nelson county*--Joseph Lewis, William McClung, John Caldwell, Isaac Cox, Matthew Walton.

*Fayette county*--Levi Todd, John Fowler, Humphrey Marshall, Caleb Wallace, William Ward.

*Bourbon county*--James Garrard, John Edwards, Benjamin Harrison, Edward Lyne, Henry Lee.

*Lincoln county*--Benjamin Logan, John Logan, Isaac Shelby, William Montgomery, Walker Baylor.

*Madison county*--Wm. Irvine, John Miller, Higgerson Grubbs, Robert Rodes, David Crews.

*Mercer county*--Samuel McDowell, Harry Innis, George Mutter, William Kennedy, James Speed.

II.

*Members of the Convention in 1788.*

*Jefferson county*--Richard Taylor, Richard C. Anderson, Alexander S. Bullitt, Abraham Hite, Benjamin Sebastian.

*Nelson county*--Isaac Morrison, John Caldwell, Phillip Phillips, Joseph Barnett, James Bard.

*Fayette county*--James Wilkinson, Caleb Wallace, Thomas Marshall, William Ward, John Allen.

*Bourbon county*--James Garrard, John Edwards, Benjamin Harrison, John Grant, John Waller.

*Lincoln county*—Benjamin Logan, Isaac Shelby, Wm. Montgomery, Nathan Houston, Willis Green.

*Madison county*—William Irvine, Geo. Adams, James French, Aaron Lewis, Higgerson Grubbs.

*Mercer county*—Samuel McDowell, John Brown, Harry Innis, John Jouitt, Christopher Greenup.

---

NOTE T.—PAGE 126.

I have been furnished, by a friend, with the following biographical sketch of Mr. Brown:

John Brown was the son of the Rev. John Brown and Margaret Preston, and was born in Staunton, Virginia, on the 12th of September, 1757. His father was an Irish Clergyman of the Presbyterian denomination, who settled in the county of Augusta, when it formed the western frontier of Virginia, and was for 44 years the pastor of the church at Providence meeting house. The settlement around him was at one time broken up by an incursion of Indians, all the occurrences connected with which were strongly impressed upon the mind of his son, who ever after retained a vivid recollection of them. In this secluded spot he reared a numerous family, who practiced through life the pure morality and virtue with which they were imbued by their pious parent. Having no patrimony to bestow upon them, he gave them the elements of a good education and trusted to their own energies to make them useful members of society. They were not brought up in the lap of luxury, but in the vigorous nurture of the western borderers, accustomed to labor in the field, to hunt in the forest and to excel in manly exercises. As a necessary consequence of such early habits, they grew up with fine physical developments, and with a fearless and adventurous cast of character. His son John being the elder of the brothers, was the first to separate from the parental roof. In order to obtain for himself a more extensive education than there was an opportunity for him to procure at home, he became an assistant of the celebrated Dr. Waddell, (whose piety and eloquence have been so eloquently described by Mr. Wirt,) in a private school which he at that time taught in his own house. With this interesting family he remained for nearly two years, and by the means thus acquired he entered Princeton College, of which institution he was a student when it was broken up by the Revolutionary War. On that occasion he united himself with the retreating American army, crossed the Delaware with them and remained some time in the service without being attached to any particular corps. Subsequently to

this, he volunteered in a company which was raised in Rockbridge for the purpose of aiding Lafayette in his military operations in Virginia, with which company he continued until it was disbanded by order of the General. His education, which had been interrupted by those events was again resumed and he entered William and Mary College, after leaving which he commenced the study of the law in the office of Mr. Jefferson. The intercourse which grew out of this connexion ripened into a personal and political friendship, which remained uninterrupted until the death of Mr. Jefferson. Upon completing his legal studies he determined to emigrate to the western country, although it was at that time the theatre of dangers of the most appalling character. His first intention was to settle upon the Holstein, but after a brief residence there, he determined to remove to Kentucky which he entered for the first time in the winter of seventeen hundred and eighty two. From that early date to the period of his death, embracing a span of fifty four years, he had been a resident of the western country. He was a most prominent and distinguished actor in the events which preceded the separation of Kentucky from Virginia, and for many years subsequent to it. No one contributed more than he did to bring about that separation, and to procure for Kentucky admission into the Union as an independent State, while his efforts to obtain for the entire west the full benefits of an unobstructed commerce were unceasing and, eventually, most signally successful. In the year 1785, he was elected a Senator in the Virginia legislature, from the then district of Kentucky; and in 1787, the legislature elected him a member of the old Congress, intending by that election to manifest the interest which Virginia felt in her western counties. By that election he became the first member ever sent from the western country to the Congress of the United States! What a change did he not live to see? From a region inhabited by a few thousand souls, surrounded by almost impenetrable forests, and in daily combat with ferocious savages, he has seen the tide of population flow in until the valley of the Mississippi teems with six or seven millions of inhabitants, and holds the balance of power in the National Councils! Not only did he live to see Kentucky taking her rank as an independent member of the Confederacy, but he beheld in the west, alone, eleven important and powerful sovereignties where the foot of civilized man had scarcely trodden when he first visited the land. No one witnessed these almost magical changes with more patriotic pride than he did, and it was a pleasure to hear him contrast the dangers and difficulties which he had encountered with the security, the abundance and the happiness which now every where abounded.



Upon the formation of the New Constitution he was elected one of the first Senators from Kentucky, which distinguished honor was three times consecutively conferred upon him by the State, and he retired from public life about the close of the year 1805. He had the good fortune to enjoy the confidence of and a personal intimacy with General Washington, by whom he was honored with important commissions of a military trust, in conjunction with General Charles Scott, Benjamin Logan, Harry Innis and Isaac Shelby, with power to enlist men, commission officers and carry on war at home and abroad. In conjunction with General Knox, and by the assent of General Washington, (whom he had convinced of the propriety of the proposed measures,) he devised several of those military expeditions into the Indian territories which were of such signal service in suppressing the savage invasions. In one of these successful expeditions, he himself accompanied the army as a volunteer in the ranks, thus lending the influence of his example to enforce his official exhortations. In the controversy for the Presidency between Mr. Jefferson and Colonel Burr, he being at that time president elect pro. tem. of the Senate, he advocated the claims of Mr. Jefferson, with zealous ardor. Mr. Jefferson's administration pressed upon him the acceptance of several highly important and lucrative offices under the General Government, all of which he declined. He had also the good fortune to enjoy the friendship of Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe, and when Mr. Monroe became President, that eminent patriot addressed him a letter wishing him to make known to the Administration in what manner it could testify its regard for his character and early public services. With the most distinguished men in the annals of the west he had a most friendly and intimate association. With Gen. George Rogers Clark, Governor Shelby, General Scott, Governor Madison, Judges Innis and Todd, and Col. Nicholas, and their illustrious cotemporaries, he lived upon terms of the most endearing intimacy. At the time of his death there was probably no man living who knew as much of the personal history of the principal men in the Revolutionary combat as he did, and being nearly, if not the very last, survivor of the old Congress, and having served three terms immediately succeeding the adoption of the New Constitution, his conversation in relation to the actors and occurrences of those days was peculiarly interesting and valuable.

Upon ceasing to act a part in the politics of the country, he devoted himself with great care to the duties which devolved upon him as a private citizen. His walk through life was without a deviation from the paths of honor and rectitude, and he was a liberal contributor to every thing which had for its object the

promotion of the happiness of man. As a friend, he was devoted in his attachment and unsuspecting in his temper—as a brother, no man ever enjoyed more fully that happiness which flows from fraternal harmony and confidence—as a neighbor, he was hospitable and kind—as a master, he was liberal and indulgent, and some years before his death gave immediate emancipation to the elder of his servants, and of prospective emancipation to such as were under age—as a father and husband, he was faultless, and there was not a gray hair in his venerable head that they did not reverence. And if ever a man's children could rise up and call their father blessed, he is entitled to the benediction and the joy of that promise. As a christian, he was unobtrusive and fervent in his devotion; and how a long life of active benevolence was closed, may be seen in the following statement of the concluding scene, which is from the pen of one who was privileged to be with him as a comforter in his last moments, and whose happy lot it was to witness how tranquilly and sublimely the good man and the good christian can meet the eye of the all seeing God.

“It is at all times interesting and instructive, when we know the manner of a man's life, to be made acquainted also with the manner of his death. Mr. Brown, for several weeks previous to his last confinement, complained of slight indisposition, which produced some uneasiness in the minds of his affectionate family. Every arrangement was completed for his departure to the Olympian Springs for the restoration of his health, when he was violently attacked by his disease which confined him to bed for several days. On the Sabbath following, he attended church both morning and evening, which was his invariable custom. On Sunday, August 3d, he set out for Lexington, where he remained several weeks under the care of an eminent Physician. On Thursday, August 25, he left Lexington and reached his home on the evening of the next day. He lived until the following Tuesday morning. About half past one o'clock he breathed his last. During all his sickness, which was exceedingly distressing, his mind was clear, calm and collected. Not a cloud at any time obscured his mental vision. He knew that he was standing upon the verge of two worlds—that he was about to leave the one which was temporal, and to enter upon the other which was eternal. He knew further, that his destiny in the eternal depended upon his character in the temporal world; and yet, knowing all this, “having served his generation by the will of God,” and having placed all his hopes in a Saviour's righteousness, he was undismayed by the prospect. He met death like a friend—commended his spirit to the Lord Jesus, and sunk sweetly and sublimely to rest in the bosom of his God. It was a sublime spectacle, to behold that venerable man—whose goodness was as un-

obtrusive as it was exemplary; who was a blessing to his generation, to his family, and to the church with which he was connected as a member and an officer—fall asleep without a sigh or a struggle in the arms of death. Few persons enjoyed more of this world's honors and blessings than he did, yet few are they whose hearts are so thankful for them. It was, indeed, "by the goodness of God that he was led to repentance;" and often while he was enduring the sufferings of his last illness, would he exclaim, "have I received good, and shall I not receive evil?" His last hours were spent in prayer and thanksgiving. Few possessed his benevolence—so kind to the poor, not in words only, but in deeds also—so liberal in his contributions to all objects of benevolence. Few were so punctual in their attendance upon the services of the sanctuary, yet he relied upon none of these for his admittance into the upper world. "I have been an unprofitable servant," was his dying testimony. All these, doubtless, afforded him consolation, as evidences of his change of heart; but he said, with an emphasis, which all of his acquaintance will understand, "I rest my hopes of salvation upon *my Saviour's righteousness.*" It was this hope that enabled him to die the death of a christian philosopher—"Oh let me die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his." May this be the feeling of all who read this notice—and may they remember, that to die as he died, they must live as he lived."

Mr. Brown died at his residence, in Frankfort, Kentucky, on the 29th of Aug., 1837, in the 80th year of his age.

---

On page 31, it is erroneously stated that Kenton renounced his paternal name of Butler, and assumed that of Kenton. It should have been, that he renounced his paternal name of Kenton, and assumed that of Butler. On page 11, seventh line, for 1769, read 1679.