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## Sons of a Trackless Forest: The Cumberland Long Hunters of the Eighteenth Century

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SONS OF A TRACKLESS FOREST: THE CUMBERLAND LONG HUNTERS  
OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

Mark A. Baker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

American Studies

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1992



DEDICATION

For Marlys

Who has always allowed me to dream,  
and never once laughed,

But instead became a partner  
in my every vision.

In humbleness and love,  
Mark

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Jay Anderson for encouraging me to seek the answers to my questions about the popular notions and the reality surrounding the long hunter of the Cumberland. Dr. Steve Siporin's genuine pleasure in the worth of the common person, and Dr. Barre Toelken's enthusiasm for folklore have both helped me to realize a deeper understanding of the tales and the realities surrounding my own research topic.

I want to thank Dr. Joyce Kinkead for her belief in me as a writer. I found great comfort in her support. I appreciated Dr. Pat Gardner's reaction to my project, and she always exhibited a sincere interest towards my ideas. Both professors were most helpful to me. Especially when I grew tired.

For all the times that I occupied Dr. Christine Hult with documentation questions, I am truly indebted. She saved me hours of frustration. I really appreciate Tom Allen's tempering of my romantic slant to a subject matter which I have found so fascinating. And last, I am grateful to Ron Lamb for being both a partner in our graduate experiences and a very willing proofreader.

Perhaps many of the above mentioned scholars never realized that they were indeed guiding me in my research project. Nevertheless, to all of them I owe my sincere thanks.

## Preface

As a boy of eight, with a lively imagination and a consuming infatuation for leather-clad frontiersmen, 20th Century-Fox's TV series Daniel Boone was the banquet upon which my youthful enthusiasm feasted each Thursday night. For six straight years, I witnessed Fess Parker portraying the Kentucky trailblazer who lived out the adventures, the exploits, the dramas which I could only dream about during my playtimes.

I admired Daniel Boone's courage, his sense of fairness during both conflict and calm. I longed to be as tall, as strong, as clever with long rifle and axe as my Hollywood hero, Fess Parker, appeared to be each week. I dreamed of having an Indian friend and blood brother, like Ed Ames, who portrayed the Oxford-educated Cherokee warrior, Mingo. I longed to live in a wild country, full of dense hardwoods, rushing rivers, and settled by "Kentucky folk," not unlike the tavern owner Cincinnatus, so naturally personified by Dallas McKennon.

Fulfilling such "longings" took plenty of imagination for a boy growing up in Phoenix, Arizona. My backyard mulberry tree became a hickory forest, the dirt alleyways running throughout my neighborhood transformed into Boone's Wilderness Road, and the community's public pool became the lumbering Cumberland, the rushing Rock Castle, or the wide

Ohio river. With the aid of my real coonskin cap, my signature Daniel Boone rifle and knife, and a plastic powder horn, my tiny world easily became the hunting grounds of the Shawnee, the Cherokee and the unnamed woodsmen who followed the paths of my hero Daniel Boone.

In 1964, I was not alone in this infatuation with the images created by Hollywood and so aptly played out by Fess Parker. Countless boys, girls, and even adults fell under the spell created by this romantic brand of Americana and spread widely through the illusion of television. Daniel Boone strongly influenced the formative years of many in my generation. And as a result, the television show left countless viewers with a lifelong impression of frontier America.

Even today, almost thirty years after the show's debut season, many of those original children of television can still sing a few bars of the theme song from 20th Century-Fox's frontier drama. A baby boomer's impromptu vocalization of "Daniel Boone was a man, yes, a big man" can quickly elicit spontaneous renditions of the musical lines which followed that opening phrase. Such catchy lines as, "Boone what a doer, a dream comer-truer" or "From the coonskin cap on top of ol' Dan, to the heel of his rawhide shoe" and "He was the rippinist, roarinist, fightinist man the frontier ever knew" quickly flood the memory of many in

my generation, offering proof of the show's lingering impressions.

Fess Parker entered into the role of Daniel Boone while still riding the wave of national popularity created by Walt Disney's original five-part, TV immortalization of Davy Crockett. The public, myself included, easily transformed Fess Parker's image of the flamboyant Tennessee politician into the famed Kentucky long hunter and trailblazer. As with most amateur historians, I did not yet realize the difference between the two historical figures or the times in which they found themselves struggling to prosper. In my youthful naivete', I assumed that what I viewed within the coziness of my living room was invariably a witness of the truth. And teased by that version of "truth" concerning America's heritage, I, as well as countless other Americans, yearned to experience more.

During the early Sixties, America found itself celebrating the centennial of the American Civil War. Gasoline flowed cheaply, cars were big, the popularity of family auto vacations had reached its zenith, and the various Civil War sites around the eastern United States were flooded with home-grown tourists seeking a glimpse of their dynamic past. Hollywood, New York and Chicago pumped out Civil War movies, television programs and books in an effort to satisfy the public demand for a vision of that turbulent era.

Besides the usual media of our popular culture, a new, innovative channel for Americans to experience their Civil War heritage became popular during this decade. Men of all ages began to wonder what it was like to shoot the Springfields, cock the Colt revolvers, sweat in the wool uniforms and "enjoy" a meal of beans and hardtack. With this "active" interest in the history of the Civil War, historical reenacting was popularized spontaneously in much of America. Thousands of reenactors dressed as both Union and Confederate soldiers. Cavalry, sutlers, even generals began to march in parades, encamp at historical sites, attend shooting matches and wage mock battles. Not wanting to be left out, women and children became involved also, by dressing up in their own period outfits and expressing an interest in the roles which their predecessors played out during America's greatest conflict.

The reenactors' need for the muzzleloading weapons utilized during the decade of the Civil War put a strain on the diminishing collection of original weapons then circulating among gun collectors. There was not enough original weaponry available, or deemed safe enough, for the public to use in their new roles as reenactors, shooters and muzzleloading hunters. In trying to locate and use suitable weapons, the public tried to experience more than just the static history found in books, or the two-dimensional images conveyed through television and the big screen. And to

satisfy this craving for the "old time weapons" such entrepreneurs as Val Forgett of Navy Arms Company and Turner Kirkland of the Dixie Gun Works mail-order business, began to sponsor the manufacturing of a new generation of Springfields, Colts, Remingtons and Enfields.

With the purchase of such shooting reproductions, the need for the proper ammunition and shooting accoutrements naturally followed. Reenactors also grew curious about authentic clothing, footwear, eating utensils, food, horse equipage, shelters and camp gear. By following their limited sense of research, and by using their imaginations, many reenactors tried to make their own accoutrements and clothing. But the demand was more than the home hobbyists could handle. As a result, companies like James Townsend and Son, La Pelleterie, and R.K. Lodges materialized throughout the country offering a wide variety of historical and quasi-historical items. In a short time, the fledgling business of supplying reenactors grew into a viable and lucrative enterprise.

Throughout the celebration of the American Civil War Centennial, reenactors engaged in a wide variety of activities. Each time a collection of blue- or grey-attired volunteers marched in a parade, performed an honorary color guard, drew battle lines in memory of those who had originally fallen, or set up an encampment for the weekend, the public had a chance to respond. And for the most part,

the public did find the "living historians" enchanting. Private foundations, as well as local, state and federal governments took advantage of this new, exciting living history format. And each time the public came to a particular event, more volunteers wished to become involved as soldiers, sutlers and civilians.

During this same decade, interest in other historical eras, and the possibilities of reenacting the important events of those times and places, began to take hold all over the country. Reenacting followed the "battle lines" of a young America's conquest towards the Pacific ocean, for "playing soldier" was a prominent part of the phenomenon. The French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Plains Indian Wars, all found students-turned-reenactors trying to relive their favorite time period. With the approaching Bicentennial celebration of America's independence, though, interest in the Revolutionary War and its various armed forces became a perfect focus for the maturing reenactor. Out of this interest in the fight for American independence came The Brigade of the American Revolution. The "BAR" was the first successful effort by reenactors to organize, on a national basis, as many like-minded individuals as possible.

Battlefields, forts, small towns, cities, even Washington D.C. took advantage of the available and very willing crop of volunteer soldiers. Parades, battle



reenactments and innumerable garrison encampments offered a Revolutionary War reenactor plenty of chances to taste the past. And July 4, 1976, brought this living history involvement to a climax. On that day I sat captivated in front of our television, while Walter Cronkite hosted the CBS special celebrating America's 200th birthday. The broadcast lasted all day and into the night with camera crews scattered throughout the United States offering a panorama of a country in celebration. For hours, I waited patiently for fleeting glimpses of the British and American forces standing guard at Yorktown, or a brigade of scarlet-coated soldiers marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, or Union and Confederate forces battling once again at the site of Pickett's Charge. Through the confines of my television set, I witnessed on that day a vast collage of historical reenactors adding a "living" dimension to 200 years of American history.

With this growing and "living" interest in America's Revolution and subsequent early years of independence, curiosity developed in reenacting circles about the roles non-uniformed citizens played in a developing America. Interest in portraying colonial frontiersmen like Daniel Boone, an infatuation to taste the lifestyle of mountain men like Jim Bridger, a curiosity to work the waterways like French voyageurs--all in turn increased the ranks of America's volunteer reenactors. As the interest grew,

companies like those already mentioned began to reproduce widely the proper weaponry, as well as the associated clothing, accoutrements and camp gear of the varied eras. In the wake of America's Bicentennial celebration, historical reenacting matured into a multi-million dollar business and the passionate pastime for thousands of individuals.

While the reenacting hobby prospered and matured, museums and historical sites continued to utilize both volunteer reenactors from the community and trained "professional" reenactors of their own. In an effort to improve their roles as living representatives of a bygone era, reenactors began to devise new and more effective ways to interpret the past. This concern was for both the public's benefit and for the enjoyment of the volunteer and professional time travelers. An in-depth study of the birth, growth and transition of living history, as it took place at historical sites across the United States (as well as much of Europe), can be found in Jay Anderson's Time Machines: The World of Living History.

Like the attention surrounding Civil War Centennial celebrations a decade earlier, America's interest in the Bicentennial excitement eventually faded. That is, the parades stopped, the speeches ceased, the national television coverage moved on to other interests. But the reenactors did not go away. The numbers continued to grow.

The activities increased. And the living history movement's attitude toward period portrayals gradually matured.

Organizations like the National Muzzleloading Rifle Association (NMLRA), which existed decades before historical reenacting ever found root in America's pastime, developed during this time innovative activities in an effort to attract the reenactors who loved to shoot their muzzleloading firearms, or dress up in period clothing, or relax while sampling a bit of the "period" camp life. As a result, the NMLRA began to sponsor a National Western Rendezvous (a loose recreation of the mountain man fur trade market of the early 19th century). The association's rendezvous program has since reflected the growth of historical reenacting, for the NMLRA now sponsors annually nine national rendezvous, strategically placed across the country. Interest in such activities caught on with other organizations too, for black powder clubs, town councils, and state governments also sponsored a myriad of local and regional rendezvous. But reenactors did not just focus on the romance of the rocky mountain fur trade, for a wide variety of colonial civilian encampments, trade fairs, military tacticals and "soldiering schools" also became popular over much of the United States.

During the decade between America's two great historical celebrations, many reenactors were challenged, even bored, by their own purposes behind reenacting. As a

consequence, various individuals and groups began to seek activities by which they could improve their historical interpretations. Over a period of time such reenactors developed new challenges, hoping to discover a deeper understanding of just what it took to be a colonial woodsman, a Revolutionary War soldier, a mountain man, a Confederate volunteer. In short, the cutting edge of reenacting grew tired of just standing around, all dressed up, and doing basically the same old thing. Shooting black powder weapons remained fun for those involved. Marching and drilling as a continental soldier still found new recruits. And attending a rendezvous still offered a temporary state of tranquility for the thousands who continued to go. But many of those involved knew that true historical reenacting meant more than just standing in line and shooting a black powder weapon.

Living history was no longer just a child, dependant on the images initially inspired by the various media which widely spread the popular culture of the early American time period. Living history buffs and professionals alike were looking for ways to become more historically correct in their portrayals. And that meant challenging projects were needed. Out of this interest, groups of like-minded individuals formed organizations on local and national levels. Among the first of such associations was the American Mountain Men (AMM), who wished to learn, practice

and preserve the skills of the early 19th century Rocky Mountain fur trapper. The AMM sparked a national fever to do more than just "dress up," which, in turn, inspired other groups, interested in other time periods, to invent the means to practice a variety of skills associated with voyageurs, long hunters, colonial woodsmen, plus British, French and American regular soldiers.

In the northwest a band of reenactors called the Rocky Mountain Men appeared, a small party concerned with the pre-rendezvous era western hunter. In Minnesota, La Compagnie des Hivernants de la Rivere St. Pierre formed from among reenactors wishing to portray properly the lifestyles of the French Voyageurs. In Tennessee, a small detachment of colonial backwoodsmen known as The Second Company headed off into the hardwoods to practice and preserve the skills of those original long hunters. In the Midwest, the Forces of Montcalm and Wolfe formed from among reenactors wishing to interpret better the opposing forces of the French and Indian War. And most recently, the American Long Rifle Association has matured into a national organization promoting a high degree of authenticity from among colonial riflemen and backwoodsmen reenactors.

Countless other groups have sprouted up all across the United States with most remaining unknown outside their immediate areas. Although this collection of cutting-edge reenactors might go by different names, emulate a variety of

historical personalities, or enjoy various levels of notoriety, they all began with the same purpose. Each group strove to understand, and depict better than ever done before, a particular early American era. This challenge meant doing a multitude of historically-based experiments. These "experiments" were of course meant to be fun for the participants. But in the end, each activity was designed to fill in the gaps between book learning and historical artifacts.

As an example, reading about long hunters constructing a half-faced shelter by using just the raw materials of a hardwood forest and a belt axe leaves an incomplete impression of the talent and time involved. Without any efforts to emulate the task studied, the details and secrets of the construction elude the researcher. But when a group of reenactors spend a weekend using their belt axes and the debris of a forest to build such a shelter, then the process is preserved and better understood by relearning a skill long forgotten. And when the experimenting woodsmen wait out a winter storm inside their newly constructed shelter, even more is discovered and appreciated concerning a lifestyle long since vanished from the woods of North America.

For the past century serious scholars have referred to this research by simulation as "experimental archaeology." Jay Anderson describes the long repeated experimentation as

"practically testing theories of past cultural behavior, especially technological processes involving the use of tools, and a method of obtaining data not readily available from more traditional artifactual analysis and historical research" (Time Machines 88). Although this brand of archaeology has long been appreciated by professional scholars, it has only recently been employed within the American living history movement. And within the fraternity of pre-1840 reenactors, the term and practice is even newer still.

Along with the challenges of new activities also came the need for deeper research beyond both Hollywood's traditional shallow treatment of America's colonial history and the surface knowledge of amateur historians. Again, the marketplace answered the needs of the reenactors. Magazines like Muzzleloader and the NMLRA's publication Muzzle Blasts began to devote more and more space to the cultural history of black powder firearms, historical clothing, accoutrements and frontier skills. As these articles appeared, the quality of research improved and, in turn, the interest in authenticity escalated.

A collection of books also flooded the market, like the Collector's Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Revolution, Sketch Book 76, Distaff Sketchbook, and a series of western fur trade sketchbooks published by The Fur Press. Madison Grant published three very helpful books picturing

and reviewing original hunting pouches, powder horns and the common working knives of frontier America. George Shumway made a monumental contribution to gun building and reenacting with his detailed picture books that catalog and illustrate original muzzleloading weapons from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. And perhaps the biggest difference in America's living history movement has been due to Rebel Publishing Company's Book of Buckskinning series, devoted to the "how to" aspects of pre-1840 reenacting.

While this maturing gradually manifested itself within the reenactment circles of North America, I was also maturing in both my interest and attitude toward emulating the life of the colonial backwoodsman. And my journey has mirrored in many ways the national growth of the American reenactment movement. What began with the Daniel Boone series, a Fess Parker coloring book, and a plastic long rifle with a sand paper frizzen, has gradually evolved into a very active participation in historical reenacting. Like most all pre-1840 reenactors, I began my odyssey toward living history by investing in my first black powder gun. With the initial "crack" of that long rifle, my infatuation has steadily increased.

As an eager pilgrim, I read everything I could on the weapons, accoutrements and original heroes who supported and defended their families with such guns. I went to black



powder shoots, I even won a few shooting prizes, and I eventually outfitted myself in "authentic clothing" of "the period." I watched every movie or TV show set along the colonial frontier that I could. And I watched them over and over again, for to a great extent I was still basing my knowledge on what I saw on the large or small silver screen. I was perfectly happy, but not always completely content to just stand in line and shoot my gun. I wanted to do more, experience a deeper sense of the life which Daniel Boone led so long ago. But I did not know how.

I had joined the National Muzzleloading Rifle Association, read several copies of Muzzleloader magazine, studied the first two volumes in the Book of Buckskinning series (the only two in the sequence published at the time), and asked as many questions as I could. I explored from my "armchair" as best I could. Yet my maturing as a living historian, as a reenactor, bumped and sputtered along in a disorganized fashion. I had no direction. That is, not until I stumbled upon two veterans in the reenactment game.

I can still remember discovering for the first time the exploits of Jeff Hengesbaugh and David Wright. On the Henry's Fork of the Green River, I sat captivated one July afternoon as Jeff spun his yarns at an American Mountain Man rendezvous. Jeff had spent several seasons intermittently traveling by horseback, across the Rocky Mountain West, in a fashion similar to the original fur trappers. On other

occasions, I read about and later visited with David Wright concerning his treks into the Tennessee and Kentucky hardwood forests. To me, Hengesbaugh's adventurous spirit, coupled with Wright's tall and sinewy form, clad in linen and leather, presented the perfect image of a colonial frontiersman. Under the influence of those two "experimental archaeologists," a fire ignited within me to simulate historically-based activities on my own.

Since then, I have traveled a great distance in my journey to experience more of the life originally led by Daniel Boone and countless other unknown woodsmen. As my reenactment journey has focused on the heyday of the Cumberland area long hunter, the path has been an interesting and rewarding one. I have crossed trails with several other woodsmen reenactors and I have been the better for it. A man could never hope for any finer partners in emulating the original woodsman's lifestyle than the maverick Jim Briggs, the Second Company led by Captain Tom or the solitary scout Ed Maurer.

Somewhere along the way, I found purpose not just in researching and then doing, but also in reporting on my own experimental archaeology. Rebel Publishing gave me my first chance to "report" with the March/April, 1986, issue of Muzzleloader magazine in which my article, "Snowshoeing in the Sawtooth" appeared. During that same year, a second article entitled, "Your Shooting Bag; Packing it Light"

appeared in the July/August issue of the same magazine. And in the following September/October issue of Muzzleloader, I was given the opportunity to begin a featured column, entitled "A Pilgrim's Journey." The column has appeared in the magazine almost continuously since that time and has dealt primarily with emulating the skills and lifestyle of the colonial backwoodsmen.

Opportunities to share my experiments with other reenactors have continued. I have written essays on my brand of experimental archaeology which have also appeared in Muzzle Blasts. In the Book of Buckskinning VI, I authored a chapter devoted to historically based or "period" trekking. And in the American Association for State and Local History's publication of A Living History Reader: Volume Two (edited by Jay Anderson), I have three separate essays discussing the challenges of reenactors doing their own experimental archaeology.

Since the spring of 1986, colonial backwoodsmen reenacting across the nation has seasoned rather well. My researching, doing and then sharing, has played a positive role in that progress. The 1988 summer issue of Whole Earth Review calls my articles "the closest to the real thing" and "His attention to detail in his equipment is a goal to attain. In addition, he demonstrates the research and work necessary, I believe, to attain the maximum benefit. . . ."

(22). With my public role has come a responsibility to report honestly details concerning the Cumberland woodsmen.

Since I first journeyed through television with Fess Parker's Daniel Boone, my path has come full circle. As a child, I feasted with wonderment upon the table which Hollywood set before me. As previously discussed, I later took to the books, to the woods, to learn as much as I could about the life I once knew about only through the illusion of the motion picture. And now I have returned to Hollywood's illusions. During the summer of 1991, I served as a consultant to the 20th Century-Fox production of The Last of the Mohicans, where I trained Hawkeye, played by Daniel Day Lewis, to load, shoot and handle his long rifle in a traditional eighteenth-century manner.

As I have chased the long hunter's life through many different avenues of reenacting, I have come to know very well the research presently available to both the static and living historian. A void in published research presently exists within the work dealing with the colonial woodsmen of the Cumberland drainage. Several historians have dealt with popular culture heroes like Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton and the other principal characters of that time and place. Harriette Simpson Arnow, in her work Seedtime on the Cumberland, expertly examines the southern Appalachian culture which eventually settled the Tennessee area. In her work she includes a broad review of the long hunters and

woodsmen who frequented that region. Although she offers great detail in a multitude of fragmented insights, she does not fully explain the lifestyle of an average woodsman turned market hunter. The accoutrements of those hunters have already been aptly cataloged and illustrated in a variety of publications. But as yet, no thorough statement has been published on the everyday life of the common backwoodsman who spent his days market hunting beyond the Allegheny, Cumberland and Smoky mountains.

That is the ultimate goal of this research project. I wish to present an in-depth look into the traumas, the challenges, the mundane aspects of the common hunter who made his living throughout the Middle Ground. In order to do this, I must first separate the images perpetuated in America's popular culture from the reality of a colonial hunter's life. With the heroic attributes of the popular culture persona understood, then a detailed look at the common life of a common hunter may begin.

By undertaking such a project, I also wish to return the favor to those who have played such a major role in my own experimental archaeology. With such a resource at hand, perhaps the living history movement can take one more step forward, the amateur historian might gain a clearer picture of a woodsman's life, and Hollywood may have a well prepared, well documented resource at hand.

I understand that such a work is never completed.  
Therefore, this research is just one more step in the long  
journey towards a complete and honest understanding of the  
Cumberland drainage long hunter.

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## ABSTRACT

Sons of a Trackless Forest: The Cumberland Long Hunter  
of the Eighteenth Century

by

Mark A. Baker, Master of Science  
Utah State University, 1992

Major Professor: Jay Anderson, Ph.D.  
Department: English

For much of America's history, a certain fascination has existed in American culture with the lifestyle of the woodsman who made the hardwood wilderness his home. Over time this fascination has given birth to a collection of romantic traits firmly identified with such a frontiersman.

The requirements for survival in a deep wilderness forced the pre-American Revolution era woodsman turned long hunter, to be "Indian," to demonstrate a high level of marksmanship, and ultimately to draw most of his needs from the bounty of the forest. Such requirements tended to promote the popular conceptions surrounding the eastern frontiersman. Looking beyond those legendary traits, though, such a lifestyle was often an uphill path made only steeper by a rather monotonous diet, days spent in endless and mundane labor, and the threat of perpetual warfare born of political forces beyond his control.

(273 pages)

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

WHEN YET OUR WORLD WAS YOUNG

Where Allegheny's towering, pine clad peaks  
Rise high in air, and sparkle in the sun,  
At whose broad base the gushing torrent breaks,  
And dashes through the vale with curling foam,

My father came while yet our world was young,  
Son of the trackless forest, large and wild,  
Of manners stern, of understanding strong,  
As nature rude but yet in feeling, mild.

For him no splendid mansion reared its head,  
And spread its furniture of gaudy forms,  
His was the humble cot of forest wood,  
Made by his hands, a shelter from the storms.

No costly dress, the work of foreign hands,  
Nor silks from Indian, or Italian realms,  
His clothing plain, the produce of his lands,  
Nor shaped with modern skill, nor set with gems.

Simple his fare, obtained from fields and woods,  
His drink, the crystal fountain's wholesome streams,  
No fettered slave for him e'er shed his blood,  
To swell in pomp ambition's idle dreams.<sup>1</sup>

In an effort to construct this tribute to his father, Joseph Doddridge inadvertently perpetuates the then already common and romantic notion of the woodsmen who wandered the wilderness of the Appalachian frontier. Written sometime prior to 1823, Doddridge's elegy for his father describes several legendary attributes of that persona. Each stanza composed by the retired minister etches many of the values most commonly attributed through America's popular culture to a hunter of the hardwood forest.

When Doddridge composed his elegy, he envisioned an Allegheny wilderness sparkling under nature's finest light, an Eden beyond the reach of civilization's greedy, grabbing grasp. While such a world "was young," the woodsman, or as Doddridge envisions him, a "son of the trackless forest," ventured forth into that pristine wood. Doddridge describes the hunter as an independent spirit who matched the "towering peaks" and "torrent breaks" with his unchangeable code of morality, his unwavering strength, and his wild vitality balanced with the meek manner of a most Godly man.

Doddridge further perpetuates the popular notions already surrounding the woodsman by his description of the hunter's simple dress as being "the produce" of an undefiled land, and the frontiersman's humble shelter as being built from the bounty of the forest. Along with the drink of a "crystal fountain" and the labor of the hunter himself, such romantic descriptions further accent Doddridge's version of the self-reliant colonial woodsman. According to Doddridge's elegy, the hunter prospered and found contentment in the natural resources of the Allegheny wilderness. He carved such a satisfying existence in a shadowed forest, without the help of a king or the forced service of slaves.

Doddridge also addresses the legendary marksmanship, and the hunting prowess, which became the customary trademark of all men who called themselves "woodsmen."

Doddridge notes that: "when Boreas blew in autumn's whirling snows" (31), and when the "stern winter howl'd thro, leafless woods, / and filled the air with bitter, biting frost" (33-34) then:

The shaggy native cattle of the west,  
The bounding elk, with branching antlers large,  
The growling panther, with his frowning crest,  
Were victims to his well aim'd deadly charge.

In hunting frock, and Indian sandals trim,  
O'er lengthening wastes, with nimble steps he ran,  
Nor was Apollo's dart more sure in aim,  
Than in his skillful hand, the deadly gun.  
(37-44)

The stanzas penned by Doddridge abound with romantic images of an athletic, skillful, sharp-eyed woodsman who by education and experience was--to use a popular frontier cliché--more "Indian than the Indians themselves." Through such a series of images, the amateur poet and historian Doddridge cleverly manifests an ideal firmly rooted in the American frontier.

#### Beginnings of the Popular Notions

The images endorsed by his verse had long ago blossomed along an earlier frontier, formed along the western edge of the Piedmont or perhaps in the salty marshes of the Virginia tidewater country. From the very first white settlement, popular notions began to form concerning the men who penetrated the shadowed forests beyond the security of the tiny seaboard hamlets. As will be explained in the succeeding pages, the popular conception of the colonial

woodsman grew from what Richard M. Dorson in American Folklore calls the "uprooted European" influence and the newly encountered Native American culture "blended in the crucible of a strange, fierce land" (7). Although Dorson centers his discussion on the origin of colonial folklore, the same axiom holds true for the birth of America's popular culture perceptions about the frontier woodsman. The perfected combination of European and Indian culture embodied in the colonial woodsman proved perfectly suited to penetrate the frontier and to capture the imagination of historians, novelists, travelers and modern-day entertainment specialists.

Doddridge was, therefore, merely cultivating the imagery which was planted previously by men like William Byrd of Westover, Virginia. Byrd, a wealthy statesman, spent much time trekking through his colony's western wilderness while searching for promising acreage, surveying for the colony or just visiting interesting sites. On such trips, he routinely hired experienced woodsmen to keep his company in fresh meat and out of Indian trouble. While conducting those wilderness excursions, Byrd often kept extensive journals. And through those writings, he entered dozens of notations which both attested to the existence and unwittingly contributed to the perpetuation of the popular notions encompassing a woodsman. It was not uncommon for

the Virginia aristocrat to make notes such as:

Till this night I had always lain in my nightgown, but upon trial I found it much warmer to strip to my shirt and lie naked in bed with my gown over me. The woodsmen put all off, if they have no more than one blanket to lie in, and agree its much more comfortable than to lie with their clothes on though the weather be never so cold. (Secret History 127)

Throughout his wilderness journals, Byrd repeatedly supplies similar tidbits concerning the habits and skills associated with the woodsmen's way of life. Such entries reflects his respect for both the woodsmen's cleverness and their know-how. Byrd generally holds true to such admiration, unless the pains of an empty stomach cloud his temperament towards the very men who were hired to bring him fresh meat twice a day. During Byrd's famous surveying trip, which was recorded in The Secret History of the Dividing Line, missing a meal of fresh meat became more of a common occurrence than the Virginia aristocrat wished to endure. As the party neared the Shenandoah Mountains, his frustration with the hunters' apparent lack of concern for supplying the party with fresh meat is sarcastically reflected in his journal when he remarks that:

. . .woodsmen are good Christians in one respect: by never taking care for the morrow but letting the morrow care for itself for which reason no sort of people ought to pray so fervently for their daily bread as they. (126)

Although Byrd found his woodsmen to be oftentimes lazy, and in his opinion they eternally demonstrated a naive trust in the good fortune of the forest, his mockery nevertheless

acknowledged a skill which all successful hunters possessed. His woodsmen basically relied on the bounty of the forest and the magnitude of their wits to feed themselves. As Byrd privately criticized his hunter's apparent slothfulness, he in turn underscored one of the colonial woodsmen's strongest notions found in frontier culture; such men could feed, cloth and shelter themselves from the products of the hardwood wilderness. And they could do it almost indefinitely.

Although Byrd secretly criticized his hunters when they returned without fresh meat (a thing he believed hunters should never do), the statesman nevertheless continually respected the ways in which a good woodsman should behave when in the wilderness. Byrd often labeled such particular modes of behavior as "laws of traveling," meaning the expected behavior of a woodsman when trekking through the wilderness. And whenever it was convenient, Byrd inevitably associated such worthy attributes to himself. To a great extent, the Virginia aristocrat basked in the persona of a capable woodsman.

In one of his journals, written in 1733, and entitled A Journey to the Land of Eden, Byrd repeatedly mentions one rule of the code: never to complain. On the 27th of September, Byrd remarks that, "My knees pained me very much, though I broke not the laws of traveling by uttering the least complaint" (395). For several days and with a quiet

satisfaction, Byrd notes to posterity that he had withstood at least one test of traveling in the wilderness.

Byrd's passion to exemplify himself as fit company for the best of woodsmen could just as easily turn face and severely rebuke a fellow companion in the wilderness, especially when the man had broken one of those "laws of traveling" in the woods. Six days after Byrd had so nobly carried the burden of painful knees, he used his private journal to blast one of his men, Joseph Colson, who had spent his time squandering away his bread and then growing nervous over his dilemma of shortened rations (Journey to the Land of Eden 399). Byrd illuminated the man's behavior by explaining that the pathetic fellow ate too much and only had a sense of humor if his belly remained full.

To Byrd, such chowhound behavior was bad enough, but the predicament called for disciplinary action when the man "began to break the rules by complaining and threatening to desert" (399) after his bread ration began to look pretty slim. The Virginian then startled the hired hand into "submission" by threatening him with a severe treatment of "the blanket," a chastising action by where any troublemaker was rigorously tossed in a blanket.<sup>2</sup> By the way Byrd nonchalantly refers to such "rules" and "treatments" throughout his frontier writings, the Virginian assumes that his potential audience was already familiar and understood such "codes" of the woodsmen.



By the time Doddridge wrote his lengthy tribute to the "son of a trackless forest," such "laws for traveling" noted by Byrd had become part of the expected woodsman behavior. In Doddridge's day, such heroic woodsmen portrayed in various printed tales never complained about their plight, never demonstrated a wanton appetite, and never foolishly lost their equipment. As the 19th century progressed, frontier popular culture no longer recognized such rules for traveling as "rules," but rather they were an intricate part of the woodsman's perceived persona. The heroic character automatically faced the challenges of an untamed wilderness without wavering from his beliefs. As a result, the images perpetuated through the various mediums of America's popular culture typically promoted the personality manifested in Doddridge's elegy.

#### Cooper's Manifestation of the Woodland Hero

Fiction offered one of the biggest arenas for the fledgling country's story tellers to express the largely heroic attributes of the early American woodsman. One of the most acclaimed authors, who gained national notoriety when he solidified the woodsman's image in his romantic leatherstocking saga, was James Fenimore Cooper. His fictional character, Natty Bumppo, earns several nicknames throughout the course of Cooper's five frontier novels. The master woodsman, Bumppo, acquires the names Deerslayer,

Hawkeye, Pathfinder, Scout and Leatherstocking. Each one of those titles manifests a particular facet of the personality typically associated with the frontier hero of American popular culture.

In the novel The Deerslayer (which is the first leatherstocking novel chronologically) Cooper acknowledges that Bumpo first receives the name Deerslayer from his Delaware "family" due to his great skill in hunting. In The Last of the Mohicans, the hero confidently states that "the compliment of Hawkeye" came from his Delaware brothers who believed that the woodsman's sight never fails (313). As the frontiersman's tale continues, Hawkeye's white allies call him Pathfinder and Scout due to his keen ability to find his way along the darkened floor of the deepest wilderness. And the title Leatherstocking is reflective of his Indian and white dress, perfectly adapted for a secluded life in the woods.

Cooper merely created names for the traits Byrd sought in his hired hunters, for the characteristics earlier attributed to Daniel Boone by John Filson, and for those previously associated by Doddridge to his woodsman father. And 100 years after a young America first clutched the novels of James Fenimore Cooper, the hunting prowess, the marksmanship, the scouting, the innovative dress have continued to adorn various frontier characters found in movies, television and assorted fiction.

That typical image of the woodland hunter, which has matured in American popular culture, is easily identified in the novel The Deerslayer, where Cooper describes his hero as follows:

In stature he stood about six feet in his moccasins, but his frame was comparatively light and slender, showing muscles, however, that promised unusual agility, if not unusual strength. His face would have had little to recommend it except youth, were it not for an expression that seldom failed to win upon those who had leisure to examine it, and to yield to the feeling of confidence it created. This expression was simply that of guileless truth, sustained by an earnestness of purpose, and a sincerity of feeling, that rendered it remarkable. At times this air of integrity seemed to be so simple as to awaken the suspicion of a want of the usual means to discriminate between artifice and truth; but few came in serious contact with the man, without losing this distrust in respect for his opinions and motives. (4)

Cooper enjoyed elaborate prose, but in the end he, nevertheless, described his frontiersman in the same athletic build and moral stature which Doddridge had attributed to his woodsman father. And by Cooper's description of his hero, it is hard to imagine Deerslayer ever complaining about short rations, cold nights, or a painful knee. By 1841, the year The Deerslayer was first published, Cooper's hero reflected the moral fiber and physical prowess earlier promoted by Byrd, Doddridge and countless others.

Doddridge refers to his woodsman father as wearing a "hunting frock" and "Indian sandals trim," an image later elaborately detailed in the words of Cooper. Although the

creator of Hawkeye describes the manner of his hero's dress in each of his five novels, his vision as explained in the novel Deerslayer epitomizes the popular image of a woodsman. Cooper describes young Deerslayer as wearing an outfit that:

. . .needs no particular description, though it may be well to add that it was composed in no small degree of dressed deer-skins, and had the usual signs of belonging to those who pass their time between the skirts of civilized society and the boundless forests. There was, notwithstanding, some attention to smartness and the picturesque in the arrangements of Deerslayer's dress, more particularly in the part connected with his arms and accoutrements. His rifle was in perfect condition, the handle of his hunting knife was neatly carved, his powder-horn was ornamented with suitable devices lightly cut into the material, and his shot-pouch was decorated with wampum. (4)

Cooper describes a woodsman who took great care in the tools of his calling, and through repeated use, had developed a fondness for those hunting implements. The writer also romantically depicts Natty Bumppo as a woodland hunter who dressed in a perfect, yet functional blend of both Indian and colonial apparel. Bumppo's dress and the tools of his profession aptly manifest the characteristics which by this time were commonly associated with such an early American trailblazer. In short, Cooper's hero appears as the reader expects a woodland hero to appear.

Dressing the part and sporting accoutrements seasoned with a life time of frontier use were only part of the image developed and promoted in the Leatherstocking Tales. As

Doddridge hinted, and as Byrd always hoped for, a true woodsman was an expert in both shooting and hunting. And many times such skills were superbly demonstrated when fighting the "savages" of the wilderness. In his novel The Pathfinder, Cooper repeatedly remarks on his character's expert marksmanship and stealth when Bumppo was faced with the threat of immediate danger. Cooper sums up such critical talents of Bumppo's by commenting that:

The Pathfinder did not stir. He had originally got a position where he might aim with deadly effect through the leaves, and where he could watch the movements of his enemies, and he was far too steady to be disconcerted at a moment so critical. (65)

Cooper's champion, now called Pathfinder, does not wantonly kill the Indians he encounters. Nor does Hawkeye ever peel and pop the scalp from the head of a fallen enemy. Instead, Bumppo flawlessly treats all of his woodland neighbors with a certain fairness, sprinkled generously with a helping of humility and respect seldom offered along a violent frontier. Enemies are not judged by the color of their skins, but rather they are judged according to a higher law--a flawless blend of Christian and Native American morality. This is a code which Cooper's hero follows continuously from the first moment the frontiersman enters the Great Lakes country as a young man. The gallant Natty Bumppo explains it best when in The Deerslayer he reveals that "I shall not pull upon [aim his rifle at] a human mortal as steadily or with as light a heart, as I pull

upon a deer" (37). When his hunting partner, Hurry Harry, criticizes Bumppo for such naivete', the hero explains it by saying:

I look upon the redmen to be quite as human as we are ourselves, Hurry. They have their gifts, and their religion, it's true; but that makes no difference in the end, when each will be judged according to his deeds, and not according to his skin. (38)

Hurry Harry then criticizes the Deerslayer's position as resembling a poor missionary's blind faith, which did not have any place in such a hostile land. Nevertheless, such brotherly charity is a trait that Doddridge promotes and Cooper's character holds dear, right up to Natty Bumppo's death in The Prairie.

Deerslayer's mannerism, his skill and his dress all reflect the notion of a "natural man," one who could thrive in a savage wilderness, becoming part Indian and yet retain his innocent and rather complex blend of morality. Deerslayer exists in the wilderness without the artificial constraints brought on by civilization's laws, courts, trade, currency or formal religion. Cooper's fiction aptly reflects the image commonly accepted in American popular culture.

The concept has been repeatedly re-invented in characters like the frontier adventurer Christopher Holden, of Neil H. Swanson's Unconquered. The handsome Holden is born into the best of the Virginia tidewater citizenry. Swanson's hero shares the company of the colony's most

influential citizens, and conducts his family's business in both Williamsburg and London. But Holden never feels completely himself, never realizes total contentment unless he is deep within the trans-Allegheny wilderness. And when Holden finally takes to the darkened forest of the Virginia/Pennsylvania frontier, the woodsman is at his best. Holden becomes complete. Swanson clearly captures his hero's transformation when he describes Holden as:

. . .feeling better than he had felt in a long time. He was thinking now about the last few nights in blankets on bough beds in the piney woods, and about the feel and smell of the raw earth beneath him and around him, and about the earthy talk of these two middle-aged backwoodsmen who call him Cap'n with a casual respect but felt quite free to poke fun at his highfalutin manners and would disobey him, just as casually and naturally, if they knew that he was wrong. But they wouldn't let him down. (171)

Chris Holden's trekking partners see his "highfalutin manners" as a product of his privileged upbringing, but to his creator Swanson, Holden's character is merely the perfect blend of the colonial, frontier, and Indian cultures of the day. Holden is gentle, yet an expert fighter. He is a clever diplomat, yet the best of scouts. The tall Virginian knows both the mannerisms of the Europeans and the Ohio Indians alike. Swanson portrays his hero as wealthy gentry, but he was happiest only when sleeping on the ground while wrapped in a single wool blanket. And as the story progresses, Holden dances the best Virginia reel at Fort

Pitt, but then in the next instance out-stalks Guyasuta's best warriors.

Such a contrast of characteristics superbly blended with a Cooper-type flair into one woodland frontiersman did not stop in 1947 with the novel Unconquered. Walt Disney's Davy Crockett series, which first swept the country in 1955, and starred Fess Parker, exhibited many of the same traits. Parker's version of the Tennessee icon quickly became firmly rooted in America's popular culture. Coonskin hats, rubber tomahawks, and a variety of published material soon saturated America's homeland. And while Fess Parker was still heralded by the American public as the popular frontier hero, 20th Century-Fox recruited the actor for their own project. And in the fall of 1964, Fox telecast for the first time, its long running Daniel Boone TV series. The headlines of a publicity poster for one of 20th Century-Fox's original promotional movies entitled Daniel Boone: Frontier Trail Rider, capture the popular perception of the colonial frontiersman when it boldly promises that the hero would be:

Storming across the western plains,  
With a dream big enough to settle a new land,  
And courage great enough to take on Indian,  
outlaw, or any man who tried to stop him!

By the time Fess Parker bravely settled Kentucky every Thursday night on NBC, America's popular perceptions of the original long hunter Daniel Boone had transformed from images of the solitary explorer and hunter to a man who



"stormed" into the Middle Ground with a "courage great enough" to take on Indian, outlaw, and anyone else who kept him from his destiny. Yet through six years of continually "storming," Fess Parker's Boone retained the same characteristics which Doddridge, Cooper, and others had first painted their own heroes in so many years previous.

#### The Maturing of the Woodland Hero

Ever since Cooper first introduced his woodland hero, the truly American hero has gradually evolved, appearing innumerable times as the familiar hero in fringed buckskins and toting a trusty long rifle. But the frontier hero has also appeared in cowboy motifs such as Jack Schaefer's unforgettable novel Shane, or in the rural American countryside as experienced through the Hollywood portrayal of Sergeant Alvin York by Gary Cooper. But regardless of his costuming, or the tools of his trade, that unmistakable code of conduct and that unmistakable package of talent has remained a constant force in telling the American story.

As a result, the image of a "natural man" living as he pleases has saturated notions of the American frontier for more than 250 years. So much so that when, in the 1955 movie The Kentuckian, Burt Lancaster exclaims, "We're traipsing along like natural men," the viewer knows exactly what the frontier character is saying. When the Kentuckian later explains that, "All we know'd, little Eli and me, was

living free in the woods, shooting our meals and following foxes, it's habit with us and hard to bust," the viewer is immediately in sympathy with the protagonist's love for the "free" and "natural" life of the woods.

And when the "wild" Kentuckian is threatened by his "civilized" older brother, who promises that "I'll work the buckskin off and out of him both!" the viewer can not help but cheer for the salvation of the "natural man" as portrayed by Burt Lancaster. As perpetuated through the images of writers like Cooper and through the poems of authors like Doddridge, the woodsman can never leave the forest; he can never get that natural pureness out of him. And the American movie viewer does not need any explanation to understand such a conflict between the civilized and the wild worlds as presented through the Kentuckian and his older brother.

Finally, in the closing moments of the movie, when the heroine explains to the Kentuckian that, "Some are born to stand still, and some are born to run," she is manifesting the very essence of the popular perception surrounding the woodland frontiersman. The viewer knows that the hero must leave the settlement; he must return to the forest which gives him his vitality, his independence, his meaning for existence. And so he does indeed "run," crossing the next river to the west and stretching his stride for the frontier that is promised just off screen.

The image born along the first edges of America's woodland frontier; the character perpetuated by amateur historians like Doddridge and solidified by authors of Cooper's romantic slant; the persona maturing through a growing country's various forms of fiction; all have permeated the interpretation of this early American history. In countless grade school textbooks, in assorted historical novels, through various TV shows and movies, bona-fide characters like Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Kit Carson, Jedediah Smith and even Grizzly Adams have all taken on the attributes originally associated with the popular notions of the colonial woodland frontiersman. In many cases, time has blended misconceptions with reality, and thus the real personalities, including their flaws and strengths, have become almost indistinguishable to the lay historian.

#### Woodsmen Beyond the Popular Culture

During the years between the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, a certain breed of frontiersmen spent much of their time roaming the wilderness which lay to the west of the Allegheny, Cumberland and Blue Ridge mountains. When compared with the kaleidoscope of characters present along the Ohio River frontier, those particular woodsmen were different in several ways. They possessed the ability to hunt for profit, not just subsistence. In the pursuit of their occupation, they

tended to leave the settlements for extended periods of time. Such woodsmen were a curious, yet practical blend of Indian and European dress. Many of them tried to hold close to their own particular form of morality, even when stranded in a land that proved too frequently to possess a shocking code of behavior. Through the process of their unique lifestyle, they contributed to both the history and popular notions surrounding the American frontiersman more than any other group of men.

Joseph Doddridge's father was one such man who spent much of his time roaming the western woods of Pennsylvania in pursuit of the hunt. He eventually brought his family (a three year-old Joseph included) to the lands which he had once explored. When as an old man Joseph felt led to record his frontier past, much of his reminiscing was undoubtedly sparked by the mental images of his woodsman father.

Perhaps the most celebrated woodsman of such caliber was Daniel Boone, who gained notoriety during the 1770's, and first obtained a firm footing in America's popular culture when John Filson celebrated the hunter Boone in his monumental work The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentuckie.<sup>3</sup> By the very manner in which Filson glorified Boone's adventures, the Kentucky historian first created what Richard Dorson labels a "vaunted hero" which personified many of the attributes commonly associated with

the frontiersman, but has surprisingly lived on in primarily written works (200).

Filson created his intended interpretation of the master frontiersman by molding his descriptions of Boone's exploits very carefully, making certain that his protagonist would reflect the expected characteristics of his frontier hero. Throughout Filson's history of Kentucky, Boone demonstrated his hunting, fighting, shooting, scouting, pathfinding and woodlore in a similar fashion as would later Cooper's Bumpo. As an example, Filson reports Boone's first sighting of the land called "Kentucke" as nothing short of spectacular when he notes that:

After a long fatiguing march, over a mountainous wilderness, in a westward direction, they at length arrived upon its borders; and from the top of an eminence, with joy and wonder, descried the beautiful landscape of Kentucke. Here they encamped, and some went to hunt provisions, which were readily procured, there being plenty of game, while Col. Boon [sic] and John Finley made a tour through the country, which they found far exceeding their expectations, and returning to camp, informed their companions of their discoveries. (8)

Filson portrays Boone as overcoming the "mountainous wilderness" by being as big as the wilderness itself. As a result, Filson very cleverly intertwines his romantic version of Kentucky with the supposed personality of Boone, making them both inseparable, indistinguishable from one another. To Filson, the hardwood wilderness was a "great forest, on which stood myriads of trees, some gay with blossoms, others rich with fruit. Nature was here a series

of wonders, and a fund of delight" (52). The wilderness, which kept all others away, was a bounty, an Eden for men of Boone's caliber. According to Filson, Boone testified that in such a plentiful, yet "howling wilderness, I believe few would have equally enjoyed the happiness we experienced" (53). Filson's ultimate frontier hero was daring enough, courageous enough, clever enough and big enough to match the duality of the Kentucky wilderness. To Filson, Boone was in his prime when the forest of the Middle Ground was yet untouched by civilization's heavy hand.

But in reality, Boone was really no different from many of the woodsmen (like Doddridge's father) who made their living beyond the comforts of the colonial settlements. However, once Filson shared with the world his romantic perception of the leather clad scout, then Boone was to forever possess the characteristics common with all woodland heroes in American popular culture. And soon after Daniel Boone died in 1820, James Fenimore Cooper's leather stocking hero was conceived out of the womb formed by the prevalent notions surrounding frontiersmen like Daniel Boone.

Those woodsmen who hunted for extended periods of time in that land once called the Middle Ground, but now known as the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, were eventually referred to in American culture as "long hunters."<sup>4</sup> Many of those professional hunters, such as Boone, began their

careers in the western reaches of Pennsylvania, Virginia and the Carolinas. Due to the very skills required in their lifestyle, those long hunters unknowingly contributed to the tales which gradually surrounded and many times mystified their own history. Such woodsmen were an unusual breed, even extraordinary in their talents, for they routinely existed in the hardwood wilderness for several months, even years before returning to the settlements. In the course of their "natural" existence, the long hunters roamed where they pleased, they largely fed themselves from the bounty of the forests, and many of them indeed became more adept in their forest skills than the woodland Indians themselves.

The long hunters were perhaps the most talented, the most independent, the most enduring of any other frontier character. They survived in an unforgiving wilderness for longer stretches, under more adverse conditions than many of their contemporaries. In the process they demonstrated many of the qualities (such as expert marksmanship and woodsmore, self-reliance and cleverness) normally associated with America's colonial woodsman. But they were not always as Doddridge so fondly remembered them, nor were they always true to the romantic foresters envisioned by Cooper in his many novels. And the long hunters have seldom been portrayed honestly in Hollywood entertainment. When trying to understand and fully appreciate the life of a long hunter, the challenge lies therefore in deciphering the true

character from among the personas created and clouded by more than two centuries of various forms of American popular culture.

#### Finding Clues in Primary Sources

To aid in unraveling the reality from the oftentimes romantic perceptions of American popular culture, a diverse collection of primary texts have been examined thoroughly in an effort to find as many clues as possible concerning the life typically lived by the Cumberland long hunter.<sup>5</sup> Since such eighteenth century woodsmen were usually of a common class, keeping written records was not generally a major concern for them. As a result, very few documents originally penned by any of the long hunters have survived to this day. And since the focus of this research has centered around the woodsmen who traversed the Kentucky and Tennessee areas, the amount of primary source material recorded by such men is even more of a rarity.

Therefore, the search for primary texts went beyond just the words of the hunters themselves. The writings of traders, travelers, missionaries and military personnel were examined in this research. The works of amateur and professional historians who lived in or journeyed through the Ohio country between 1755-75 were also studied in this research. Many of those visitors found the woodsmen uncommon, even peculiar. Others found the leather and



linen-clad frontiersmen a necessary and common part of their business. As a result of their curiosity or their business dealings, those eye-witnesses quite often felt led to comment in their writings on various aspects of the frontiersmen's lifestyle. And their remarks were usually void of the heroic qualities normally associated with woodsmen in popular beliefs. Thus, a more realistic picture of the Cumberland long hunter was gradually formed through an evaluation of their observations.

The major primary sources used in this research have been listed in the following discussion, separated into different categories according to the author's purpose in coming to the Ohio River country during the long hunter era. Such works published during the eighteenth century were typically graced with unusually long titles. To ease in the review of the literature, overly long titles have been shortened. In the bibliography all works have been listed with their full titles.

Contrary to popular culture, not every item woodsmen needed to live for extended periods of time in the wilderness was, as Doddridge put it, "obtained from the fields and woods." Just like the French inhabitants of the Ohio River country, or the various Indians nations of the hardwood empire, and even the British soldiers scattered throughout the frontier dominion of King George, the professional hunter of the Cumberland drainage also

routinely withdrew supplies from trading stores in the settlements. In order to practice their profession, they needed such sundries as powder, lead, flints, corn meal and flour. These supplies were conveniently available in trading stores located in Fort Pitt, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, or along the western edges of North Carolina and Virginia.

A majority of the business done along the colonial frontier was conducted on the barter system. Very little hard coinage was exchanged, for such monies were scarce west of the Alleghenies. As a result, English traders who dealt with French, Indian, Spanish and English inhabitants had to work under the barter system, using a mixture of French, English and colonial monetary values as a basis of trade. Hunters bartered skins, tallow and meats under the same system. They received "credit" for the products they harvested and deposited at the trading store. At the same time, hunters were "charged" for any goods which they withdrew. Depending upon the circumstances, their running accounts were calculated in Pennsylvania, New York, French or English currency rates. As a result, traders who dealt along the fringes of the Ohio River country kept careful records in numerous ledgers of their extended dealings with scores of long hunters.

Since such careful records were kept by the traders, they have unknowingly left a trail of clues to help decipher the common life of the long hunter. The trading firm of

Baynton, Wharton and Morgan was one such firm that dealt extensively with both individual and company hunters. They based their operations in Philadelphia and stretched their trading fingers all the way north to Quebec, down to the West Indies, west to the Illinois country and along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. As a result, any of their ledgers which have been preserved to this day offer the possibility of information concerning the lifestyle of the woodland hunter.

By the end of 1765, George Morgan, the firm's junior partner, had secured a virtual monopoly on the Illinois trade. Due to the war with France and the subsequent troubles with Pontiac, English traders had been driven from that country. But with the English conquering the old Northwest Territories, Baynton, Wharton and Morgan had exercised their political prowess and struck a deal with Sir William Johnson's Deputy Indian Agent, George Croghan, and the young Morgan was soon authorized to supply the British posts and many of the civilians in the Ohio River country. In an effort to help supply the British troops, Morgan sponsored bateaux crews and company hunters to ascend such rivers as the Cumberland and bring back to the settlements thousands of pounds of buffalo meat, venison, hides, skins and rendered bear fat.

As a result, George Morgan's trading ledgers, letter books and travel accounts (along with correspondence written

by several of his employees) recorded during his Illinois years (1765-72) offer excellent primary source material for this research project. He carefully recorded the routine supplies taken on hunting forays, some of the "extras" woodsmen liked to withdraw, the terms of their employment, and Morgan's own opinions concerning the various hunters working in his employ.

Contrary to the typical views of outsiders (travellers, military personnel, missionaries), Morgan recognized his hunters' expertise and routinely relied upon their skills to help assure success to his partnership. As a result of Morgan's admiration, he often recorded through his business correspondence reflections upon the "common" rather than merely the peculiar facets of their lifestyle. Due to the foresight and generosity of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Morgan's papers from this time period are available as part of a ten-roll catalogue of microfilm. The "Great Illinois Adventure" records are part of Pennsylvania's complete collection of the firm's papers and are cataloged as:

"Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Papers." Pennsylvania State Archives. Manuscript 19. Microfilm. Ed. George R. Beyer. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1967.

Although this is but a single source, physically this collection of primary source material amounts to "28 cubic feet and 68 volumes of manuscript material" (as stated in the microfilm guide, page 4). During the course of this

research, the papers of Morgan held within this substantial resource have offered a multitude of clues to the common life of the professional hunter. These clues proved very helpful in getting past the common perceptions of the "natural man" living along the colonial frontier and thereby gaining a much more realistic view of the eighteenth-century long hunter.

Besides traders, there were scores of travellers who moved throughout the Ohio country during the heyday of the long hunter. During their intermittent adventures such sightseers often came in contact with various woodsmen. These wanderers, along with missionaries, were the ones who commonly found the woodsmen to be very unusual and at times quite disturbing. Their references and reactions to woodsmen were usually just the opposite of the more popular conceptions, and therefore have offered a tempering quality when attempting to define the woodsman's personality.

Besides commenting on the woodsmen, those same travellers and missionaries also came in contact with the woodland Indians. And since frontiersmen have often been described as being a blend of both white and red culture, then any of their comments made concerning the material and social culture of the Native Americans have reflected to some degree upon the culture of the colonial woodsman.

The published records of travellers and missionaries examined during the process of this research are listed, in an abbreviated form, as follows:

Bartram, John. Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals, and Other Matters Worthy of Notice, 1751.

Beatty, Charles. The Journal of a Two Months Tour; With a View of Promoting Religion Among the Frontier Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, 1798.

Bossu, Jean Bernard. Travels Through Part of North America Formerly Called Louisiana, 1771.

Byrd, William. The Prose Works of William Byrd of Westover, 1727-1733.

Carver, J. Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768, 1778.

Cresswell, Nicholas. The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell 1775-1777, 1925.

Kalm, Peter. Peter Kalm's Travel In North America (The English Version of 1770), 1964.

Nairne, Thomas. A Letter From South Carolina, 1710.

Smyth, J.F.D. A Tour in the United States of America, 1789.

Woodmason, Charles. The Journal and Other Writing of Charles Woodmason, 1953.

Trabue, Daniel. The Narrative of Daniel Trabue. ed. Chester Raymond Young, 1981.

As long as the European powers realized any value in the American frontier, military presence and pressure was felt along strategic points of North America. During the struggle for the continent, British, French and provincial forces repeatedly came in contact with the colonial woodsmen. As a consequence, several officers who served in

the Old Northwest during the third quarter of the eighteenth century recorded their impressions of the frontier culture. Some officers looked with great distaste upon a people who seemed so "rough," so uncultured, but others learned much from a people who had adapted so well to wilderness warfare. In an effort to glean any clues about the material or social culture of the woodsmen from such opinionated voices, the following primary sources were reviewed:

Anderson, Captain Thomas G. Narrative of Captain Thomas G. Anderson, 1909.

Bougainville, Louis Antoine de. Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville 1756-1760. Trans. Edward P. Hamilton, 1964.

Clark, George Rogers. Col. George Rogers Clark's Sketch of His Campaign in the Illinois 1778-79, 1971.

Collins, John A. Autobiography of a Revolutionary War Soldier, 1859.

Gist, Christopher. Christopher Gist's Journals. Ed. William H. Darlington, 1893.

Knox, Captain John. An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America for the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760, 1970.

Morris, Captain Thomas. Journal of Captain Thomas Morris of His Majesty's Service XVII Regiment of Infantry; Detroit September 25, 1764, 1791.

Smith, William. Expedition Against the Ohio Indians, 1966.

Timberlake, Henry. The Memoirs of Lieutenant Henry Timberlake 1756-1765. Ed. Samuel Cole Williams, 1927.

Washington, George. The Writings of George Washington From Original Manuscript Sources 1745-1799. Ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, 1931.

Weiser, Conrad. Conrad Weiser's Journal of a Tour to the Ohio August 11 - October 2, 1748, 1904.

Perhaps the most descriptive of all the Ohio River frontier visitors were the amateur and professional historians. Every social custom or material good which was viewed by the historians as indicative of the colonial frontier was usually described with the utmost care for detail. Of course, the slant of these historians was understandably ethnocentric, and many times observed only through the foggy glasses of an outsider, but nevertheless, their reactions to what they witnessed deserve a fair review. And many times, the colonial frontier historians were the only ones who realized the importance of a particular social custom, the preparation of a culturally indicative food, or the beliefs of a frontier people which truly reflected their priorities. The historians of the colonial frontier period reviewed during this research were as follows:

Adair, James. The History of the American Indians, 1775.

Doddridge, Joseph. Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1876.

Filson, John. The Discovery, Settlement, and the Present State of Kentuckie, 1784.

Heckwelder, John. History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and Neighboring States, 1876.

Kercheval, Samuel. History of the Valley of Virginia, 1850.



### Interpreting Secondary Sources

A wide range of secondary sources was consulted for the purpose of verifying the emerging suppositions concerning the common life of the woodsman turned long hunter. Works written as close as possible to the third quarter of the eighteenth century were the preferred sources, for many times they offered personal narratives, opinions, descriptions and historical insights which otherwise have unfortunately vanished with time. With over 200 years having passed since the original long hunters traversed their woodland empire, many first person accounts and reflective opinions of the frontier culture were never recorded in a permanent fashion and thus have slipped beyond reach with the passing of time. Because of this, these "first generation" texts offer selected glimpses of an otherwise lost resource.

Frontier social histories written within 100 years of the long hunter era were the next preferred secondary source used in this research project. Originators of such works generally relied upon rare primary source documents which were fortunately preserved by such institutions as the Filson Club and the Wisconsin State Historical Society. Historians such as the then-recent Harvard graduate Theodore Roosevelt, and the respected Wisconsin social anthropologist Reuben Gold Thwaites were two such authors who produced monumental works of this nature.

Within this century several substantial research efforts were completed which offered in-depth looks into the colonial frontier culture. Among others, the extensive texts of Alice Morse Earle and Harriette Simpson Arnow, which are today considered standards in colonial frontier studies, were relied upon substantially during the formation of this project.

Several "specialty" sources which centered upon particular aspects of the colonial frontier's social and material culture were also reviewed during this project in an effort to help clarify the descriptions of the various eighteenth-century authors. As an example, when the prominence of corn in the diet of the woodsman was researched, then any primary source material describing the use of corn was clarified and supplemented with secondary resources which specifically dealt with the various aspects of corn in North American history. This same format was followed for any discussions concerning clothing and accoutrements mentioned in the various primary texts studied during the course of this project.

A list in abbreviated form of both the "early" and subsequent secondary sources dealing with general surveys of the material and social culture used in this project is as follows:

Arnow, Harriette Simpson. Seedtime on the Cumberland, 1963.

Caruso, John A. The Appalachian Frontier, 1959.

Draper, Lyman C. King's Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King's Mountain, October 7th 1780, and the Events Which Led to It, 1967 (reprint).

Earle, Alice Morse. Home Life in Colonial Days, 1898.

Every, Dale Van. Forth to the Wilderness; The First American Frontier 1754-1774, 1961.

Fels, Elizabeth Meek. "The Battle of Point Pleasant and its Relationship to the American Revolution and to Tennessee." Tennessee Historical Quarterly Winter, 1974.

Hanson, Charles E. Jr., ed. The Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly Spring, 1988.

Henderson, Archibald. The Conquest of the Old Southwest, 1920.

Huddleston, Joe D. Colonial Riflemen in the American Revolution, 1978.

Messick, Hank. King's Mountain, 1976.

O'Neil, Paul. The Frontiersmen, 1977.

Ranke, George W. Boonesborough: Its Founding Pioneer Struggles, Indian Expeditions, Transylvania Days and Revolutionary Annals, 1901.

Roosevelt, Theodore. Winning of the West, 1905.

Smith, Barbara Clark. After the Revolution, The Smithsonian History of Everyday Life in the Eighteenth Century, 1985.

Thwaites, Reuben Gold. How George Rogers Clark Won the Northwest, 1903.

Tunis, Edwin. Frontier Living, 1961.

Vaughan, Alden T. America Before the Revolution 1725-1775, 1967.

Withers, Alexander Scott. Chronicles of Border Warfare, 1895.

As previously stated, several secondary sources which illustrated particular facets of either the material or

social culture of the colonial frontier period were also used in this research project. Such works, listed in an abbreviated form, are as follows:

- Barmann, Floyd A., ed. A Guide to Clothing and Accoutrements of Frontier Militia in the American Revolution, 1980.
- Booth, Sally Smith. Hung, Strung, and Potted, a History of Eating Habits in Colonial America, 1971.
- Gehret, Ellen J. Rural Pennsylvania Clothing, 1976.
- Glenn, Camille. The Heritage of Southern Cooking, 1986.
- Grant, Madison. The Kentucky Rifle Hunting Pouch, 1977.
- . The Knife in Homespun America, 1984.
- . Powder Horns and Their Architecture and Decoration, 1987.
- Hamilton, T.M. Colonial French Guns, 1980.
- Kindig, Joe. Thoughts on the Kentucky Rifle in Its Golden Age, 1964.
- Klinger, Robert L. and Richard A. Wilder. Sketch Book 76. The American Soldier 1775-1781, 1967.
- Russell, Carl P. Firearms, Traps, and Tools of the Mountain Men, 1967.
- Wallace, Henry A. and William L. Brown. Corn and Its Early Fathers, 1956.
- Weatherwax, Paul. Indian Corn in Old America, 1954.

#### Acknowledging the Real Frontier Heroes

Since the purpose of this research effort was to distinguish the common life from the more popular perceptions surrounding the colonial frontier woodsman, a study of the prominent historical characters was necessary.

Men like Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton, and Lewis Wetzel really lived, worked, and desperately fought for their existence along the Ohio Frontier. And they consequently became famous for their heroic adventures. When studying such men and their exploits, every effort was made during the course of this research to acknowledge verifiable extraordinary feats, and at the same time to avoid endorsing the notions in popular culture as unabridged truth.

Therefore, several autobiographies and biographies were reviewed during this project. They are listed, in an abbreviated form, as follows:

Bakeless, John. Daniel Boone, 1939.

Collins, John A. Autobiography of a Revolutionary War Soldier, 1859.

Durham, Walter T. "Kasper Mansker: Cumberland Frontiersman." Historical Quarterly, Summer 1971.

Elliott, Lawrence. The Longhunter: A New Life of Daniel Boone, 1966.

Iglehear, Ted. "Squire Boone The Forgotten Man." The Filson Club Historical Quarterly, October 1970.

Kenton, Edna. Simon Kenton, His Life and Period, reprint 1985.

Lofare, Michael A. "The Eighteenth Century Autobiographies of Daniel Boone." The Register of Kentucky Society, April 1978.

Smith, Col. James. An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Col. James Smith, 1799.

Tasse', Joseph. "Memoirs of Charles De Langlade." Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1908.

Tome, Philip. Pioneer Life; Or, Thirty Years a Hunter, reprint 1854.

Van Noppen, John James. Daniel Boone, Backwoodsman: The Green Woods Were His Portion, 1966.

Wellford, Harry W. "Dr. Thomas Walker, His Uncelebrated Impact on Early Tennessee." Tennessee Historical Society, 1975.

White, Stewart Edward. Daniel Boone Wilderness Scout, 1972.

### Challenging the Popular Notions

When Joseph Doddridge first paid tribute to his woodsman father by heralding him as a "son of the trackless forest," he cleverly capsulated the predominant and romantic image which was by that time already taken for granted by a young United States. The adolescent country was cutting its teeth on federalism, national pride, and the promises offered by an ever-expanding western border. The image of a frontiersman with his long rifle in hand and an axe in his belt, blazing a trail into an unexplored wilderness and thereby leading the way for eventual settlement was a perfect complement to the visions held dear in America's consciousness.

That very image of the frontier woodsman was to America's writers the perfect symbol of such a country set in motion. Images perpetuated by predominate men like William Byrd, characters created by novelists such as James Fenimore Cooper, personas invented by self-proclaimed historians like John Filson, and the lines crafted in

lingering tributes to a lost father by men like Joseph Doddridge all promoted attributes which the country liked to believe existed unconditionally in characters called frontiersmen. Such "bigger than life" men were a perfect match for the challenge of conquering the western wilderness.

Several works previously published have already discussed a general overview of the Middle Ground woodsmen's contribution to the eventual settlement of that area. Harriette Simpson Arnow devoted two chapters, "The Shirrtail Men" and "The Woodsmen," in her book Seedtime on the Cumberland to a somewhat fragmented view of the long hunters. Other works, such as John Caruso's Appalachian Frontier, Dale Van Every's Forth to the Wilderness; The First American Frontier 1754-1774, and Archibald Henderson's The Conquest of the Old Southwest: The Romantic Story of the Early Pioneers into Virginia all present varied glimpses of the woodsmen. And the newest general history of the backwoodsmen, entitled The Frontiersmen by Paul O'Neil, has presented nothing new for the serious researcher.

Most of the above mentioned works have not gone beyond the well-known stories or the historical circumstances which inevitably perpetuated the popular notions of the woodsmen. Therefore, the purpose of this text is to gain a more intimate understanding of the reality behind the images promoted through popular culture and in many of the

histories concerned with the period. As a result, a fresh look at their existence has been attempted, one which focuses on the individuals behind the popular notions: how they lived, earned a livelihood and contributed to the settlement of the Middle Ground. The focus of this research has been the common links within their lifestyles and not so much the heroic escapades of the few long hunters who became legendary.

Of course Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton, and the rest of the well-known woodsmen must be included within any study of the long hunter's way of life. If not, the study would never be complete. But within this project, such frontier heroes have been treated differently than in any of the previously discussed biographies or general histories. Instead of dwelling on the "heroes," this project has focused on developing a partial picture of the market hunting trade, and in the process those woodsmen have largely only been mentioned when acknowledging their involvement within the commercial endeavors of the long hunters.

Developing a realistic study of the long hunters' professional activities and historical contributions has taken two avenues within this research project. The next two chapters will include an explanation of the hunters' social culture, their methods of business and the talents which allowed them to survive and even prosper in the Middle



Ground wilderness for extended periods of time. Found within the fourth chapter of this research is an extensive chronology of the time period, people and events most associated with the Cumberland long hunter. Never before has such a chronology been presented, which combines the highlights of the recognized heroes with the contributions of the lesser known, more common woodsmen who frequented the lands surrounding the Cumberland drainage.

The final goal of this project is not to destroy or trivialize the lives of those long hunters who contributed to the maturation of the American frontiersmen. Rather, the goal is to challenge the notions in America's popular culture by promoting a clearer picture of who those woodsmen actually were, and thereby offer an understanding of how such notions were first born, and why such perceptions have continued to grow right along with their maternal United States.

CHAPTER II  
THE NATURAL MAN AND HIS EDEN

April 24, 1769

My Dear Old Friend,

I arrived six days ago from hunting with a good cargo of beef and delivered the same into the King's store.

I shall set out in four or five days on my grand hunt of the summer season. I don't expect to return until next November, if the Indians will be pleased to let me stay in the woods.

I shall take with me thirty-six men all well armed. With them I can stand a good gamble with the savage rascals. You may depend on the news of Pontiac being killed at Cahokia on the 20th of this instant, we expect war every day with the Indians. Mr. Morgan has given you a more particular account of the news and affairs as we stand here. Mr. Morgan is in good health, Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Rigby the same. Mr. Rigby intends to come home in about six weeks from this date. By him I shall send letters to you and my wife. This comes by Colonel Cole by the way of New England or Rhode Island or elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

I am your old friend as before coming to the Illinois Country. If this should come safe to you, please to remember me to all our friends.

Joseph Hollingshead<sup>2</sup>

When the long hunter Joseph Hollingshead sat at a desk and penned this letter, he had just returned from spending six months in the heart of the Cumberland River country hunting buffalo "beef." Just two days after Hollingshead arrived back in Kaskaskia, the Ottawa war chief Pontiac was killed under suspicious circumstances in the neighboring town of Cahokia.<sup>3</sup> As the hunter hinted in his letter, the Illinois country was rumbling with accusations concerning

the responsible parties and rumors of impending trouble from the Indians living in the area.

Any good news of Hollingshead's successful hunting trip was surely tempered by both the disturbing news of Pontiac's murder, and the implications such an incident presented for the English and French settlers, the British army, and of course the woodsmen who made their living hunting. But as Hollingshead mentioned, he planned to "set out in four or five days" for his "grand hunt of the summer season." He only hoped that the Indians, or as he called them the "savage rascals" would be "pleased" to let him and his party of 36 men stay in the Cumberland forests long enough to make a profit.

As Joseph Hollingshead dipped his grey-goose quill in a bottle of freshly-mixed ink, springtime flourished along the Mississippi River Valley. The peach and apple trees blossomed, dusting the ground with a sprinkling of white and pink pedals. The daily rain showers and the bright sun allowed the grasses to green quickly and grow tall. The new, spring wheat sprouted above the dark, rich, river bottom fields. Cows bellowed for their new calves to come close, and the sheep were thick, heavy and ready to shear. Each morning brought a cool, moist stillness to the air. And each afternoon, gentle breezes tempered the warming of the sun. The earth and the animals seemed vibrant, full of hope.<sup>4</sup>

As Hollingshead finished the first paragraph of his letter, he too expressed a hope typical of the spring season. Even though rumors ran rampant and war loomed in the imaginations of countless Englishmen and a few hopeful French, Hollingshead was determined to continue doing what he had always done: market hunt. Ever since woodsmen first hunted the land west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, south of the Ohio and north of the Tennessee River, war and hope had existed simultaneously in the lives of such Middle Ground long hunters as Joseph Hollingshead. War always meant dealing with Indians, sometimes the French, and would eventually mean contending with the British. Hope always involved a fresh start, the promise of a new season, the projected bounty of young crops, a profit to be made in land speculation and the harvesting of skins, meat, tallow and furs.

The spring of 1769 was no different to Hollingshead than any other springtime since he first came to the Illinois country to hunt for the trader George Morgan. His personal land of Eden was seldom free of violence, seldom free of any pain. No matter how talented Hollingshead or any of the long hunters were, their chances to "live like natural men" came only in short episodes, woven among the hardships of living in a violent frontier, the desire to make money, and the need to return to civilization for various supplies.

Even under such circumstances, the long hunters spent more time in the woods than they did back in the settlements. For those determined men like Joseph Hollingshead, who spent months at a time venturing into the captivating, yet bloody ground of "Ken-ta-ke," or trekking along the tributaries of the Cumberland River in the heart of Tennessee, their time of excellence survived less than two decades. During that limited time, such woodsmen went to the Middle Ground to explore, to hunt and to see the land that Indian lore so embellished, the land made mysterious by the oral tradition of distant travelers and grey-haired old hunters. Upon seeing the virgin bounty of so vast an unspoiled wilderness, they sought out and harvested the game it held with such superb efficiency that they were, in a big way, the means to their own end.

Out of such circumstances, America's popular culture has fabricated quite an image of what a colonial woodsman, a frontier hunter was really like. During the course of this text, it will be easy to see how such a heroic, romantic persona referred to in the Introduction of this research was born during the exploration and settlement years of the colonial era. But looking beyond the tall tales, past the idyllic notions of a natural man, a rather complex, yet common woodsman emerges who was himself just like his environment. He was full of contradictions.

## The Imperfect Hero

As in James Fenimore Cooper's character Hawkeye, the frontier American hero has traditionally arrived on the scene from an undisclosed location, always just in time, and quite often by surprise. In doing that, Cooper's woodsman never failed, always made the correct choices and never contradicted himself. As a result, Cooper perpetuated the popular notion surrounding the natural man living in the hardwood forests. In The Last of the Mohicans, when Hawkeye first found Cora, Alice, and Lieutenant Heyward in the wilderness and quickly rescued them from the evil Mingo warrior Magua, the scene was typical of Cooper's imagination. Hawkeye and his Indian brothers materialized from out of the shadowed forest to surprise all involved. Up until that moment, the British soldier Heyward had no idea that his band of wilderness travelers was, in fact, kidnapped by Magua. The party's serenity suddenly exploded when the Mingo:

. . .plunged, at a single bound, into the opposite thicket. At the next instant the form of Chingachgook appeared from the bushes, looking like a specter in its paint, and glided across the path in swift pursuit. Next followed the shout of Uncas, when the woods were lighted by a sudden flash, that was accompanied by the sharp report of the hunter's rifle. (37)

While Magua barely escaped, enabling the tale to continue in Cooper fashion, Chingachgook, Uncas, and Hawkeye rescued the three pilgrims by appearing at the most opportune moment.

Hawkeye and the two Mohicans gave a hot chase for a brief time, but prudently decided to avoid any possible ambush from Magua's allies. Throughout Cooper's multi-volume works, Hawkeye never loses such heroic, staunch qualities.

The woodsmen of the colonial frontier were not so one dimensional, though, as Cooper, Doddridge, and others preferred to paint them in their prose. Even the best of the woodsmen--legends like Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton--did not always make the right decision or arrive in the nick of time to save the forlorn and the helpless. In the fall of 1773, while Daniel Boone led a group of Yadkin Valley neighbors toward Kentucky, the party was ambushed near Wallen's Ridge, an area just east of the now famous Cumberland Gap. During the course of one trying day, Boone had mistakenly allowed the main party to become separated from the young men who were driving the extra livestock. As nightfall blanketed the forest ridge, the settlers made camp along the trail, in several separate sites, with Boone planning to gather everyone up in the morning. But just before dawn on October 9, Shawnees ambushed the stock drivers and killed most of the young men and one of the slaves in the small party. Boone's eldest son James was among two of the boys who were shot in the hips with arrows, and then tortured slowly by the Shawnee. Lawrence Elliott notes that Boone had always "looked forward to a long and useful life" for his son, but due to the hunter's

miscalculations about the likelihood of any Indian dangers, his son's life was snuffed out in a most horrible way (71-74). In all five of his Leatherstocking novels, Cooper never once allowed his hero Hawkeye to commit such folly at the expense of the helpless.

And, unlike Hawkeye who flawlessly tracked the kidnapped band for days, Daniel Boone could not always follow correctly the "sign" along the forest floor. Boone sometimes failed, even when the trail was relatively fresh and involved the life of a dear friend. One rainy Kentucky evening in the winter of 1770, Boone's hunting partner John Stewart did not return to the pre-arranged rendezvous spot. After waiting for a week, Boone searched for days, trying in vain to locate his favorite hunting partner. Elliott acknowledges that the master woodsman only found a cold bed of ashes and, nearby, a tree with the initials J.S. carved in its trunk. Not until five years later, when Boone was directing the construction of the Wilderness Road to Kentucky, did he finally learn of Stewart's untimely end. A party of his road cutters found a human skeleton in the hollow of a downed sycamore tree. The skeleton had a broken arm and next to it lay Stewart's old powder horn. After five years, Boone finally understood the mystery surrounding the disappearance of John Stewart (61). For many years, Boone was most likely haunted by his inability to follow his wounded friend's trail. Yet, in contrast, Cooper



perpetuated the popular perception of a woodman's undaunted skill by always affording his protagonist the luxuries of substantial strength, endurance, and wisdom to follow the right sign, in the right direction, and undoubtedly in time to save the life of a friend. As Allan Nevins proclaims in his introduction to The Leatherstocking Saga, Hawkeye and his band:

. . . follow the trail of captive Cora and Alice for days, scaling rocks, pushing through brush, crawling on the ground when in peril, and are still fresh and well panoplied at the end. (10)

After such a colossal effort, Hawkeye and his allies are not taxed in the least by the trauma. Instead they are hungry to end the long feud with their adversary, the evil Magua.

Whereas Hawkeye always rushed on and into danger in order to save the life of a less hardy individual, on at least one occasion, Simon Kenton's hesitation resulted in the lost life of a companion. The unfortunate incident happened in 1775, near Kenton's temporary camp at Blue Licks. While Kenton made a short journey away from the camp, he left a man named Hendricks at the shelter. During Kenton's absence, Shawnees surprised and captured Hendricks. By firelight, the Indians spent their time torturing their captive. When Kenton returned in the darkness, he spotted the distant campfire, but fearing a large number of Indians, he elected to conceal himself a good length away from the ominous glow. The next day, when the long hunter approached the deserted fire site, he realized his mistake and the

awful death Hendricks must have experienced. Edna Kenton acknowledges in her work Simon Kenton: His Life and Period that, even as an old man, Simon Kenton still recalled with deep regret his hesitation and the misfortune which Hendricks endured as a result (66-68). In a completely contrary vein, throughout his five epic novels Cooper never allowed Hawkeye to contradict either his values or fail in his abilities. Allan Nevins underscores this literary phenomenon by stating that "Cooper makes him [Hawkeye] perfectly consistent from young manhood to death" (16).<sup>5</sup>

With the lessons learned from such misguided adventures, Boone and Kenton did prove themselves when future circumstances afforded the opportunity. During one of many sieges at Boonesborough, Simon Kenton rushed into the middle of a vicious melee outside the fort gates and rescued a wounded and downed Boone (Elliott 112-13, Kenton 86-88, Thwaites 141). And on separate occasions, the seasoned woodsmen Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton both demonstrated superb trail reading. For several days, Boone followed the trail of a band of Shawnee who had kidnapped his daughter and two other girls of Boonesborough. After reading difficult sign and covering many miles, Boone's party ambushed the Indians and rescued the girls unhurt (Elliott 104-09, Kenton 76-77). In 1790, a middle-aged Kenton crossed the Ohio River to the north, followed days-old sign and a trail that split several times, and

successfully rescued James Livingston. Edna Kenton calls the rescue "one of the great technical and intuitive feats of Kenton's life," for over the course of the episode Kenton "chose right each time" (197-200).

As manifested through the exploits of Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton, not even the best of the long hunters could always imitate the stalwart images perpetuated through early America's popular culture or in the fictional tales of writers like Cooper. The woodsmen of the colonial frontier did not possess the perfected abilities, or the pure, perfect blend of Indian and "civilized" notions of morality, justice and good judgement which Hawkeye consistently exhibited. Rather, the woodsmen, who ventured into the western regions of Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas and who eventually poured over into the Kentucky and Tennessee wilderness were a blend of several different cultures, a mix of various codes of judgement, and a complex blend of morality. Some heritages were understandably more adaptable for the wilderness life. But none of the cultures from which any of the frontiersmen came were a perfect blend of Indian and white beliefs as found in the tales of heroes like Hawkeye. Any direct influence of the Indian culture on any of the frontiersmen usually happened only as a result of skirmishes, warfare, or the woodsman's capture and subsequent adoption into one of the various Woodland Indian tribes.<sup>6</sup>

Like every other element of colonial population, the middle colony woodsmen traced their heritage to one of several countries in the Old World. Many hunters, such as the Bledsoe brothers, claimed a British lineage, and some, like the stocky Kasper Mansker, betrayed their German heritage through a heavy accent. Still other hunters hailed from Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and a few like Jacques Thimote de Monbruen spent a large part of their lives in New France.

According to Joseph Doddridge, a large percentage of the frontiersmen who went into the wilderness of Tennessee and Kentucky were Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists. Complementing such dominant doctrines and traditions were a sprinkling of Catholics and Episcopalians (208-11). Quite to his dismay, the Anglican minister Charles Woodmason found that most of the Carolina back country people "seem'd to be all inclined to turn Baptist--and showed no regard for the [Anglican] church" (21). And like Daniel Boone, some woodsmen took with them to the frontier a strong Quaker heritage, and thus were burdened in particular with a theology which seldom worked well with the harsh realities of the colonial frontier (Elliott 1, 15-17, Thwaites 1, 2, 4-7, 10-12, 14, 33). Some of the woodsmen who eventually hunted for long periods of time in the Middle Ground were undoubtedly agnostic, if not atheist. But reflections of any men who held such beliefs have been lost to time, for

most of the original observers who documented the colonial frontier were firmly rooted in their own particular religious persuasions. And like most writers of the time, they were typically ethnocentric. The Presbyterian minister and American patriot Joseph Doddridge, and the Anglican and staunch loyalist Charles Woodmason are two perfect contrasting examples. Although they describe the same general population and culture, each man repeatedly exhibits a strong religious and political bias through his individual interpretations of Middle Colony frontier life.

#### Contradictions in the Land of Eden

When such a hodgepodge of cultures, religious beliefs and experiences was thrown against the background of a wilderness previously void of such influences, many contradictions understandably arose. These conflicts manifested themselves within the personal and community life of every frontier individual. The borderland family could not always (to use an old phrase) practice what they tried to preach. They could not always "Love thy neighbor as Thyself." Nor did they always wish to show such benevolence. To a wounded father, desperately clinging to a smoking flintlock, besieged within a cabin crowded with terrified children and a dead wife, the values personified by Cooper's hero or attributed to Doddridge's woodsman father would have surely appeared incomprehensible. Out of

a need to survive, the individuals, the families, the fledgling communities adopted a workable system of beliefs.

The frontier, as far as morality and religion were concerned, started just outside the city limits of the various towns located far to the east of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains. Practicing the mandates of one's religious beliefs, obeying and administering the judgements of the civil law, were easily done when protected within the sanctuary of a "civilized" environment. It was much easier for a people to follow their convictions when actually residing within a "city of brotherly love" like Philadelphia, than in the western wilderness, far removed from the protective hug of churches, courts, soldiers and taxes. As families moved to the westernmost regions of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas, they undoubtedly took with them their established sense of morality, but they also left far behind the trappings which made it easier "to practice what they preached."

Joseph Doddridge devoted a great deal of text to such challenges of the colonial frontier people.<sup>7</sup> At the time of his birth, the western boundaries of Pennsylvania and Virginia were obscure, for the government had not yet run the border beyond the Alleghenies, thus fully dividing the two colonies. As a consequence, there were no government-sponsored courts, no public laws, no taxes or tax supported army other than a token presence of a small contingent of

British Regulars. Doddridge's circumstance was not unique, for all along the frontier each lonely cabin, station, blockhouse, stockade, or budding settlement existed under much the same circumstances. They did not have the privilege of official government support or the benefits of an established community.

A finished, permanent church with stone walls, gothic windows and a resident clergy was perhaps the most obvious symbol of tranquility coming to the frontier. Woodmason felt that only such an institution would ever "civilize" the frontier people. Doddridge did not see such a building or hear a traditional Sunday service until he was about ten years old, and that message was heard within a structure east, "in Baltimore county, Maryland." For the young man Doddridge, a traditional observation of Sunday worship merely meant "a day of rest for the aged, and a play day for the young" (189). While traveling through the Carolina back country in 1766, Charles Woodmason found much the same situation, for other than the people at Lynch Creek, the frontier community was "more rude, ignorant and void of things, than any circle hitherto among." Woodmason believed their ignorance was due to "not having a minister--heard or read a chapter in scriptures, or heard a sermon in their days" (23). Churches and the customary order of services were still all new to the Carolina frontier. On the first

day of 1768, the Anglican missionary describes his congregation at Granny Quarter Creek as:

. . .the lowest pack of wretches my eyes ever saw, or that I have met with in these woods--as wild as the very deer--no making of them sit still during service--but they will be in and out--forward and backward the whole time (women especially) as bees to and fro to their hives--all this must be born with at the beginning of things--nor can be mended till churches are built, and the country reduc'd to some form. (31)

After a long year of traveling, discoursing, baptizing and marrying his crude and infrequent church members, Woodmason finally complains in his journal that:

The open profanation of the Lord's day in this province is one of the most crying sins in it--and is carried to a great height--among the low class, it is abus'd by hunting, fishing, fowling, and racing--by the women in frolicking and wantonness. By others in drinking bouts and card playing. . . . (47)

Any formal gathering of like-minded believers was seldom and irregular along the Middle Colony frontier. Practicing clergy, an actual church building or a combination of both was rarely seen. Any professional men of the cloth who were bold enough to go into the midst of such "rude, ignorant" people were indeed very few in number. Out of necessity to see as many people as possible, such frontier missionaries traveled thousands of miles each year, often in unfavorable circumstances. In 1767, Charles Woodmason rode horseback an estimated 3,185 miles, on occasion "living a fortnight on only bacon and eggs" or existing for long periods on nothing but "Indian corn" and



many times swimming several creeks and rivers in a single day, arriving at his next destination long after dark and "wet to the skin" (34-35). Within those 3,000 plus miles travelled, Woodmason "raised and attended occasionally" 20 different "congregations." Only one of those congregations was seen by the Anglican as often as "once every other Sunday," with over half of his flock visited only "once a month" or "once a quarter" (26).

As far as a fixed structure was concerned, if any existed, they were generally shared by ministers of several different denominations at sporadic times during the month. Unless of course, like Woodmason found, political alliances of Irish and Scotch Presbyterians occasionally kept an Anglican loyalist from using a neighborhood building, or even conducting a service, baptism or the sacrament of marriage (42).

It was even so after the American Revolution, when Kentucky was still plagued with Indian troubles. Edna Kenton recounts one such "church service" that was held in "Old Man Taylor's Cabin" during a warm summer evening in 1786. Almost the entire population of Kenton's Station had gathered within the log structure and were content in their fellowship when Black Snake and four of his warriors snuck up to the cabin for a "look see." After quietly spying through the cracks between the horizontal logs, Black Snake withdrew and did not attack the people as they worshipped,

for as the Shawnee later explained, "We goes. No hurt white people praying. Great Spirit would be angry" (180). Those gathered at Taylor's cabin for a time of worship were unaware how close they had actually come that humid night to a calamity.

Without regular meetings to bind the like-minded, without a dominant structure to suggest permanence to the community, without a place to gather regularly and a minister to instruct them in proper behavior, then the frontier settlers had to decide for themselves how to live. As noted earlier, out of this phenomenon evolved a rather lax attitude for the sabbath and a naivete' about social custom and traditional church services. In a community where Woodmason found that "very few can read [and] fewer write," the "knowledge of Christ" was shallow at best (52). Woodmason found that not a single Bible or prayer book existed in many of his congregations, and any religious principles were learned by rote within the family setting (61).

As a direct influence of this "frontier brand" of religion, personal convictions quickly lost any frivolous traditions which were much more easily administered and followed within the eastern seaboard hamlets of European-style civilization. And in a community void of any government-supported civil law, the Middle Colony frontier people's "basic" concepts of religion combined with their

sense of "fair play" translated into a set of informal, commonly understood frontier laws.

As previously suggested, many different Christian dominations were present along the colonial frontier. Since the main reason for the existence of the various dominations was primarily differing opinions concerning New Testament theology, the frontier communities tended to avoid any doctrinal differences when developing a community-wide civil law. In an effort to find a common understanding, a type of Old Testament civil law, although very basic, evolved as the sporadic collections of cabins grew into small communities. Doddridge refers to such verbal, commonly understood liberties and punishments as "Moses' Law" (187). Without the organized law that was present in the eastern domains of the colonies, Doddridge remembers the frontier people as "a law unto themselves" (185).

This adaptation of such preconceived notions of behavior, morality and personal accountability to the realities of the colonial frontier started with the individual's responsibility. And the resulting mandates often brought out the harshest punishments under "Moses' Law." Thievery was a prime example. As Doddridge remembers it, the first settlers to the frontier "had a kind of innate or hereditary detestation of the crime of theft," and all thieves had to be whipped. And whipping meant under the Old Testament law, 40 lashes minus one (187). All thieves had

the lashes vigorously administered to their backs, whether the convicted was male or female. And banishment always followed the public whipping.

Whipping did not stop with convicted thieves. Slaves and bond servants were a common sight along much of the Middle Colony frontier. And the swinging of hickory switches, leather strips and belts against bare backs, buttocks and legs was a popular form of punishment administered to slave and servant alike. Doddridge recalls that such regulation of behavior was often administered by the masters with a certain relish, with friends invited to share "a jug of rum and water" while they took turns flogging the bare backside of the strung-up offender. Such a process often took several hours, with the whipping stopping only long enough for the wounds to "cool down" and the whippers to share another round or two of the jug (192).

Doddridge claims that he only witnessed the cruelest side of slavery in Maryland (189-97). Slavery in that province sometimes manifested itself in dark ways, for Nicholas Cresswell once witnessed in that colony "the quarter of a Negro man chained to a tree" because the slave had murdered his overseer (20). But slavery and the bonding of servants was present along much of the territory which Doddridge, Cresswell, and Woodmason frequented in their lifetimes.

During the winter of 1768, the long hunter James Smith journeyed for 11 months in the Tennessee wilderness, and Smith notes in his journal that much of the time was spent exclusively in company with a mulatto slave named Jamie (127-32). When part of Daniel Boone's settlement party was ambushed just west of Wallen's Ridge in September of 1773, Elliott notes that one of the two slaves camped with the stock drivers was killed along with Boone's son during the Shawnee's early morning attack (71-74). Even as far west as the Illinois country, slavery was a traditionally profitable trade. George Morgan, both junior partner and the Illinois representative of the trading firm Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, regularly traded in slaves as well as hides, furs and buffalo meat. His clerks routinely listed and summarized the Negro men, women, and children who were traded as slaves in the same ledgers as they listed deerskins, tallow, and salted meat. According to a letter written to Nicholas Chapman by one of Morgan's clerks, the slave trade was so brisk that Chapman had better respond "at the first opportunity" so Morgan might save Chapman his requested amount of slaves. Otherwise "the merchandise" would go quickly to other clients (19 January 1767).

Besides public floggings and banishments, fisticuff courts were often held to decide insolvable issues or someone's displaced honor. Within the common class, from which most of the long hunters came, punching, biting, using

thumbs to gouge out eyes and vicious kicking were resorted to, as Doddridge notes, much more often than a duel with pistols or swords (188). Whippings and rough and tumble fights, though, were not the only form of justice adopted along the colonial frontier. The border was populated thinly and everyone knew one another well. Such pockets of settlers often existed for much of the time confined to a cluster of cabins, a stockade or perhaps a wooden fort. Under these conditions public opinion, according to Doddridge, answered "the purposes of legal government better than it would in a dense population" (184). As a result, a type of frontier "gospel" or code of conduct evolved along the Middle Colony frontier. This gospel strongly encouraged men to volunteer for militia duty, to manifest bravery in war, to labor energetically on a neighbor's cabin, to often support certain and rather (as Woodmason and Cresswell found) rebellious political views, and to possess a healthy dose of candor. Along the Middle Colony frontier, the opinion of the other men in the area meant everything to the colonial woodsman. And such attributes were valued highly by the frontier populace.

If a man, or for that matter a woman, fell from favor with the neighbors, then hateful remarks and cruel comments voiced publicly by one-time friends could cut deeper and bleed longer than the worst of whippings. Doddridge calls such oral whippings "hating the offender out" (185). And

oftentimes a lazy individual, a cowardly man, an unfaithful spouse or a lying woman could be "driven out" of the community by an unrelenting barrage of judgemental remarks. Under such circumstances it is understandable why, in 1782, the mounted Kentucky militia bolted blindly into the devastating ambush awaiting them at Blue Licks after Hugh McGary shouted down the more cautious men, and called them all (including Daniel Boone) "cowards."<sup>8</sup>

If peer pressure, verbal floggings, honorable bouts of fisticuffs, or whippings were not enough pressure to force a solution to the problem at hand, then a form of Old Testament "an eye for an eye" retaliation, even extermination, played itself out through a multitude of scenarios. Such a form of civil law usually involved large bands of vigilantes who sought "justice" for the popular majority. These armed parties went by several different names, served various causes, and were sometimes headed by now-famous long hunters.

If conflicts with Indians arose, then armed men, called militia, searched and tried to destroy the "seed" of the problem. Simon Kenton formed his skilled band of "Kenton's Boys" for this very purpose. If religious and political differences got in the way of community harmony, then as Charles Woodmason discovered, "a band of rude fellows" of Presbyterian persuasion might come to an Anglican church meeting and set "57 dogs" to fighting amongst the gathering.

And keep the dogs snarling, biting and lunging until the poor Anglican outsider gave up and sent everyone home (45). If what Woodmason calls "rogues" and "banditti" were a problem, then some of the same men who brought the fighting dogs to church might assemble themselves as a band of "regulators" (55).

One Sunday, Carolina regulators made it their mission to track down and kill the robbers and horse thieves who had previously harassed Woodmason. The Anglican minister remembers that, at the close of one sermon, the congregation:

. . .took to arms and pursu'd them [highwaymen] and at 15 miles end came up with them. One man was wounded whom his companions carried off. They [regulators] recovered several horses and much goods. (29)

Despite their occasional laudable actions, Woodmason would characterize the same Carolina regulators as "rogues" when they committed "great insolences" in "wanton wickedness and impudence" by flogging all the constables and sheriffs who tried to serve legal writs in the King's name. Woodmason sums up his accusations by claiming that the Carolina back country is "now without law, gospel, trade or money" due to the regulator's "licentiousness" (54-55).

Such an independent sense of justice repeatedly clashed with the heavy hand of Imperial authority. All along the Middle Colony frontier, wherever British soldiers tried to impose the King's wishes, then the backwoods people



eventually formed a "committee of justice." And as a result, a band of regulators volunteered to render the judgement and "set things right." During the spring and summer of 1765, James Smith records in his journal that he formed such a committee of "Black Boys," so called because the members smeared their face with blackened grease. Smith's regulators tried to control the unjust, yet officially endorsed Indian trade. His men were bold, ambitious, going so far as to lay siege to Fort Loudoun (Pennsylvania) until the British authorities agreed to their demands (122-27).

Life along the frontier, void of any organized churches, civil courts or peace officers, gave birth to a harsh system of expected behavior and personal beliefs. A network of expectations and punishments slowly matured which sometimes contradicted the earlier values expressed through a frontier family's religious heritage or culture.

#### A Contradiction of the Deepest Kind

The New Testament value of "loving thy neighbor as thyself" was not just challenged when considering the treatment of fellow frontier families, slaves or servants, but also when dealing with the Woodland Indians. As discussed previously, Cooper's Hawkeye judged all men justly, by no matter what the color of their skin. And Doddridge's "son of a trackless forest" came into the

wilderness with: "manners stern, of understanding strong, / As nature rude but yet in feeling, mild." Life was never that simple, never that naive beyond the boundaries of the idyllic communities in the East. The moment a woodsman draped his shooting pouch and powder horn over his shoulder, grabbed his long rifle and set off into the western woods, he immediately put into jeopardy any Christian ethics he might have possessed. Especially when the armed woodsman confronted an angry band of Shawnee, a Cherokee war party, or even a lone brave who could be ambushed easily. And by the time Joseph Hollingshead sat inside his humble quarters in Kaskaskia and penned his letter, the proverb "the only good Indian is a dead Indian" was already an accepted axiom of colonial frontier life.

The challenge of dealing with the Indians was perhaps the biggest area of controversy within the lives of the frontier community, especially for men like Hollingshead who wandered deep into the wilderness of the Middle Ground. Both the long hunter's business opportunities and his personal safety relied to a great degree upon his relationship with the various Indian tribes who shared the hunting grounds of the Cumberland River drainage. Thus, the apprehensions expressed by Joseph Hollingshead concerning any possible repercussions resulting from the controversial killing of Pontiac were of primary concern to the veteran hunter.

The concerns expressed through Hollingshead's letter were based upon experience and well circulated reports of past disasters. As an example, just two years prior to Hollingshead's anticipated "grand hunt of the summer season" several theories circulated the Illinois country when one of George Morgan's bateaux met with a tragic, yet mysterious end while traveling down the Ohio River. One report came in from Devereaux Smith, who spotted a half-submerged bateau on the north side of the Ohio "about 20 miles above the falls." Devereaux was bound for Fort Pitt, and his bateau crew had been poling since before dawn up the "Cherokee side" of the Ohio River when they spotted "a boat lying on the Shawnee shore."<sup>9</sup> Concerned and curious about the fellow river boatmen, Devereaux ordered his crew to cross over to the north side of the river.

When he reached the damaged boat, Devereaux found the cargo scattered about and many of the boxes, bales and kegs torn asunder. Devereaux notes with great care in his journal that:

Several boxes of guns broke open, sundry kegs, casks and boxes of merchandise stove [in] apparently with tomahawks. Some bales of blanketing cut open and a box directed for Edward Cole Esquire with another box of looking glasses broke to pieces. On the shore lay two or three large match coats, two guns, some stroud cases, with a large kettle which had been used for cooking. (17 July 1767)

For the next 11 miles up the Ohio River, Devereaux and his crew continued to find a variety of goods (including a keg

of pickled sturgeon and a trunk of writing paper) scattered at several spots along the shore. Devereaux summarizes the scene in his journal entry by noting that "through the whole of this, there was no appearance of bloodshed." He concludes his report by commenting that he figured the crew had "capitulated" and left the boat to the "savages." And none of Morgan's lost crew ever straggled in to any of the frontier settlements.

Scenes such as the one described by Devereaux Smith and suggested by the reservations of Hollingshead two years later; the images of the charred remains of Kenton's new found friend spread across a fire pit; the skeleton of Boone's long lost hunting partner discovered crumpled in the hollow base of a downed sycamore, all understandably fueled anxiety, mistrust, and even hatred towards the various Indian nations. Every time such anxiety and hatred collided with the woodsman's personal sense of justice, a complex set of contradictions deepened along the Allegheny frontier.

Simon Kenton manifested this contradiction perhaps as much as any of the woodsmen who roamed the Kentucky and Tennessee areas. Kenton possessed an unusually high sense of honor regarding his foes in war and his friends in peace. To Kenton his foe and his friend could be one and the same person. Including an Indian. In September, of 1778, Kenton had the misfortune to be captured by a band of Shawnee braves headed by a large, boisterous, intimidating brave

named Bo-nah. As a result, for the next several weeks Kenton was subjected to the "hospitality" of the Shawnee nation and endured repeated torture, the extended suffering of running seven gauntlets, the trauma of being condemned twice to burn at the stake, and the agony of having an arm broken and his skull punctured by the pipe bowl end of a pipe tomahawk. All this happened because he was out wrestled, knocked to the ground and captured by Bo-nah.

Yet over twenty years later, when Kenton had settled in the Ohio wilderness near present day Springfield, he welcomed several Indian families to build their hunting camps near his own cabin and on his personal homestead. Among the small contingent of Shawnee Indians were several of his former adversaries, many of whom had experienced first-hand the marksmanship and stealth of Kenton. Countless nights were spent around a campfire, where former enemies, now friends, shared their different perspectives of past battles and various escapades. Among Kenton's permanent following at Springfield was Bo-nah.

As Edna Kenton describes it, Bo-nah "lingered for years about this locality" (251). And Kenton patiently accommodated the now "squat, large and heavy" Shawnee who had once been the cause of so much pain for the woodsman. Not even when Bo-nah begged repeatedly for presents at the door of Kenton's cabin or assumed a seat at Kenton's table did the woodsman ever turn away his former adversary and

ruthless captor. One day, when Kenton was entertaining a few guests and Bo-nah had invited himself to their dinner table, the old woodsman once again offered the Indian a chair. But while Kenton was busy carving a roasted deer ham, the Shawnee finally pushed his benefactor a bit too far. Bo-nah began to brag rather loudly and overly sentimental about how he had once "bested" Kenton and had forced the woodsman "to extend his arms" so the Indian could tie Kenton's wrist's together. Kenton possessed a quick and sometimes violent temper, and at those words the frontiersman lunged at the Indian while swinging his carving knife at the throat of the insulter. Bo-nah showed prudent behavior and quickly left the dinner party. Edna Kenton writes that when later asked why the old woodsman just didn't kill Bo-nah, Kenton responded as if offended by shouting, "NO! it is peace, suh! What Bo-nah did was an act of war" (252).

The apparent contradictions within Kenton did not stop with his sense of fair play with Bo-nah. According to the traditional stories of the frontier, Simon Kenton never once took a scalp. If any scalps were taken, another woodsman in the "hunting" party did the honors, like Joe Lemon, who according to one eye witness, lifted scalps even when the corpses were half buried and "smelled badly" (Kenton 203). But such a particular code of honor did not prevent Kenton from retaliating in other equally morbid ways. On one raid

into the Ohio country, in which Kenton and 30 or so of "Kenton's boys" took part, the woodsmen surprised and killed three Indians. According to Edna Kenton, some of the boys wanted to skin the dead Indians and make "parchment and razor straps" but their leader refused them the opportunity. Yet when Kenton recognized one of the downed warriors as an Indian who had been previously "paroled" at Fort Harmar, Kenton allowed the men to sever the warrior's head and mount it a top a 20 foot pole (206). According to Kenton's sense of frontier justice, a paroled enemy who broke his word was fair game.

Although Kenton practiced a complicated, yet high brand of frontier justice, he often formed alliances with backwoodsmen who appeared to contradict everything by which Kenton rationalized his actions. Kenton formed one such partnership in protecting the border with a woodsman named Lewis Wetzel. Lewis was one of a couple of Wetzel men who made their living by going on long hunts for Indians rather than deer, buffalo or bear. Instead of trading skins, tallow and furs for supplies, Lewis bought his powder and ball with the bounty on scalps. Wetzel killed men, women, children. Anytime. Anywhere. It did not matter to him. Wetzel appeared to contradict any sort of frontier justice, especially Simon Kenton style. As Edna Kenton recalls, even when Wetzel was arrested for "shooting an Indian in time of peace," Kenton led a large party of his boys to Fort

Washington where they quickly spirited away Lewis Wetzel. For the next several months the Indian killer stayed in Limestone, Kentucky, and went with Kenton on several scouting forays (192-93).

When the Indians, and even the African slaves were considered for any length of time, eventually the frontier culture had to justify their perceptions and handling of the "dark races." Through that justification the frontier culture betrayed its deepest contradiction. In an effort to rationalize what had happened along the frontier during his lifetime, Joseph Doddridge devoted a lengthy essay to a discussion concerning the origin of the races and the relationship between the different peoples. Through a process of supposed scientific analysis (by the time Doddridge wrote his "Notes," the Age of Enlightenment had gained American acceptance) he comes to the conclusion that "the original color of mankind was white" (91). Thus, he believed that every other race descended from and was inferior to the white race. The various colors of the skin, as far as Doddridge could discern, are only "occasioned by the influence of different climates and modes of living" on the people (92). Doddridge goes on to note carefully that such a theory is definitely true, but what the frontier culture (and much of the more settled young United States) has done with such thinking is totally repulsive. Although



his voice is definitely anti-slavery and full of sarcasm in the following segment, Doddridge explains clearly the thinking of the frontier people when he comments:

An African is black, has a wooly head, and a flat nose, he is therefore not entitled to the rights of human nature! But he is a docile being possessed of but little pride of independence, and a subject of the softer passions, who rather than risk his life in the defense of his liberty will "Take the pittance and the lash." He is, therefore, a proper subject for slavery.

The Indian has a copper colored skin, and therefore the rights of human nature do not belong to him! But he will not work, and his high sense of independence, and strong desire of revenge, would place in danger the property and life of the oppressor who should attempt to force him to labor. He is, therefore, to be exterminated; or at least despoiled of his country, and driven to some remote region where he must perish! (92)

Doddridge sums up his remarks by exclaiming that unfortunately such is the "logic of nations possessed of all the science of the world!--of Christian nations" (92).

Doddridge was criticizing the contradictions, the hypocrisy of his own frontier people. But through his angry discourse, the frontier community's rationalization behind enslaving Africans and killing Indians can be easily seen.

All along the Middle Colony frontier, a complex and often contradictory set of standards regarding the red and black man existed both within the various communities and the countless individuals. Joseph Doddridge anguished over his people's folly, while traders like George Morgan dealt in African "merchandise" and woodsmen like Daniel Boone brought slaves into Kentucky. Kenton would not kill Bo-nah

"in a time of peace," yet saved Lewis Wetzel from the hanging tree when Wetzel committed such an offense. When his hunting days were over, James Smith compassionately served as a Presbyterian missionary to Tennessee Indians. Shortly before he began his missionary work, 96 "Christian Indians" living in the Moravian towns along the Muskingum River were systematically bashed in the head with a large wooden mallet by border militia professing peaceful intentions. "Loving thy neighbor as thyself" did not always come easy along the colonial frontier.

#### Dealing with the Unknown

Besides the struggle within individuals over moral values, contradictions also existed between the frontier people's faith, knowledge, and the limited scientific research of the era. To the frontier community, superstitions held just as much validity as morality, civility, and faith.<sup>10</sup> Although the Age of Enlightenment was accelerating in Europe by the time long hunters were trekking along the Cumberland River, the practice of looking for the answers to all mysteries through scientific deduction had yet to establish itself firmly within the mind-set of the colonial frontier. According to Doddridge, until such enlightenment came to the Ohio Country, superstitious beliefs infiltrated almost every part of a backwoodsman's life.

Any misfortune which could not be explained through the logic which the frontiersman already possessed was very often blamed upon a jinx, a curse, a miscalculation of the zodiac signs, a witch or a demon. Doddridge states that diseases which inflicted internal organs, caused dropsy of the brain or even rickets in children were commonly blamed on witchcraft. As a result, "cures" rooted in ignorance and desperation were tried. Treatments included using the urine of the infected child or shooting an effigy of a "witch" with a lead rifle ball laced with silver (80).

As a result of witnessing such treatments and their consequences during his childhood, the retired minister strongly believed that the wilderness "was a region of superstition." And the acts of an "adventurous hunter" who looked for the "future good or bad luck in everything" about him only added credence to Doddridge's conclusion (65). The cry of a hawk, the baying of a hound, the screech of an owl, the weather, the sky at sunrise as well as the western horizon at dusk could all signify a prophecy or disturbing premonition to the common long hunter. According to Doddridge, the search for clues to the future even disturbed a man's slumber, for many woodsmen had dreams of two girls, one signifying good luck and the other bad luck, and depending upon which girl invaded a man's sleep, he was sure to receive quickly the appropriate endowment (65).

Doddridge also remembers some hunters, even when far from the watchful eye of the local clergy, would not practice their trade on Sunday for fear that they "would have bad luck all the rest of the week" (152). Such "bad luck" could even affect the hunter's gun and his ability to shoot straight. To remedy such a dilemma, and if a witch's spell was suspected, then as the frontiersman Bickley recalls, the hunters "would sometimes unbreech their rifles, and lay them in a clear running stream for a certain number of days," but if the water failed to wash the spell from the rifling, then the unfortunate hunter "would borrow patching from some other hunter, which transferred all the bad luck to the lender" (as quoted in Arnow 144-45).

Hunters who preferred to spend their days "traipsing along like natural men" found their world a complicated mix of faith, providence, mystery, social conflict, guerilla warfare, and superstition. And while each border family tried to find some sort of order in such a boiling pot of emotions, a distant and often absent government strove to dictate their lives. Principles which worked comparatively well within the comforts of an eastern seaboard city, within a small Virginia town or on a Pennsylvania Dutch farm, struggled to remain meaningful along the Middle Colony frontier. Yet the frontier continued to call hunters, explorers, land speculators and settlers. Many such frontier personalities could not resist the heed of the next

ridge to the west. To them, the woods, the wilderness signified more than just a maze of contradictions.

#### The Long Hunter's Eden

In 1733, William Byrd christened 20,000 acres of wilderness located at the confluence of the Dan and Irvin rivers in North Carolina as his personal "Land of Eden." Byrd was enchanted by the sight of such an unspoiled, magnificent wilderness, and once he had returned from his initial journey to "Eden," the Virginia aristocrat enthusiastically made plans to bring settlers into the area.

Byrd was probably not the first colonist to picture the land beyond the westernmost settlements as a land of Eden. And he was certainly not the last, for as long as there was uncharted wilderness lying to the west of the settlements, a strong fascination existed in colonial America to "go and see" the country. Land to the west of the settlement line was always envisioned as raw, untouched, unconquered. As time and progress swallowed Byrd and his North Carolina settlements, the hopes of such a land of Eden simply moved farther to the west. By 1761, when Elisha Walden first hunted the Cumberland Plateau, the hunter's land of Eden was nestled beyond the southern Appalachians in an area known as the Middle Ground.

To long hunters like Elisha Walden, Joseph Hollingshead and Daniel Boone, the Middle Ground was a mysterious land, a

peaceful, yet violent wilderness. And above all, a land large enough to get lost in for months at a time. The Middle Ground was roughly the land now known as the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. Such a wilderness was comprised of almost 83,000 square miles of blue grass meadows, dark forests free from undergrowth; thousands of acres of cane which stood taller than a man and gently swayed with the wind; clear creeks and meandering rivers, and of course a land crisscrossed with countless buffalo traces, age old trading routes and warrior paths.

To the north, the Ohio River hemmed in the Middle Ground and offered a relatively easy route of access to the interior wilderness lying to the south. Along the eastern border of the long hunter's land of Eden rose the southern Appalachian Mountains, a multiple system of ridges, valleys and rivers running roughly in a northeast to southwest direction. Along the southern edge of the Middle Ground wandered the Tennessee River, a waterway which bows deep to the south before finally turning west, then north and emptying into the Ohio River. And the Mississippi River valley formed the western border of the long hunter's personal hunting haven. By the mid eighteenth century, no one Indian nation claimed sole ownership of the vast wilderness. Rather the Illinois, Ohio and Iroquois Indians to the North and the Cherokee confederacy to the south used the land to hunt, war and trade with each other. The Middle

Ground fell between the northern and the southern Indian nations, offering both a buffer zone and what seemed like a perpetual hunting preserve.

Four principal rivers flowed through the heart of the Middle Ground. The Tennessee, the Cumberland (first called the Shawanoe River), the Green and the Kentucky rivers all offered quick access to the herds of buffalo and deer which flourished in what surely was a "land of milk and honey" for the long hunters. As made evident in Hollingshead's letter, personal safety was a major concern for the professional hunters, and not all of the four waterways offered the same degree of risk. The Tennessee (first designated the Cherokee River) was frequented by the southern Indian tribes and the Kentucky and Green rivers were relatively crowded with various warrior and hunting parties of the Ohio and Illinois Indians. The Cumberland was far from empty of Native American traffic. Since the river was about halfway between the southern and northern Indian tribes, and offered a slow easy current into the heart of the Middle Ground, it quickly became the main highway into the interior for many of the long hunters who traveled down the Ohio from Fort Pitt or for those, like Hollingshead, who stationed themselves in the Illinois country.

The Cumberland River begins along the western edges of the Blue Ridge Mountains in present day Kentucky and winds southwest into Tennessee, bends south and west (running

roughly parallel to the Tennessee River). Near present day Nashville the Cumberland turns to the west, and then to the north, wandering into western Kentucky and finally joining the Ohio River near the mouth of the Tennessee. As soon as the trouble with the French ended in North America, hunters like Elisha Walden and later Daniel Boone traveled west by horseback over the Blue Ridge mountains and hunted both the tributaries and the headwaters of the Cumberland. Long hunters like Uriah Stone and Kasper Mansker followed Walden and Boone and explored the Cumberland, eventually hunting the middle Cumberland country in and around present day Nashville. From the Illinois country and from Fort Pitt, scores of bateaux boats, dugouts, canoes and pirogues loaded with an assortment of supplies and manned by hopeful hunters and boatmen entered the mouth of the Cumberland via the Ohio water way.

Among the first of such long hunters was Jacques Thimote de Monbruen who successfully hunted buffalo for over ten years along the middle Cumberland and eventually settled in the Nashville area. The Cumberland River drainage offered the most promise and the surest odds for the market hunters.<sup>11</sup> The Green, the Kentucky and the Tennessee were also hunted, but the Cumberland proved to be the predominant route into the interior of the Middle Ground.

For many of the first white men who entered the Middle Ground their land of Eden appeared spectacular. And each of



the traders, missionaries, travelers and hunters who recorded their impressions of the country describes a land which no longer exists in the Kentucky and Tennessee regions. John Filson claims that Daniel Boone considered the Middle Ground a "Second Paradise" worthy of risking life and fortune (57). In correspondence between George Morgan and his brother, the Ohio River country was referred to as a "Garden of Eaden" just waiting to be occupied (23 February 1773). Unfortunately, Filson, Morgan and the rest detail a virgin wilderness hard to imagine in the last decade of the twentieth century. Self-styled anthropologists like John Bartram, Jean Bernard Bossu and Thomas Naird offer a systematic description of the soil, climate and "aborigines" found in the land west of the Appalachian crest and east of the Mississippi. The missionaries like John Heckwelder, Charles Woodmason and Charles Beatty describe in detail a savage land inhabited by "savages" of all colors. And visionaries like John Filson describe a land ripe for the taking, a wilderness truly worthy of being a "land of Eden."

In his 1784 version of his text, John Filson acknowledges that the Indians had traditionally called the Kentucky and Tennessee area the Middle Ground (8). For almost 50 pages, Filson offers description after description of prime acreage that would rival the best of twentieth century real estate advertisements. Filson definitely makes a hard sell for settlers to come to the land so recently

explored by frontier trailblazers such as Daniel Boone when he makes claims like:

In winter, which at most only lasts three months, commonly two, and is but seldom severe, the people are safe in bad houses; and the beasts have a good supply without fodder. The winter begins about Christmas, and ends about the first of March, at farthest does not exceed the middle of that month. Snow seldom falls deep or lies long. The west winds often bring storms, and the east winds clear the sky. . . . (22)

Filson continues to claim that, "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," and that in the Middle Ground there is a ". . . great plenty of fine cane, on which the cattle feed, and grow fat" (23).

Throughout his hard sell Filson fails to mention any inconvenience which might dissuade people from settling in the land called "Kentucke." On the other hand, Nicholas Cresswell, who eventually journeyed in company with a small contingent of woodsmen down the Ohio and up the Kentucky River in 1775, offers a somewhat different perspective of the hunter's personal land of Eden. Cresswell, who had never before experienced the magnitude, the depth of the colonial wilderness, tempers Filson's romantic view of a virgin forest long since vanished from the North American continent when he comments that:

This is one of the most dismal places I ever saw. The lofty pines obscure the sun, and the thick laurels are like a hedge on each side, the road is very narrow and full of large stones and bogs. I measured a pine that was blown down, 130 feet long. (62)

Cresswell acknowledges the potential power of Filson's "west winds" when the British loyalist describes a vast area which is called Fallen Timbers by his woodsman guide. Cresswell states:

Crossed the Fallen Timbers. Occasioned by a violent gust of wind from the east. The trees are either torn up by the roots or broke off near the ground. Some oaks two foot diameter are broke off and the tops carried to a considerable distance. Scarcely one tree left standing. I am told it continues 100 miles in a west course and about a mile broad. (63)

Cresswell begins to sound similar to Filson when he makes his journey through the wilderness near Fort Pitt and describes the woods which contain walnut and cherry trees that:

. . .grow to an amazing size. I have seen several three foot [in] diameter and [rise] 40 foot before they come to a limb. Great plenty of wild plum trees and a species of the pimento, these are small bushes. The soil in general is black and of a fat loamy nature. Coal and limestone in the same quarry. I have seen stratum of coal 14 feet thick equal in quality to English coal. (68-69)

Being an Englishman, and fresh from the Island of Britain where coal has long been a common fuel, he is naturally intrigued by the quality of coal and unknowingly eludes to the black "stratum" which would fuel future American industrial development.

As Cresswell headed down the Ohio River with his backwoods companions, the young man finally finds a land similar to what Filson promotes in his work. Cresswell

describes Big Tree Island in the Ohio as containing:

. . . a large sycamore tree. It was 51 feet 4 inches in circumference one foot from the ground, and 46 foot circumference five feet from the ground, and I suppose it would have measured that twenty feet high. (72)

A few days after he measured the sycamore tree on Big Tree Island, Cresswell gives a detailed description to tiny pests which Filson fails to mention in his lengthy discourse on the supposed merits of Kentucky. Cresswell finds that he is:

Much tormented with ticks, a small animal like a sheeplouse, but very tough skin. They get on you by walking in the woods in great numbers, and if you don't take care to pick them off in time they work their heads through the skin and then you may pull the body away but the head will remain in the skin, which is very disagreeable. If they are not removed in a short time they grow like the ticks on a dog. (79)

Charles Woodmason echoes Cresswell's sentiment in regard to the pesky ticks, and in turn adds another torment found in the trans-Allegheny wilderness during the summertime. Solemnly, Woodmason reports in his journal one August Friday that:

My horse greatly jaded thro' heat of the weather and great drought and myself greatly tormented with seed ticks, by my lying in the woods. Seed ticks are a small insect not bigger than the point of a needle with which every leaf and blade of grass is covered at this season of the year--they bite very sharp--get into the skin cause inflammations--itchings, and much torment. (59).

Besides the ticks, heat, monotonous diet and the ignorant people, the Anglican minister also saw living in the eastern edges of the Middle Ground as physically very

taxing. Repeatedly, Woodmason describes the Carolina frontier as a "swamp," an "impenetrable woods" where he had his "cloaths torn to pieces" (12). In summing up his backcountry travels during the year 1766, the Englishman called the frontier a "wild woods" where he was:

destitute often of the very necessaries of life--sometimes starved--often famished--exposed to the burning sun and scorching sands--obliged to fight his way through banditti, profligates, reprobates, and the lowest vilest scum of mankind. . . . (25)

Being an Englishman better suited for the genteel life of an English squire, Woodmason tends to dwell on the Middle Ground's harsher side. Cresswell and Woodmason both look at the trans-Allegheny wilderness with less passionate eyes than does the enthusiastic Filson. As a consequence, both Englishmen point out "inconveniences" which Filson never admits existing in his land of Eden.

Whereas Woodmason tends to be overly negative, Cresswell does verify the vast animal herds which gave birth to the Middle Ground legends. Throughout much of the course of his Ohio River travels, Cresswell repeatedly spots great quantities of buffalo who congregate around natural salt springs, called "licks," where they satisfy their instinctive craving for salt. Cresswell quickly learns from his backwoodsmen guides that the licks are where the buffalo can be hunted the easiest, and as a result, his party frequents many such springs. In his journal, Cresswell gives careful detail to his experience at one such lick and

in the process testifies to the great herds of buffalo, but also betrays the less-than-adequate marksmanship of his "professional" hunter companions:

Fell down to Grinin's Lick, shot at some buffaloes but killed none, tho' I am certain we must have wounded a great number. Five of us fired at a herd of two hundred odd not more than twenty yards. This is the greatest lick I ever saw. I suppose here is 50 acres of land trodden by buffaloes, but there is not a blade of grass upon it. Incredible numbers come here to the salt springs. (86)

The Middle Ground. A land of Eden. A second paradise. Owned by no particular Indian nation, but traveled by a variety of races. A virgin wilderness, ignorant of the settler's axe and seemingly untouched by the crack of a long rifle. A land teeming with enormous herds of deer and elk, unknown numbers of black bear hiding in the hills, and flocks of passenger pigeons so thick the sky would blacken for several minutes when they took to flight. And buffalo running in such large herds that Simon Kenton once counted "1500 pacing in single file" towards a lick (Kenton 63).

The Middle Ground had its faults, as briefly highlighted by Nicholas Cresswell and lamented by Charles Woodmason. The Middle Ground also had its hidden dangers, as reflected through the words of Joseph Hollingshead. But the wilderness west of the Blue Ridge Mountains and south of the Ohio River offered a promise, a pull that John Filson tried so hard to illuminate through his prose. The Middle Ground presented a certain hope for any of the backwoodsmen

who were clever enough to grasp it. For those few, no matter how imperfect in their skills, or how contradictory their values and judgements, that wilderness was truly a "Land of Eden."

CHAPTER III  
ON HIS OWN HOOK

Kaskaskia, Illinois

August 4th 1768

Thomas Bay, Thomas McIntire and Jacob Drennan: Three hunters who have agreed to descend the Mississippi in company and partnership in hunting for deer, buffalo and etc.

		Pennsylvania Currency
22 lb. powder.....	7/6.....	8" 5" 0
45 lb. lead.....	1/6.....	3" 7" 6
1 stretching needle.....	3/9.....	" 3" 9
4 doz. flints for.....	3/9.....	" 3" 9
2 pd. soap.....	6/.....	"12"
6 needles/3 shanks thread for	2/3.....	" 2" 3
2 kettles wt. 13 1/2 pds.....	7/6.....	4"19" 4
3 beaver traps.....	37/6.....	5"12" 6
20 gallons luxavated corn.....	9d.....	"15"
2 kegs.....	3/9.....	" 7" 6
67 pds. Indian meal for.....	15/.....	"15"
10 gallons salt.....	6/.....	3" "
1 keg for salt.....	7/6.....	" 7" 6
1 half round file.....	7/6.....	" 7" 6
1 axe.....	15/.....	"15"
1 drawing knife.....	7/6.....	" 7" 6
1 1/2 yd. linen.....	4/6.....	" 6" 9 <sup>1</sup>

By signing the above contract with George Morgan of the English trading firm Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, the three hunters obligated themselves to return "within 12 months" to settle their outstanding debts with the Kaskaskia-based trader. To help offset the total cost of the supplies withdrawn from the trader's warehouse, the three hunters requested any pay not yet collected to be entered against their new debt. As a result, a credit of almost 30 pounds in various supplies was whittled down to just 5 pounds, 7 shillings and 1 1/2 pence. With "red deer skins" going for approximately 2 shillings apiece in 1768, and salted buffalo



meat worth 6 pence per pound, the three long hunters stood a good chance of recovering their expenses.<sup>2</sup>

Following the common practice in the colonial frontier trade, no cash was exchanged between the two parties. Deep within the Illinois country, paper money or hard currency was seldom seen by the common person, for a barter system on the grandest scale propelled the economy. Successful traders, like Morgan, proficiently balanced books with numerical figures representing British pounds, French livres, Spanish dollars and a sprinkling of colonial currency. Individual accounts were usually entered in a monetary system through which the particular client could both understand the transaction and visualize an imaginary worth. Most likely, the three American hunters appreciated the value of Pennsylvania currency, and with that in mind, Morgan converted their goods appropriately.<sup>3</sup> Then with just a verbal agreement of the terms, and a short testimony by the woodsmen entered at the end of the account acknowledging the ledger as "just and true," the men settled the arrangement. Before leaving the trader's store, Thomas Bay and Thomas McIntire both carefully signed their names at the bottom of the account, while Jacob Drennan scratched a crude "J" as his mark just below the signatures of his two hunting partners.

As the three long hunters shoved their loaded dugouts into the river's current, they had a year to "descend the

Mississippi," hunting and trapping almost anywhere they wished. With each stroke of their paddles, with a certain savvy in "reading sign," and with their expert marksmanship, the three men were free to choose their route, free to determine their own fortune deep within the wilderness. Perhaps they wandered into the mouth of the Shawanoe River, as the hunters then called the Cumberland. All three men had previously hired on with George Morgan, and the Cumberland River was a favorite refuge for hunters working out of the Illinois country. Yet again, maybe the three long hunters eventually worked their dugouts up the Tennessee, hoping to outsmart the Cherokee and Chickasaw who frequented that waterway.

If George Morgan really intended for his woodsmen to "descend the Mississippi," then perhaps the hunters defied Spanish sovereignty in the land west of that great river and worked the fringes of the Arkansas or the Missouri country. But rather than run the risk of political trouble, Drennan, Bay and McIntire most likely headed for the western edges of the Middle Ground, in the area between the mouth of the Tennessee and the tiny settlement of Natchez.

From the viewpoint of Morgan based in Kaskaskia and from the perspective of friends and family of Drennan, Bay and McIntire, the three woodsmen were plunging into an obscure wilderness of over 100,000 square miles. Only because of their skill, their independent spirit, their

frontier experience could the three long hunters take such a risk. For the next 365 days, they were truly "on their own hook."

Through their partnership's account listed with Morgan, much is revealed about the enterprising hunters' skill, confidence, and their common approach towards their endeavor. The only food rations they withdrew from the trading store were 67 pounds of "Indian meal," 20 gallons of luxavated corn (dried corn separated from the cob) and 10 gallons of salt. What, if any other food was carried by the partners when they left Kaskaskia is now unknown, but according to the evidence at hand, Jacob Drennan and company most likely planned to feed themselves in great measure from the bounty of the forest.

The Indian meal and the dried corn took the place of bread, porridge, vegetables, and above all, offered a diversion from what was expected to be an overabundance of lean meat. The white grain, whether pounded into meal or left whole, represented the staple food of the Woodland Indians and a majority of the Middle Colony frontier community. The corn was a standard ration for forest travel with a handful a day considered adequate. Or, as Sally Smith Booth recounts, in the eighteenth century "it was estimated that a frontiersman could exist in the forest for half a year with only six pounds of rockahominy" along with a smaller ration of "glue soup" (131). The salt, of course,

was used for seasoning food. But with ten gallons withdrawn from the trading store, a majority of their salt was probably kept for the curing of meat destined for the British stores in Kaskaskia, Cahokia, or Vincennes.

Bay, McIntire, and Drennan all needed a high degree of self-confidence to venture into a wilderness with their rations equaling a mere handful of corn per day, per man, for a little over half of the estimated time planned away from the settlements. That confidence came from a lifetime of learning, with many seasons spent in the woods subsisting only on Indian corn and wild game. The three contracted with Morgan to shoot as many "deer, buffalo and etc [sic]." as they could possibly find and process. If they read the signs of the forest correctly, and none of the party fell into "bad luck," then their harvest by modern standards would be nothing short of spectacular. If the three long hunters stuck to harvesting deer skins alone, then they could clear their account with Morgan after skinning, scraping, drying and packing away only 60 summertime hides. But with a year to hunt the tributaries of the Mississippi, men who possessed the ability to feed themselves from the forest were destined to shoot more than a mere three score of "Virginia red deer." If their luck was anything like Kasper Mansker's, who according to Walter Durham, would in 1772 shoot 19 deer while moving but a few hundred yards between two salt springs (158), then the woodsmen stood a

good chance of coming back wealthy, at least on paper. Their only obstacles were the time needed to labor through the proper care and storage of each skin, the size of their dugouts, and the risk of potential trouble with raiding Indian parties.

For Drennan, Bay and McIntire, hunting and a bit of trapping would amount to their sole source of income for the next year. With just three beaver traps withdrawn from the trading store, trapping was most likely to be only a secondary endeavor. But by the amount of ammunition they packed within the holds of their dugouts, the trio was counting on doing plenty of rifle shooting. Commonly, white hunters in the Illinois country purchased their rifle lead by the pound and invariably in an approximate ratio of twice as much lead as any gun powder acquisitioned.<sup>4</sup> Since each rifle of the time was a custom-made affair, each woodsman routinely carried his own bullet mold to cast round balls which fit their .48, .52, .56 or other uniquely bored rifles. Thus, when the partners withdrew 22 pounds of powder and 45 pounds of bar lead, they were merely following the common practice of their profession.

When a hunter in the party needed more rifle rounds, then he spent an hour or so crouched near the fire, patiently melting a fragment of bar lead in a small ladle, carefully pouring the molten liquid into his mold, allowing the lead to harden, and thus, casting one rifle ball at a

time. According to Doddridge, the hunters of the Middle Ground rarely depended upon a rifle which "carried more than forty-five bullets to the pound," for a rifle which shot a smaller round ball was considered too light "for hunting or war" (177). If Bay, McIntire and Drennan all adhered to Doddridge's axiom, and carried a rifle of no less than .48 caliber (which converts to 42 balls to the pound), then with the quantity of lead which they purchased, the three had up to 1,890 rifle shots available to them during the long hunt.<sup>5</sup> The 1 1/2 yards of linen withdrawn last from Morgan's trading store was most likely the calculated amount of fabric needed for patching their projected quantity of rifle loads. If just one quarter of their estimated shots brought down a deer, a buffalo or an elk, then the woodsmen had ample opportunity to make a tidy profit. And at the same time, the three partners would obtain a steady supply of fresh meat.

Time has swallowed up the details of their long hunt, but by the brief evidence presented within the account books of George Morgan, at least one of the three hunters made the return trip into the trader's Kaskaskia store. On the 14 day of June, 1769, a little over 10 months after the partners first pulled away from the Illinois shore, Thomas Bay stepped into the trader's warehouse and settled the partners' outstanding debt. On that day, Morgan notes in the original ledger started the previous August that the

hunter Thomas Bay paid "by cash in full" the 5 pounds, 17 shillings, 1 1/2 pence.

If Thomas Bay paid off the account in actual "cash," then mostly likely Morgan had recently bought the hunter's goods with a partial payment in Pennsylvania script. Morgan was merely receiving cash which only moments before had belonged to him. As already discussed, cash payments made by either party were traditionally very few. By the evidence left within Morgan's Illinois ledgers, he apparently compensated for the lack of cash by preferring to close out the accounts of any hunters leaving the Illinois country with promissory notes payable at Fort Pitt.<sup>6</sup> If he expected the hunter to stay in the area, and possibly work for him in the near future, then Morgan often wrote the note with a "payable on demand" clause. If the hunter indeed signed on with Morgan once again, the trader would simply take back the old note and reopen the hunter's account with a credit equal to the monetary amount previously promised "on demand" to the hunter.

The personal accounts of the long hunter, courier and translator Simon Girty exemplifies Morgan's method of updating an employee's financial records. Over a period of 11 months, Girty opened and closed his personal account with the trader Morgan on two different occasions. During that time, Girty withdrew on credit several items which reveal

both his personal tastes and the common needs of his profession.

Girty appreciated good rum, but if Morgan's ledger is any clue, he did not overly abuse the strong spirits, for Girty withdrew only one quart per month between October 25, 1767 and March 21, 1768. But Morgan's Jamaica rum may very well have been Girty's chief form of entertainment, for out of ten entries made in the hunter's account during that time, seven of them were for Girty's personal consumption of the West Indies drink. Besides the rum, Girty also withdrew one half pound of soap and one shirt. One ledger entry made during that time for the woodsman is very interesting, for when Girty wanted to "buy garters of an Indian," the hunter withdrew 5 shillings worth of rum needed to seal the bargain.

By March 21, 1768, the need to leave the settlement for the woods apparently overtook Girty. As a result, his account reflects a summer hunting expedition, for at least part of the time, under the command of Joseph Hollingshead, and a short trading venture with Samuel Black. Between March and August, Girty was charged for two breech clouts, "ticklenburg" and thread needed to make "a frock" (plus the cost of the sewing), a checked shirt, a comb, one "dressed" deer skin, a handkerchief, along with the cost of the material, the thread, and the tailoring fees for a shirt made by Madame Lavine. The handkerchief withdrawn by Girty



was expensive, costing almost as much as the fabric, thread and Madame Lavine's tailoring fees charged for a single shirt. And Girty could have taken two "dressed" deer skins, or three quarts of Jamaica rum for the price of just one of Morgan's handkerchiefs.

During this time, Morgan allowed Girty to withdraw small amounts of cash and have it charged to the hunter's running account. By the evidence present within Morgan's various ledgers kept during this period, such dealings were apparently very rare, for Girty stood alone in this practice. Between March and August, Girty withdrew "cash" on two separate occasions. On March 21, 1767, Girty received from Morgan, money "in Livres" which converted to a credit of 15 shillings in Pennsylvania script. On that same day, Girty's final entry revealed that he again withdrew 5 Livres which converted to a debt of 7 schillings, 6 pence in Pennsylvania script. In July of that same year, Girty reimbursed Morgan with 15 shillings. And sometime before the middle of August, Girty received 1 pound, 2 schillings, 6 pence credit for "three dollars returned."

By the middle of August, Girty settled his affairs with Morgan. After the ten months of wages and the returned cash were averaged against his debts, the talented woodsman received a promissory note from Morgan for 43 pounds, 14 shillings, 9 pence "payable on demand." A little over one month later, though, Girty reopened his account by

purchasing one half pound of soap for three shillings. Within a week Girty also enjoyed one pint of rum, followed by one quart of the same and the purchase of one "stroud." As a result, Morgan received from the hunter the promissory note given to Girty just 29 days previously.

However, before the end of September, Girty once again closed out his account. But this time, the woodsman received his credit in two different ways. As partial payment, Girty accepted "Joshua Moore's draft on Robert Leake" made payable in 30 days "in favor of James Campbell" (a British officer stationed at Fort Pitt who was a part-time business partner of George Morgan). Following the common practice of colonial trade earlier referred to, Morgan converted the note from New York to Pennsylvania currency. The multiple-party, bartering note covered almost two-thirds of Girty's credit, while a cash payment of 27 Spanish dollars converted to 10 pounds, 2 shillings, 6 pence Pennsylvania currency satisfied the rest owed to the hunter.<sup>7</sup>

During those 11 months in which Simon Girty worked for six pounds per month (which made him one of the highest paid of Morgan's men), he was involved in a multitude of experiences. Unfortunately, the written record has only preserved a fraction of the hunter's life during that time. One of the more interesting incidents happened in July of 1768, only a few days after Girty purchased his checked

shirt, returned the 15 shillings and settled his account with Joseph Hollingshead. On July 20, Simon Girty had just returned from the Cumberland to "Fort Chartes," bearing the sad news of an ambush made on a hunting crew in the hire of Morgan. The long hunter reported that the party was overwhelmed, and the boat destroyed (seven scalps and marked hides eventually reached Vincennes). Girty summed up the report by confessing his belief that he was the lone survivor.<sup>8</sup>

The long hunter profession involved certain risks, a combination of which was unique to their vocation. The woodsmen, including many like Jacob Drennan who could not write, had to deal continually with a complicated system of bartering, promissory notes and a variety of currencies. As Girty reported and various other hunters echoed, the risk of being ambushed, captured, scalped or tortured also saturated their lives. As Hollingshead's letter revealed in the last chapter, a long hunter's life also forced extended separations from family and friends. And as Lawrence Elliott notes, for long hunters like Daniel Boone, such prolonged absences from home sometimes resulted in a long hunter's lonely wife bearing the child of the hunter's brother (39-40). For the long hunter, the privilege of living "on his own hook" could demand a high price.

Not every colonial citizen or frontier resident could appreciate, understand and adapt to such complicated risks.

As a result, only a fraction of those who settled along the western borders could prosper in a similar setting. The few who did venture into the Middle Ground wilderness realized the jeopardy in which they placed their fortune, family, and personal health. And in order to match the challenges and dangers hidden within such a calling, a woodsman-turned-long hunter required an in-depth, constant and unique brand of schooling.

#### A Lifetime of Training

As seen in the previous chapter, the colonial frontier experience gave birth to a woodsman who was in a great many ways, "on his own hook." When faced with the obstacles such an environment presented, both the frontier heroes like Simon Kenton and the more obscure hunters like Jacob Drennan, judged for themselves the right and wrong of each situation. Many times the frontiersmen contradicted themselves or one another as they dealt with religion, civil law, hunting, and warfare. As manifested in the actions of the Carolina regulators with whom Charles Woodmason enjoyed an uneasy alliance, the frontier people said "Sir" to no one, and quite often bowed their heads to no king. As a result, every tradition, every notion of a "civilized" society faded into obscurity if the frontier experience deemed the practice trivial.

For the Middle Ground long hunter, with the privilege and the responsibility of choosing the right from the wrong, the evil from the good, the proper from the crude, also came the freedom of living in the woods and charting his own course. And that image of a woodsman venturing deep into the wilderness, relishing an existence similar to Adam in his Eden, is perhaps the most prevalent image of a colonial frontiersman perpetuated in American popular culture. When Thomas Bay, Thomas McIntire, and Jacob Drennan left the Illinois settlements for a year-long season of market hunting, they "repaired" as Doddridge describes, "to the spacious, trackless woods" (320). For as long as they "descended the Mississippi" in pursuit of their profession, the three hunters were truly "on their own hook."

The frontier style of training which prepared a woodsman to live for a time completely independent of society's crutches started when the children were young. As the little girls were constantly tutored in the roles they were expected to practice around the homestead, the boys were also taught the skills necessary to farm the land, hunt in the fall and discern the difference between an Indian signaling with a hoot to his warrior band, and an owl calmly penetrating the darkness.

Doddridge mentions that animal sounding was a popular and necessary game for all children. The frontier family's survival often depended upon the clever deciphering of

turkey calls during the day, and wolf howling or owl hooting during the night. And whole settlements would turn out in their own defense if any suspicious animals calls were heard in the surrounding woods. Doddridge further notes that since the Indians commonly used the appropriate animal "talk" while stalking through the woods during both the day and night, any young boy who showed promise at both calling and deciphering was considered to hold great promise as a skillful hunter and warrior (176).

Farming, hunting, and warfare were occupations which every young Middle Colony frontier boy was sure to practice when he entered manhood. Imitating animal calls was only a small part of the training needed to master those roles. Various chores associated with growing corn, squash, watermelons, and beans occupied a boy's summer season as soon as he could comprehend and follow simple instructions. To the frontier homestead, though, the art of farming was more than just crop raising, for every boy also learned the basic and imaginative use of the various tools needed to convert the wilderness into a homestead. The auger, the scraper, the froe and the adz, were just some of the many tools all boys grew accustomed to managing. Each father then taught his son lessons in choosing and using the proper wood for the different items he made with those tools. As a result, a maturing boy gradually assimilated a practical

education, well suited for survival along the eighteenth-century frontier.

Hunting lessons were first absorbed through a father's fireside stories, and then through the countless lessons given at opportune moments. As each son learned to keep his mouth shut and his step light, he also tagged along during short hunting forays. In a world where the ticking of a clock did not matter, the word "short" meant a longer period of time than just a weekend spent in the woods. William Smith offers a clue to the length and manner of such hunting experiences which a frontier lad might have undertaken. After surviving the fatigue, the trauma of fighting the Ohio Indians on their own terms, in their own territory, Smith realized that the typical British soldier destined for the trans-Allegheny wilderness must undergo some unique training. As part of his recommendations, Smith strongly urged that all soldiers serving in the Ohio country must experience "living off of the land." Through his words, Smith offers his version of what a "short" hunting foray might have been for the young frontier hunter:

While the greatest part would be employed in clearing the ground, fencing, ploughing, sowing, planting, building and making utensils and household furniture, others might hunt with the officers, and remain a fortnight or a month out of camp, without other provisions than a little flour, and what they could procure by hunting and fishing: then to be relieved, and the whole trained up in that way. (50)

In essence, Smith recommends for the troops a condensed frontier training program. And in the process, he inadvertently capsulizes a backcountry boy's complete education. As with all frontier lads, soldiers would farm, construct buildings, split lumber for fences and use their imaginations to invent various utensils. And if Smith could have his way, each soldier would learn to live in the woods for 14 days or more on just "a little flour" and the fruits of his hunting wits. Smith merely recommends a trekking feat which a young Jacob Drennan, a Simon Girty or a Daniel Boone would consider as part of normal living.

The lessons and short hunting forays continued until a boy entered his teen years. Doddridge notes that a boy shouldered his first rifle by the age of 12 or 13. He did so for both hunting and defending his home. At that time the young man "was furnished with a small rifle and shot pouch. He then became a fort soldier, and had his port hole assigned him." Hunting squirrels and turkeys during the succeeding seasons polished the marksmanship and cleverness of the young soldier (176). Playing at war did not last long deep in the Middle Colony frontier.

For the typical frontier homestead nestled along the Holston, the Clinch or other unsettled river valleys, the spring and summer seasons were typically spent in the drudgery of tilling the soil. Unless a fresh deer ham or a roasted turkey was relished for an evening meal, very little



hunting was done during that time. But as Doddridge remembers:

As soon as the leaves were pretty well down and the weather became rainy, accompanied with light snows, these men, after acting the part of husbandmen, soon began to feel that they were hunters. They became uneasy at home. (149)

Once the crops were harvested, and the corn was drying in the cribs, hunting became the occupation of choice. Doddridge further notes that come fall, the backwoodsmen felt, "The house was too warm. The feather bed too soft, and even the good wife was not thought for the time being a proper companion" (149). As Doddridge insinuates, hunting was a ritual connected with the season, a chance to break from the hoe, the plow and the confines of a small cabin. But hunting was also a means of survival.

For many of the frontier community, who did not hunt professionally as did Hollingshead, Drennan, or Girty, cash was even more rare than Girty's occasional "five Livres." The deerskins taken in the fall, bear hides and fur harvested through the winter and much of the spring, constituted the typical frontier family's only form of cash. The hides, tallow and furs taken during the months between crops provided a majority of the bartering power offered to the otherwise "poor" frontier family. Sugar, coffee, chocolate, linen, garters, shoes, and land were purchased along the frontier with various amounts of "red" or "faul skins," raccoons, cased otters and beaver. Samuel Kercheval

recounts the success of one Virginia woodsman, Henry Fry, who eventually purchased his land with 250 pounds worth of hides, furs and meat harvested over several long hunts (54). And most likely, Henry Fry did not have access to such an abundant amount of cash, but rather he purchased the property with a series of promissory notes, which allowed the bearer to collect "on demand."

The typical frontier family bartered with the trader in much the same manner as did the friendly Indians who occasionally ventured into the frontier communities. George Morgan makes a note in the account of "Captain MacClelland, a Mingo Indian" which reflects the common methods of bartering with skins and meat for store goods. On January 5, 1768, Morgan notes that the Indian is to "pay in peltry or meat," in the amounts stated, for the following goods:

	Bucks	Does
1 carrot of tobacco .....	2	
1 tomahawk .....	1	
1 pair of leggings .....	1	
1 breechclout .....	1	
ribbon .....	1	
bed lace .....		1
1 3 pound kettle .....	3	
1 pound powder .....	1	
6 bars of lead .....	2	
2 knives .....	1	
Paid in 13 bucks and 1 doe....	13	1

Captain MacClelland purchased goods typically used by any frontier family, whether red or white. Trading did not have to stop with supplies needed to hunt, or goods needed to feed and cloth the family. Any hunter who prospered enough during the winter months could even barter for slaves from

traders like George Morgan, who dealt in every kind of merchandise needed or desired by the Illinois community.

Slaves, though, were an expensive commodity when compared to powder, lead, lace or tobacco. In a letter to Nicholas Chapman, George Morgan's clerk instructs that if only two slaves are purchased at once, then the payment must be in full. But if Chapman should have "occasion for more than two," then he could "have them on credit by allowing interest at the rate of ten for every hundred per annum." Morgan offers a break in the amount of cattle, otter, beaver or racoons which could be used for barter, depending upon the number of slaves desired. Since the cost was steep, and a break was offered for volume purchasing, Morgan's clerk hints "it would be better for you to get some of your neighbors to join with you and buy several together." As a sample of the bartering scale offered, the clerk closes out the letter by stating that, "If you take 4 negroes, the price is 12 cattle a piece, or 200 otters, or 450 beaver or 1700 raccoons" (19 January 1767). The mulatto Jamie who journeyed the length of Tennessee with the long hunter James Smith, or the slave killed with Boone's son James near Wallen's Ridge were most likely purchased by their frontier owners through similar means of bartering.

Honing skills necessary in war and the desire for material goods were not the only reasons boys learned to hunt. In a time before refrigeration, artificial

preservatives, and vacuum packaging were invented, the means of storing safely the crops yielded during the harvest season were very limited. To compound the difficulties, warfare, drought, and disease could all ruin a season's crops. And without pesticides and a workable knowledge of fertilization, raising corn, squash, melons, or beans was at best a risky business. As a result, what a frontier family successfully cultivated by fall, many times did not last until the next season's crops matured.

Therefore, the crack of the rifle or the spring of a trap often signaled the only source of acquiring food during the lean months of late winter and early spring. Doddridge recalls that:

For some years the woods supplied them with the greater amount of their subsistence, and with regard to some families at certain times, the whole of it; for it was no uncommon thing for families to live several months without a mouthful of bread. It frequently happened that there was no breakfast until it was obtained from the woods.  
(148)

Doddridge paints a scene of struggle. A prolonged setting where a man, and any boy old enough, hunted the deer, elk, bear, buffalo, and even beaver for the very survival of their families. According to Doddridge, any leisure associated with the sport had not yet been invented. And through the amateur historian's words, a vision of a family united, battling a wilderness, under stressful and uncertain circumstances is easily envisioned.

However, Charles Woodmason creates a much different picture when he describes the same Middle Colony backcountry people who farmed and hunted mainly for subsistence purposes. As a result of what he witnessed during his travels along the Carolina frontier, the Anglican minister believed the frontier family's struggle to feed and clothed themselves "arises from their indolence and laziness" (33). As an example of their perceived listless behavior Woodmason notes that even though the country is littered with firewood, "the people are so very lazy, that they'll sit for hours hovering over a few embers, and will not turn out to cut a stick of wood" (17).

Both Doddridge and Woodmason continually created a slanted image of the colonial frontier culture. Each author distorts the setting which prompted the best of the frontier pupils to one day graduate to market hunting. Doddridge's version pictures a community happy with their lot, but constantly building toward a better tomorrow. Woodmason promotes the image of a lazy society, wallowing in their own vices and ignorance. But by blending the two authors' impressions, a more believable borderland family emerges which accepts its destiny of feeding, clothing and warming themselves on the results of skill, fortune and destiny. Although most families settling in the western parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania or the Carolinas surely wished for material wealth and an easier life, it was through such

circumstances of "want" which each frontier lad learned to accept an absence of material comforts. Such a setting inadvertently prepared a growing boy to one day live as a long hunter, "on his own hook," deep within the trans-Allegheny wilderness.

Imitating animal calls and rifle marksmanship perfected through season after season of hunting proved necessary for the common defense, as well as the clothing and feeding of the woodman's family. Every frontier boy's training for these roles also involved throwing proficiently the tomahawk.<sup>9</sup> The games devised to perfect the art were pastimes enjoyed by boys of all ages. Doddridge fondly remembers that the sports of the Virginia and Pennsylvania frontier were "imitative of the exercises and stratagems of hunting and war" (175). Tomahawk throwing proved no different. Doddridge recalls that the young men of his community learned to stick successfully a particular tomahawk, with a certain length of handle, at several different distances. Repeated practice "enabled the boy to measure the distance with his eye, when walking through the woods, and strike a tree with his tomahawk in any way he chose" (176).

Doddridge designates the art of tomahawk throwing as a "boyish sport," but practicing the skill did not end with the passing of youth. Woodsmen of the Middle Colony frontier continued to season the talent, for as long as the

need existed. And continual warfare with the Woodland Indians created the single largest requisite for throwing the edged weapon. Both the red and white inhabitants of the Ohio country appreciated and respected an adversary who could expertly throw his tomahawk.

According to John Struthers, "the summer of 1777 was a season of great alarm," and the whole Virginia territory was "broken up" with dozens of skirmishes involving the settlers and the Indians supported by their British allies. To aid in the defense of his isolated frontier community, Struthers joined "a small company of volunteers to act as spies and wood rangers" (253). He spent the summer patrolling the banks of the Ohio, from Fort Pitt, down the river several miles, and back again, to the fortress located at the confluence of the Monongahela and the Allegheny rivers. His company of spies continued the routine for six months, resting only when they reached one of the small stockades. At each wooden outpost, the wood rangers spent a few days recuperating and practicing the skills which they deemed valuable. Struthers explains that:

. . .we remained a day or two to get washing and mending done and a recruit of provisions, and at every station would spend an hour or two in the exercise of the tomahawk and rifle, not only for our own improvement in the use of these weapons of warfare but also to alarm the savages if they should be lurking in the neighborhood. (254)

To the company of rangers and spies which Struthers attached himself, the skill of throwing the tomahawk was

just as valuable as marksmanship in the use of the long rifle. Both were considered equally worthy of attention by the woodsmen who turned from the hunting of game, to the art of woodland warfare.

Besides the rifle and the belt axe, the woodsman's belt knife has also been traditionally a part of the images perpetuated through America's popular culture. A colonial frontiersman is not considered complete, unless all three are present in his persona. And along the Middle Colony frontier the hunter's knife was perhaps more of a "badge of identity" than either his rifle or his axe. According to Lyman C. Draper, the Ohio Indians quickly learned to call woodsmen from Virginia a variety of names reflecting the type of knife typically hung from the waist of those backwoodsmen. Long Knife, Big Knife, Big Knife Warrior, and Great Knife were all names given by the Indians to Virginia hunters (Chronicles 79-80). Christopher Gist reflects such a notion in his journal when he reports that a Frenchman who was living with the Indians called Gist "Big Knife" after learning the frontiersman was from Virginia (7 December 1750). At least the woodsmen from the colony of Virginia, if not from the other Middle Colonies, carried knives which were unusually long and apparently common to all men of their profession.

Neither of the early Virginia historians, Joseph Doddridge nor Samuel Kercheval, discusses the sport of knife



throwing. But at least one long hunter practiced the skill. Not long after Simon Kenton moved from Kentucky into the Ohio country, he had a run in with a "bad Indian" named One Eye. After hearing news that the Indian had beaten senseless a settler's wife and stolen food from her spring house, Kenton led a party of his "boys" to visit One Eye and administer frontier justice. After each member of Kenton's party equally whipped the Indian with switches, they all considered the punishment just. Except for One Eye. The Shawnee never forgave Kenton, and for the next five years he bragged that he would kill the old hunter. When both men accidentally met at a council at Stoney Creek, Kenton noticed the One Eye was trailing him. Edna Kenton explains that the woodsman attempted to squelch the Indian's temper by drawing out his long knife and:

. . .taking far aim at a tree trunk, let it fly. He walked up to the tree trunk, drew the knife out, and looked straight at the Indian who a few moments later came up to him, saying, "Me friend."  
(251)

Simon Kenton did not have his rifle, for like all of the participants in the council, his primary weapon had been left back at camp. But when the need arose, the weathered woodsman drew out his knife and "let it fly" and successfully stuck the blade in a tree a good distance away. If what Edna Kenton records is true, then it appears that knife throwing was a familiar skill to the woodsman Kenton.

The obvious skills of rifle shooting, hunting, tomahawk and knife management were only a small fraction of the skills practiced by young men living along the Middle Colony frontier. Each lad learned to find the cardinal directions of the compass, even on cloudy and wet days. As Nicholas Cresswell found out, the small party of frontiersmen he hired were practiced enough to manufacture two 30-foot dugouts in just 13 days (64-67). Knowing where to find the right roots and ferns for use in snake remedies or for the healing of dysentery were secrets shared and implemented by the frontier community. In a land of immense virgin woods, the building of shelters from the materials found on the forest floor was routinely practiced each time a hunting party left on a long hunt. With downed trees six feet in diameter and smaller debris littering every mountainside, the long hunters of the eighteenth century found little need for a portable tent. To graduates of the frontier school like Jacob Drennan and Joseph Hollingshead, the hardwood wilderness offered most everything they needed. And knowing where to find the wealth of the forest and how to best invest it, enabled such long hunters to live for lengthy periods "on their own hook."

Underlining the training all young boys received, was a strong belief in common sense. The idea of knowing where to find the best roots to make poultices for burns, cuts, and gunshot wounds made plenty of sense in a world far removed

from any kind of professional medicine. Knowing how to treat the chills, fever, the bloody flux, all made sense to any woodsman who planned to hunt for long periods of time away from the relatively comfortable environment of the cabin homestead. But it made much better sense to the frontier mind to prevent any sickness or accidents before they happened. Being careful, being cautious, being woods-wise mattered equally to a lone hunter, or to a sizable party of hunters who counted on each other to stay alive.

The woodsman's approach to rainy weather and high creeks perhaps best illustrates this ideal. Generally, a hunter seldom took extra clothing. If the extra weight was to be tolerated, then the bulk was generally foodstuffs, not an extra jacket, shirt or breeches. John Struthers reflects this thinking when he recounts his scouting forays during the first years of the American Revolution, and notes that his company was "ready to march with as much provision as we could conveniently carry" (253). The following year, even when he had a packhorse available, Struthers only loaded the animal with bacon and flour (255). The frontiersman makes no mention of a square of oilcloth, extra clothing or even a brass kettle.

When heavy rains pelted the forest, or when rising creeks had to be crossed, having only one set of clothing presented a predicament to the woodsmen. Cresswell and Woodmason, both outsiders, reflect on the frontier people's

answers to dealing with either inconvenience. As Nicholas Cresswell's party worked up the Ohio from the mouth of the Kentucky River, they had spent several successive days battling an almost constant barrage of spring rains. On June 27, 1775, the British tourist notes, "It is a custom with our company, as soon as it begins to rain to strip naked and secure their clothes from the wet" (91). On that same day, Cresswell admits in his private journal that he had twice tried the practice, but found the rain "so disagreeable" (91) to his bare skin. As a result, he was forced to wear his linen shirt during the rain storms.

Cresswell's hired hunters handled the wet much the same as the frontier people who happened by and offered to help the Anglican minister, Woodmason. In February of 1767, on a Sunday no less, the Englishman could not find a crossing over a unidentified swollen creek. As Woodmason perceived it, "the stream was ev'ry where too broad" (19). Normally the Anglican gentleman found the frontier people "ignorant" and "rude," but on that day he called them "neighbors" and "bold" when word spread through the area, and a family soon came to the creek's edge to help him across the rough and bitter waters (19).

Woodmason explains in detail how the backwoodsman was mounted on a "very large, strong and high horse," and that the "bold man" successfully tested a probable crossing point

along the raging creek. The frontiersman then:

. . . recross'd the stream, took my saddle and  
baggage at times on his head, and carried them  
safe and dry to the opposite bank.

The women then striped me naked, and gave him my  
cloths which he carried on his head in like  
manner. . . . (19)

To the frontier "neighbors" who came to Woodmason's aide, were merely practicing a "common sense" axiom which was considered basic behavior for anyone caught in a similar situation. They knew that after the naked minister had been ferried across on the back of the "large strong and high horse" he would appreciate the dry clothes. Through a lifetime of frontier schooling, they knew the dry clothes would quickly warm the tenderfoot. But Woodmason found the experience almost unbearable with the brisk northeast wind and the ground covered with ice.

#### Dressed for a Life in the Woods

Common sense refined by generations of living in the woods also dictated the type of dress which the woodsmen-turned-long hunters preferred to wear when practicing their profession. Choosing the clothing best suited for the briars, the thickets, the heat and the cold was especially important since, as previously mentioned, under typical circumstances most hunters did not pack extra clothing.

The Middle Colony frontiersman learned to adapt the best of Indian traditions with the best of their own. The prevalence of "Indian corn" alongside hog meat in the

frontier colonial diet exemplifies such a blending of two cultures. But even more obvious than the mixed diet of the Virginia, Pennsylvania and Carolina backwoodsmen was the unique merger of the European style with the Woodland Indian manner of dress. Doddridge sums up the look of the woodsman as being "partly Indian, and partly that of civilized nations" (140).

The hunting shirt generally worn by Middle Colony hunters became the "calling card" for the woodsmen who habitually wore the garment. Doddridge explains that the hunting shirt was usually made of linsey (a combination of wool and linen), coarse linen or very rarely deerskin (141). Doddridge details both the importance and the commonness of the garment by explaining that:

The hunting shirt was universally worn. This was a kind of loose frock, reaching half way down the thighs, with large sleeves, open before, and so wide as to lap over a foot or more when belted. The cape was large, and sometimes handsomely fringed with a ravelled piece of cloth of a different color from that of the hunting shirt itself. (140)

The hunting shirt detailed by Doddridge is the same basic description of the garment which General Washington issued to some of his troops throughout much of the American Revolution. The hunting shirt's rise in popularity is unknown, but by the time the first shots were fired at Lexington and Concord, the hunting shirt had already come to symbolize expert riflemanship to the British soldiers.

Doddridge continues to explain that a hunter routinely stuffed corn bread, jerky, even tow for cleaning his rifle inside the folds of the hunting shirt. As Doddridge remembers it, the hunting shirt was held in place with a belt or sash always tied on the backside of the woodsman's waist (141). After a wad of tow, a sack of jerky and a section of corn bread were stuffed inside the folds of the loose and draped hunting shirt, the woodsman created a dumpy appearance. Nicholas Cresswell comments in his journal, that his hunters all wore hunting shirts "which have never been washed only by the rain since they were made" (84). And two months later, when the Englishman prepares to journey with Mr. Anderson into the land of the Ohio Indians, he is informed by the trader "that the Indians are not well pleased at anyone going into their country dressed in a hunting shirt" (103). According to Cresswell, the British soldiers' strong opinions concerning the men who routinely wore the hunting shirt were also shared by the Ohio Indians.

The retired Presbyterian minister also explains that woodsmen wore a shirt and jacket of "common fashion" under their hunting shirt. He further illustrates their dress by stating that, "A pair of drawers or breeches and leggings, were the dress of the thighs and legs; a pair of moccasins answered for the feet much better than shoes" (141). According to his description, Doddridge portrays the

woodsman as a modest blend of a civilized individual with the best of the "savage" Indian dress.

Doddridge does admit that during "the latter years of the Indian war our young men became enamored of the Indian dress" and took to wearing breechclouts and leggings, even to church. Such displays of what Doddridge called "nudity" did not help "the devotion of the young ladies" (142). But according to Cresswell, the breechclout and leggings were much more common among the woodsmen than Doddridge tended to remember. While working up the Kentucky River, Nicholas Cresswell notes in his journal that "I believe there is but two pair of breeches in the company, one belonging to Mr. Tilling [another outsider] and the other to myself. The rest wear breechclouts, leggings and hunting shirts. . . ." (84). Between the late fall of 1767 and the following August, the master hunter Simon Girty purchased two breechclouts from George Morgan, but not a single pair of breeches or drawers from the British trader. Twenty-four hunters signed on in the fall of 1767 with Joseph Hollingshead to hunt the Cumberland by bateau and dugout. Several withdrew on credit breechclouts, leggings and dressed deer skins for making moccasins. A few even withdrew shoes from Morgan's Kaskaskia store, but none felt it worth their while to go into debt for a pair of breeches.<sup>10</sup>



As with morals, civil justice, religious rituals, a woodsman's dress was also refined by the realities of the frontier. Anything trivial was given up in the name of comfort and practicality. Charles Woodmason found such an attitude about dress to be abhorrent, but quickly realized that he could do nothing about the "nakedness" of either the men or the women. The men who came to his church services, even in January, typically wore nothing but "frocks or shirts and long trousers--no shoes or stockings. . ."  
(32).<sup>11</sup>

During August, when the heat of the Carolina summer oppressed the western woods, Woodmason complains in 1768 that the frontier people abandon any sense of European style or resemblance of propriety. The Carolina backcountry folk see no difference between a town meeting, a church service or lounging at home. Woodmason called the personal taste in dress of the Carolina frontier people "a great novelty to a Londoner" and further details his opinion by explaining that:

The men with only a thin shirt and pair of breeches or trousers on--barelegged and barefooted--the women bareheaded, barelegged and barefoot with only a thin shift and under petticoat--Yet I cannot break them of this--for the heat of the weather admits not of any but thin clothing--I can hardly bear the weight of my wig and gown, during service. (61)

Woodmason goes on to explain that the young women are "a bunch of wild Indians--being hardly one degree removed

from them" for they "have a most uncommon practice" which the Anglican explains as:

They draw their shift as tight as possible to the body, and pin it close, to shew the roundness of their breasts, and slender waists (for they are generally finely shaped) and draw their petticoat close to their hips to shew the fineness of their limbs--so that they might as well be in Puri Naturalibus--indeed nakedness is not censurable or indecent here, and they expose themselves often quite naked, without ceremony. . . . (61)

According to the Anglican minister, any fashion influenced by the European courts or the coffeehouses of London seemed distant and meaningless to the Carolinians. The dress of the people, though, was really only a reflection of the frontier community's adaptation of each facet of their lives to the harsh, uncomfortable, and quite often unpleasant realities of daily life in the dark, damp and humid woods along the southern Appalachian frontier.

The woodsmen who pursued the profession of hunting dressed in garments "partly Indian and partly that of civilized nations" were merely dressing how a lifetime of frontier learning had taught them was the best way to outfit themselves. And the women, even if only a shade away from being Indian, were simply trying to tolerate the heat and humidity found both under the Carolina sun and in front of the cooking fire. Any social pressure to wear constantly a bodice, a mob cap, stockings or shoes apparently seemed incomprehensible when the women were so far removed from the pleasant sea breezes of Boston harbor and the seasonal balls

of the Virginia governor. The men turned long hunters, as well as their women, were merely dressing for a life in the woods.

Several influences helped these varied backwoodsmen to hunt alone, to explore the next unknown valley to the west. As a result, a special breed of frontiersman, who was a product of both his environment and his own design, rose within the eighteenth century. Such a personality was perfectly matched to grab and cling to a land removed from a majority of the social graces and civilized supports. Understanding this, it is easy to see where the heroic traits associated with hunters like Daniel Boone found their beginnings in American popular culture.

Yet, those frontiersmen had their imperfections. They had their flaws. As long as Charles Woodmason encountered such frontier characters, he continually described them as rude, ignorant, irreverent, and lazy. Nicholas Cresswell many times grew frustrated with the trans-Allegheny people he dealt with and called them "whores and rogues" (98). Yet the Anglican minister appreciated their expert help when he found himself stranded in the winter woods. William Byrd saw such people as dirty, poor, but necessary, both to populate his lands and to supply his parties with fresh meat. But Byrd continually grew frustrated with his hunters when they did not meet his preconceived notions of either

their purpose or their ability. Yet he boasted of possessing their woods-sense.

Nicholas Cresswell watched in bewilderment as his hired backwoodsmen repeatedly aimed and shot at a massive herd of buffalo, yet failed to down a single animal. But in the end, those same woodsmen kept him alive, safe, and healthy. Joseph Doddridge saw his father's generation as a people void of scientific reason, smothering in superstition and practicing a special brand of frontier racism. Yet with a melancholy spirit, the amateur anthropologist regretted the passing of such a noble race. One member of James Smith's adopted Indian family mimicked the white trader's manner of speech by constantly repeating "God Damn [sic] it" in broken English anytime something displeased him. Such a personality trait rooted firmly in the mannerisms of the frontier people and copied by the Indians deeply troubled the future Presbyterian missionary. But only a few years later, James Smith would rise as a leader in the midst of such a profane people.

And even the heroes of the day, men like Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton, sometimes failed in their greatest moments. As a result, many of them would carry burdens of regret for the rest of their lives. But regardless of their flaws, when they finally erupted out of the woods to fight in the American Revolution, the British, loyalists and Indian allies repeatedly respected, even feared "the

widowmakers" of the Woodland frontier who stood "on their own hook."

CHAPTER IV  
A CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE: THE LONG HUNTERS'  
PATH INTO THE MIDDLE GROUND

The gradual settlement of the land south of the Ohio River and west of the Allegheny, Cumberland, and Smoky Mountains resulted from many different characters and political forces intertwining in both benign endeavors and brutal conflicts. It would be unfair to claim that the long hunters had a hand in it all. They did not. But as noted earlier, the hunters did spur on west the cycle of settlement into the Middle Ground. After that, forces often larger than any one man's dreams compelled the different entities to sometimes play out roles they did not favor. Caught up in the struggle for the land were the long hunters, the settlers, the land speculators, various government bodies, and the different Woodland Indian nations who frequented the region. The growing pains that would eventually bring Kentucky and Tennessee into statehood affected the lives and the dreams of both the white man and Indian alike. The long hunters included.

Some called the settlement of the Middle Ground "progress," while others saw the events as merely a sickening prologue to an inevitable storm of white domination. In any morality question as big as the eventual death of the Kentucky and Tennessee wilderness, the right

and wrong of things is never determined easily. Issues are seldom black or white, good or evil. The participants in this epic play were no different. They were a mixed lot of characters. Many good, many bad. But never was any one individual, any one side completely in the right, or completely in the wrong. Including the woodsmen called long hunters.

Regardless of their original motives for coming to the cane or meadow lands, most long hunters contributed in one way or another to the exploration and eventual settlement of that region. Their success in both hunting and story telling offered hope of a fresh opportunity for many borderland families. With each tale repeated, the fever to "go and see" the country spread a little bit more throughout the Middle Colonies. Thus, the hunters' stories naturally aided in the settlement of the old Southwest. And any of the Ohio country long hunters who eventually returned to the area as settlers, witnessed their expertise in hunting, woodcraft and "being Indian" aiding the transformation of the Middle Ground wilderness into a collection of growing communities. The long hunters' skill contributed to the demise of the very wilderness experience which they had basked in during the previous decade.

As reflected in this chronology, the long hunters were never isolated in their wilderness experience. Land speculators, settlers, and the probing grasp of the European

powers followed too closely, and sometimes preceded, the footsteps of the very first hunters into the region. The Cumberland long hunters never enjoyed much of a chance to live truly free. The "natural man" never existed in the Middle Ground except for brief periods of time. The long hunters enjoyed the freedom of wandering where they pleased only as long as the powder, lead, and flour lasted. They were able to reap the bounty of the forest only when the wilderness was free from warfare. And as seen in this chronology, that was very seldom.

Listed in this chronology are several of the events which helped fashion the transformation of the Middle Ground, along with many of the forces which were instrumental in the process. Special note has been taken concerning both the contributions to that change offered by the long hunters and the events which were of primary importance to them. The heroes perpetuated along the various avenues within America's popular culture and the lesser known hunters are all intertwined within this chronology, no matter what role they played. And thus their relationships to each other, along with their combined contributions, become evident as the history of the Middle Ground unfolds through this chronology.

As discussed in the introduction, many of the notions surrounding the Cumberland area long hunters have been filled with overly romantic notions. When Big Eli



proclaimed in the movie The Kentuckian, that Little Eli and he were "traipsing along like natural men," and "living free in the woods" those images are easily imagined, for they are firmly embedded in the history and tales surrounding early American heroes like Daniel Boone. But upon close examination of this chronology, such a carefree life fades from view. Rather the hardships, the misguided notions, the violent atmosphere of the Middle Ground all come into sharp focus. The "Eden" in which the hunters tried to live like "natural men" was truly as one Cherokee Indian claimed a "bloody ground." And Dragging Canoe was right when he warned Judge Henderson that a "dark cloud" hung over the land called Kentucky (Ranck 144).

Under such conditions, the chance to live truly free in the Middle Ground was extremely hard to accomplish. Perhaps such an ideal was even impossible. And therefore, probably not the sole driving force behind those woodsmen who explored and hunted in the Kentucky and Tennessee areas. Rather, this chronology makes it apparent that many of the men who market hunted were after various degrees of wealth, or land, or a chance to start fresh. Hunting was their choice as a means to that end. And their hunting profession only lasted a brief time, and then the hunters turned to land speculation, trading, surveying, farming or other professions which they had previously practiced.

This chronology will also make clear the melancholy spirit resulting from the slow death of the Ohio River wilderness. The signs of an ailing wilderness are first seen in the tragic efforts of a Woodland people trying to build a workable compromise between French, English, and colonial influences. The disease progressed as the cycle of settlement was encouraged by the hunters, traders and land speculators. The resulting warfare devoured the pristine wilderness like a terminal cancer. And as the death of the wilderness drew near, and statehood loomed for Kentucky and Tennessee, the chronology makes clear that many of the players (the long hunters included) were swept aside in the process. The hunting life of the truly free Middle Ground woodsman was only short lived, and at its best, never very healthy.

In constructing this chronology several sources were consulted to illustrate clearly how the long hunter fit into his environment, how his actions affected the land which he first explored, and how he was ultimately rendered obsolete by forces beyond his control. First, general histories were reviewed for events considered historically significant in the path toward statehood for Tennessee and Kentucky. Next, a highlighting of the more prominent long hunters' lives was constructed by studying their personal histories. Key events in the lives of such woodsmen were included within the framework of the chronology in order to visualize how

each of the individuals interacted with each other, and within the historical setting of the eighteenth century, Middle Ground frontier. Any information about the more common hunters was then gleaned from various sources in order to steer the focus away from the "heroes" of the frontier. And last, events which were undoubtedly known to the long hunters and in turn most likely affected their judgments, their lives, their families were included within the chronology.

The general histories consulted during the formation of this chronology were:

Arnold, Harriette Simpson. Seedtime on the Cumberland, 1963.

Caruso, John A. The Appalachian Frontier, 1959.

Every, Dale Van. Forth to the Wilderness: The First American Frontier 1754-1774, 1961.

Hamilton, T.M. "Chronology." Colonial French Guns, 1980.

Henderson, Archibald. The Conquest of the old Southwest, 1920.

Roosevelt, Theodore. Winning of the West. 4 vols., 1905.

When looking for key points in the various lives of the long hunters, woodsmen, political and military leaders, the general texts mentioned above were of course used. But the incidents hidden beyond the more widely known incidents were only found by searching historically correct biographies of those characters. Therefore the following list of works was

consulted when forming the chronology:

Durham, John. "Kasper Mansker: Cumberland Frontiersman." Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 1971.

Elliott, Lawrence. The Longhunter: A New Life of Daniel Boone, 1966.

Filson, John. The Discovery, Settlement, and the Present State of Kentuckie, 1784.

Igleheart, Ted. "Squire Boone: The Forgotten Man." The Filson Club History Quarterly, 1970.

Kenton, Edna. Simon Kenton, His Life and Period, 1930.

Ranke, George W. Boonesborough: Its Founding Pioneer Struggles, Indian Expeditions, Transylvania Days and Revolutionary Annals, 1901.

Smith, Col. James. An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life of Colonel James Smith, 1799.

Thwaites, Rueben Gold. How George Rogers Clark Won the Northwest, 1903.

Wellford, Harry W. "Dr. Thomas Walker, His Uncelebrated Impact on Early Tennessee." Tennessee Historical Society, 1975.

Whithers, Alexander Scott. Chronicles of Border Warfare, 1895.

Information gathered about the principal characters playing out their respective roles in the settlement of Kentucky and Tennessee was derived from the works mentioned in the above list. A majority of the information concerning the main characters was found within the various titles which bear their respective names. Elisha Walden, probably the first hunter to cross the Cumberland plateau into what is now Tennessee, was the exception. His exploits have been largely lost to history and were first mentioned only

briefly in Alexander Whither's work, Chronicles of Border Warfare.

In order to illustrate fully the objectives of this chronology, the list starts well before the heyday of the long hunters and continues on well past their prime, thereby offering a better understanding of the people, forces and circumstances which shaped their lives.

#### Prelude to the Great Hunt

- 1673 -Two traders, James Needlam and Gabriel Arthur become the first Englishmen to enter the Tennessee region. They leave from Fort Henry, Virginia, and travel as far as the Tennessee River Valley before turning back toward home.
- 1714 -Charles Charleville sets up a French trading post at French Lick, near where the town of Nashville will later be founded.
- 1734 -Daniel Boone is born on November 2; he is the sixth child of Squire and Sarah Boone.
- 1736 -French traders establish the first settlement in Kentucky. They locate their post just opposite the site of present day Portsmouth, Ohio.
- 1737 -James Smith, future long hunter, is born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania.
- 1747 -Rivalry between the French and the English for the sovereign trading rights to the Ohio Indians has

reached an intense stage. Both governments are willing to bribe, cheat, and even encourage war in order to gain their desires. After clever undermining attempts by the English, France's hold on the "upper country" weakens due to a series of wars with the Fox and Chickasaw Indians. Even those Indians most faithful to the French--those living around Detroit and Michilimackinac--become dissatisfied with their French brothers and rise up in revolt.

1748 -Several Indian tribes situated along the southern shore of Lake Erie send a small delegation to Pennsylvania, hoping to form an alliance with the English. To prove their sincerity, the Indians present a belt of wampum and a French scalp to the Pennsylvanians. In response, Pennsylvania authorities send back with the Indian delegation a gift of 200 pounds. The token of friendship is to be carried by George Croghan, a new employee of Sir William Johnson's Indian department.

-Within the same season, a deputation of ten Indians from the Ohio country arrives in Philadelphia and requests a similar alliance with the English. Philadelphia seals the alliance with a 1,000 pound gift. In an effort to preserve their own interests, Virginia offers an extra 200 pounds to help secure the new friendship with the Ohio Indians.

-George Croghan leaves in the spring and travels throughout the trans-Allegheny wilderness. He informs the tribes that an English ambassador and interpreter, Conrad Weiser, will visit them in the summer. Weiser, who the Indians call "the honest interpreter" is delayed by the Miami Indians who also want an alliance. But by the middle of August, Weiser is in the heart of the Lake Erie country. The English interpreter spends almost three months among the friendly Indians, striving hard to solidify the fresh alliance.

1749 -In an effort to draw the Allegheny Indians back to the French fold, a French trader, Louis Celeron De Bienville, voyages down the Ohio River and visits several of the Indian tribes. To declare France's sovereignty over the upper Ohio River, Celeron sinks a lead plate on the western bank of the Muskingum River, at the foot of a maple tree which forms a triangle with a red oak and an elm. His actions soon prove futile, for George Croghan follows him through that area and manages to neutralize Celeron's efforts to win the Ohio Indians over to the French.

-Taking advantage of the peaceful climate, Virginia jumps ahead of Pennsylvania and makes plans to secure the forks of the Ohio River. Virginia does so by authorizing her own Ohio Land Company to formulate plans for settlement in that region.

1750 -With the threat of French intervention dissipated, Dr. Thomas Walker, as both representative and partner of the Loyal Land Company, leads a party of adventurers through a legendary gap in the middle Appalachian Mountains. His men build the first known cabin on the western slope of the Allegheny Ridge. Walker names the gap and the nearby river after the British Lord William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland. The Duke, while campaigning in Scotland, has recently defeated the Jacobites at the battle of Culloden Moor.

-Squire Boone, the father of Daniel, sells his land in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and moves to North Carolina. Almost a year later, his family eventually settles in the Yadkin River Valley.

-While crossing the Atlantic Ocean, a young immigrant German family welcomes into this world a healthy male child. The parents name their son Kasper Mansker. Kasper will eventually become a master long hunter and prominent settler in the early stages of Tennessee's birth.

1751 -Christopher Gist, as representative of the Ohio Land Company, floats down the Ohio River looking for suitable land for future settlement. Gist's exploration takes his party up the Scioto River into the country north of the Ohio River, and later south into the interior of Kentucky. Eventually Gist floats



down the Ohio as far as the Three Falls area. At one point in his journal the frontiersman mentions the immense fields of blue grass in the "land of the Miami."

1752 -In a renewed effort to control the trans-Allegheny frontier, the French fortify the Ohio River and the Lake Erie frontier. They then oust all the English traders from the area.

-John Finley and Thomas Kenton, both traders, sneak past the French and canoe down the Ohio River and enter an area known only in legends as "Ken-ta-ke." Both marvel at the land's beauty and untouched bounty of wild game.

-George Rogers Clark is born on November 19 in Albemarle County, Virginia.

1754 -Colonel Washington finally persuades the Ohio Land Company to build a fort at the forks of the Ohio. Captain Trent is sent to begin construction of the bulwark, but the French force him to retreat. They in turn finish the fortress and name it Fort Duquesne.

-A group of woodsmen, led by James McBride, floats down the Ohio River in canoes. The party eventually lands at the mouth of the Kentucky River. While encamped at that spot, McBride carves in a tree the first letter of his name and the date.

1755 -The political differences between the two great powers, England and France, explode into a full-fledged war. The fuse is first lit when Colonel Washington ambushes a French "spy" column. The conflict is eventually called the French and Indian War or the Seven Years War.

-General Braddock organizes his army to march against the French forces encamped at Fort Duquesne. Several future long hunters, Daniel Boone included, hire on with Braddock's army. Boone is hired to drive one of the supply wagons.

-James Smith, a naive eighteen year-old, is one of three hundred civilians hired to cut Braddock's road to Fort Duquesne. Smith is captured by Indians while he is away from the main body of road-cutters. As a prisoner held at Fort Duquesne, he witnesses the French and Indian victory over General Braddock. A few days later Smith is adopted into the Caughnewaga nation. He is allowed to keep a prayer book, a Bible and a personal diary. At the hands of his adopted Indian family, the young man begins his pilgrimage toward becoming a seasoned woodsman and one of the most famous long hunters.

-The first map of the Cane Lands of Kentucky is drawn by a group of English explorers.

-During this same year, Simon Kenton is born in Fauquier County, Virginia, on Little Bull Mountain, in the "April before Braddock's defeat."

1756 -Unless the British build a fort near their homes, the Cherokee Indians refuse to leave their own territory and attack the French. The Cherokees wish to have their women and children protected by their British "brothers" while the braves are away on the warpath. In order to secure an alliance with the Cherokee, the British build Fort Loudoun on the forks of the Little Tennessee and Tellico Rivers.

1758 -General John Forbes, accompanied by Colonel Washington, leads a sizable British force against Fort Duquesne. The French commander, having recently sent to Canada all but 200 of his force, decides to burn the fort and retreat to the north. General Forbes occupies the site without a major engagement. The British rebuild the fortress and name it Fort Pitt, in honor of the British statesman William Pitt (the Elder).

1759 -While his Caughnewago family is visiting an Indian village near Montreal, James Smith escapes into the French city. There he joins a group of English captives who are being made ready to exchange for French prisoners. Eventually Smith is released at Crown Point.

- 1760 -At age 26, Daniel Boone crosses the Blue Ridge Mountains for the first time and explores Tennessee.
- A member of the French nobility, Jacques Thimote De Monbruen, resigns from the French artillery and becomes a market hunter. He spends his time hunting south from the Illinois country. The Frenchman, barely twenty years old, makes his first trip up the Cumberland River and becomes very fond of the country. De Monbruen finds a cave near the banks of the Cumberland and uses the natural shelter as his base camp. He eventually builds a small cabin in the area of present day Nashville.
- After five years among the Indians, James Smith finally makes his way back to his family in Conococheague, Pennsylvania. Upon his arrival, Smith is notified that just two days prior his sweetheart has married someone else.
- In December, Fort Detroit is occupied by the English, along with the rest of the northwestern posts formerly held by the French. The war between the two great powers has ended in the New world, but continues to rage in Europe.

## The Great Hunt Begins

1761 -The British rebuild and expand Fort Pitt, making it the largest and strongest of all forts ever built on that spot.

-Elisha Walden, at age 27, leads a group of 20 hunters over the Alleghenies and across to the headwaters of the Cumberland River. They are the first organized band of woodsmen to come from the eastern colonies and into the Middle Ground for the express purpose of hunting. Elisha and his fellow woodsmen are probably the first of the Cumberland long hunters.

1763-The Treaty of Paris is signed and formally ends the French and Indian War. France surrenders to Great Britain all claims to lands east of the Mississippi.

-King George III of Great Britain issues a Royal Proclamation forbidding any settlement west of the Appalachians except at Natchez.

-Elisha Walden forms a second hunting party to head once again deep into the western frontier. Walden's party of long hunters travel all the way into what is now east Tennessee. The trip is a success, and a reunion of sorts, for many of the same hunters who accompanied Walden in 1761 are with him again.

-Richard Henderson defends Daniel Boone in a civil suit for debt. During the course of the trial, Henderson

grows fond of Boone, and later hires the hunter as a personal land scout.

-Pontiac, an Ottawa, organizes a confederacy of former French-allied Indian tribes. Under his leadership, these Indians of the Great Lakes area make a bold effort to rid their territory of all English presence. Pontiac believes that his former French allies will soon return to the Great Lakes country. During May and June, eight British forts are surprised and taken, two other outposts are abandoned, and before the deadly business is finished approximately 400 British troops and 200 civilians are killed. Fort Detroit and Fort Pitt, failing to fall quickly, are held under siege by Pontiac's forces.

1764 -James Smith serves as a militia lieutenant, under Colonel Bouquet, in an expedition against the Ohio Indians. The British leadership has recognized the need to fight Indian-style, which helps Bouquet's expedition meet with greater success than did Braddock in 1755.

-Pontiac's daring scheme begins to crumble as his Indian allies abandon his plan to rid their land of the British. Both Fort Detroit and Fort Pitt never surrender, which in turn weakens Pontiac's charisma. The Ottawa leader finally realizes that his vision has vanished, and he sues for peace with the British.

-As a result of Pontiac relinquishing his scheme against the British, Captain Thomas Morris is sent by General Bradstreet to retake possession of the Illinois country. On September 5, the British captain meets "an Indian on a handsome white horse." Morris learns from the lone man that the horse had once belonged to General Braddock. The animal was taken almost ten years earlier, during the battle in which the general had lost his life.

1766-With the threat of both the French and the hostile Indians gone, the first and /largest British trading company to conduct business in the Illinois country sets up in Kaskaskia. The company is named Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, after the three partners. George Morgan personally runs the business in the west. The other two partners ship supplies from Philadelphia, to Fort Pitt, and then down the Ohio to Morgan at Kaskaskia. The company gradually develops an elaborate freight system over the 1600 miles of mostly wilderness between Philadelphia and the Illinois country. Baynton, Wharton and Morgan offer almost every article known to both red and white man, including Castile soap and satin lace. Morgan prefers English woodsmen from Virginia and Pennsylvania, instead of the local Frenchmen, to do the market hunting. Many long hunters

first work for Morgan and eventually see the Tennessee/Kentucky area by way of the Illinois country. -James Smith, in company with Uriah Stone, Joshua Horton, William Baker and another James Smith, start out to explore and hunt the land south of Kentucky. After 11 months the hunters find themselves on the banks of the Ohio having come overland from the Holston River settlements.

1767-Michael Stoner and James Harrod, two long hunters working out of the Illinois country, meet a group of Virginia hunters near the mouth of Stone's River. The woodsmen from Virginia have followed the Cumberland, from its head waters down to where it joins Stone's River.

-Daniel Boone reaches the land called Kentucky, but he does not realize it. After a period of successful hunting, Boone turns back toward home.

-Deerskin sells for a dollar a hide east of the mountains. In an effort to keep business coming into their frontier posts, the trading firm of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan offer, in the form of trade goods, more money per hide. They trade as much as two pounds of powder or four pounds of lead for each dressed deerskin, and although business remains steady, they lose money.



-James Smith and a mulatto slave, Jamie, bid their hunting partners farewell and return home. Uriah Stone and the others continue on, crossing over the Ohio and into the Illinois country. James and Jamie are arrested in North Carolina, because they look so peculiar dressed in only skins and furs. The townspeople do not believe that anyone could walk from the mouth of the Tennessee all the way back east across the Allegheny Mountains.

1768 -The trader Morgan commissions several hunting groups to travel by bateaux and dugouts into the Kentucky and Tennessee areas. They are to hunt deer and bear. Morgan hopes to get 20,000 pounds of meat, hides, tongues and tallow from each boat load of hunters.

-In July, Indians ambush one group of Morgan's woodsmen. When attacked, the hunters are far up the Cumberland and only one man escapes the disaster. He is a young lad, a good marksman and particularly attached to Morgan. His name is Simon Girty.

-Oconostota, a principal leader of the Cherokee Nation complains to John Stuart, who is in charge of Indian affairs in the southern colonies. The red man claims that whites are out in large groups, hunting in the middle of the Cherokee's land. Although the agreed boundary lines between southwest Virginia and the Cherokees are vague at best, Oconostota also protests

settlers building homes far west of what the Indian feels is the established boundary line.

1769 -Holston River settlements have grown enough to the southwest to be in what is now East Tennessee.

-In April the Ottawa war chief Pontiac is assassinated while visiting the settlement at Cahokia. Rumors spread fast describing Pontiac's murder. Soon the Ohio River Country is alarmed and cautious, for everyone is expecting an Indian uprising against the English. But the raids do not come. Instead, the Fox and Sac Indians nearly exterminate the Peoria, Kaskaskia and Cahokia Indians who they feel are responsible for Pontiac's death during a time of "peace."

-The Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers are both charted from their headwaters to where they meet the Ohio.

-One of the best known and largest bands of long hunters ventures into Tennessee and Kentucky by way of the Cumberland Gap. Many of the twenty-plus woodsmen will become prominent figures in the future of Tennessee. Among its members are Anthony, Abraham and Isaac Bledsoe, along with Kasper Mansker, Uriah Stone, Michael Stoner, Joseph Drake, Obediah Terrell and Robert Crockett.

-James Robertson, the future "father of Tennessee" becomes a Justice of the Peace in Botetourt County, Virginia.

-Daniel Boone, with the help of his old friend John Finley, finally makes his way through the Gap and into the Kentucky paradise.

-A loner named Jones tries to settle in a sheltered place close to present-day Nashville. He clears land, plants corn and builds a temporary shelter. Jones lives in his new home for about a year, until the Indian sign gets too uncomfortable. He then heads back over the mountains to safety in the East.

-Another brave soul, William Bean, moves farther southwest along the Holston than anyone has yet dared to settle. Bean builds a cabin on Boone's Creek, about 100 yards from its junction with the Watauga River. The secluded location hides his home well, is easily defendable and is located above a creek fall. Built on a ledge, Bean's hide-away is not easily seen from the trail that runs along the Holston River. By settling here, Bean is on Cherokee land and the first British subject to settle permanently in Tennessee. William is just the beginning of a long line of Bean family men who will move west in succeeding generations.

1770 -Daniel Boone and his hunting party of five woodsmen are encamped on the Red River. To help pass the time, Boone's men share a book while lounging around camp. The novel, History of Lemuel Gulliver's Travels, is quite popular with the men. They find themselves daily

discussing the characters and their escapades. One night, Alexander Neely comes into camp late and describes an encounter with two Indians. Neely alludes to the action with characters and locations out of Gulliver's Travels. The woodsman cleverly says that he has been that day to "Lulbegrud"<sup>1</sup> and had killed two "Brobdingnags" in their capital. Thus Lulbegrud Creek (in present day Montgomery and Powell counties of Kentucky) acquires its name.

-James Robertson moves to Holston County.

-Some members of the well-known 1769 Tennessee hunting party return homeward. But Kasper Mansker, Uriah Stone, John Baker, and others decide to explore more of the country. The long hunters build two dugouts and two buffalo hide boats and load them, along with an old abandoned canoe, with hides, furs and bear meat. The woodsmen head down the Cumberland, pushing for Natchez where they hope to sell their goods.

#### The Woods Grow Crowded

1771 -At sixteen years of age, a tall sinewy Simon Kenton angrily beats senseless his neighbor, William Leachman. Kenton had earlier lost his first love, Ellen Cummins, to the older and more mature Leachman. After several months of quiet rage, the young man's jealousy erupts into a bloody, dirty, desperate fist fight. With his

rival down and unconscious, Kenton suddenly fears murder charges, and in desperation heads west. To help hide his identity the scared runaway takes the alias of Simon Butler.

-After spending two years exploring and hunting in Kentucky and Tennessee, Daniel Boone finally returns to his home in the Yadkin Valley.

-A band of approximately forty long hunters, led by James Knox, leaves from southwestern Virginia and heads west to roam and hunt. Many of Knox's party are veterans of the celebrated 1769 party. Isaac Bledsoe, and Kasper Mansker are among the more experienced of the crew. This is the last-known large party of long hunters to hunt the Cumberland.

-Simon Kenton, now calling himself Simon Butler, finds himself in partnership with George Strader and an old man, John Yeager. The three adventurers form a pact, promising to find the elusive cane-lands of Kentucky. Searching for weeks along the Ohio River, the trio eventually gives up and makes winter camp at the mouth of the Elk River, which is in present day West Virginia. 1771 has been a year of great misadventures for the young man Kenton.

1772 -The settlers living along the Watauga River form a constitutional government, calling it the Watauga

Association. The Association is the first attempt at self-government west of the Alleghenies.

-After a winter of excellent hunting and trapping in the western wilderness of Virginia, Simon Kenton and his partners load their winter's take into their dugout canoe and float down to the Ohio River. The three of them camp along the southern shore of the Ohio and spend their days waiting for a trader to pass. When one does, the woodsmen trade their skins and peltry for clothing, plenty of powder and lead, plus as much dried corn as the trader can spare. The three partners then return to their Elk River camp for another season of hunting and trapping.

-Some members of the 1771 long hunter party, Isaac Bledsoe and Kasper Mansker included, are still in the woods hunting and exploring. During August the Cherokees plunder their Station Creek camp and destroy 500 deerskins. The Indians also take much of their food, supplies and ammunition. The woodsmen are saved from total ruin by a French trader who generously barter with them for fresh flour, ammunition, and a bit of cherished rum.

-Soon after his Station Creek camp is raided, Kasper Mansker discovers two salt licks, which are only a few hundred yards apart. While exploring between the two licks, Mansker kills 19 deer. He quickly grows fond of

the rich land, the abundant game, and hopes to return one day and build a home. One of the salt licks he names after himself.

-Kasper Mansker, while hunting alone in Kentucky, hears a strange noise far off in the woods. The sound, coming from the banks of the Big Barren River, is off-key, loud, and sounds like neither man nor beast. Mansker skillfully stalks the peculiar noise until he spots a lone white man lying flat on his back, upon a deerskin, and singing at the top of his voice. The floundering singer is Daniel Boone.

-After their party is robbed in August, Kasper Mansker, Isaac Bledsoe and the rest spend the fall recovering their losses. As the season grows cold, they encounter no further trouble and do not stop market hunting until their ammunition is almost exhausted. The party then heads for their homesteads east of the mountains and along the New River of Virginia. While in route, they meet another brigade of long hunters in eastern Kentucky. Mansker, along with a few others, joins up with the Kentucky bunch and then returns to the Middle Cumberland, hunting until the end of the year.

-The Cherokee agree to lease for ten years the land already settled inside their boundaries. In return, the settlers promise to pay in trade goods what amounts to several thousand dollars.

1773 -In March, with a cold rain saturating the forest, Shawnees ambush Simon Kenton's Elk River camp. The Indians kill John Yeager in their initial musket volley. But George Strader and Simon Kenton manage to escape, unhurt, into the dark. The two make their way through the wilderness, with literally only the shirts on their backs. For five days the young men stumble, crawl, hide, and nearly starve to death before they finally reach a cabin occupied by an old sugar-maker and his wife. Kenton and Strader lose everything they own: their rifles, axes, knives, accoutrements, along with the hides and furs a season of excellent hunting has produced.

-In September, Daniel Boone leads a settlement party toward Kentucky. While encamped west of Wallen's Ridge and less than a day's journey from the Cumberland Gap, a Shawnee war party ambushes the men guarding the stock. The Indians kill or steal all the livestock, and brutally torture and murder the young men guarding the animals. Boone's son, James, is found among the dead. After such a traumatic setback, most of the settlers become disheartened and turn back toward home. Boone, however, takes the remaining members of his family on to the Clinch River.

-Dr. Thomas Walker, who first looked for land in 1750, sells in southwestern Virginia 980 different parcels of



land totaling 201,554 acres. He then finalizes plans to move west.

-Settlers continue to cross the Alleghenies and venture into the Watauga and Nolichucky River Valleys of what is now Eastern Tennessee. Many of the new homesteads infringe on Cherokee lands.

-Surveyors begin entering areas of Tennessee and Kentucky, sectioning off land in preparation for payment to soldiers of the French and Indian War.

#### Death of the Long Hunt

1774 -By the Spring of the year, the Woodland Indians grow restless. Numerous white hunters, new homesteads and dwindling game all help to fuel a fire of discontent between the Indians and the colonists. Skirmishes erupt across the Middle Ground. The Woodland warriors raid several base camps, and many long hunters lose their fortunes. Simon Kenton, much wiser than the year before, manages to elude the raiding parties that plague his Big Sandy Camp.

-On April 25, Virginia raises militia under John Connolly. On April 26, Connolly issues a declaration of war against the Indians.

-On April 27, while encamped near Pipe Creek, Michael Cresap's party of woodsmen murders two friendly Shawnee.

-Three days later, Daniel Greathouse and a large party of bordermen massacre, at Baker's Bottoms, Chief Logan's entire family.

-By June, Simon Kenton leaves his Big Sandy camp and retreats back to the Fort Pitt area. Kenton musters in as a spy, along with fellow hunter Jake Drennon. While at Fort Pitt, Kenton meets for the first time George Rogers Clark. Clark, an officer in the Virginia militia, has Strother Crawford and several others whipped for "telling the truth on him." The "truth" as Kenton calls it, remains a great mystery for the enlisted men stationed at the fort.

-Daniel Boone, starting from his temporary home on the Clinch River, sets out with Michael Stoner to carry news of the Indian hostilities to the various surveying parties still out in Kentucky. The two woodsmen stop at Harrodsburg, a small wooden stockade where James Harrod has started the first permanent white settlement in Kentucky. When Boone warns of war, the settlers of Harrodsburg withdraw east of the mountains, abandoning the stockade. Before returning home, Boone and Stoner make their way to the Falls of the Ohio, where they give warning to the farthestmost surveyors.

-On a peninsula called Point Pleasant, Shawnee forces under Cornstalk attack a militia unit of Virginia backwoodsmen. Caught on the peninsula, with their

backs to the waters of the Ohio and the Kanawha Rivers, the frontiersmen fight boldly, holding the Indians at bay. The battle wages the entire day, with both sides giving and gaining the field. With darkness approaching, Cornstalk withdraws his forces, along with their dead and wounded and leaves the peninsula to the woodsmen. The Battle of Point Pleasant is the only major battle of what is to be called, Lord Dunmore's War.

-After the Battle of Point Pleasant, the Shawnee sue for peace. Chief Cornstalk meets the whites at Camp Charlotte and there delivers a moving speech which is recorded and later circulated throughout the colonies. During the treaty negotiations, Simon Kenton meets two men who will later save his life: Simon Girty and Chief Logan.

-As part of the Camp Charlotte Treaty, the Shawnee are to return all stolen goods. Some of Boone's family possessions, which he had lost the year previously west of Wallen's Ridge, are reinstated to his family.

-After the treaty, Simon Kenton is discharged from the militia. While hanging around David Duncan's tavern, he meets Thomas Williams and the two of them become hunting partners. The duo soon start down the Ohio, in Kenton's fourth bid to find the elusive Cane Lands.

1775 -In March, the Cherokees meet with white settlers at Sycamore Shoals. Through a lengthy negotiation, both sides come to an agreement. Judge Henderson acquires most of Kentucky, a good size chunk of Tennessee, and a guaranteed right of way to Kentucky. As part of the agreement, the Watauga settlers are able to purchase the land they previously had leased. The sale, convenient for both parties, allows the whites to negotiate without any legal right, and the Cherokees to receive gladly trade goods for land to which they can make no claim. Boone leaves Sycamore Shoals before ratification of the treaty, to lead a party of road cutters to Kentucky. They blaze a trail that is later known as the "Wilderness Road."

-During the Spring, Simon Kenton and Thomas Williams finally locate the mouth of the Limestone River. There, at the confluence of the Ohio and the Limestone, Kenton tops a ridge and spots vast fields of cane. The great stalks are twice the height of Kenton. Finally, the young woodsman has found the legendary Cane Lands.

-Following Boone's fresh trail, Colonel Henderson brings a party of adventurers to settle in Kentucky. Deep within Kentucky they find a partially-completed stockade named Fort Boone. On May 8, Henderson forms a "House of Delegates of the Colony of Transylvania." In the charter, Henderson calls Fort Boone

"Boonesborough," and designates the stockade as the capital of his independent state. One of the first laws endorsed by the delegates of Transylvania is an ordinance initiated by Boone, restricting the mass slaughter of wild game.

-After abandoning his Harrodsburg Station the previous year, James Harrod and his settlers return to Harrodsburg. They make several needed improvements to the stockade.

-Benjamin Logan, a dreamer, comes to the Kentucky area and starts his own settlement. Logan builds a wooden stockade and names it St. Asaph's Station.

-Simon Kenton builds a temporary camp at Blue Licks. With his partner Williams, Kenton finds two lost men whose canoe has overturned in the Ohio. Hendricks, one of the lost men, elects to stay in Kentucky with Kenton, whereas the other, Fitzpatrick, wishes to return home as soon as possible. Kenton and Williams take Fitzpatrick to their main camp in order to outfit the man for his return trip. While Hendericks is left alone at the Blue Licks shelter, Shawnee Indians capture him. During the following evening, the Shawnee torture and burn Hendricks alive. That same night, Kenton and Williams return to Blue Licks and spot the Indian's campfire. Fearing they are outnumbered, the two white hunters withdraw into the

darkness. The next day, after Kenton finds the torture scene, he deeply regrets not having reacted differently when first spotting the fire. The image of tortured Hendricks will sadly haunt Kenton the rest of his life.

-George Rogers Clark surveys under Captain Hancock Lee. In July, young Clark pens a letter to his brother, boasting that by Christmas 50 families will inhabit Leestown, Kentucky.

1776 -By Spring, Fort Pitt inhabitants designate the point of land, where Limestone Creek feeds into the Ohio River, as the "landing port" for the interior settlements of Kentucky. When disembarking at the mouth of Limestone Creek, new settlers are often met by a tall, quiet and polite woodsman who introduces himself as Simon Butler. The woodsman then gladly leads them into the Cane Lands.

-In June, with the coming of the rebellion in the east, the "fathers" of Kentucky vote on sending two delegates to Virginia, in order to request aid for the frontier settlements. The leaders elect and send George Rogers Clark and John Gabriel Jones.

-Thomas Sharpe Spencer, a woodsman who stands over six feet tall, and possesses uncommon strength, ventures into central Tennessee. Near the area of Mansker's Lick, the lone hunter finds an unusually large sycamore tree. The trunk is hollow and broken off about 20 feet

above the ground. The old tree slants to the south, just enough for Spencer to be able to walk up the trunk and climb inside the sycamore. The hollow interior is about nine feet across and offers plenty of room for the backwoods giant to explore the bottom of the trunk. At the base, Spencer finds a hollow root, which is large enough to contain his horizontal form. The tree becomes the woodsman's home. For months neither whites or Indians ever spot him. Spencer eludes all who pass by his hollow tree and his huge tracks cause quite a stir among the Indians. The large footprints are often an item of curiosity with other woodsmen.

-Indian hostilities heat up in the Kentucky area and the settlers have not experienced such raiding since the days of Lord Dunmore's War. Shawnees kidnap three white girls, one a daughter of Boone and the other two belonging to Richard Callaway. Boone leads a daring rescue after displaying a brilliant mind for reading some very difficult sign.

-Due to the dangers of the exploding border warfare, Kenton and his new partner Samuel Arrowsmith decide to "quit raising corn" and go to Hinkston's camp. The two woodsmen must travel light and fast, and therefore leave much of their supplies in the wilderness. Arrowsmith carefully buries, near their two acre corn plot, some iron wedges and an iron pot. He hopes to

return for them at a later date. Once safely at Hinkston's camp, Arrowsmith returns to his hometown in Maryland, with plans to bring his family to Kentucky. Instead, he becomes involved in the Revolution in and around Baltimore.

-George Rogers Clark brings 500 pounds of gun powder down the Ohio from Fort Pitt. The gun powder is the only result of the fiery Clark's impassioned plea for Virginia to send military aid to Kentucky. With only seven men in his party, Clark is forced to hide the powder along the banks of the Ohio.

-Christmas Day marks the beginning of a winter raid by Chief Pluggy and some forty Indians. On the 25th, they ambush a small party at the lower Blue Licks. Then on the 29th, the Shawnees attack McClelland's Fort. During the second fight, both Chief Pluggy and McClelland are killed.

-This year forces drastic changes on the long hunter's way of life. Wild game is now very scarce in the woods of the Kentucky and Tennessee regions. Just ten years earlier, the Middle Ground had teemed with buffalo, elk, deer and bear, but now a hunter must search far to harvest just a few animals. The market price of furs and skins drops so low that the cost to finance a hunt overshadows any reasonable hope for a profit. Both conditions, along with the erupting hostilities,



contribute to the demise of the long hunter's profitable profession.

1777 -In January, Clark leads a group of men more than 150 miles in five days to retrieve the cached powder. Guided by Kenton, the party leaves from Harrodsburg, and packs the powder back to the settlement without any misfortune.

-With the death of McClelland last Christmas, the settlers at his station decide to disperse and move to Harrodsburg. The folks residing at Logan's Station soon do the same. By the end of January, only Boonesborough and Harrodsburg remain occupied.

-The winter of 1777 is fast gaining a reputation as an extremely bloody season. The frontier settlers take to calling "the Year of the Three Sevens" the "Bloody Year."

-George Rogers Clark receives a commission from Virginia, making him a major and head of the Kentucky militia. In March, Clark forms the first "official" militia companies at Harrodsburg and Boonesborough.

-The two remaining Kentucky stockades are desperate for clothing. Clark sends Kenton and a small party to Hinkston's old camp to cut and retrieve any flax still growing there. The skillful woodsman recovers all the available flax and safely distributes it to the two stations.

-By spring, Logan leaves Harrodsburg and reestablishes himself and some settlers at his old St. Asaph's Station.

-A seemingly endless terror of Indian forest warfare haunts the Kentucky stockades. The violence reaches its zenith with Black Fish's raid and siege on Boonesborough. In the opening moments of the attack, Daniel Boone's leg is broken by the smashing force of a musket ball. While the wounded frontiersman is dazed and down, an Indian grabs the hunter's hair and prepares to scalp him. Fortunately, Kenton shoots the Indian before he can draw Boone's scalp. Kenton then rushes to the side of his fallen comrade, picks Boone up and carries him in a daring dash back to the security of the fort.

-In August, two companies of continental soldiers, totaling 100 men, arrive to guard the Kentucky settlers while they harvest the surviving crops. When the regular soldiers return to the East, the Kentucky forts are left with just 22 men at Boonesborough, 65 at Harrodsburg, and only 15 men at Logan's Station.

-North Carolina appoints James Robertson as the first American Indian agent to the Cherokee. Earlier Robertson had led Carolina militia in a victorious sweep through Cherokee land, but now that peace exists, he wishes to serve justly both sides. In order to be

closer to the Cherokee Towns, Robertson moves farther down the Holston River, to the mouth of Big Creek. -By the close of 1777, almost all of the Kentucky settlers have left the Middle Ground in either defeat or tragedy. Many are captured or killed, and most of those left alive have retreated back across the Allegheny mountains to either East Tennessee or Virginia. Any men who were once long hunters, and are still living in Kentucky, are now hunting for the subsistence of their families and the folks of the nearest stockade. The area of middle Tennessee is also practically void of white men, except for the giant, Thomas Sharpe Spencer. The Year of Three Sevens is truly the Bloody Year.

1778 -During the first few months of the year, the Kentucky settlers realize that they are without any means of preserving meat when the warmer months of spring arrive. When the temperatures drop to a constant sub-freezing level, Boone feels safe enough to venture out of his stockade and boil spring water down into salt. The frontiersman heads a party of 26 men to Blue Licks, and there they set up a salt-making camp. The men work around the clock, in shifts, adding wood to the fires and water to the massive iron kettles. Boone's sole job is to keep the party in fresh meat. On February 7, Boone is out hunting, and while loading buffalo meat

onto his horse, the woodsman is surrounded by a large band of Shawnee. Boone prudently surrenders. After some quick thinking and some clever persuading, he is able to save the lives of his 26 men at the Licks. But only if the salt makers peacefully surrender. Since there are so many prisoners on hand, Boone is also able to talk the Indians out of attacking the frail Boonesborough. With that somber thought in their minds, the 27 most able-bodied men of Boonesborough, now Shawnee captives, march off to the north.

-A little over a month later, on the evening of the 28th of March, a handful of desperate frontiersmen slip out from the American held Fort Pitt and make their way to the British forts in the Old Northwest. At the head of the renegade band is Alexander McKee. With him are Matthew Elliott, Simon Girty (the same woodsman who formerly worked as a long hunter for the Kaskaskia trader George Morgan) and a few other men who have chosen to follow a deep conviction to serve their king rather than their frontier community. Their decision to side with the British will inevitably draw the Indian conflicts out longer and make the price paid for peace more bloody.

-The price of deerskins has dropped to around a shilling sterling per pound, or about 50 cents per hide. With the further drop in the market price, the

continued scarcity of game, and the effects of the war along the border, even the best of the long hunters find the business of profit hunting near impossible to conduct.

-In June, George Rogers Clark leaves Corn Island, on the Ohio, for the Illinois country. He plans to capture all the British forts in the area and to secure the allegiance of the predominately French-speaking inhabitants. Clark hopes for a fighting force of 500 backwoodsmen, but only 175 men sign on to serve in the campaign. Simon Kenton is among the few who answer the call to fight under Clark.

-After four months as a captive, Boone escapes and arrives back at Boonesborough. Knowing a large war party follows close behind, the woodsman feverishly organizes the re-fortification of the stockade. Under Boone's inspiration, the disarrayed stockade is repaired just in time. On September 7, Black Fish and his Shawnee army lay siege to the fort. In an effort to gain entrance inside the walled compound, the Indians cleverly take to digging a tunnel, from the banks of the Kentucky River toward the palisade. Before the tunnel is completed, Providence intervenes, and a torrential rain destroys the Shawnee effort. Under the cover of the rainstorm, Black Fish and his band withdraw and return across the Ohio.

-During the summer, Clark fulfills his plan of conquest and captures three important British strong points in the Illinois country. Without the loss of a man, he takes Cahokia, Kaskaskia and Post St. Vincennes. The British have only one stronghold left in the Northwest: the fortress of Detroit.

-Simon Kenton returns to Kentucky, delivering the news of Clark's success. The former long hunter then remains in Kentucky, moving from one post to the next, helping where the needs appear the greatest. Kenton hunts, scouts and runs the woods undetected for much of the late summer. But on September 13, a band of angry Shawnee braves capture Kenton while the frontiersman is hiding near Chillicothe, searching for stolen horses. Bo-nah, a big, stout brave catches the white warrior whom the Shawnee call, "Butler." The frontiersman endures the torment of running seven gauntlets; the agony of having an arm broken and his skull permanently indented with the pipe end of a pipe-bowl tomahawk; plus suffering the emotional trauma of being twice condemned to being burnt alive at the stake. Only through the help of his old friend Simon Girty, plus Chief Logan and Peter Druillard, is the tormented Kenton eventually able to find reprieve within the safety of Fort Detroit.

-By December 17, only two of Clark's men hold Post St. Vincennes. On this day, the British Governor Hamilton and his forces, surround the lowly fort at Vincennes and demand its surrender. One of Clark's most trusted officers, Captain Helm, boldly peers above the stockade wall and waves a hot cannon fuse in his hand. Helm and his brigade of one private stand defiantly, prepared to defend the fort against the deplorable "Scalp Buyer" Hamilton. Only after the British officer promises the full honors of war does Helm dutifully accept the reality of such overwhelming odds and give up the wooden stockade.

1779 -In February, Clark makes a bold and unforeseen move against Governor Hamilton. Clark leads his men on a heroic march through the flooded Wabash countryside and surprises the British at Vincennes. During the march, the temperature is seldom above freezing and the men's clothing never dries. Emaciated and depressed, Clark's volunteers look to the red-headed Virginian for inspired leadership. The men keep on through the water and ice, lay siege to the fort, and eventually force Hamilton to surrender the stockade and his entire force. By capturing the British Governor, Clark does much to dispel the Indian alliance with the Crown. The daring march and ensuing victory contributes plenty to the Indians' growing fear of the "Big Knife" Clark.

-Kasper Mansker builds his station on Mansker's Creek (near the present-day city of Goodlettsville). Mansker erects a wooden stockade not too far from the very lick he found ten years before while hunting with Isaac Bledsoe.

-James Robertson, after hearing the news of Clark taking the Northwest, leads a group of men to the Middle Tennessee country. Robertson searches for and finds the beautiful French Lick area, which is only about 30 miles south of Mansker's Station. Robertson also locates Jacques Thimote De Monbruen's cabin. The Frenchman's base camp is crowded with stored skins, every one filled with rendered buffalo tallow. Robertson searches for De Monbruen, but can find no sign of the veteran long hunter. After making note of the prime land surrounding French Lick, Robertson continues down the Cumberland River and eventually ends up in Kaskaskia. Robertson travels back through Kentucky and makes it home by August. His family, ravaged with fever, is in no shape to move and the adventurer must wait until the fall before migrating to the French Lick region.

-At age 65, Dr. Thomas Walker begins the hardy task of extending the line between North Carolina and Virginia all the way to the Mississippi River. Walker and his partner, Daniel Smith, take a reckoning every few



miles, by either the sun or the polestar. Now old, grey-headed, and stooped, Walker has seen many changes along the frontier. A long twenty-nine years have passed since he first gave the famous gap its name of Cumberland.

-With the days of market hunting long since over, veteran long hunters Isaac and Anthony Bledsoe hire on with Dr. Walker. The two brothers help with both surveying and subsistence hunting.

-In early June, under the cover of darkness, Simon Kenton escapes from Detroit. With him are two men who were originally captured with Boone at Blue Licks. The fugitives elude capture by first going west, instead of straight south, as do most escaped Kentuckians. During the first two weeks of their freedom, the trio travels only at night. To complement their diet of dried corn, they occasionally feast on raccoons. Sometimes they manage to shoot three coons in a single night. After 14 days, the three travel during the daylight hours, and after 30 days and 400 miles, the men arrive at the falls of the Ohio. The place where the three Kentuckians make their crossing is not too far from the spot where the Shawnee first captured Kenton.

-Colonel Bowman leads a group of Kentucky woodsmen and settlers into the Ohio country. They attack the Shawnee town of Chillicothe, but the Indians soundly

defeat them. The Kentuckians are hotly chased by the Woodland braves all the way back to the Ohio. The Shawnee kill a great number of Bowman's men. During the original battle, Black Fish, the chief who had earlier adopted the captured Daniel Boone, is wounded in the hip. The Shawnee chief wishes to go to Clark's fort on Corn Island, because he has been told the doctor there can give him relief. His people vote against such a risk, and the great chief dies that fall due to complications resulting from the injury.

-Virginia sets up a special commission for the titling of property and to hear grievances concerning land claims in the Kentucky and Tennessee area. Simon Kenton hears rumors that anyone who does not enter land under his proper name will have legal trouble later. The stalwart frontiersman is reluctant to give up his alias, for although he has heard rumors that William Leachman is indeed alive, Kenton has always feared some sort of a trap. Kenton calls himself Simon Butler, until December 20, when he finally comes forward with the truth, and obtains a legal certificate explaining his metamorphosis.

-Nature ends this year in a cruel, harsh way. From November until the last of February, 1780, all of Kentucky is shrouded in ice and snow. The season becomes known as "the Terrible Winter." During the

frigid cold, turkeys fall frozen from the trees. While searching for all available browse, deer and buffalo wander close enough to the settlements that they can be shot from cabin doors. What the settlers don't shoot, the cutting cold kills. The wild animals suffer to such an extent that the herds and flocks never regain their greatness. The bitter weather also destroys all of the newly-planted fruit trees.

1780 -In June of this year, British Captain Henry Bird invades Kentucky. He leads a large mix of white men and Indians. Accompanying the 600 Indians joining the campaign are Simon Girty and Alexander McKee. Besides the intimidating force, Bird also brings two brass cannon. Both Ruddle's Station and the station belonging to Martin quickly yield when faced with such large numbers and the power of the artillery. As the two forts fall to Bird's demands, 350 Kentuckians surrender to the invading force. Due to the large number of prisoners and loot taken, Bird is forced to cease his campaign and return back across the Ohio. Simon Kenton and Charles Gatliffe are the only two woodsmen to secretly and swiftly follow the army northward. Their quickness pays off, for during the course of one dark night Kenton and Gatliffe steal one of Bird's brass cannon. They then deliver the captured field piece to George Rogers Clark.

-By August 2, a force of 1,000 militiamen and woodsmen under Clark land where Cincinnati now stands. Four days later the Kentuckians arrive at the Shawnee capital, Chillicothe. The village is deserted, because one of Clark's men has earlier defected, sneaking off to warn the Indians. Clark pushes on, finally forcing the Shawnee to do battle at Pickaway Town. The fight continues for two hot, intense days. The Indians eventually retreat and the Kentuckians burn the town and destroy the food crops. Clark spends three days cutting down every corn field his scouts can find. Kenton's brass six-pounder, lately stolen from Bird, plays an important part in the campaign.

-While the fighting is very costly in the Kentucky and Ohio countries, the Middle Tennessee area is quiet enough to attract several hundred new settlers. By the end of the year, more than one dozen new stations are built.

1781 -Clark's thorough beating of the Shawnee inaugurates a year of relative quiet along the Ohio River country. Small skirmishes still erupt, and whites occasionally get ambushed, but Kentucky is free from any large invasions.

-In Middle Tennessee, however, the country soon drips blood. The Chickasaw, Cherokee, Chickamauga and Creek all attack the Tennessee settlements. The Indians

devastate the region. By winter, only three stations remain in Middle Tennessee: French Lick, Freeland and Amos Eaton's.

#### The Bittersweet Years

1782 -In March, overly zealous militiamen massacre helpless missionary Indians. Scores of Moravian converts fall to the cruel executions of mallet-swinging bordermen. Just two months later, Colonel William Crawford leads 500 militiamen against the Sandusky towns of eastern Ohio. Crawford's men suffer a terrible defeat, and the colonel has the misfortune to be captured alive. In revenge for the Moravian massacre, the Sandusky Indians sentence the American officer to die at the stake. Simon Girty tries to intervene, much as he did for Kenton. He finally gives up the plea when the Indians tell Girty that Crawford will only be saved if the white renegade takes his place.

-In the middle of June the Ohio Indians hold a great council. The British agents inform their allies about the surrendering of Cornwallis to Washington. The British cause, and thus the Indians', plainly weakens. In a last great effort to destroy the western settlements, the Ohio Indians simultaneously attack parts of both Virginia and Kentucky. Captain William Caldwell leads the force to invade Kentucky. The

"famous three" of Matthew Elliott, Alexander McKee and Simon Girty go along for the fight. Girty's younger brothers also come, hoping to spill some blood. The British and Indians attack Bryant's Station and give a heated battle for two days. Suddenly, for no visible reason, the invading force withdraws.

-Three days after the siege on Bryant's Station ends, volunteers from Lexington, Harrodsburg and Boonesborough arrive at the battle site. The men, hot to hunt Indians, refuse to wait for more help to arrive from Logan's Station. Their appointed leader, John Todd, is just as anxious to take the trail. The men follow the Indian sign northward to the Lower Blue Licks. Boone, who is with the party, warns that they follow too easily. To the experienced long hunter, everything looks too much like an ambush. No one listens, and when threats of "being yellor" are shouted by Major Hugh McGary, the party ignorantly bolts across the river. The Kentuckians ride right into a cleverly laid ambush. The fight lasts only 15 minutes. In that brief time 70 white men fall, several more are wounded and the Indians capture seven. Boone finds his son, Israel, among the dead. One day later, Logan arrives at Bryant's Station with more than 300 men, among whom is Simon Kenton.

-Kentucky calls on George Rogers Clark to take the fight back into the Ohio country. Once again the red-headed hero leads a sizable force of men against the Indian towns located along the Big Miami. Boone and Kenton scout the way. An ex-captive, Phil Waters, gives valuable information on the exact locations of the newly rebuilt towns. During the course of the campaign, seven Indian towns fall before Clark's army and dozens of cornfields are destroyed. This is Kenton's last time to scout for his favorite commander, George Rogers Clark.

1783-By spring, Kenton's new settlement at Quick's Run boasts several cabins, cleared land, plus a small field of corn and flax. Kenton has dreams of many folks coming to his new settlement. With his future frontier community on his mind, the legendary woodsman leaves Quick's Run and returns to his boyhood home in Virginia. While "back home," Kenton tries to make amends. He offers land to all who will go back with him to Kentucky. He even makes amends with William Leachman and offers him the same land deal. On September 14, Kenton starts with 41 people, but unfortunately Kenton's father dies along the way. At Fort Pitt, the woodsman commissions the construction of a long, broad boat. When the vessel is completed,

Kenton takes his band down the Ohio in one of the first "Kentucky flatboats."

-In November, the Chickasaw and the Tennessee settlers sign a treaty. The peace agreement removes the Chickasaw threat, but the other southern tribes continue to molest the Cumberland Stations.

-Small raiding parties continue to sweep through parts of Kentucky. In the late fall, one such Shawnee raid hits Tanner's Station, a small stockade at the Lower Blue Licks. During the opening moments of the attack, the Shawnee kill all but two of the settlers camped outside the fort walls. Unknown to the raiders, each of their victims has smallpox and thus has been banished outside the fort walls. When the warriors carry the stolen goods and scalps back to their villages, hundreds of Ohio Indians soon die from the dreadful disease.

1784 -Along the mouth of the Limestone River, Simon Kenton finishes a blockhouse which he had started the previous year. From the blockhouse, the frontiersman coordinates scouting forays in order to better watch the northern Kentucky border. For some unknown reason, the Indians avoid attacking Kenton's fortress.

-By the spring of this year, 63 of the first 131 settlers in Middle Tennessee are dead. Of those that



still survive, many carry the scars of being wounded, scalped or maimed.

1785 -At the junction of the Muskingum and Ohio Rivers, where just 36 years before Celeron had claimed the Ohio Country for France, the Americans build Fort Harmar. The Americans hope to drive out the Indians and the English from the Ohio country for good and thus occupy permanently the area for themselves.

-Enterprising settlers build a grist mill at Limestone, only about four miles from Kenton's Station. The mill, an improvised contraption of wood, stone, and buffalo hide enables the settlers to bring their corn in and have it ground into meal. Near his blockhouse, Kenton invests in a water mill project. Kenton has the mill constructed just below the forks of Lawrence Creek, but the design proves unworkable and the project is eventually abandoned.

1786 -The Ohio Indians sign a peace treaty at Fort Finney. The quiet lasts but a short while, though, before the Shawnees and their allies once again cross the Ohio to steal, raid and kill.

-During the summer, Black Snake, a Shawnee leader, takes a group of warriors on a raid into the area surrounding Kenton's Station. One night Black Snake and four of his braves wander within hearing distance of Old Man Taylor's cabin. The five Indians sneak up

and peer through some cracks between the logs. Soft candle light betrays a majority of Kenton's Station crowded inside having worship services. With a perfect opportunity to wipe out much of Kenton's community, Black Snake withdraws without causing harm. The Shawnee feels that he would extremely anger the Great Spirit if he kills people who are praying.

-Kenton organizes, on his own hook, a body of scouts for the purpose of trailing Indian parties. The scouts become known as "Kenton's Boys." Each man, including the leader, volunteers to serve without pay or official recognition. They agree to "be on call" for approximately seven months during the year. From the first of April until November, each man is ready, at any time, to protect the people of Kentucky. Kenton plans to continue the organized band of bordermen during each year that Indian hostilities are likely.

-In late September, Benjamin Logan commands a force of over 700 Kentuckians, each man supplied with his own provisions. The brigade leaves Kentucky and crosses into Ohio and through Logan's gap. Boone and Kenton lead the advance force. Kenton guides the militia along the same route which he had traveled while a Shawnee captive in 1778. Logan's Gap is the same stretch of woods where Bo-nah had originally captured the respected frontiersman. During the first week of

October, Logan's men attack simultaneously both Mackachack and Moluntha's Town. After the battle, Kenton puts under his personal protection the old chief Moluntha, who had previously extended friendship to the whites. While Kenton is involved with other concerns, he leaves the elderly Shawnee with a few men. During Kenton's absence, the same Hugh McGary who prompted the disaster at Blue Licks, cravenly murders the chief with his tomahawk.

-Despite the major victory of Logan's sweep up into Ohio, raids into Kentucky continue for the remainder of the year.

1787 -After an absence of eleven years, Samuel Arrowsmith, Kenton's old partner from the pre-Revolutionary War days, arrives back at Kenton's Station. Arrowsmith retrieves his iron wedges and the iron pot which he had buried back in 1776. With a little bear grease, the iron implements are soon restored to workable order. The Arrowsmith family then uses the tools and pot while working their homestead.

-Indian raids are so severe in and around Kenton's Station, that armed men must guard those who are doing the tilling and the planting.

-With the beginning of the warm season, Colonel Robert Todd leads a force of Kentuckians north into Ohio. Kenton is once again called upon to pilot the fighting

force. By the end of the campaign, Todd's men do not inflict much damage upon the Ohio Indians.

Nevertheless, the Limestone Treaty is drawn up between the Shawnee and the Kentuckians. A few weeks later, both sides exchange prisoners and then partake in a barbecue and feast. But after the strained festivities the Indians resume their raiding.

1788 -After his first wife dies, the old long hunter James Smith moves his family to Bourbon County, Kentucky. Smith later becomes an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church and spends a considerable time serving as a missionary to the Indians.

-At the site of old Fort Harmar, on the western bank of the Muskingum River, General Rufus Putnam and his company of Revolutionary War veterans land their Ohio River flat boats. Putnam and his fellow homesteaders have come to settle the area and endearingly name their new town site Marietta. Putnam fondly calls his dream community the "Plymouth Rock of the West." Any memory of claims by the French to the Ohio country has long since vanished.

1789 -James Robertson, in his annual report as Indian agent to the southern tribes, estimates that the Tennessee settlers have lost five or six thousand horses due to the continuing raids conducted by the Indians.

-A bustling population and 119 cabins now surround Kenton's blockhouse at the mouth of the Limestone River. The people have named their growing community, Washington.

1790 -In the Spring, orders come from Henry Lee, Mason County Lieutenant, ordering all Kentuckians not to cross over to the Ohio side, no matter what the reason. No longer can any frontiersman legally take the woodland warfare to the Indians. Under the law, scouts cannot even cross the Ohio in order to look for any Indian sign that might warn of trouble coming to the Kentucky settlements. Such forays are now viewed by the Kentucky government as trespassing. As a reaction to this recent order, Kenton extends his scouting network 150 miles along the south bank of the Ohio River. The "Kenton Boys" continue patrolling in such a manner until each county can financially support its own patrols. When Mason County finally offers monetary support, each scout receives a mere 5/6 dollar per diem. Kenton is elected head of Mason County scouts.

-Simon Kenton finds the recently enacted trespassing law very frustrating. Especially when the Indians follow different rules. If the frontiersman feels justified, he does not hesitate from crossing over and trailing the Ohio Indians. Kenton quickly "trespasses" when Shawnees kidnap James Livingston and steal much of

Livingston's worldly goods. The woodsman brilliantly displays his gifted trail-reading by following days-old sign and not becoming fooled when the Indians split their party several times. Kenton eventually saves Livingston and much of the stolen plunder.

-By winter things have changed. This season is the first winter, that anyone can remember when Kentucky does not have any Indian problems. The Ohio country warriors stay on their own side of the river.

1791 -General Scott orders a detachment of "one ensign, one sergeant and sixteen privates" to range from above the Three Islands to 35 miles down the Ohio. All the scouts are Kenton's Boys and they report to Kenton more than to the county commander.

-In the Spring, the Indians increase their raiding along the Ohio River. More than ever before, immigrant flatboats are chased or lured to the north shore. Many times whole families are massacred. The mouth of the Scioto River becomes a favorite ambush location.

-In order to retaliate, the Kentucky militia finally ignores any trespassing laws and takes to crossing the Ohio. Kenton, though, has never stopped going into Ohio when he felt the reasons justified.

-On November 4, the Ohio Indians soundly defeat General St. Clair. Due to their routing victory, the Indians are encouraged to commit even greater raids down in

Kentucky. All winter they continue their bold marauding.

1792 -In the spring, once again the Kentuckians are officially forbidden to cross north into the Ohio country, for no matter what the reason. The law is sporadically obeyed by the civilian population.

-Kentucky becomes the 15th state on the first day of June.

-During the summer, five of the lower Cherokee towns, plus a large band of Creeks, combine forces to total about 600 warriors and declare war on the United States. By September, James Robertson calls up the Tennessee militia and bivouacs around Buchanan's Station, which is located just south of Nashville. All month the militia searches for Indians who reportedly have crossed the Tennessee River. The soldiers find none and by Friday, the 29th, the militia disbands. Buchanan's Station is left with only 19 men who normally live in the blockade.

-Just before dawn on Monday the 31st, over 400 Creek and Chickamauga warriors, plus many of their best chiefs, attack Buchanan's Station. Never in the history of Tennessee is there such a battle as this one. Within hearing distance of Nashville, the 19 men of Buchanan's Station spread themselves out to fire from the corner blockhouses and the four walls. The

women run powder, ball and drink to each man, doing their best to help defend their homes. The battle rages on for hours until Jeremy O'Connor, an Irish tourist, discharges an overly-loaded blunderbuss and creates a sheet of flame and death which devastates the Indians and sends them fleeing. O'Connor, who does not even own a firearm, saves the fort, and ends the last great Indian battle of Tennessee, by misusing a borrowed blunderbuss.

1793 -Isaac Bledsoe, long since retired from the market hunt, lives at his station near Castalian Springs, Tennessee. While moving logs one day, Indians ambush the old woodsman and kill him. His brother Anthony had been killed the previous year, under much the same circumstances.

1794 -Thomas Sharpe Spencer, the enormous man who lived in a hollow sycamore tree when he first ventured into Middle Tennessee, is killed by Indians. The Woodland warriors finally find the elusive Spencer unawares, and ambush him while the hunter is traveling back to East Tennessee.

-Dr. Thomas Walker, the man who first named the Cumberland Gap, who surveyed the boundary between Kentucky and Tennessee, and who did much to promote the western lands, dies in his sleep.



1796 -Four years after Kentucky, but on the same calendar day, Tennessee becomes the 16th state to join the new union.

-With most of his land holdings gone, and impossible debts mounting up, Daniel Boone applies to Governor Shelby for a job. The government plans to widen the Wilderness Road, which Boone had originally built back in 1775. Boone wishes to do the job, issues an emotional plea, but hears nothing back from the governor.

1806 -Elk have become so scarce in Tennessee, that when one is killed in Dickson County, the successful hunter holds a special barbecue for all of his neighbors. The feast is grand, and those that partake of the roasted meat remember the elk as a distant memory or an odd curiosity.

1812 -James Smith dies in Washington County, Kentucky. The ex-long hunter lives his final days with his various stepchildren. He outlives two wives and several of his offspring. His last few months are spent in a bitter battle over his son's membership in the Shaker church.

1815 -The Boone family has long ago moved to Missouri. But Indian troubles still befall them. During one uprising, Boone's extended family flees by canoe. The craft paddled by Flanders Calloway overturns and Daniel Boone's hand-written autobiography is lost.

- 1818 -A neglected and embittered George Rogers Clark dies. His death finally brings peace to a man filled with turmoil at never being genuinely recognized by his government for his service in wresting the Illinois country away from the British during the Revolutionary War. At the time of his death, Clark's fortune has disappeared, being eaten away by the debts incurred during his Illinois campaigns.
- 1820 -On September 26, Daniel Boone dies at his son Nathan's home. The aged hunter suffers for several days prior from complications developed after eating too many sweet potatoes.
- Kasper Mansker, perhaps once the most active long hunter of Middle Tennessee, dies of old age. He succumbs to the passage of time while living on the same land he had first hunted in 1769. During his years as a borderland explorer, hunter and resident, the German immigrant had received several wounds, in countless fights against the Woodland Indians.
- 1836 -Simon Kenton, the long hunter who perhaps endured the most, dies quietly at his home in Ohio. He lingers in his bed for several days before his body finally gives up the fight. During those failing hours, the old hunter is visited by many of his friends.
- 1844 -Elisha Walden, the leader of the first known group of long hunters to explore and hunt the Cumberland, dies

on his farm in Missouri. Walden lives until he is an amazing 110 years of age.

CHAPTER V  
A GRAND AND RISKY ADVENTURE

Kaskaskia Nov. 4th, 1768

Sir--

. . . You certainly judge right in putting a full complement of men on board Elliot's boat, but you either loaded her too deep or they have been strangely negligent. I was obliged to send men to the Ohio to help them up to this place, on account as they say the boat was too crowded for all of them to sit to row at one time. Please attend to this hereafter. This single boat has cost upwards of 100 dollars to get up the Mississippi. You should have also given them a hunter. . .

One of Mr. Elliot's men named \_\_\_\_\_ was drowned at the mouth of the Ohio, by a bear jumping into a canoe, he was in, and forcing him to leave it, although he had a gun with him; his companion escaped by swimming to the shore. . . .<sup>1</sup>

As seen in chapter two, Joseph Hollingshead referred to his upcoming expedition into the Cumberland country as a "grand hunt of the summer season." His words were full of hope, promise and a quiet confidence which only a well-experienced long hunter could obtain. Hollingshead knew that his hunting party had the ability and the supplies to spend six months in the summertime woods, and in the end, come back with enough red deer skins to make the gamble worthwhile. And the master hunter, as well as the rest of the woodsmen in his brigade, knew well the possible dangers involved in such a "grand" endeavor.

George Morgan called the trading experiment into the Illinois country undertaken by Baynton, Wharton and Morgan the "Grand Illinois Adventure." Not long after Pontiac fell

from power and the warrior's confederation dissipated into the Old Northwest, the three trading partners invested a majority of both their capital and credit in an effort to secure a monopoly on the Illinois country trade. Through a series of bribes, political favors and clever finagling, the British traders managed to swing a deal to be the sole suppliers for the British posts newly re-manned throughout the Ohio River country. With the rights to supply the soldiers, Morgan also absorbed much of the lucrative trade with the local French community and the Woodland Indians. Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan had a "grand" opportunity to make an unbelievable profit. Yet all three of the partners understood the risks, the financial gambles, involved in such a huge undertaking.

Joseph Hollingshead and George Morgan needed each other to fulfill their hopes and minimize the risks involved in their individual schemes. Hollingshead needed financial backing, in the form of credit. Morgan needed expert hunters who were willing to leave the security of the settlements and venture into the wilderness for extended periods of time.

As part of his contract to supply the British army in that region, Morgan promised to deliver salted buffalo meat to each of the Ohio River and Illinois country garrisons. In a letter to the "Partners" back in Philadelphia, Morgan hints at the phenomenal amounts of buffalo meat he needed

his hunters to harvest. When the trader penned the correspondence to his associates, Hollingshead's crew had been gone a little over a month. But already Morgan had received word that one of Hollingshead's bateaux would soon arrive in Kaskaskia with 15,000 pounds of salted buffalo meat. Morgan also mentions that a French hunter, Monsieur Dane, annually supplies the trading firm with 20,000 pounds of "wild beef." And the trader comments further on the lucrative buffalo market by explaining that Mr. Murray of Fort Chartes has placed an order for "35,000 weight for the garrison," but Morgan mentions that "we shall manage matters so between us as to lay in about 50,000 weight" of the salted buffalo meat at the old French fortress (24 December 1767).

Such numbers make it obvious that George Morgan needed the services of more than just Joseph Hollingshead and his hunting crew. And such requirements demonstrate the estimated 1,000 rounds of ammunition packed by Thomas Bay, Thomas McIntire and Jacob Drennan to be sound judgement. Morgan staked the future of the firm's "Grand Illinois Adventure" on the ability of his hunters to supply the meat and on his ability to deliver the meat and the various other sundries to the isolated garrisons.

As insinuated in his letter used in the above epigram, Morgan struggled with a myriad of obstacles when trying to efficiently formulate a trading route that stretched from

Philadelphia, across the Alleghenies to Fort Pitt, and finally down the Ohio and up the Mississippi to Kaskaskia. Elliot's boat was overloaded, the bateau men could not efficiently work the oars, and as a result the wooden vessel sat stranded at the mouth of the Ohio. As Morgan mentions in the letter to Captain Campbell at Fort Pitt, the miscalculation cost Morgan almost 100 Spanish dollars. If the British trader actually meant currency and not a bartering amount, then most likely Morgan was forced to pay, in cash, for the services of the men who went to rescue the stranded crew and bateau.

Paying in cash for impromptu labor was a minor concern to Morgan when compared to the actual loss of bateaux, trading goods and hired men. As discussed earlier, Devereaux Smith discovered one of Morgan's trading bateau wrecked and pillaged along the "Shawanoë" shore of the Ohio River. But Smith's discovery was not the only boat, supplies and crew which the trading firm lost during their "Grand Illinois Adventure." Such disasters happened to Morgan's supply chain far too frequently along the Ohio frontier.

Not long after Smith reported the pillaged bateau, several of Morgan's dugouts, piloted by Mr. Murray, overturned in the Ohio. The supplies were lost, and a negro was drowned. In the same letter by which Morgan informed his partners about Murray's dugouts overturning, he also

strongly recommended that any bateau loaded with trade goods should only attempt a descent of the Ohio during the months of January or February, when it was most likely that the Indians were holed up in their winter camps. And as a result of the repeated setbacks, Morgan expresses his anxiety over the shortage of supplies by commenting that the firm will "be ruined for want of shoes, sugar, green tea, coffee and chocolate" (24 December 1767).

Morgan's melancholy manner on that dark, icy Christmas Eve was ultimately prophetic, for by the spring of 1769, Captain John Campbell notifies George Morgan that, "From the great number of traders in every part of the woods the trade of this place is ruined" and, "The face of Indian affairs seems very gloomy. The Shawnees have been sending war belts and messages to all the western nations" (20 March 1769). Baynton, Wharton and Morgan's ability to seize and control the Ohio River trade was diminishing quickly. Any chance at keeping substantial profits gradually crumbled before the competition and the repeated misfortunes along Morgan's supply route. By 1771, the firm went into receivership. And Morgan's "Grand Illinois Adventure" was over.

A great many of the Cumberland long hunters were, in one way or the other, dependent upon Morgan's trading network. Many French and British colonial hunters worked for a salary, a commission, or in limited partnership with the trader. Men like Hollingshead and Girty worked for a



straight salary, while hunters like Bay, McIntire and Drennan preferred to ply their trade with an agreement to sell all the hides, furs and meat acquired to a single trader, George Morgan.

Many long hunters, like Uriah Stone, Joshua Horton and William Baker, who in 1766, followed the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers down to the Ohio, ultimately crossed over into the Illinois country and worked for George Morgan. As reflected in his autobiography, James Smith chose to not follow his hunting companions, and instead bade farewell to his partners at the mouth of the Cumberland. Smith then returned homeward through Tennessee in company with Joshua Horton's slave, Jamie (127).

Two years later William Baker ended up at Fort Pitt, having almost completed a circular route through the Middle Ground. While at the fort, the long hunter was re-hired by George Morgan. In the Fort Pitt account book of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, the hunter showed a previous balance of 3 pounds, 17 shillings and 5 pence. During April and May of 1768, Baker remained in Morgan's employ earning 7 pounds per month. He hunted for the trader for "two months and two days" boosting his credit up to 14 pounds, 16 shillings and 6 pence. With that "money," Baker bought a rifle, a knife, a pair of garters and a three-point blanket. By May 31, William Baker "requested to be discharged" from Morgan's service, and with 1 pound, 17 shillings and 1 pence credit

remaining on the Fort Pitt books, Morgan's clerk notes in the ledger that "this man is gone to hunt with Richard Brooks."<sup>2</sup>

Long hunters like Simon Kenton, Elisha Walden and Daniel Boone formed relationships with various backers in a similar fashion to William Baker, or the "deal" struck between Morgan and the hunting partnership of Bay, McIntire and Drennan. Like Joseph Hollingshead, almost every long hunter needed "a stake," some sort of financial endorsement. The cost of launching a long hunt of any size into the Middle Ground wilderness was just too costly, too full of risk for the average hunter to go it alone. Joseph Hollingshead had his George Morgan. Daniel Boone had his Judge Henderson. And Simon Kenton had the one-time help of the long hunter Jacob Greathouse.

In a time well before credit references, banks and computerized background profiles, any woodsman wishing to receive credit from a trader, or financial backing from a man like Judge Henderson, had to apply with his reputation as both a hunter and a man of his word. The woodsman destined to succeed as a long hunter had to excel in all the skills learned in a lifetime of frontier schooling. A "wannabe" long hunter could not be average in talent or character and expect a trader to offer credit, or his family to see him ever again if he ventured for months into the

western wilderness. The adventure was just too grand, just too risky.

The poor boatman of Elliot's bateau crew briefly mentioned in George Morgan's letter (in the epigram of this chapter) is a tragic example. The clerk, who copied Morgan's letter into the permanent ledger, did not even know the name of the unfortunate man who had drowned when a bear leaped into his canoe. Even with a loaded gun, the boatman panicked, jumped, and then met a terrible end which Morgan does not detail. A man expert in the frontier skills might have stood a better chance than did the nameless bateau man of Elliot's crew.

Freak accidents like wild animals ending up in a hunter's canoe did not happen just once in the Middle Ground frontier. When Nicholas Cresswell and his team of eight backwoodsmen and several hunting dogs floated down the Ohio River in their twin dugouts named Charming Sally and Charming Polly, the entire party looked forward to a great season of exploring and hunting.<sup>3</sup> Cresswell notes in his journal that the lashed-together canoes are drifting down the Ohio at about "two miles in an hour" (70). They are content to allow the current of the river to carry gently their overloaded canoes toward the limestone cliffs and the caneland valleys of Kentucky. But once the Kentucky River is reached, Cresswell repeatedly mentions in his diary that

"all hands well tired and damn cross" (77), and that there is "great quarrelling among the company" (79).

The discomfort, the raw nerves, the disgruntled personalities were due to a shortage of fresh meat and bread in a land of supposed plenty. Although the canoes were heavily laden with supplies and "in great danger of oversetting" (70), the adventurers were soon to be down to a pint of flour per man, per day (79). Rainy weather and mismanagement, and hoggish behavior by some members of the crew had caused the rations to run exceedingly short. And to add misery to their misfortune, while the canoes were secured to the bank of the Kentucky one dark spring night, a herd of buffalo decided to cross the river, right over their canoes. Most of the remaining flour, along with one of the dugouts, was driven into the muddy river bottom by thundering buffalo hooves. Cresswell notes that the second canoe, lashed nearest to the shore, was occupied by a sleeping Benjamin Johnson. For some unknown reason, the entire herd of buffalo jumped Johnson's canoe and crashed into the empty dugout, thus saving the life of the terrified hunter (78).

Cresswell's party did not escape hunger, misfortune and trauma with that eventful May night. Sickness, starvation, torrential rains, injured limbs, Indian ambushes, plus deserters and thieves from within their own group all plagued Cresswell's hopeful adventure into the Kentucky

River country. Before the Englishman reached the relative comfort of Fort Pitt, Cresswell found himself on all fours searching the ground for "potatoes" and ginseng root to appease his withered stomach (94-95).

Anytime a long hunter left the haven of a frontier settlement, the security of a stockade, or the affection found within his lonely cabin, the woodsman put his life and his family's well being in jeopardy. Daniel Boone not only grieved for the loss he suffered when he discovered the broken bones of his lost hunting partner John Stewart, but also for the devastation Stewart's family would surely experience. According to Lawrence Elliott, when Stewart stumbled through the woods alone, with a broken arm and no rifle, he was but 26 years old. And as the weary hunter crawled into the hollow tree and awaited death, his "four children, one of whom he had never seen" must have filled his mournful mind (61).

The risks encountered by woodsmen were not confined to the shadowed buffalo traces and distant warrior paths. Misfortunes of all kinds, including murder, could ambush even the most careful of all woodsmen. Not all woodsmen made their living along the frontier as market hunters. As already mentioned, Simon Girty was paid as a translator, guide, hunter and messenger. And not all employees of traders like George Morgan were white men.

Other than Simon Girty, the trader George Morgan relied on an Indian named Silver Heels. In both men, the colonial entrepreneur placed his unreserved trust and faith. And both men returned similar affections to Morgan. During the first months of the American Revolution, Simon Girty sided with the British cause and fled to Fort Detroit, offering his services to the British Indian agents. But Silver Heels was never afforded such an opportunity to choose his own destiny.

One evening, while George Morgan was at home in Kaskaskia and working by candle light at his desk, he heard a great disturbance in his front yard. Upon hearing the angry voices, the trader went outside to investigate. As Morgan entered his yard, figures hidden by the darkness skulked off into the night. By the dim illumination of the moon Morgan was horrified to find his faithful messenger, Silver Heels, crumpled on the ground. Morgan carried the poor soul into his house and proceeded to "search for his wounds which the sight of made me lose all hopes of relieving him" for the trader found that:

A knife of eight inches long had entered between his collar bone and his neck likewise in the three places of his left breast within two inches of each other in nearly an equilateral triangular form and all went to the heart. Then they cut him open crossways just below or rather between his left and right breast bones, from whence his entrails appeared.<sup>4</sup>

Morgan went on to report his anguish and his helplessness while a "person who had on all occasions shown a most

particular attachment to me and rendered me many services" gasped his last breath in the trader's arms.

History has hidden many of the tragic deaths encountered by hunters who ventured beyond their familiar valley and ridges to seek adventure and fortune. How many long hunters met pitiful deaths similar to that of John Stewart is not known. How many unfortunate greenhorns like Hendricks spent their last screaming hours spread-eagled over a fire pit has long since faded from history (Kenton 66). How many died tragically within a bustling settlement, like the faithful Silver Heels, has long ago been covered by time. But many did die tragically, quickly and alone. No stories are told of those unknown woodsmen who explored and hunted the Kentucky, Green, Cumberland and Tennessee rivers of the Middle Ground. Those anonymous hunters who simply never came back home died far short of their visions of a "grand adventure."

The nature of what America's popular culture has retained since hunters first worked the tributaries of the Cumberland is understandable. The times, the circumstances, the personality of the unexplored regions west of the Appalachians required explorers with unusual talents. The historian John Filson created a hero to match the Kentucky wilderness. And the novelist James Fenimore Cooper embroidered upon the tapestry begun by Filson.

Undoubtedly, Daniel Boone really existed. The woodsman did hunt and explore the Kentucky and Tennessee regions. But Boone paid a terrific price for the privilege of being among the first to seek such an adventure. And the master woodsman made mistakes. He repeatedly abandoned his wife and family. He contributed to the horrible deaths of two of his sons. Simply put, the real Boone was human. But to John Filson, Boone was the personification of America subduing the North American wilderness. And that is what America's popular culture has chosen to perpetuate.

James Fenimore Cooper took Filson's image of Boone and solidified the character in his leatherstocking hero Natty Bumppo. Hawkeye continually hunted and lived in the wilderness while following a higher law, completely unaffected by the contradictions boiling all about him. As Cooper explains in The Deerslayer, "Truth was the Deerslayer's polestar" (460). And throughout his fictional life, the Scout never failed to practice that axiom.

If the natural man existed, then he did not exist in such a perfected form as Cooper's Hawkeye. Rather the man "on his own hook" survived in tarnished forms like those found in the life of Simon Kenton. Several people who saw Kenton when he was an older woodsman did indeed describe him as a "natural man." John W. McCann was one who saw the former long hunter only once, but the image left a permanent impression. McCann wrote Lyman C. Draper several years



after the chance meeting and commented that Kenton "was the most remarkable natural man I ever saw or talked with" (as quoted by Kenton 304). Yet however "natural" and free from the corruptness of civilization Kenton might have been, he did not practice a pure sense of justice, truth was not always his polestar, and he practiced a code of vengeance seldom equaled along the frontier.

If a woodsman ever had a chance to live truly free, traipsing along as he pleased, then the episodes were at best brief. The dependence upon the trader's supplies, the needs of the family back home, almost continual warfare, and the mandates of a European royalty all interfered with any efforts of a long hunter to exist in an unmolested state.

But hunters did try. Not for the sake alone of "living natural" or on their "own hook." The long hunters were susceptible like all people to the unrelenting pull of the dollar. The hope of exaggerated buying power back in the settlements undoubtedly propelled many to seek their fortunes in the pursuit of the hunt. And in order to have a realistic chance at fulfilling their dreams, the woodsmen turned long hunters had to possess the best of frontier talents.

But no matter how morality tinted their view of the frontier, how well they prepared to meet its challenges, and how skillful they became, the long hunters' grand adventures were a constant gamble. And sometimes they lost. This

inscription carved on a sycamore tree along the Holston River epitomizes the regret of one forlorn long hunter whose dream had died: "2300 deerskins lost. Ruination by God."<sup>5</sup>

## CHAPTER VI

## CONCLUSIONS

## REMEMBERING THE GOOD FAME

To masters, schools, and colleges unknown,  
The forest was his academic grove,  
Self taught: the lettered page was all his own,  
And his the pen, with nicest art to move.

Think not ye lettered men with all your claims,  
Ye rich in all the spoils of fields, and floods,  
That solid sense, and virtue's fairest gems,  
Dwell not with hutsmen in their native woods.<sup>1</sup>

As discussed in the introduction of this work, Doddridge has described in previous stanzas of his elegy, the dress, talents and prowess of his woodsman protege. In the lines quoted above, the amateur historian continues the supposed image by thoughtfully illustrating the natural, "native woods" which fostered a "self taught" hunter full of "solid sense" and "virtue's fairest gems." Not only is Doddridge's woodsman a talented hunter and daring explorer, but he is also painted as a perceptive Solomon of the frontier. Doddridge intertwines warrior and wise man within the same person.

Doddridge does not stop with such claims when describing the Middle Colony backwoodsman. In the stanzas following the frontiersman's "academic grove," the historian illustrates additional attributes firmly established in a young America's popular image of a colonial westerner. Doddridge has his woodsman clearing the field and planting grain while being the thoughtful "husband, father, and the

friend" (59-60). While conquering a hardwood wilderness, raising a family, and valuing precious friendships, the woodsman in Doddridge's eye also has an "ample store of ardent mind, / Rich in liberal and creative arts," enabling him expertly to "trace the landscape with correct design" (61-64).

Then in the spirit of Cooper's frontier hero Hawkeye, who guided his course by truth and fairness, Doddridge's woodsman lives his life:

With feeling heart sincere, and ever kind,  
He was the friend and father of the poor,  
His was the wish for good to all mankind,  
And pity often taxed his little store. (65-68)

Through these clever lines, a caretaker of the impoverished, weak, and helpless, emerges from the deep shadows of a virgin wood. Such a sense of justice, of brotherly concern for the poorest of mankind is balanced, in Doddridge's words, with a "rough woodland" pioneer who must not be denied the deserved "love, or tears," or their names allowed "to vanish with the passing gale" (89-92). The amateur historian affirms that such a strong, yet compassionate woodsman must be remembered.

Doddridge also stresses that these same colonial woodsmen bestowed upon young America the prosperity and security then enjoyed by her citizens. With an axe, a rifle, a sack of seed and a firm sense of square-dealing, the frontiersmen chopped, shot and planted their way across the virgin wilderness. Behind such stalwart individuals

came the stockades, the trading posts, the budding settlements. The retired minister claims that the growing communities of "Mississippi's wide extended vale" (90) owe their prosperity to the woodsmen who:

With veteran arms the forest they subdued,  
with veteran hearts subdued the savage foe,  
Our country, purchased by their valiant blood,  
Claims for them all that gratitude can do.

Their arduous labors gave us wealth and ease,  
Fair freedom followed from their double strife,  
Their well aim'd measures gave us lasting peace,  
And all the social blessedness of life. (93-100)

Throughout this elegy written in honor of his father, Doddridge constructs a complete image of the supposed colonial backwoodsman. The retired minister stresses the frontiersman's ability to hunt, feed, clothe and shelter his family. He underlines the backwoodsman's delight at discovering unspoiled meadows and cascading waterfalls. Doddridge blends wisdom, prudence, brotherly love, reverence, and the skills of a justified warrior into a single persona--the "son of a trackless forest" with "manners stern" and "understanding strong" who struggled long in a "humble, lowly state" (26) to leave his "happier offspring rich and great" (28).

By promoting such a notion in his elegy, Doddridge develops the image previously envisioned by John Filson and later solidified by James Fenimore Cooper. Doddridge, like Filson and Cooper, prefers to overlook any stories of shortened rations or the nightmare of stampeding buffalo

jumping over a sleeping woodsman. The three writers avoid the inevitable rheumatism, the inadequate clothing, the sporadic seasons of feast or famine. None dwell on broken limbs, mutilated children or greedy hunting partners. And nothing is written concerning the frontier slave market, adultery, murder, lost trade goods or devious land speculators.

Instead, Doddridge, Filson and Cooper re-create a popular image already growing along the early American frontier. They perpetuate a persona already firmly established everywhere woodsmen have wandered out of the wilderness and into a growing settlement. Like other frontier story tellers, these three authors have chosen to remember what Lord Byron calls "the good fame," an eminence which only an individual who lives beyond the depravity of civilization can ever hope to claim.

Lord Byron explains this notion of the natural man living "as free foresters" (8.67.6)<sup>2</sup> in his epic poem Don Juan,<sup>3</sup> where he refers in his eighth Canto to "General Boon, back-woodsman of Kentucky" (8.61.4). Daniel Boone caught Byron's attention sometime around 1820. According to Truman Guy Steffan, author of Byron's Don Juan: The Making of a Masterpiece, Byron most likely learned of Boone's exploits and lifestyle from several different sources. Supposedly, an American traveller shared frontier tales of the Kentuckian with the English Romantic "at Florence in 1823."

The American promised to send Byron two works, a "long poem" and a book, both inspired by the trailblazer's life. And based upon Steffan's research, Byron may very well have read a variety of other sources which referred to Daniel Boone's exploits (177; vol. 4).

While caught up in the "War, Pestilence, the despot's desolation" (Don Juan 8.68.4), which then ravaged 19th century Europe, Byron discovered the hidden appeal of the free-spirited, wandering hunter. Through Daniel Boone, the poet had found a certain hope in his natural man. During 1823, while living in Genoa, halfway around the world from the deep forests and immense canelands of Kentucky, Byron looked to Boone for his inspiration. And as a result (less than three years after Boone died) Lord Byron penned his own version of "General Boon." According to Steffan, Boone became Byron's "dream escape from stupidity and suffering on sea and land" (321; vol. 1).

To illustrate this notion of Boone being "the happiest amongst mortals any where;" (8.61.5) Byron devotes eight stanzas to guiding the reader through the elusive world of the frontiersman. Byron sees this contentment of Boone's deriving from a multitude of freedoms that only a natural man, such as a deep backwoodsman, can enjoy while fleeing intermittently beyond the ever-spreading confines, the "walls men know" (8.60.6) that are built--both figuratively and literally--high within cities and civilization.

First of all, the Englishman believes that Boone gains satisfaction by "killing nothing but a bear or buck" (8.61.6). As Byron sees it, the "walls" do not encompass and the crimes of war, tyranny and murder do not penetrate the security of the forests. And the poet explains this by writing:

Crime came not near him--she is not the child  
Of Solitude; health shrank not from him--for  
Her home is in the rarely-trodden wild,  
Where if men seek her not, and death be more  
Their choice than life, forgive them, as beguiled  
By habit to what their own hearts abhor--  
In Cities caged. The present case in point I  
Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to ninety;  
(8.62.1-8)

Although Byron exaggerates slightly the ultimate age of the frontiersman, the Englishman nevertheless paints a strong picture of a virgin wood free of vice, disease, premature death and the constrictions of his European society. To Byron, there are no walls, no cages in the deep woods to trap humanity.

Byron further elaborates on Boone's serene lifestyle by claiming that contrary to Europe's traditional heroes--who claimed their fame through warring, pillaging, and robbing--the Kentuckian gained a "good fame," a "name" which people value above a mere "tavern song" hero. Byron explains his perceptions as follows:

And what's still stranger, left behind a name  
For which men vainly decimate the throng,  
Not only famous, but of that good fame,  
Without which Glory's but a tavern song--  
Simple, serene, the antipodes of shame,  
Which hate nor envy e'er could tinge with wrong;



An active hermit, even in age the child  
Of nature, or the Man of Ross run wild. (8.63.1-8)

The English poet then acknowledges that perhaps Boone did avoid "his nation" (8.64.1) when civilization "built up unto his darling trees" (8.64.2), but that the frontiersman did so following the most natural of motivations. According to Byron, Boone knew that with civilization "you neither can be pleased nor please" (8.64.6). And as in the eyes of Filson, Doddridge and Cooper, Byron envisioned his hero judging each "individual man" (8.64.7) on his own merits and always "shewed himself as kind as mortal can" (8.67.8).

The English Romantic then offers evidence for his suppositions concerning Boone's ability to enjoy "the lonely vigorous, harmless days" spent in the "wilds of deepest maze" (8.61.7-8). Byron claims that the Kentuckian is not alone in his paradise, for there are the "children of the chace," the woodland Indians, who also enjoy a similar life of bliss. Byron writes that:

He was not all alone: around him grew  
A sylvan tribe of children of the chace,  
Whose young, unawakened world was ever new,  
Nor sword nor sorrow yet had left a trace  
On her unwrinkled brow, nor could you view  
A frown on Nature's or on human face;--  
The free-born forest found and kept them free,  
And fresh as is a torrent or a tree. (8.65.1-8)

To Byron, the woods, the wilderness, "found and kept them free" from the "sword" of war, the "sorrow" of disease, greed and decaying society. In the poet's eyes, the freedom found in the forest rejuvenated both Boone and the Indians.

Byron perceives the meadows, the rivers, the hardwood groves of the Middle Ground as an unadulterated land of Eden. And this sanctuary is an escape which, the English poet hopes for all humanity, "shall be our home at last" (8.60.8).

To underscore this vision of a "free born forest" full of a content "sylvan tribe of children," Byron constructs the next two stanzas to contrast repeatedly the "dwarfing city's pale abortions" with the "unsighing people of the woods." Byron wants the reader to understand the slow strangulation which the unrelenting grips of lust, corruption and even fashion have on most people. The poet explains:

And tall and strong and swift of foot were they,  
 Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abortions,  
 Because their thoughts had never been the prey  
 Of care or gain: the green woods were their  
 portions;  
 No sinking Spirits told them they grew grey,  
 No Fashion made them apes of her distortions;  
 Simple they were, not savage; and their rifles,  
 Though very true, were not yet used for trifles  
 (8.66.1-8)

Motion was in their days, Rest in their slumbers,  
 And Cheerfulness the handmaid of their toil;  
 Nor yet too many nor too few their numbers;  
 Corruption could not make their hearts her soil;  
 The lust which stings, the Splendor which  
 encumbers,  
 With the free foresters divide no spoil;  
 Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes  
 Of this unsighing people of the woods. (8.67.1-8)

To Lord Byron, the "green woods" were indeed the sanctuary for Boone and the other "free foresters," allowing them to revel fully in "their portions" as a satisfied, "unsighing people of the woods." And finally, in the poet's

best satiric manner, Byron ends his discussion of the "happiest mortal" and his "green woods" by proclaiming that:

So much for Nature:--by way of variety,  
Now back to thy great joys, Civilization!  
And the sweet consequence of large society,  
War, Pestilence, the despot's desolation,  
The kingly scourge, the Lust of Notoriety,  
The millions slain by soldiers for their ration  
(8.68.1-6)

Byron portrays a natural man, living free as man should always have done, "traipsing along" as he pleases, "living free in the woods," shooting only his meals and showing "himself as kind as mortal can." Byron's Boone has no worries, no burdens, no misfortunes. And as long as Boone moves ahead of those who build "up into his darling trees," then the frontiersman will remain as unadulterated as the Eden which encompasses him.

This "good fame," which Byron endorses, is the result of the same lifestyle promoted by Filson, Doddridge and Cooper. Although uniquely clothed in their own buckskins, and masters of their own wilderness, each hero invented by these American authors lives the same natural life described by Lord Byron. Each free forester's life is only disturbed when the greedy fists of civilization shove warfare, land speculation and political forces into their personal Eden. And the tomahawk, the long rifle, the fighting knife are only taken up against a woodsman's fellow man in order to rid the "green woods" of greed, lust, corruption and envy--Byron's telltale marks of civilization.

Escaping from the cages and walls of society by living deep in the western wilderness was not an unusual theme in early American popular culture. And as seen in the discussion of Byron's tribute to "General Boon of Kentucky," such a notion was also appealing, during this same time, in far away Italy. A French writer, though, first popularized the tempting persona of the natural man existing in a primitive forest where disease, land ownership, material greed and tyranny did not exist. During the mid-eighteenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau<sup>4</sup> spent much of his creative energy developing this theme in such works as Discourse on the Origin of Inequality which first appeared in 1752, and The Social Contract published a decade later.

Rousseau believed that war, crime, greed, sickness and violence--the cages and walls alluded to by Byron--came only when a group of individuals gave up some of their freedoms to a political force. The Frenchman avowed that these political forces generated a sense of property, and social crimes or acts of war resulted from disputes over ownership. In Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, Rousseau quotes the English philosopher, John Locke, who earlier stated that "There can be no injury, where there is no property" (351). The Frenchman explains that idea by stating:

. . .so long as they [primitive men] undertook only what a single person could accomplish, and confined themselves to such arts as did not require the joint labour of several hands they lived free, healthy, honest and happy lives . . . But from the moment one man began to stand in need

of the help of another; from the moment it appeared advantageous to any one man to have enough provisions for two, equality disappeared, property was introduced, work became indispensable, and vast forests became smiling fields, which man had to water with the sweat of his brow, and where slavery and misery were soon seen to germinate and grow up with the crops. (352)

In this same work, Rousseau underscores this idea by earlier stating that "in a state of nature, every one there is his own master," and since no one man is dependent upon "the help of others," then "the bonds of servitude" do not exist in nature, and man is truly free, making slavery of any kind impossible (347). Lord Byron agreed in philosophy with Rousseau, for the Englishman saw Boone doing the wisest thing by continually moving beyond the vices and deceptions of the encroaching society. Byron saw Boone as being the "happiest among mortals" because the Kentuckian cherished the freedoms and the rejuvenating powers of the frontier forests.

In his history of Kentucky, Filson, too, followed Rousseau's insight and suggests that Boone "observed" several times to his brother, Squire, that "You see how little nature requires to be satisfied. Felicity, the companion of content, is rather found in our own breast than in the enjoyment of external things" (53). To Filson's Boone, the "external things" were not the bounty of nature, but rather the material goods, the property which the two hunters had brought into the wilderness. This idea of the

natural man in perfect contentment is brought up once again by Filson when he records Boone as saying:

Thus I was surrounded with plenty in the midst of want. I was happy in the midst of dangers and inconveniences. In such a diversity it was impossible I should be disposed to melancholy. No populous city, with all the varieties of commerce and stately structures, could afford so much pleasure to my mind, as the beauties of nature I found here. (56)

Cooper's character also followed the impressions of Rousseau, for Hawkeye was never fully content unless he was roaming "on his own hook," in a forest free from the same war, pestilence and desolation which Lord Byron's European despots had also brought to the North American wilderness. Joseph Doddridge could not resist the images influenced by Rousseau either, for as already seen in his elegy to his woodsman father, Doddridge describes his father as being the "son of a trackless forest" whose fare was simple, humble and "obtained from the fields and woods." And William Byrd, as earlier noted, could not understand why his woodsmen, his "children" of the forests, did not worry about what the morrow might bring. Byrd's woodsmen held little value in property, extra supplies, schedules and other "cages" of civilization. The Virginia aristocrat's hired hunters "trusted" nature to supply them with food when they needed it. And that simplistic reliance on their talents, nature and providence, Byrd found very frustrating.

Besides having a powerful influence on future ideas of democracy, Rousseau's concepts concerning the natural man

also greatly influenced how European and American writers alike viewed the lone woodsman exploring the deep forests while "on his own hook." A solitary frontiersman, owing to no man, living successfully by his own wits in a wilderness surrounded by both bounty and potential danger, appealed strongly to the creators of America's popular culture. Such a persona, under the influence of Rousseau, could not exist, let alone prosper, without an arena as large as the western wilderness. To a young America, to Europe also, this woodsman appeared truly free, truly the natural man. As a result, during the early 19th century, heroes like Boone and Hawkeye attracted a world-wide audience.

Ever since authors like Byrd, Filson, Doddridge, Cooper or Byron penned their first impressions, America's popular culture has continually manifested an infatuation with this natural man content in the American wilderness. The woodsman, ever intertwined with the wilderness, has appeared in a wide variety of media, in the guise of many different characters, and encountering innumerable challenges. But always, when the conflicts have ended, when the dilemmas have vanished, the woodsman and the uncharted wilderness have remained a single entity. As examples, the character Chris Holden, in the novel The Unconquered, gave up his own "cages" of civilization for Ohio Wilderness; And the free-spirited Big Eli in the movie The Kentuckian, forfeited his position in society for the promise of Texas.

Even today, the image of the natural man content in his wilderness has not changed much. The persona and his Eden find new life in a variety of media which repeatedly test Rousseau's theory within the confines of the North American wilderness. Among the most recent visions is 20th Century Fox's release of Michael Mann's remake of The Last of the Mohicans. This film perpetuates both Cooper's original vision of his Hawkeye, and the notion that the natural man can only find contentment in the wilderness hidden beyond the encroachments of civilization. Mann's screenplay follows closely Cooper's novel. But Mann does bring Cora and Hawkeye together in a romantic commitment, something which Cooper could never allow his hero to do. And in the last scene of the movie, after Hawkeye's forest has once again been rid of the European tyrants' greed, Michael Mann describes Cora asking Hawkeye "Where will we go?" to which Hawkeye declares:

Winter with the Delaware, my  
father's cousins. And in the  
spring, cross the Ohio and look  
for land to settle with my father  
in a new place called  
Can-tuck-ee. (115-16; Scene 572)

Michael Mann has his frontier hero, like Chris Holden, or the Kentuckian, and even Lord Byron's Boone, returning to the untouched forests, to live with the "children of the chase," once again becoming "happiest among mortals any where." And by doing so, Mann has done what every creator



of such a character in such a story has done, "deemed the woods . . . home at last."

William Byrd felt a need to explain his personal land of Eden. In doing so, the Virginian perpetuated the persona of the colonial woodsman. John Filson had a strong sense of history and tried to place all of the participating characters into a providential order. In the process, the historian gave the world a lingering image of the popular frontiersman. Joseph Doddridge believed that his woodsman father, and others, were guided by a divine purpose. Inspired by such a belief, the Presbyterian minister expertly preserved a now-vanished culture through his in-depth historical narrative on the Virginia/Pennsylvania frontier. And through his elegy to his woodsman father, Doddridge offered America a fresh glimpse of their popular woodsman hero. James Fenimore Cooper possessed an enduring passion to entertain. In satisfying his appetite, Cooper gave the world America's first fictional hero, eventually known as Hawkeye. And throughout each variation of this image, Rousseau's vision of the natural man is reiterated to various degrees.

The present interpretation of this most popular image in American culture continues to ignore, to a large degree, the reality of life along the Cumberland and Ohio frontiers. Whether in novels, on television, in the darkened galleries of movies theaters, even among many in the living history

field, the "good fame" of the independent, natural woodsman of the colonial forests has prevailed. This research, on the other hand, has offered an unique look beyond the popular culture image and into the complex existence of the common woodsmen who endeavored to hunt, explore and eventually make their home in such a "natural" environment.

Indeed, both personas are worth preserving. The hero and the survivor are each worth remembering. The ideals which Hawkeye promotes are worth considering, and the humbling reality of Joseph Hollingshead, William Baker and countless others are lessons worth teaching. And the notion of the North American wilderness, in which both personas are forever intertwined, cannot be forgotten. The hardwood forest, long since vanished, has continually served as the vessel into which each of these recipes has been poured, the field on which each of these games has been played, the setting where each of these plots has unfolded. Without the unexplored woods of North America, the Cumberland long hunter would not have existed as he did, and without that same wilderness, the "good fame," as Byron described it, would never have been born in America's popular culture.

And that is what America's popular culture has largely done--preserved the "good fame" of Daniel Boone and the countless other "free foresters," those sons "of a trackless forest" who became for a brief while the "unsighing people

of the woods." Perhaps Doddridge had it right when we wrote:

Then let their offspring, mindful of their claims,  
Cherish their [woodsmen's] honor in the lyric  
band--  
O save from dark oblivion's gloomy reign,  
The brave, the worthy fathers of our land (101-04)

## NOTES

## Chapter I: Introduction

<sup>1</sup> The author of this elegy, Joseph Doddridge was born on October 14, 1769. He grew up along the Pennsylvania and Virginia frontier and that experience left a permanent impression on the young man. Doddridge recorded his notions of the vanishing colonial frontier in a lengthy work entitled Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania (see pages 319-22 for a complete version of the elegy written in memory of his deceased father). His "notes" remain the most compressive first-person record concerning the Middle Colony frontier culture of the eighteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Just a few days prior to that incident, William Byrd subjected a "careless servant" to the blanket after the man had lost a camp axe. See The Prose Works of William Byrd of Westover, page 397.

<sup>3</sup> John Filson first published his history of Kentucky (which included Filson's romantic interpretations of Daniel Boone's service to the state) in the year 1784. His work incorporated discussions about the rivers, soil, trees, wild life and the various little settlements located along key waterways in the territory. Filson's entire effort was overly romantic and typically biased towards the settlers' cause. Of course, this attitude carried over into Filson's

rendition of Boone's story. For Filson's complete version of Boone's exploration years see The Discovery, Settlement, and the Present State of Kentuckie, pages 49-82.

<sup>4</sup> Exactly when the title "long hunter" first came into common use has been obscured through time. But in the book History of Kentucky, written by H. Marshall, and first published in 1824, one valuable hint can be found. Marshall states that, "Nine of his party, led on, by the present Colonel James Knox, reached Kentucky; and from the time they were absent from home, obtained the name of long hunters" (45). Marshall attributes the title being used first in relationship to James Knox's 1771 hunting party. It must be noted, though, that Knox's party entered the Middle Ground two years after Daniel Boone and ten years after Elisha Walden, men who were both "long hunters" in every sense of the title's meaning.

<sup>5</sup> The meaning of a "Cumberland long hunter" is fully explained within the following chapters of this text.

#### Chapter II: The Natural Man and His Eden

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Morgan was George Morgan of the English trading firm Baynton, Wharton and Morgan. Mr. Rumsey was James Rumsey, Morgan's chief clerk in Kaskaskia (one year later, he would betray Morgan's trading interests in the Illinois country). Mr. Rigby was also an employee of the trading firm and a family friend of John Baynton.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Hollingshead (sometimes spelled Hollinshead) was the principal hunter and bateau foreman for George Morgan. He was also a long-time friend of the trading firm's three partners. This letter is part of the "Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Papers," Pennsylvania State Archives, Manuscript Group 19. Hollingshead's correspondence, as recorded in this epigram, has been edited slightly for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>3</sup> The Ottawa war chief Pontiac and his "conspiracy" are highlighted in the chronology of this research project. The details of Pontiac's assassination (the event which Hollingshead alluded to in his letter) were confused from the very first moment reports came pouring out of Cahokia. For further descriptions on Pontiac's final days, see Francis Parkman's The Conspiracy of Pontiac vol. II, pages 308-12. For a contrasting point of view, see Allen Eckert's The Conquerors, pages 775-77.

<sup>4</sup> By the time George Morgan entered the Ohio trade, the colonial French community already had a firm hold on the Illinois country. Englishmen like Morgan and Joseph Hollingshead were cultural outsiders--working and living in a dominant French society. For an extensive account of the Illinois French culture briefly described in the opening of this chapter see "Part 2: Fundamentals of Life" in Carl J. Ekberg's Colonial Ste. Genevieve: an Adventure on the Mississippi Frontier.

<sup>5</sup> For a full description of Hawkeye's final hours, his lack of any regret and his noble death, see chapter 34 of James Fenimore Cooper's The Prairie.

<sup>6</sup> Most of the now famous long hunters were on at least one occasion captured by bands of Indians. Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton, James Smith and Simon Girty belonged to this fraternity.

<sup>7</sup> For further details on Doddridge's perceptions of frontier religion, law and morality see Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Part of Virginia and Pennsylvania, chapters 21-23.

<sup>8</sup> According to Lawrence Elliott, Boone's son Israel, who fell in this ambush, was the "final victim" of the American Revolution. For further details on the Battle of Blue Licks, see The Longhunter: A New Life of Daniel Boone, 165-69.

<sup>9</sup> To Devereaux Smith and all other Ohio Country travelers familiar with the Woodland Indians, the "Cherokee" shore designated the southern side of the Ohio River, as the "Shawnee" side designated the northern shore of the river. By guiding his bateau up the Cherokee or southern shore, Smith was practicing sound judgement for it was commonly considered to be less dangerous when hugging the shore opposite the land of the Shawnee. Perhaps the lost bateau crew did not practice such prudent behavior.

<sup>10</sup> Understandably, the word "superstition" has traditionally been used by outsiders looking in on a culture. But it is the same word which Joseph Doddridge used in his text when looking back on the frontier life he knew as a boy. Doddridge did acknowledge that at one time the people really believed the superstitious notions, but due to the scientific advancements which took place during his lifetime the frontier community no longer relied on such concepts. Therefore, it is apparent that he used the word in an effort to show both the progress of knowledge and a distinction between the superstition and the religious faith of the frontier people.

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed discussion of the importance of the Cumberland River in regard to the exploration, the market hunting and eventual settlement of the Middle Ground, see Harriette Simpson Arnow's Seedtime on the Cumberland, chapter IV "Riviere des Chauouanons."

#### Chapter III: On His Own Hook

<sup>1</sup> This contract is taken from the Kaskaskia ledger dated September 1767-21 November 1768, vol. 1, of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan. George Morgan figured the merchandise in Pennsylvania Currency which was designated in the same ratio as the British Sterling system of the eighteenth century. That is, one pound equaled 20 shillings or 240 pence. Following the traditional book keeping methods of the time, Morgan listed each piece of merchandize



individually, assigning a particular value to each item in schillings/pence. He then totaled the cost in the far right column, converting the amount to a workable figure in pounds/shillings/pence.

<sup>2</sup> Morgan and his clerks designated any deerskins taken during the summer as "red skins." Apparently, Morgan was referring to the whitetail species of deer found in Virginia, which the colonist called the "Virginia red deer." Deerskins taken in the autumn were referred to as "faul skins." Hides taken during the summer were worth more for the hunter and trader alike. See "A List of Peltrys Put on Board the Boats for Philadelphia, March 21, 1771" of the Baynton, Wharton and Morgan papers.

<sup>3</sup> An example of traders converting monetary scrip can be found in the papers of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, Ledger A, April 24, 1766-Sept. 1768. When the hunter Simon Girty closed out his account on 13 September 1768, he received a promissory note for "currency" to be collected at Fort Pitt. Morgan stipulated that the note was worth in trade 40 pounds New York currency or 37 pounds, 10 shillings Pennsylvania currency.

<sup>4</sup> All of the accounts examined, which listed the white hunters working in the employ of George Morgan between 1767-71 show lead and powder purchased at a 2 to 1 ratio respectively. Examples: John Johnson, 3 pounds lead to 1 1/2

pounds powder (20 August 1767); Lewis Viviate, 12 pounds of lead to 6 pounds powder (20 October 1767).

<sup>5</sup> When figuring the maximum possible shots, .42 caliber was used, because it came the closest to Doddridge's cut-off for a caliber being too light to carry the desired punch. Most likely though, the hunters' rifles were much larger, somewhere around .50-.54 caliber, with a .54 caliber mold casting 29 balls to the pound. And in all likelihood, the three rifles carried by Drennan, Bay and McIntire were all different calibers.

<sup>6</sup> The practice of making a note payable at Fort Pitt worked well for the hunter returning home. He would not have to carry his wealth up the Ohio in the bottom of a dugout canoe. And if the hunter wished to seek employment at Fort Pitt, he could simply use the promissory note to open an account at that location. As for Morgan, any goods sold at Fort Pitt represented less risk and therefore, a greater potential for profit.

<sup>7</sup> Girty's 1767-1768 account can be found in George Morgan's Ledger A, 1766-Sept. 1768.

<sup>8</sup> On July 20, 1768, Morgan wrote an extensive letter to his partners in Philadelphia, explaining the news of the lost bateau, along with the hunters and boatmen killed. Harriette Simpson Arnow highlights several parts of the letter in her discussion of the hunting trade. See chapter VI, "The Illinois" of Seedtime on the Cumberland.

<sup>9</sup> The word "tomahawk" was used by both the white traders and hunters throughout the entire colonial trade era to designate almost any type of belt axe, hatchet or the classical tomahawk most frequently traded to the Woodland Indians. For further discussion of the evolution of the word "tomahawk" see Carl P. Russell's Firearms, Traps and Tools of the Mountain Men, 237-39.

<sup>10</sup> For a complete inventory of the hunter accounts listed in conjunction with Joseph Hollingshead, see Ledger A, April 24, 1766-Sept. 1768. vol. 1 of the Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Papers.

<sup>11</sup> The "long trousers" described by Charles Woodmason were most likely loose-fitting linen or wool garments "worn by men, covering the loins and legs to the ankles; sometimes said to have been worn over close-fitting breeches or pantaloons" (The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary: Volume II 408). This same entry in the OED further explains that such trousers were used upon occasion to protect a gentleman's deerskin or seal breeches; were worn by those "who rode post" to protect their breeches and stockings; or for women who "have not handsome legs" (408). Woodmason's backwoods congregations were most likely, though, not worried about protecting their fancy clothes. Rather, they wore trousers for economy and convenience reasons. Simply put, they probably owned no other lower

garments. For supplemental information, see Harriett Simpson Arnow's Seedtime on the Cumberland, 350-54.

Chapter IV: A Chronological Outline. . . .

<sup>1</sup> In the 1726 version of Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift spelled the name of "the metropolis" as "Lorbrulgrud," which in the novel meant "pride of the universe." This version is most likely the publication which Boone and his men enjoyed so much when hunting in the Kentucky wilderness. The passage of time causes many perversions in both the spellings and meanings of many geographical names. Such is the case with the "Lulbegrud" creek in present-day Kentucky. See Gulliver's Travels, part II, chapter II, page 99 for further details about the city of Lorbrulgrud.

Chapter V: A Grand and Risky Adventure

<sup>1</sup> For the complete copy of this letter, see Campbell, John, Fort Pitt, 1766-1772 and n.d., of the Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Papers.

<sup>2</sup> William Baker's personal account can be found in Ledger, Sept., 1767-Nov. 21, 1769. vol. 1.

<sup>3</sup> During the early stages of Cresswell's Kentucky River adventure, he camps at the site of Braddock's defeat, then called "Braddock's field" (63, 69), and even dines at Fort Pitt with the same John Campbell who just a few years previously had represented George Morgan's interests at the fort (70).

<sup>4</sup> For the excellent service and the unusual faith placed upon Silver Heels by George Morgan see Morgan's letters to the "Partners" dated 24 December 1767, and one addressed to John Campbell dated, 4 November 1768.

<sup>5</sup> The crude carving found on the tree is quoted in John A. Carusso's The Appalachian Frontier, 69.

#### Chapter VI: Conclusions: Remembering the Good Fame

<sup>1</sup> These two stanzas (lines 49-56) are taken from the same elegy written by Joseph Doddridge, in honor of his woodsman father, previously discussed in the introduction of this work. In line 56, Doddridge chose the word "hutsmen" rather than the more common "huntsmen," perhaps reflecting the influence of Rousseau's natural man who lived a peaceful life in "huts." For the complete elegy see Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars, 319-322.

<sup>2</sup> For the benefit of the reader, all lines cited from Byron's Don Juan are identified by canto, stanza, line(s). Thus (8.67.6) refers to canto eight, stanza 67, line six.

<sup>3</sup> George Gordon Noel Byron, or simply, Lord Byron, enjoyed acclaim in the early nineteenth century as Britain's best-known poet. Lengthy poems like Childe Harold, The Corsair, The Giaour, The Bride of Abydos and Hebrew Melodies vaulted Byron into world-wide popularity. In the spring of 1816, Byron left England soon after suffering a permanent break with Lady Byron. He made his way eventually to Venice, Italy, where he became inspired anew by the Italian

style of writing verse. His last satiric epic, Don Juan, a rambling collection of sixteen cantos, heavily influenced by the freedom of the Italian style, explained Byron's view of the world as he then saw it. The eighth canto, which includes the stanzas discussing the "good fame" of Boone, was published less than a year before Byron's untimely death. For further discussion on the "General Boon" verses and Don Juan as a whole, see Truman Guy Steffan's Byron's Don Juan: The Making of a Masterpiece.

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) was a French writer who believed and promoted some then very revolutionary ideas about man's relationship to his fellow man. Through his popular and sometimes notorious published works, Rousseau disseminated many notions which were later to become foundations of Romanticism and to influence world opinions concerning democracy. Among his most popular precepts was his notion of the natural man living content in a natural state. He based many of his arguments concerning social affairs upon this notion. And because of his wide-spread influence concerning his "natural man," Rousseau influenced literary as well as political thought throughout the western world. For further insights into Rousseau's influence and life's work, see Robert Maynard Hutchin's Great Books of the Western World: Volume 38, entitled "Montesquieu: Rousseau." 331-439.

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