

THE FILSON CLUB HISTORY QUARTERLY

Vol. 8

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, OCTOBER, 1934

No. 4

DANIEL BOONE, 1734-1934

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An address before The Filson Club, October 1, 1934

The narrator who undertakes to write of Daniel Boone cannot complain of any want of materials. Such materials are to be found, not only in contemporary records, but in numerous biographies and historical essays which were composed and published during the lifetime of the mighty hunter, and afterwards. The difficulty arises from the need of restraint and compression. How shall one single out the important facts in the life of such a man and portray his distinguishing features with conciseness and fidelity?

To provide a convenient framework for what we shall here attempt to set down, the dates of birth and death may, first of all, be stated. According to the latest and best authorities, Daniel Boone was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, on October 22, 1734, according to the Julian or "Old Style" calendar, or on November 2, 1734, according to the Gregorian or "New Style" calendar, and, since we are now and, ever since the year 1752, have been operating under the "new style," which adds eleven days to dates theretofore reckoned by the Julian calendar, we may treat it as settled that November 2, 1734, is the true date of Daniel Boone's birth.

He died, at the home of his son, Nathan Boone, not far from St. Charles, on the Missouri River, on September 26, 1820.

At his death, he lacked but a little more than a month of being eighty-six years of age.

It is by his complete and outstanding identification with the early exploration and settlement of Kentucky that Boone is chiefly of interest to us and to the world at large. To set forth that identification, one might safely omit detailed references to the first thirty-five years of his life, and, also, to the last twenty-five years of his life. The intermediate period of twenty-five or twenty-six years is the one which coincided with Boone's career in Kentucky and is that part of his life with which the historian is particularly concerned. It was during this period that Boone reached the meridian of his powers and established his lasting claims to fame.

Nothing would be more interesting or diverting than to describe his early life as a boy in Pennsylvania; his frequent excursions through the primeval forest and his intimate contacts with the untamed and uncivilized denizens of the "backwoods"; or to tell of the tedious pilgrimage he performed with his parents and their family down through the Valley of Virginia and across the Blue Ridge to the forks of the Yadkin River in upper North Carolina; of his protracted residence there, his service in Braddock's ill-fated campaign of 1755, during which he became acquainted with Colonel George Washington and with the redoubtable John Finley, of Pennsylvania, who as a trader had visited the interior of Kentucky in 1753; of his later services in the expeditions against the hostile Cherokees, his hunting and prospecting trips on the waters of the Holston and other upper tributaries of the Tennessee River; of his marriage and free-and-easy domestic life, and of his repeated wanderings in search of game and of exciting adventure in the wild country to the westward of the sparsely settled frontiers.

But all of this and more is accessible in printed sources which may readily be consulted by those who wish to pursue the subject at length. For immediate purposes it must suffice to say that these formative years in themselves possessed no special significance either for Daniel Boone or for his fellow-men; but they were of immense importance, in the light of after events, as years of training and preparation for the peculiar tasks he was called upon to perform in the subsequent exploration, conquest, and reclamation of Kentucky and the early West. The success

he achieved in his leading role as pathfinder and pioneer would have been impossible but for the valuable experience he had previously gained and the individuality he had developed by the strenuous and diversified life he had led in the first thirty-five years of his existence.

Bearing this background in mind, our chief interest in Boone dates from the year 1769, when, at the beginning of the month of May, in that year, he set out, in company with John Finley, his chance acquaintance of the Braddock campaign; his brother, Squire Boone; his brother-in-law, John Stuart, and two other companions, to penetrate the wilds and explore the mysteries of Kentucky. Here, again, it is impracticable for us to follow the footsteps and relate the adventures and misadventures of the daring party in detail. It is enough to say that Boone himself remained in Kentucky, on this first visit, for about two years, not returning to his home and family on the Yadkin until the month of March, 1771. That first visit of Boone to the very heart of Kentucky not only marked a turning-point in his life, but it decided his future career.

The disturbed condition of affairs in North Carolina which eventuated in what came to be known as the War of the Regulation and reached its climax in the Battle of the Alamance of May 16, 1771, caused a widespread exodus of settlers from the region, in which the Boones and Bryans and their kin were living, to the Watauga settlements west of the Carolina mountains. Upon returning home from Kentucky, Boone had evidently made up his mind to sell his small farm and other worldly possessions and then to emigrate, with his family and such others as might be induced to join them, to the Kentucky country. But more than two years elapsed before he was able to put this plan into partial execution. Finally, in September, 1773, having disposed of his farm, he collected his wife and children, and, with others who joined them, he set out on the long contemplated journey to the interior of Kentucky.

Encumbered as they were by slow-moving live-stock and pack-animals loaded with indispensable household goods, this party of pilgrims plodded their toilsome way, slowly and patiently, along the tortuous water-courses, through the dark forests, up the steep ascents and across the narrow passes of the mountains, and finally got as far as Powell's Valley in Virginia. Here they

paused for rest and refreshment, and all was going well until some of the party, who had been despatched to invite certain settlers in that vicinity to enlist in the enterprise, were set upon by a roving band of Shawnee Indians, and several of the number, including Boone's eldest son, James Boone, were killed. This tragic and disheartening event threw a cloud over the entire company, but it did not daunt the determined Boone. He resolutely insisted that the party should proceed on their projected advance into Kentucky. Nevertheless, he was overruled, with the result that he and his family took up a temporary residence at a nearby location on Clinch River, in Virginia, and in these makeshift quarters they sojourned for the next two years.

By this untoward event, Daniel Boone was deprived of the honor of planting the first settlement in Kentucky. That settlement, as he planned it, would have comprised not only a group of able-bodied men, but a number of women and children, including, of course, the members of Boone's own family. It would have been a settlement by families and not by mere unattached individuals, and it was designed to be a permanent settlement. It was no fault of Boone's that the venture failed of realization.

In the following year, 1774, Daniel Boone and Michael Stoner were despatched, by direction of Lord Dunmore, to warn surveyors and prospectors in Kentucky that an Indian uprising was imminent, and that for safety's sake they should all leave the Kentucky country. In carrying out this mission, Daniel Boone came upon Colonel James Harrod and his party, who a short time before had arrived at the spot where Harrodsburg was subsequently located. A pang of sadness must have swept over Boone as he looked upon the beginnings of Harrod's Town, and recalled how his own ambitious undertaking of the previous year had been thwarted and the privilege denied him of founding the first real settlement in Kentucky. But for this timely arrival and the salutary warning of Boone, it may be that Harrod and his men would have been cut off and captured or annihilated and the Harrodsburg settlement thereby indefinitely delayed. As it was, Boone tarried long enough to select a lot and erect thereon a rudimentary cabin, and shortly thereafter Harrod and his companions left Kentucky, and the projected settlement at Harrodsburg was not resumed until the following year and less than a month before Boone and his comrades laid the first foundations of Boonesborough.

It was not long after these occurrences that the men of the Virginia border were hurriedly mustered for Dunmore's campaign against the Ohio Indians, which culminated in the fierce clash with the Shawnees at Point Pleasant, on October 10, 1774. Boone had volunteered for this service and offered to raise a company, but he was needed nearer home and, instead of marching to the Ohio with the Fincastle troops, he was assigned to the command of several frontier garrisons, charged with the duty of safeguarding the settlements and protecting the rear of the advancing army. In discharging the duties thus imposed on him, Boone acquitted himself with great credit and earned the commendation of his superiors.

In March, 1775, Boone, as he himself relates in the autobiography which was written down and published by John Filson in 1784, was employed by a party of North Carolina gentlemen to hew out and mark a road or pathway from the Sycamore Shoals, on the Watauga, in what is now East Tennessee, through Cumberland Gap and the Kentucky wilderness, to a spot at the mouth of Otter Creek, on the Kentucky River, which Boone himself had selected as a proper site for the location of a fort and town. At the time of his employment on this business, Boone still maintained his home in Virginia, at the place on Clinch River, to which he and his family had retired immediately after the disaster which overtook them in Powell's Valley, in October, 1773.

Boone took command of the party of about thirty men, many of whom were Virginians, who were to undertake to cut out and mark the road; and they all set out from Fort Watauga about March 10, 1775, and after an arduous and fatiguing march, blazing a trail on the way, they arrived, on March 25, at a point on Silver Creek, in the present county of Madison, where they encamped. Here they were set upon in the night by a party of Indians, and two of Boone's men, Captain Twetty and a negro, were killed, and Felix Walker, another member of the party, was badly wounded. To guard against a repetition of this misfortune, Boone caused a small fort to be hastily constructed on the campground, which was called then and known long afterwards as "Twetty's Fort."

By the first of April, Boone and his companions had reached a point about fifteen miles distant from the Kentucky River, and on this date Boone wrote a letter which was carried back to the

party headed by Richard Henderson, Nathaniel Hart, and John Luttrell, three of the "Transylvania" Proprietors, who were following in the wake of Boone. By nightfall of April 1, 1775, Boone and his party reached their intended destination, and, on the following day (April 2), they began the erection of a stockaded fort. Thus were the beginnings of Boonesborough inaugurated.

Many interesting incidents transpired during the next ensuing months, but it is not practicable here, within the space at our command, nor is it necessary for present purposes, to undertake to relate them all. We take time only to note certain facts which preeminently distinguish Boonesborough and Daniel Boone himself as the founder and leading protector of this infant settlement.

Boonesborough was not just another settlement among the many that began to spring up in Kentucky from 1774 onward. It is to be noted that Boonesborough was definitely projected not only as a settlement, a nucleus of white population, but as the future capital of the Colony of Transylvania. The plans of the Transylvania Company, which contemplated the erection of a new Commonwealth and which envisioned the establishment of a capital for that Commonwealth in the depths of the Kentucky wilderness, were all on a large scale, since their purchase from the Cherokees, by the Watauga Treaty, embraced all of the land south of the Kentucky River and between that river and the Cumberland River in Tennessee, a vast domain comprising about eighteen millions of acres, of which some ten million acres were within the present limits of Kentucky and constituted approximately two-fifths of the area of the entire state. Although this ambitious undertaking eventually came to naught, yet none can deny to those who planned it a high degree of credit for their bold initiative and masterful enterprise.

The first fortified station in Kentucky, if an exception be made of the temporary defense known as "Twetty's Fort," was the fort at Boonesborough, and this stockaded fort has been happily described by James Lane Allen as a "rustic castle." If Boonesborough had not come into being when it did, or if it had fallen in 1777 or 1778, it is safe to say there would have been no Harrodsburg left—it would have been deserted or wiped out by marauding Indians. Here, at Boonesborough, was convened the first Legislative Assembly ever organized west of the Alleghany Mountains, and of this representative legislative body

Daniel Boone was a duly elected member and during its sessions introduced two highly important measures, one designed to preserve the wild game, and the other to improve the breed of horses.

On May 28, 1775, the first religious service ever performed in Kentucky was conducted at Boonesborough, under the "divine Elm," by Rev. John Lythe, a clergyman of the established Church of England, and, as has been suggested, it is probably true that, in reading the Episcopal service, he offered prayers for the King and Royal Family of Great Britain.

In the middle of June, 1775, Daniel Boone returned to Snoddy's Station, the present Castlewood, Virginia, on Clinch River, to get his wife and children and bring them back to Boonesborough with him, and, in September of that year, the entire reunited family arrived on the banks of the Kentucky River. Thus Rebecca Bryan Boone, the wife of Daniel, and their daughters were the first white women that ever set foot on the shores of the Kentucky or Chenoa River. Three weeks later, in the same month of September, 1775, Colonel Richard Calloway brought his wife and family, including several daughters, to Boonesborough, and this helped to swell the feminine population of the settlement.

Trouble of a serious kind began for the inhabitants of Boonesborough with the capture, on July 14, 1776, by a small band of Indian braves, of Jemima Boone and Elizabeth ("Betsy") and Frances ("Fanny") Calloway, who were amusing themselves canoeing on the river. Rescue parties were promptly formed and set off in pursuit of the kidnapers, who were soon overtaken and forced to surrender their pretty captives. One of the romances which grew out of this alarming episode presently resulted in the marriage of Elizabeth Calloway to Samuel Henderson, a younger brother of Judge Richard Henderson. At this, the first, marriage in Kentucky, Squire Boone, brother of Daniel, officiated as a civil magistrate.

Quiet on the Kentucky prevailed for a time, but for only a short time. On April 15, 1777, Boonesborough was subjected to a savage Indian attack, and on July 4, of the same year, the assault was renewed on an even more formidable scale. Both of these attempts to reduce the fort and make away with its inhabitants were successfully repulsed, thanks to the skill and

courage of Daniel Boone and Richard Calloway, but they left the inmates in a state of constant dread and uneasiness.

The prime necessities of pioneer life were gunpowder, lead, and salt. For their ammunition, the first comers, of necessity, relied on supplies drawn from sources back home beyond the mountains; but salt was an article susceptible of manufacture in the wilderness as soon as the necessary kettles and other utensils could be provided. These were presently forthcoming and quickly put to use at some one or more of the mineral springs in which the country at that time abounded. The most noted of all these salt springs were the Lower Blue Lick Springs, on the South Fork of Licking River, then commonly called the Great Salt Lick Creek. They were a favorite resort of wild animals from time immemorial, and salt for domestic use was obtained from the Lower Blue Licks very soon after the earliest settlers arrived. Salt kettles furnished by the authorities in Virginia were transported to the Blue Licks and there set up, and the manufacture of salt at that place became, and for many years remained, an important industry. Mr. William J. Curtis, of Piqua, in Robertson County, now owns one of the original kettles used by Daniel Boone and his fellow salt-makers at the Blue Licks, and this interesting relic is in a good state of preservation.

Early in January, 1778, Daniel Boone and some thirty-odd men left Boonesborough on a salt-making tour to the Lower Blue Licks. There they prosecuted their labors for nearly a month. Running short of provisions, Boone and two or three companions, set out in quest of game, but, while on the hunt, they were surprised and captured by a band of hostile Indians. Under threat of death, the white men were compelled to reveal the whereabouts of the rest of their number and then forced to lead their captors to the camp at the Blue Licks. For reasons which Boone afterwards satisfactorily explained in his trial by court-martial, the entire party of salt-makers surrendered without a fight to the copper-colored warriors, and were carried away to the Indian towns north of the Ohio.

The fate of Boone's comrades does not concern us here, but Boone's own fate is of peculiar interest. He proved a prime favorite with his captors, who vied among themselves for the honor of claiming him as a hostage. The Shawnee chief, Black Fish,

took a great fancy to Boone and insisted on adopting him as a son, giving him the somewhat high-sounding name of "Sheltowee" or Big Turtle. Boone humored his tawny friends and, as his habit was, proceeded to make the best of an uncomfortable situation. He disarmed the suspicions of his foster-father and his tribal brethren by entering heartily into all their amusements and hunting exploits. They escorted him to Detroit and proudly exhibited him to their great White Father, the Governor of Canada, who sought to ransom him, but all to no purpose, for the shrewd savages were unwilling to part with their congenial pale-faced brother, who had so completely ingratiated himself with them and whom they so genuinely admired and loved.

One cannot resist the feeling that Boone thoroughly enjoyed this novel experience, which must have carried him back to his boyhood days in Pennsylvania, when he easily made friends with the neighboring Indians and shared their sports with them. In spite of the demands of duty to his own people and of the fortunes of war which occasionally brought him into armed conflict with the red men of the forest, there was in the nature of the Indian and in his manner of life something which stirred a responsive chord and created a bond of sympathy in the heart of Boone. More than this, the character of Boone himself was such as to win the confidence and homage of the untutored savage no less than of his own blood-brother, the white man.

But all the while that Boone was a prisoner among the Shawnees, he was merely playing a part and watching for a favorable opportunity to escape. When at last it came to his knowledge that a formidable expedition against Boonesborough was in preparation, he could wait no longer, and, at the first opportune moment, stole away unobserved from the hospitable wigwams on the Scioto and hurried back across the Ohio and on through canebrake and woodland to the banks of the Kentucky to give timely warning to the unsuspecting inmates of Fort Boone. The alarm was given none too soon, for, within a few weeks after Boone's return, the allied Indians and Canadians appeared in force in front of the walls of Boonesborough.

It is only a matter of conjecture, but if anyone should wonder why Daniel Boone took no part in Clark's expedition of the late spring and summer of 1778 against Kaskaskia, Cahokia and Vincennes, the ready answer would seem to be because Boone,

during part of the time, was a prisoner among the Indians, and then, when he broke away from their clutches, his presence and services were indispensable for the defense of Boonesborough. But for these insuperable obstacles, we may be sure that Daniel Boone would have played a conspicuous part in Clark's conquest of the Northwest.

The fiercest siege and assault to which Boonesborough was ever subjected took place in September, 1778, from the 7th to the 20th of that month. It was a pretty serious affair, in which force and cunning combined to bring about the downfall of the beleaguered pioneers; but the persistent efforts of the wily foe, reinforced by able and adroit French-Canadians, were in vain, and when the enemy took their departure, it was to return no more, and thenceforward Boonesborough remained practically unmolested by hostile forces. "A dreadful siege" it had been, as Boone said, "which threatened death in every form."

During Boone's captivity among the Shawnees, his wife and family, with the sole exception of Jemima Boone, who had become the wife of Flanders Calloway and who still resided at Boonesborough, had given him up for lost and had returned to the Bryan homestead in the Yadkin Valley. The release of Boonesborough from the menace of marauders gave Boone a respite in which to think of his loved ones in North Carolina and to plan for rejoining them and escorting them back to Kentucky. But before he could take his departure, he was summoned before a court-martial at St. Asaph's or Logan's Fort to answer certain serious charges preferred against him by Colonel Richard Calloway, his superior officer. These charges, tantamount to a charge of treason, would, if sustained, have deprived Boone of his commission in the militia of Kentucky County and would have affixed to him an indelible stigma of dishonor. The grave charges, four in number, were as follows:

"1. That Boone had taken out twenty-six men (referring only to the twenty-seven captives) to make salt at the Blue Licks, and the Indians had caught him trapping for beaver ten miles below on Licking, and he voluntarily surrendered his men at the Licks to the enemy.

"2. That while a prisoner, he engaged with Governor Hamilton to surrender the people of Boonesborough to be removed to Detroit, and live under British protection and jurisdiction.

"3. That returning from captivity, he encouraged a party of men to accompany him to the Paint Lick Town, weakening the garrison at a time when the arrival of an Indian army was daily expected to attack the fort.

"4. That preceding the attack on Boonesborough, he was willing to take the officers of the fort, on pretense of making peace, to the Indian camp, beyond the protection of the guns of the garrison."

This trial and its result afford the strongest possible proof of the high estimation in which Boone was held by his associates and friends on the border and of their unshakable faith in his integrity and loyalty. He answered each accusation frankly and convincingly, showing beyond all reasonable doubt that he had intended to serve only the interests of his country. He said he had surrendered the salt-makers and given promises to the British governor in order to save the settlement from wholesale extermination, and that in consequence he had delayed the descent of the enemy upon Boonesborough and had himself been able to warn the fort in time. His trip to Paint Lick Town, he said, had been for scouting purposes and had resulted in no harm to the pioneers; and, as for the parley or powwow, which the commissioners had held with Black Fish in the hollow near the fort, every one must realize that that had been pure strategy to gain time. Boone was promptly acquitted of all the charges and this vindication was soon followed by promotion from the rank of captain to that of major. Thenceforth he was more honored and appreciated than ever before.

Soon after this illuminating episode, "I went into the settlement," (meaning the settlements on the Yadkin) Boone stated to Filson, "and nothing worthy of notice passed for some time." For six months or more, Boone tarried in North Carolina and then, gathering up his family and household belongings, he set out once more over the long Wilderness trail for his favorite stamping-ground in Kentucky. He did not arrive in time to take any part in Bowman's Expedition of May and June, 1779, against the Shawnee town of Chillicothe, but he seems to have resumed his life at Boonesborough after the customary fashion.

The year 1779 was memorable for several acts of a legislative and administrative character which had an important bearing on the fate of Boonesborough and of the other settlements in Ken-

tucky. By an act of the previous year (1778), Virginia had annulled the purchase made by the Transylvania Company of the Cherokees, insofar as the lands conveyed by the Indian deed lay within the western limits of the Old Dominion. This enactment put an effectual quietus on any further activities of the Transylvanians in Kentucky, outside of the "consolation grant" of 200,000 acres, at the mouth of Green River, which Virginia had made them by way of requital for all of their labor and outlay in negotiating the Watauga Treaty and in attempting to put their magnificent project into execution, and, also, for the advantages which had accrued to Virginia from this enterprise.

At the October session of the General Assembly, in 1779, an act was passed establishing "the Town of Boonesborough in the County of Kentucky," and Daniel Boone appears among the trustees appointed for the government of the town. Official notice of this act did not reach Boonesborough for several weeks after its passage, and Boone, in the meantime, having made other plans, declined to serve as such trustee. Boonesborough was the first town in Kentucky to be regularly established as such by legislative act of Virginia.

At the same session of October, 1779, the Virginia Assembly granted the first ferry privilege ever granted in Kentucky, when it gave to Colonel Richard Calloway the exclusive right to build and operate a public ferry across the river at Boonesborough. It was while engaged in building a "flat" or ferry-boat for the exercise of this franchise that Colonel Richard Calloway and his assistant, Pemberton Rawlings, two of the trustees of Boonesborough, were killed by Indians, on March 9, 1780, about a mile and a half below Boonesborough. The Boonesborough Ferry was continuously operated for more than a hundred and fifty years until 1931, when it was superseded by the new steel-and-concrete bridge which spans the Kentucky River a short distance below the old ferry crossing.

In the month of May, 1779, the celebrated "Land Law" of Virginia was enacted, by which it was sought to provide "for adjusting and settling the titles of claimers to unpatented lands, under the present and former government." For the execution of this law, Kentucky was constituted a separate "District" by itself, and four commissioners, acting as a Court, were appointed to administer the law. This famous "Land Law" was adopted with good intent, but it had many flaws and faults and was the

source of untold controversy and confusion for many years—indeed, its evils have persisted down to the present day. Yet to the records of the Court of Land Commissioners, whose jurisdiction embraced the “District of Kentucky,” between the month of October, 1779, and the month of April, 1780, we are indebted for some of the most valuable historical material which has come down to us from that early time. These records, chiefly in the form of “Certificates of Settlement” and “Certificates of Preemption,” have not inaptly been called the “Battle Abbey Roll” or “Doomsday Book” of Kentucky history. Certainly they constitute a corner-stone of the ancient archives of the Commonwealth.

From the book of Certificates of these Land Commissioners, it appears that, on December 24, 1779, the day before Christmas, at Boonesborough, “Daniel Boone claimed a Settlement and Preemption to a tract of land, in the District of Kentucky, lying on the waters of Licking, including a small spring on the Northeast side of a small branch, a camp, and some bushes cut down at the same, about 20 miles east from Boonesborough, by the said Boone’s settling and raising a crop of corn in the country in the years 1775 and 1776.” Satisfactory proof being made to the Court, it was adjudged that the claimant, Daniel Boone, was entitled to a “Settlement” of 400 acres of land, including the described location, and to a “Preemption” of 1,000 acres adjoining said “Settlement,” and Certificates were issued accordingly.

At the same time and place, it appears that “Israel Boone, by Dan’l Boone, claimed a Settlement and Preemption to a tract of land in the District of Kentucky, lying on Boone’s Creek, between and joining Hickman’s two (military) surveys on the said Creek, by the said Boone’s raising a crop of corn in the country in the years of 1775 and 1776.” This claim was likewise sustained by satisfactory proof, and certificates for a Settlement and Preemption of 1,400 acres were granted accordingly. This land on Boone’s Creek, which divides the present counties of Fayette and Clark, is of special interest to us, inasmuch as it was upon William Madison’s military survey for 1,000 acres, of June 4, 1775, adjoining which Israel Boone’s “Settlement” tract of 400 acres was later surveyed, that “Boone’s Station” was erected by Daniel Boone in the fall of 1779. Unfortunately, Israel Boone did not locate his certificate “between and adjoining” Hickman’s two surveys, but wholly within them, thereby losing his claims.

It was at "Boone's Station," near the "Cross Plains" (now Athens), in Fayette County, that Boone and his family and connections made their home and headquarters for six or seven years. It was at "Boone's Station" (not Boonesborough) that Boone and his people passed the ever memorable "Hard Winter" of 1779-80.

Bryan's Station, on North Elkhorn, was also erected, in the fall of 1779, by relatives of Boone's wife, Rebecca Bryan Boone. It was on the site of a camp used by a company of Bryans who "located" and "improved" lands in the vicinity in 1776.

On July 1, 1780, an Inquest of Escheat, to forfeit the lands of certain British subjects (which became the nucleus of the endowment of Transylvania Seminary), was held at Lexington, and Daniel Boone was a member of the jury that tried the case. Shortly thereafter Boone, as agent for Colonel Thomas Hart and Captain Nathaniel Hart and others, was entrusted with a large amount of paper money and silver coin and sent to the Land Office, at the capital in Richmond, to convert these funds into land warrants. On the way, however, by some means Boone was robbed of all this money. It was a heavy loss to his friends and provoked some of them to accuse him of fraud or dishonesty. Coming so soon after his triumphant acquittal in the trial by court-martial, this misfortune must have fallen upon Boone with well-nigh overwhelming force. But hard as the blow was to the confiding friends, it proved a crucial occurrence in the life of Boone, for it elicited one of the finest tributes ever paid by a contemporary to his upright and irreproachable character. His staunch friends, the Harts, who had suffered the greatest loss by the theft, announced promptly and publicly that they believed him to be above suspicion. Writing from "Grayfields," his home in Orange County, North Carolina, on August 3, 1780, to his brother, Captain Nathaniel Hart, at Boonesborough, Colonel Thomas Hart gave expression to the following magnanimous sentiments respecting Boone and his part in the regrettable transaction:

"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 everything mean; and therefore, I will freely grant him a discharge for whatever sums of mine he might have been possessed of at the time."

Boone himself suffered severely by the highway robbery of which he was the victim. In a Memorial presented by him, or on his behalf, to the Kentucky Legislature, on January 18, 1812, he stated that, in 1779-'80, 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."

In October, 1780, while Boone and his younger brother, Edward Boone, were returning from the Lower Blue Licks, whither they had doubtless gone for salt, they were set upon by a party of Indians at Grassy Lick, in what is now Montgomery County, and Edward Boone was killed.

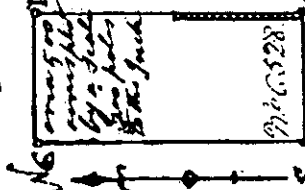
On November 1, 1780, pursuant to an act of the Virginia Assembly, Kentucky County was divided into the three counties of Fayette, Jefferson, and Lincoln, and Daniel Boone was commissioned as Lieutenant-Colonel of the County of Fayette, under John Todd as Colonel. Colonel Thomas Marshall, father of John Marshall, who later became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, was appointed Surveyor for Fayette County, but did not arrive on the scene and actually officiate until two years later. Daniel Boone became one of Colonel Marshall's Deputy Surveyors and did considerable work in that capacity. In 1788 Boone acted as a Deputy Surveyor of Bourbon County under James Garrard, Chief Surveyor of that County.

In April, 1781, so it is said, Boone was chosen one of the delegates from Fayette to the Virginia Legislature, and, while attending the sessions of this Assembly, he and two other legislators were made prisoners by the British, but were detained in confinement for only a few days. Boone did not take his seat again until the fall of the same year. He probably spent the summer in Kentucky and returned to Richmond in September

July, the 15th 1788 Surveyed for Larrance Boone

Radeicin

5000 acres of Land by virtue of a Warrant No 10215 Entered March 15, 1783. Lying and being in the County of Bourbon in the Waters of Licking adjoining said Boone on the West and bounded as follows vizt Beginning at said Boone's SW Corner at a stone



Corner thence West 200 poles to B a White Walnut hickory and Mulberry thence North 400 poles to C 2 White ashes - thence East 200 poles to D 2 Sugar trees thence S to the -

Beginning - Daniel Boone Sr
William Wallis } Chain men
Micajah Callaway }
Isaac Boone } Marker

Reduced facsimile of a Certificate of Survey for 500 acres made July 15, 1788, by Daniel Boone as Deputy Surveyor of Bourbon County, from a copy in the library of Samuel M. Wilson, Lexington. It is in Boone's own handwriting and bears his signature, also the signature of James Garrard, Chief Surveyor of Bourbon County, who later became Governor of Kentucky. This survey was made for Larrance Raidkins (or Radeicin) "on the Waters of Licking adjoining Ovid Boone." William Wallis and Micajah Callaway appear as Chain Men and Isaac Boone as Marker. Daniel Boone had previously served as Deputy Surveyor of Fayette under Colonel Thomas Marshall, Chief Surveyor of that County. As a surveyor Boone is officially identified with a number of early surveys in Kentucky.

by the roundabout way of the Ohio River and through Pennsylvania, where, it is said, he visited his boyhood home.

His participation in the Battle of the Blue Licks, on August 19, 1782, is too long a story and is too well known to admit of repetition here. For Boone the slaughter of so many leading pioneers in this disastrous encounter was not only a grave public calamity but it involved a tragic personal bereavement in that his son, Israel Boone, there fell a victim to the ferocity of the savage foe. Both Daniel Boone and his friend, Simon Kenton, accompanied George Rogers Clark on his retaliatory expedition of the ensuing November to avenge the defeat at the Blue Licks.

Boone's letter to the Governor of Virginia, describing the battle of the Blue Licks, bears the superscription: "Fayette County, Boone's Station, August 30, 1782."

In 1783 and 1784, Boone was High Sheriff of Fayette County, and during these years he helped his biographer, John Filson, in the preparation of his famous *History and Map of Kentucky*, which were published in 1784. In October, 1786, he was named, in an act of Virginia, as one of the Trustees for the Town of Washington, in what is now Mason County, and, on December 11, 1787, with his relative, Jacob Boone, and his good friend, Simon Kenton, and others, he was similarly named a Trustee of the Town of Maysville. It is not certain that he ever exercised any authority under either of these appointments, but they point to the high esteem in which he continued to be held by his neighbors, acquaintances and the government at Richmond.

Between 1784 and 1792, the efforts of the Kentuckians to separate themselves from the parent Commonwealth were prosecuted unremittingly, and their struggle for statehood was finally rewarded, when, on June 1, 1792, Kentucky became an independent and sovereign State and a full-fledged member of the American Union. Even before this happy consummation was achieved, it was evident that Boone's Kentucky was no longer a mere cabin settlement; it had gradually become a real commonwealth, in spirit and substance, even before it was officially declared to be such in fact. While these changes were coming to pass, in his former wilderness paradise, Daniel Boone was growing more and more restless and discontented. His "Boone's Station" tract had been wrested from him by a superior title, and not only because the pressure of population irked him, but even more because of the necessity of making a fresh start in

life and trying to mend his shattered fortunes, Boone packed up his goods, gathered his family about him, and, in 1788, taking leave of the Kentucky he had helped to found and had loved so long and so dearly, he sought a new home in the wilds of the Kanawha Valley, near Point Pleasant, then in Virginia, but now in West Virginia.

His fame had preceded him, and, what with farming and running a small store or tavern, usually managed by his energetic wife, and what with hunting and surveying, Boone seems to have spent several years very quietly and contentedly on the Great Kanawha. From Kanawha County, in 1791, he was sent as a representative to the Virginia Assembly and no doubt performed his duties creditably to himself and to the satisfaction of his constituents. For a short time, he also held the office of County Lieutenant of Kanawha. But his budget was perpetually out of balance, and it became necessary for him to be on the watch for new openings and again and again to make "a hazard of new fortunes."

Following General Wayne's successful campaign, peace between the United States and the allied Indian tribes of the Northwest Territory was concluded at Greenville, Ohio, on August 3, 1795. At the ensuing session of the Kentucky Legislature, provision was made by that body for widening and grading the Wilderness Road to make it passable by wagons. Theretofore it had been little better than a foot-path and pack-horse trail, yet it was estimated that not less than 75,000 persons had migrated to Kentucky and farther west, by way of Daniel Boone's Wilderness Road, between the years 1775 and 1796, and before it was opened to wagon travel.

News of the action taken by the Legislature regarding the improvement of the Wilderness Road found Boone back in Kentucky, trying to start life anew on land he had somehow acquired on Hinkston Creek, in what is now Nicholas County, about six miles east of Millersburg. The year before (1795) he was reported as sojourning on the waters of the Big Sandy, but this was probably a mere hunting excursion. On February 11, 1796, he addressed the following letter to Governor Shelby:

"Sir—After my best Respts to your Excelancy and famly I wish to inform you that I have sum intention of undertaking this New Rode that is to be cut through the Wilderness and I think

my Self intitled to the ofer of the Bisness as I first Marked out that Rode in March 1775 and Never rec'd anything for my trubel and Sepose I am no Statesman I am a Woodsman and think My Self as Capable of Marking and Cutting that Rode, as any other man Sir if you think with Me I would thank you to wright me a Line by the post the first oportuneaty and he Will Lodge it at Mr. John Milers on hinkston fork as I wish to know Where and when it is to be Laat [let] So that I may attend at the time I am Deer Sir

your very omble sarvent Daniel Boone."

What answer, if any, may have been made to this touching appeal for employment, we have now no means of knowing. Boone was now in his sixty-second year; he was still strong and vigorous, but his long absence from Kentucky had put him out of touch with the current of affairs and the new order of things under the State government, and a generation had come upon the scene that knew nothing personally of his valiant exploits and valuable services during the previous quarter of a century. The contract for repairing and improving the Wilderness Road was given to another and, despairing of further success in Kentucky, Boone, in 1798, after a brief stay with his son, Nathan, on the waters of Little Sandy, turned his face westward once more. Daniel Morgan Boone, his oldest living son, had already settled in Missouri, then a Spanish possession, in what is now St. Charles County, near the confluence of the Missouri with the Mississippi, and to this far outpost of the early West, Daniel Boone and his family slowly trudged their way in 1799, their future cheered and brightened, no doubt, by the prospect of acquiring new and virgin lands on easy terms. Shortly after reaching their destination, the Boones settled at Femme Osage, about forty-five miles west of St. Louis.

Boone's land ventures had been persistently unfortunate, and for the ordinary affairs of business he seems to have had few qualifications. In his Memorial, previously mentioned, to the Kentucky Legislature, in 1812, he stated the case simply and truly in these pathetic words: "Unacquainted with the niceties of the law, the few lands I was enabled to locate were, through my ignorance, generally swallowed up by better claims."

It was not from lack of gratitude or sympathy that the Kentucky people of that day failed to respond in a material way to

Boone's dire need. They simply did not realize his helplessness, nor awaken to the fact that he was feeling most acutely the pinch of poverty. It is most significant as proof of the unfailing regard in which he was held that, before he left Kentucky for Missouri, the General Assembly, by an Act approved December 13, 1798, created the County of Boone, named in his honor, which came into organic existence on June 1, 1799.

With his departure from Kentucky, near the close of the stirring and eventful eighteenth century, Boone's career as pathfinder, pioneer, and patriarch may be said to have come to an end. The thrilling adventures of the heyday of his youth and the masterful achievements of his manhood in its prime were now things of the past, a theme for the pen of the historian and the song of the poet. His colorful career was over, his face was turned toward the sunset, and his life thenceforth was peaceful and serene, and for the most part uneventful. We cannot follow him throughout the score of years that intervened between his final departure from Kentucky and his death on September 26, 1820, at the age of eighty-six, at the home of his son, Nathan Boone, in Missouri. Respected and lionized to the last, when word of his death reached the Missouri Constitutional Convention, then in session, it forthwith adjourned in honor of his memory, the delegates wearing a badge of mourning for twenty days thereafter.

After the lapse of twenty-five years, Kentucky claimed the bodies of her most distinguished pioneer and his faithful spouse, and, after prolonged negotiations, they were removed from their resting-place in Missouri and reinterred in the State Cemetery, at Frankfort, on September 18, 1845, with appropriate ceremonies, in the presence of a vast concourse of people from all parts of Kentucky. In after years, the graves were marked by a beautiful monument, which still stands, a favorite shrine of patriotic pilgrims from all corners of the world. Below his final resting-place flows the deep-channeled Kentucky, the Chenoa of the Cherokees, the "River of the Cedar-clad hills," the beautiful and romantic stream he had known so well and had so fondly loved. Here, at the grave of the Grand Old Pioneer, no feature of his heroic life, no element of his character, affords a subject more inviting for meditation than his moral nature. In death, as in life, one may contemplate with affection and veneration his

well-poised, equable temperament, his serene and stately spirit, his steadfast faith and fortitude, his imperturbable equanimity, his calm courage, his simple, transparent, and noble character. It may fairly be doubted whether these aspects of his unique personality have been sufficiently dwelt upon or adequately portrayed by biographers and historians; but, in the last analysis, they constitute Daniel Boone's chief title to fame. It was his character, his ingrained moral worth, above all else, that secured for him a prominent and imperishable place among the world's immortals.

Boone is not only a hero in popular estimation; he was a hero in truth and reality. Best of all, he is not a filmy creation of myth or legend, but a genuine, authentic, historical figure, the prototype and the archetype of the American Pioneer.

In the year 1934, we are happy and fortunate to live in this beatific Blue Grass land, the land Boone devoutly loved as the dearest haven of his heart. This year we celebrate the bicentennial anniversary of his birth, and during this bicentennial year, what could be more fitting than for Kentucky to be known and heralded far and wide as "Boone Land"? During this year, not only Boone's Wilderness Road, but all roads, lead to Boonesborough, where on Monday September 3, 1934, under the auspices of the Daniel Boone Bicentennial Commission of Kentucky, was held a nation-wide commemoration of this Prince of the Pioneers, this Founder of Boonesborough, this Foster-Father of Kentucky, this Favorite Son of all America, this Peerless Pilot of the Republic, this "Instrument, divinely ordained to settle the wilderness."

The Congress of the United States, with the approval of the President, has authorized the coinage of 600,000 Boone memorial half-dollars, in commemoration of the bicentenary, and, to honor Boone and his brave band of fellow-pioneers, it has also officially created a Pioneer National Monument, to consist of the historic sites of Boonesborough, Boone's Station, Bryan's Station, and the Blue Licks, the landmarks with which Boone's life and adventures in Kentucky are, perhaps, most intimately associated. Eventually they will be united by a spacious boulevard or memorial highway.

One never tires of the story of Daniel Boone. It is an inexhaustible story, in the telling of which one does not finish, he

merely pauses; and, this being a good place for such a pause, the break in the narrative may not inappropriately be marked with O'Hara's mellifluous lines—

"A dirge for the brave old pioneer!
Columbus of the land!
Who guided Freedom's proud career
Beyond the conquer'd strand;
And gave her pilgrim sons a home
No monarch's step profanes,
Free as the chainless winds that roam
Upon its boundless plains.

"A dirge for the brave old pioneer!
The patriarch, prince, and sage!
We raise this sculptured figure here
And carve his deathless name,—
But an Empire is his sepulchre,
His epitaph is Fame!"