Preface: Topography along the Virginia-Kentucky border.

It took a long time for the Appalachian Mountain range to attain its present appearance, but no one was counting. Outcrops found at the base of Pine Mountain are Devonian rock, dating back 400 million years. But the rocks picked off the ground around Lexington, Kentucky, are even older; this limestone is from the Cambrian period, about 600 million years old. It is the same type and age rock found near the bottom of the Grand Canyon in Colorado.

Of course, a mountain range is not created in a year or two. It took them about 400 years to obtain their character, and the Appalachian range has a lot of character. Geologists tell us this range extends from Alabama into Canada, and separates the plains of the eastern seaboard from the low-lying valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Some subdivide the Appalachians into the Piedmont Province, the Blue Ridge, the Valley and Ridge area, and the Appalachian plateau.

We also learn that during the Paleozoic era, the site of this mountain range was nothing more than a shallow sea; but during this time, as sediments built up, and the bottom of the sea sank. The hinge line between the area sinking, and the area being uplifted seems to have shifted gradually westward. At the end of the Paleozoric era, the earth movement are said to have reversed, at which time the horizontal layers of the rock were uplifted and folded, and for the next 200 million years the land was eroded, which provided material to cover the surrounding areas, including the coastal plain. [fn 1x] Some geologist also say that the uplift of the Appalachian Mountain range occurred prior to separation of the continents, and that parts of this range can now be seen in Scotland and Morocco.

During Virginia's western expansion the Appalachian Mountains caused some problems; however, there are natural breaks in the mountainous ridge system that were sometimes used to facilitate travel west or northwest. The Blue Ridge Mountain proved to be only a temporary barrier, and numerous gaps were soon discovered that provided passage into the Great Virginia Valley to the west. After that advance, passages were found through the next section of the mountain called by geologist the "Belt of thrust faulting and folding," which is a series of parallel mountains, individually named.

One of the earliest routes used was to follow the Potomac River, to where it turned south, near the present Cumberland, Md., then crossing the mountain to the waters of the Youghiogheny, a

branch of the Ohio. There were several trails in this area used by early traders, one of which was made into Braddock's Road during the French and Indian War.

The next break in the Appalachian chain was formed by the New River. Although this river (which becomes the Kanawha farther north) begins in North Carolina and flows all the way to the Ohio River; part of the river is not navigable, because of dangerous rapids. Early settlers who used this route had trails over the mountains, such as the one used by the Virginia militia army during Dunmore's War. [fn 1a]

Another route sometimes used to cross the Appalachians was to follow the Big Sandy River which also flows into the Ohio River to its headwaters. This route avoids high mountain ranges, but the two main branches of the Big Sandy, the Tug Fork and the Russell/Pound Fork, are small and continually curve back and forth, making these routes uninviting. During the French and Indian war, Virginia militia units attempted to use the Tug Fork route to attack Indians in Ohio, but the terrain was so bad, that the troops mutinied and turned back. Where the Russell Fork becomes the Pound Fork is called the Breaks, now the site of a tri-state park.

Although the Appalachian Mountains consist of numerous ridges, most of which have local names, along the present Virginia-Kentucky border the most prominent are the Pine Mountain and the Cumberland Mountain. Pine Mountain begins at the Breaks, or Russell/Pound Fork of the Big Sandy River and run southwestward for 105 miles, to Jerico, Tennessee. This ridge is 2930 feet (mean sea level) about 15 miles NE of Pineville, and 3137 feet (msl) about 10 miles NE of Pound Gap. The Cumberland Mountain, for all practical purposes, begins at Pennington Gap, and runs southwestward for 70 miles to LaFollette, Tennessee. The elevations of this ridge varies from 2900 feet (msl) a few miles NE of Cumberland Gap up to 3513 feet (msl) at White Rocks, opposite Ewing, Virginia. The two mountains are 8 miles apart near the Cumberland Gap, and 13 miles apart at the Pennington Gap. North of Cumberland Gap, the Cumberland River runs between the two mountain ranges.

Another smaller, lesser known ridge runs parallel with the Cumberland Mountain, called the Poor Valley Ridge, with the valley between called the Poor Valley. This ridge is not too noticeable when traveling on the pioneer trace that ran parallel to the mountain, as the Poor Valley Ridge is lower than the Cumberland Mountain, the elevation usually being about 1800 feet (msl).

The main gaps in these ranges are the Cumberland Gap in the Cumberland Mountain, which is only 8 miles away from the (unnamed) water gap in the Pine Mountain, formed by the Cumberland

River. This proximity of gaps in the two mountains is the reason it was so popular with people going to central Kentucky.

A significant gap in Pine Mountain, called the Pound Gap, is located about 20 miles SW of the Breaks. This gap was frequently used by the early frontier residents, as it was not too far from the early Virginia settlement at Castlewood. After crossing the Pound Gap, a travelers could follow any one of three rivers that begins there, these being the Cumberland, the North Fork of the Kentucky, and a little farther north, a branch of the Big Sandy River. This is the gap Daniel Boone used when he and Michael Stoner were sent to Kentucky to warn the surveyors in 1774.

Beyond the Appalachian Mountains, to the west and north, is a large area call the Appalachian Plateau, where one may find dendritic or irregularly branching type of drainage. The roads in this area may usually be found in valleys adjacent to small streams. The maximum elevation in this area varies from about 2000 feet (msl) near the base of the mountains, down to about 1300 feet (msl) near the Bluegrass area. The elevation down in the eroded valleys in this area is generally about 200 feet lower. The terrain in the Appalachian plateau is such that the old roads in the area consisted of nearly continual curves sections increasing the distance between any two points. Also, only a very small percentage of the plateau was fit for cultivation, which in pioneer times decreased its population.

Endnote:

1a: Neal Hammon & Richard Taylor, *Virginia's Western War*, (Mechanicsburg, 2002), maps on pages xxxi & xxxii.

Forward:

The 10th of October, 1773, was one of Daniel Boone's worse days. It stared out as a day of hope, part of a new opportunity to better himself by settling himself and his family in a new place, called Kentucky. But when the day ended, he had buried his oldest son near a rocky creek at the bottom of a mountain.

Up until then, Daniel Boone had spend the better part of his adult life as a long hunter. Hunting was something he liked to do, and did well, but it had not been profitable, due to the interferences of the Indians. Almost every time he and his crew had accumulated a marketable load of skins, they had been robbed at gun point. He had discovered the way into central Kentucky in 1769 with the help of John Finley, who had previously traded with the Shawnee when the Indians were still living on the edge of the Bluegrass. On a hunting trip in the winter of 1770, Boone had stayed in this new, unoccupied area, exploring, while his partners returned to their homes in the east. He is said to have spent some of the time camping on the edge of a large sink hole east of the present Harrodsburg, Kentucky, where there was an overhanging rock ledge for shelter, and a sinking spring to provide water.

Sometime during his travels as a hunter, Boone met William Russell, who then resided on the outskirts of the Virginia frontier, at Castlewood, in the valley on the headwaters of the Clinch River. In 1770, Russell moved west from Culpeper County, Virginia, where he was born; his father had been the high sheriff of the county and an officer in the French and Indian War. Young William, born in 1738, was descended from an old English family, attended the College of William and Mary, and was married to Tabitha Adams, whose father was a tobacco farmer and Indian trader. Like his father, he also served in the French and Indian War. By 1773, William Russell had possession of three military warrants, two of which had been issued to his father, each for a 1000 acres, and another for 200 acres which he acquired for his own service.

Apparently William Russell, while living on the existing frontier of Virginia, decided that he would like to use these military warrants to claim and settle land somewhere in Kentucky. Exactly how much he knew about Kentucky, and where he obtained the information is a mystery, as is the date when he met Daniel Boone. Nevertheless, by the summer of 1773 Russell had engaged Daniel Boone to lead a party to Kentucky, in order to establish a settlement, a trip of about 200 miles! Most historians assumed that Russell had promised Boone a payment in land for his assistance in this bold

adventure, to establish an outpost well beyond the last English speaking settlements. At the time, Russell was about 35 years old and Boone 39. [fn 1]

Several of the men living near Castlewood, these being William Snoddy, William Cowan, John Cowan, and Patrick Porter, had all migrated west from North Carolina and married sisters. Possibly Daniel Boone had known these people when they still lived in North Carolina, as they were recruited for the trip to Kentucky. Another resident of Castlewood was Michael Stoner, the son of a German family from Pennsylvania, who became an excellent woodsman, and was later said to the best shot in Kentucky. David Gass was also one of the early settlers of Castlewood who was engaged in the expedition; like Stoner, he was born in Pennsylvania about 1729, and eventually ended up in on the Clinch River. He owned land about several miles down the creek from Russell. Others in the party going to Kentucky included Squire Boone, William and John Bryan, Benjamin Cutbirth, Edmund Jennings, William Bush, John Grant, Isaac Crabtree and the Mendenhall brothers, and included the families of the married men. In all, counting slaves, there were over fifty people going to Kentucky, with their belongings and livestock. [fn 2]

About the latter part of September, 1773, the settlers who were headed for Kentucky met at Castlewood to begin their long trip. Daniel Boone led the main party, which included all of the women and children. A second detachment contained Henry Russell and James Boone, the elder sons of the leaders, along with the Mendenhall brothers, Isaac Crabtree, a man only identified as Drake, and two slaves owned by William Russell. [fn 2a] William Russell and David Gass stayed behind to finish some business, and told Boone they would leave a day or so later, and catch up.

It is not known exactly how long the party was on the road, but before dawn on October 10th, Indians attacked the middle group, and instantly killed the Mendenhall brothers and Drake. Both James Boone and Henry Russell were shot in the hips, and could not walk, and were tortured before being killed. The Indians also killed one of the slaves, but the other managed to escape as did Isaac Crabtree, even though he was wounded.

Not long after the incident occurred, William Russell and David Gass found the mutilated bodies. The Indians had gone. After finding the Indians had left, they notified the advance party of the attack. The dead men were buried, and everyone turned around and returned to Castlewood. Daniel Boone had sold his home in North Carolina prior to starting for Kentucky, and did not have a home upon his return. David Gass offered the Boone family a cabin on his property where they stayed for nearly two years.

In the following spring, the relations between the frontier settlers and the northern Indians was getting worse instead of better. On June 10, 1774 the Virginia Governor, Lord Dunmore, informed the citizens that "hopes of a pacification can no be longer entertained" and ordered them to mobilize the militia for defense. Ten days later the men at Castlewood began constructing three forts, one at Castlewood called David Cowan's, or sometimes Russell's Fort and sometime called Fort Preston; a second fort ten miles up the creek at Daniel Smith's was called Fort Christian, and a third a few miles down the creek from Castlewood, at Moore's Station, was called Fort Byrd. The latter was not far from the Boone/Gass cabins. About the same time, Russell sent Daniel Boone and Michael Stoner to Kentucky to warn the Fincastle County surveyors about the up-coming war. He was directed to cross the Cumberland Mountains at the Pound Gap, later also called the Sounding Gap, at an old Indian war-road, and after they crossed the mountain to follow the Kentucky River and meander to its mouth, then proceed down the Ohio to the Falls. The two messengers made the trip as ordered, but in Boone's words, "finding the surveyors well drove in by the Indians, I returned home..." On their return, they met Willis Lee, and some of the other men in the surveying party that had been attacked by Indians, and they reached the settlement together on August 26th.

When Daniel Boone returned, he discovered that part of his militia company had already left to join the main Virginia militia army moving north to engage the Indians. Sometime during 1774, perhaps not until October, Boone, a lieutenant, was promoted to the rank of captain. He and some other residents of Castlewood decided it was their duty to join Captain Russell on the campaign. However, after traveling a few days, Boone and his men were ordered back to Moore's Fort on the Clinch River, in order to guard the frontier from the intrusions of Indians.

Captain Boone and his men successfully defended the inhabitants along the Clinch River until the war ended. The Shawnee cast the dice when they attacked the Virginia militia units at Point Pleasant on 10 Oct. 1774, and lost. A few days later they contacted the Governor, Lord Dunmore, which soon after led to a peace treaty. By 4 November, Colonel William Preston began to disband the frontier militia units, even though the Mingo Indians were still on the warpath. Nevertheless, Daniel Boone was also dismissed on 20 November, and returned to his family on the Clinch River. [fn 3]

Before the end of the year, Daniel may have returned to Kentucky on a hunting expedition. [fn 4] In retrospect, it is possible to believe that he traveled several hundred miles to hunt during the early winter; after all, this had been his profession for many years. Sometime either before, but most

likely after this hunt, a gentleman from North Carolina made Daniel Boone an offer he did not refuse; Boone was hired by Richard Henderson to blaze a trail to Kentucky.

Endnotes:

1. Lyman Draper, *The Life of Daniel Boone*, edited by Ted Franklin Belue, (Stackpole Books, Mechanicsville, 1998, page 551. Hereafter Belue, Life of Boone.

2: James William Hagy, The First Attempt to Settle Kentucky: Boone in Virginia, The Filson Club History Quarterly, hereafter FCHQ, July 1970, Vol. 44; pp 227-30. William Bush was a distant cousin of Daniel Boone's wife, and the Bryan's were her close relatives. One of the Mendenhall brothers was the son-in-law of John Boone, Daniel's cousin. Cutbirth is sometimes spelled Cutbeard. Also see Kathryn H. Weiss, *Daniel Bryan, Nephew of Daniel Boone*, 2008, page 18.

2a: Possibly related to Joseph Drake, the man who went to Kentucky with John Floyd in 1775.

3. Belue, Life *of Boone*, page 322.

4. Belue, *Life of Boone*, p 326, footnote 59.

Chapter One: Boone and the Transylvania Company.

Richard Henderson had hired Daniel Boone to make it easy for settlers to find their way into central Kentucky, where he hoped that his company would make a profit selling them land. Opening Kentucky to settlement was very appealing, particularly in the area now called the Bluegrass region. There the soil was very rich, and the deer, buffalo, and turkeys were very abundant. But this new settlement in Kentucky was to be an island in the wilderness, 750 miles west of Orange County, Virginia, the home of some of the first frontier surveyors. Much of the Virginia western movement had already begun down sparsely inhabited river valleys, such as along the headwaters of the Greenbrier, New River, Kanawha, and especially down the "great valley" that was formed by the James, Roanoke, Holston, Clinch, and Powell rivers. Others settled the headwaters of the Potomac and from there moved over the mountains to the Youghioghey, Monongalehela, and upper Ohio, The "plains of Kentucky," also called the "Kentucky levels," could be reached by water by traveling down the Ohio or by land going southwest through the Virginia Valley and across the mountains at the Cumberland and Pine mountain gaps.

Richard Henderson was the shaker and mover. He decided to buy central Kentucky and whatever other good land he could find in that area from the Cherokee Indians. After the Iroquois had relinquished their claim to all land south of the Ohio River at the Treaty of Fort Standwick, the Cherokee appeared to be the sole owners. The idea was simple, and if it succeeded, very profitable. Henderson found some partners who were willing to invest in the scheme, to purchase all the land between the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers, over ten million acres, for £2000. He would then offer it for sale to prospective settlers for 20 shillings (one pound sterling) per 100 acres. On this basis, the company would only need to sell 200,000 acres or 2% of the land to break even, not counting the 2000 acres promised to Daniel Boone for blazing the trail. In Kentucky alone, the Transylvania purchase covered 9,436,200 acres or 14, 744 sq. miles.

In March, Henderson met with the Cherokee at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga River in what is now east Tennessee. Employees of Henderson drove cattle to the treaty, which were fed to the Indians along with great quantities of corn, flour, and rum. Sam Wilson, who witnessed the exchange, said that the Indians were sober, but that Chief Dragging Canoe told them "it was the bloody Ground, and would be dark, and difficult to settle." James Robinson, a witness, kept a day by day account and estimated that there were 1,200 Indians at the treaty. He stated that the chiefs told Henderson that they owned that land and offered to sell him the part located north of the Kentucky

River. Henderson, believing that the Cherokees had already relinquished this territory to Virginia, refused this offer. At this, Dragging Canoe got angry and withdrew himself from the conference. "And other Indians immediately followed him and broke up the Conference for the day. Infuriated, he declared that there were bad people among both his Nation and the whites, and that there was a dark cloud over Kentucky. He went on to say that his countrymen would not hurt the new settlers, but he was afraid that the northern Indians would." [fn 5] The Indians also complained that their payment was too small, but finally, on the fourth day, they accepted Henderson's offer and signed the treaty. Daniel Boone had been sent ahead with about 30 men to blaze a trail to the Kentucky River, which Henderson planned to follow with other settlers he had recruited. Boone left Long Island on the Holston for Kentucky about 10 March; Richard Henderson's journal shows that he finished the treaty and left the site on Monday, March 20, 1775.

The Transylvania Land Company publicly offered to sell this land to the settlers for twenty shillings per one hundred acres during 1775 but said they would raise the price to fifty shillings per hundred acres afterwards. Surveys and entry fees were extra, but a bond was acceptable in lieu of cash. William Preston, the surveyor of Fincastle County, was not happy with this development, as the Transylvania Company was claiming a large part of that county, including over 40,000 acres that his deputies had surveyed with military warrants the year before. Nor was Governor Dunmore pleased with this development; he had made arrangements with Preston to survey and sell land in the public domain to Virginia citizens. When he learned of the sale, the governor had Preston send a letter to the Indians saying that the sale of land to Transylvania had greatly alarmed the people of Virginia as well as the King, from whom they have so long enjoyed "Fatherly Love of Protection." [fn 6]

The letter went on to say that the land was ceded to the King by various treaties and that in fact the Cherokees were not the rightful owners at all. The Governor then continues: "There is no Doubt but you have been acquainted with these several treaties & if so you must have known that this land you have sold on the Ohio was the property of the King, Your Father, for more than thirty years past. Therefore your setting up a claim now & selling the same must give him & his Governors Great offense. " [fn 6a] The letter was delivered to the Cherokees in June.

Few historians have speculated on the governor's motives for selling Kentucky land. If he had intended to sell small tracts for a reasonable amount, one or two pounds per hundred acres, then it is likely that his motive was to re-gain popularity of the citizens. On the other hand, he may have been motivated to sell this land in order to show the English parliament that an American colony could be

self-sufficient and operate at a profit without burdening the mother country. Either motive would have been popular with yeomen as well as the landed gentry and may have resulted in a reconciliation had he not insulted the Burgesses.

Around the tenth of March, Daniel Boone joined others at the old fort built by the Virginia Militia at Long Island, presently within the city of Kingsport, Tennessee. Apparently, Boone and Henderson had agreed on the place where the road would lead, this being in the northern half of his purchase, on the south side of the Kentucky River. There was always certain commercial advantages in locating a town on the banks of rivers, not the least of which was being assured of a good supply of fresh water.

When Daniel Boone started on his first trip to Kentucky in 1775, he was accompanied by about thirty people, including at least two slaves but only fifteen men can be identified. We find that several were being paid by the Transylvania Company to act as hunters, but others appear to have joined as adventures, just to explore the unknown. Squire Boone, the brother of Daniel, and Michael Stoner, Daniel's companion on his trip to Kentucky in 1774, were the paid hunters. Colonel Richard Calloway appears to be the oldest of the group, and may have acted as the commissary for the party. He brought his female slave to cook the meals for the men. John Hart, perhaps related to Thomas Hart, one of the Transylvania proprietors, was part of the group. Thomas Twetty, an adventurer out to see the country, traveled with a back servant named Sam, and slept in a tent at night. Other adventures known to be in the group were James Bridges, William Bush, James Colburn, William Hicks, Thomas Johnson, James Peak and Felix Walker. All were on horseback, and their supplies were carried on pack horses. The combined party left Long Island on March 10, 1775 for Kentucky. Most people traveling to Kentucky in 1775 appear to have been from the middle or upper class; poor people could not afford to make the trip.

For the first 82 miles, to the Cumberland Gap, Boone did not need to blaze a trail; there was already a good, well known road, that had been traveled for centuries by the Indians. By the time Boone's men started to Kentucky, the first 69 miles of this road was wide enough to be used by wagons. Robert L. Kincaid, gives a good description of Boone's Trace through Virginia as follows:

"Boone's route from Long Island, at the end of the Great Road down the Holston, led directly to Moccasin Gap, the gateway to the mountainous area of Southwest Virginia, [and on to where Gate City is located today.] Here he came upon the old trail of the Indians and hunters. He went up Little Moccasin Creek valley to a low divide and over to Little Moccasin Creek valley to a low divide and over to Troublesome Creek, Wandering down Troublesome almost due west, he crossed Clinch

River where speer's Ferry was later established. On the west side of the Clinch, he went up the river to a ford on Stock Creek, following its meanderings for several miles to the great physical freak known as Natural Tunnel. Turning left at this hill, he crossed over Horton's Summit and went down into the valley of the North Fork of the Clinch to Little Flat Lick."

Here Boone and his men came to an important stopping place, now identified as the site of the Duffifield schoolhouse. Boone led his men over Powell Mountain at Kane's Gap and into the valley near the head of Wallins Creek, where Wallen and his hunters had ranged several years before. They continued down the narrow valley to the point where the town of Stickleyville was later built, and crossed over Wallins Ridge to Powell River and thence to Glade Spring, where Jonesville is now located. Two miles west of Glade Spring they passed another interesting underground channel, smaller but similar to the Natural Tunnel on Stock Creek. They were now deep in Powell Valley, with the long white wall of the Cumberland Mountains rising before them, Ranging down the valley in a souothwestward direction for twenty miles they came to Martin's Station, the present site of Rose Hill. [fn 7]

The road they traveled was more or less the same route now called Highway 23 and 58 to Jonesville, Virginia, then northward from Jonesville to the base of the Cumberland Mountain, then southwest along the base of the mountain to Beech Spring, then along the present Highway 58 to Cumberland Gap.

Henderson, following Boone, mentioned that on Tuesday, March 21st, he went to John Sevier's house, and on the night of Friday 24th, they lodged at Captain Bledsoes. The following day they passed Mrs. Callaways, and on Thursday the 30th, arrived at Captain Martins in Powell's Valley. Henderson says it was 11 miles from Martin's to Cumberland Gap, but if Martins was located at Rose Hill, modern maps show it is over 18 miles.

The proof that the old trace ran north from Jonesville nearly to the base of the Cumberland Mountain is found in the Journal of James Nourse, Jr. who writes that after crossing Powells Mountain and Walden Ridge, they reach Trading Creek and camped nearby. [fn 8] Technically the trail was at the southeast base of Poor Valley Ridge, a smaller ridge that parallels the larger mountain, and along that valley to Cumberland Gap. The crossing of Trading Creek was 36-43-09 N by 83-11-37 W. The old trail north of Jonesboro more or less followed the present Va. Route 659. The following day they reached Martin's cabins. [fn 9] From the Cumberland Gap to Boonesborough, the trail now known as Boone's Trace led northward through the present state of Kentucky.

Endnotes: 5, 6, 6a. 7, 8, 9

5: Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 1:284, and George W. Ranck, *Boonesborough*, (Louisville, 1901) Appendix, p 159, quote from deposition of Charles Robertson, Oct. 3, 1777.

6. Letter from William Preston to the Cherokees, May 1775, (source needed).

6a. Robert L. Kincaid, *The Wilderness Road* (Middlesboro, Ky., 1966), pages 100-101. The second so called smaller natural tunnel appears to the what is now called Natural Bridge, on the headwaters of Batie Creek, southwest of Jonesville. This site is quite a long way off any common sense route from Jonesville to Trading Creek.

7. Letter from William Preston to the Cherokees, May 1775, ibid.

8. Technically the trail was at the southeast base of Poor Valley Ridge, a smaller ridge that parallels the larger mountain, and along that valley to Cumberland Gap. The crossing of Trading Creek was 36-43-09 N by 83-11-37 W. The old trail more or less followed the present Va. Route 659.

9. Neal Hammon, The Journal of James Nourse, Jr. Filson Club History Quarterly, Vol. 47, 1973, page 262. Trading Creek is approximately 3 miles north of old Highway 68, erroneously thought to be Boone's Trace in this vicinity. It flows through the gap in Poor Valley Ridge.

Chapter Two: The Movement begins.

While Richard Henderson and other members of the Transylvania Company were parleying with the Cherokees at Sycamore Shoals, others were already on their way to Kentucky. The three deputy Fincastle County surveyors were preparing to make the trip in order to continue their work begun the year before. James Harrod, who had been appointed a militia captain after volunteering his men to serve Governor Dunmore in his campaign against the Shawnee, led the same men back to their town on the Salt River, now generally known as Harrodsburg. The McAfee brothers returned to their surveys made in 1773; they brought some white indentured servants to start clearing the land and planting crops. Captain Thomas Slaughter also recruited a company of men and headed down the Ohio River. Others in smaller parties also decided that Kentucky was a place to see.

Among the people who headed for Kentucky in the spring of 1775 two of the most interesting were Major David Robinson and his brother Captain William Robinson. It would appear that the Robinsons were related by marriage to Patrick Henry's cousins; he had worked his way up through the ranks over time, advancing to the rank of major in 1775. David had been a friend of William Fleming and William Christian during and since the French and Indian War and had expressed the opinion that he would be happy to resign his duty and obligations, to retire. Fleming had criticized him for "seeking to indulge in such inglorious ease when you can be of service to the world." Robinson responded with:

> "There are Duties which Solitude cannot exempt us from. We must do Good when in our Power & not absolutely wrap ourselves up in Contemplation. -- Nobis non nascin is a Maxim I can't adopt without this alteration, Nobes non solum nascimor. It is certain we are not born for Ourselves alone, tho' to communicate happiness to our Fellow Creatures is no more than a Secondary End of our Existence, Self-Love compells me to prefer my own Happiness to that of every other creature, and if in some cases I find it not in my Power to be of Benefit to Society without necessarily ruining all my Ease & Quiet, my Duty is then, I think, clear & obvious, The Love of Ease is strongly imprinted on our minds, We feel it constantly operating in our Thoughts and influencing our Actions And Nature has given us no Passion or Inclination which we may not gratify." [fn 8]

He continued, "After all, I am far from insinuating that a retired Life tho' in my Opinion greatly preferable to any other, can afford compleat Happiness. It is too certain that the

Imperfections which cleave to our Natures will everywhere attend us, and to be free from every thing, which disquiets is not consistent with our present state of Existence." With this attitude, what could be better than to retire to the peaceful isolation of Kentucky? The Robinson brothers, David and William, with a military warrant in their pockets, packed their gear and followed Daniel Boone over the mountains.

Neither Boone nor Robinson was the first to reach the new western land. Some Shawnee were also present. When Boone's men reached the "Kentucky levels" near the present Richmond, Kentucky, they were attacked before dawn by a party of "Pics," who killed one man, mortally wounded a second, and seriously injured a third. The attack alarmed many of the new arrivals. The Robinson brothers heard the news then turned around and headed for home. Kentucky did not appear to be the peaceful place they had hoped for. The McAfee brothers were right behind them. As these men retreated, they met others still headed northwest. Some turned around again. Richard Henderson talked some of the McAfee party into joining him, and John Floyd collected three companies headed by David Robinson, Joseph Drake, and Thomas Madison, who by that time had already retreated south of Cumberland Gap. With Floyd leading the party, they decided they had sufficient men to repel Indians attacks, and started back to Kentucky.

Unlike the Boone-Henderson contingent, the twenty to thirty men who accompanied Floyd were mostly interested in obtaining or securing Virginia land, not buying land from the Transylvania Company. But there was one major complication. Henderson's purchase included the land southwest of the Kentucky and from its mouth along the south side of the Ohio rivers, where many of the 1774 Fincastle surveys were located, including one that Floyd had surveyed for himself. Originally Floyd had started out with seven men. [fn 11] These men were James Knox, his guide, Jacob Boofman, William Gillispie and Jonathan Martin his hired chainmen and line markers, his friend John Todd and a Negro slave owned by John May. Two members of Floyd's final company, Benjamin Logan, and Major Robinson, intended for Floyd to make surveys for them on military warrants. Samuel Meridith, Jr. wanted to inspect the land surveyed by Floyd for his father in 1774, and Alexander Spotswood Dandridge decided to make the trip, even though he had turned back because of Indians the year before. John Todd had brought a slave owned by John Mays to help him make land preemptions. Mays had hoped that the use of his slave by Todd would entitle him (May, not the slave) to some of the land Todd preempted. Floyd was again guided by the long hunter, James Knox, who had taken him to the Falls of the Ohio in 1774, but he left Floyd's surveyors when they reached the Salt River to join Harrod. This year he guided the company along Boone's new trace to Hazel

Patch, and then led them to Dicks River along an old hunters trail, called Skagg's Trace.

When Floyd's men reached a large spring about 18 miles from Harrodsburg, they stopped and made a camp that they called St. Asaph. Here most of the men rested, while John Floyd, John Todd, and Joseph Drake hiked over to the new town of Boonesborough, to see Colonel Henderson. A few of the others, including Knox, also continued northward, some to visit Harrodsburg, some just to explore.

Henderson, worried about the lack of enthusiasm for his new colony, called for those settled south of the Kentucky River to assemble at Boonesborough for a convention. Floyd was one of the representatives from St. Asaphs, but after the convention had ended, he and his remaining followers abandoned that camp, moved north to Boone Creek, north of the Kentucky River, and started making surveys and preemptions beyond the Transylvania land purchase. David Robinson and Benjamin Logan were among those for whom Floyd made surveys on Boones Creek that summer. John Howard made his preemption claim on what is now called Howards Creek. Afterwards, some of the men in Floyd's company stayed in that area, but most returned home. Apparently none, including Benjamin Logan, went back to St, Asaphs that summer.

Back in Virginia Patrick Henry was putting together an army. After his famous speech at St. John's Church, he was appointed the chairman to prepare plans for arming the colony. Other members included Andrew Lewis, Richard Henry Lee, William Christian, Thomas Jefferson, Adam Stevens, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton. Each Virginia county was to form one or more volunteer militia companies consisting of sixty-eight privates plus officers, with a good rifle, a tomahawk, clothed in a hunting shirt. As there were then sixty Virginia counties, this mobilization brought over 4,000 riflemen under arms. Certain counties were also to provide cavalry troops, with horses able to stand the discharge of firearms. The legislature had authorized a larger army than Dunmore had used in 1774 against the Indians.

It must have been obvious to the governor, Lord Dunmore, and the royal authorities that the Virginia legislature was telling them in a not so subtle a way, that they were not afraid of his power. They were thumbing their noses at the King's authority, without saying a word. And Patrick Henry was behind it all.

The news that the counties were organizing militia companies prompted Governor Dunmore to take action against those he considered rebels. On the night of 20 April, after everyone in Williamsburg was asleep, marines from a British ship seized twenty kegs of gunpowder in the magazine, and stored it aboard their ship. The next day the citizens were in an uproar; they

demanded that the Governor immediately return their powder. Dunmore made some excuses, but the powder remained on the British man-of-war.

Patrick Henry acted promptly, and assembled the militia from Hanover County at Newcastle, on the James River just west of Richmond. No sooner had they assembled, then they learned of the hostilities at Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts. This news proved to be the last straw --- it aroused the people against Great Britain. Henry told a friend that the Americans would separate from the mother country. He confided “the seizure of the gunpowder was a fortunate circumstance, which would rouse the people from North and South. You may in vain mention the duties to them -- upon tea and those things they will say do not effect them, but tell them of the robbery of the magazine, and that the next step will be to disarm them, and they will be then ready to fly to arms to defend themselves." [fn 12] Henry was absolutely correct. Before the year ended Governor Dunmore and his troops at his disposal were fighting a loosing battle against the majority of the colonist, and were isolated in Norfork, just as General Gage and the British Army were isolated in Boston. But this war did not stop the westward migration in America.

Endnotes

10. David Robinson to William Fleming, 16 Feb 1765, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia, Special Collection, Leyburn Library, File No. 009, William Fleming Collection, manuscript O-1 from folder 23.

11. Neal Hammon, *Life and Letters of John Floyd*, [unpublished ms] p 13; the men who started to Kentucky with Floyd were his friend Robert Todd, the slave of William May, William Gillispie, and Floyd’s hired markers and chainmen, Jonathan Martin, Robert Boggs and Jacob Boofman.

12. Robert D. Meade, Patrick Henry, Practical Revolutionary, J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York, 1969, page 48.

Chapter 3: Cumberland Gap to Flat Lick.

The first description of the Cumberland Gap consists of less than two hundred words. On April 13th, 1749, Dr. Thomas Walker and his party, after riding ten miles, came upon "Cave Gap" so named because of their discovery of a large cave with a small entrance. This cave, according to Dr. Walker's Journal, was on the north side of the gap, and a large spring, "sufficient to turn a mill," ran to the foot of the hill where it flowed through a laurel thicket. "On the south side, is a plain Indian

Road." He then continued along this road and stated "as I went down the other side, I soon came to some Laurel in the head of a branch. The Mountain on the north side of the Gap is very steep and rocky, but on the south side it is not so. We call it Steep Ridge." [fn 13]

So far as it goes, Dr. Walker's description of the Gap is still quite accurate. The first white men to cross did so by following the old Indian War Road, the Athiamiowee, the path of the armed ones. As he said, there is a cave on the slope above the present town of Cumberland Gap, Tennessee, which is now called Cudjo Cave. The land on both sides of the gap still appears to be steep and rocky, but the sharp eye of this early explorer is correct; the fall from the top is approximately two hundred feet more on the north or Kentucky side. The gap itself is at elevation 1640 feet msl, whereas the adjacent higher ridges of the mountain are about 2500 feet or 860 feet higher.

On Saturday, April 8, 1775, settlers with Col. Richard Henderson, crossed the same gap. William Calk, member of this party, wrote: "We all pack up and started crost Cumberland Gap . . ." [fn 14] James Nourse, traveling back to Virginia went over the mountain on Monday, 3 July 1775, and stated that it was "a good gap." [fn 15] The Governor Henry Hamilton (called by the Kentuckians, "the Hair buyer"), then a captive of Colonel George Rogers Clark, who was certainly weary of his trip by this time, gives only these words, "26 April, 1779 Passed Cumberland Mountain." [fn 16] Col. William Fleming, normally gifted with words, passed through the gap six times, but left us with no description. By the winter of 1796 a traveler passing through the gap could stop at the tavern of Mrs. Davis which was located on the north base of the mountain. Even by modern standards, a liberal, Mrs. Davis believed that "pleasure was the only thing she had in view, and that she had her ideas of life and its enjoyments." [fn 17] In retrospect, it would be unusual for a pioneer to write a lengthy description regarding something as normal as a pass in the mountains, especially if it were well known and well used. Such literary effort was left to the more leisurely Victorians. But the Cumberland Gap remained, nevertheless, the gateway to Kentucky for people migrating overland.

The way over the gap changed little for the first 230 years; beginning in Virginia, the Indians followed the path which used nearly the same route as old Highway 58. The road followed a natural fault on the south side of the mountain, between the main mountain and a parallel ridge called Poor Valley Ridge, until the valley ends at the side of the mountain, after which the trail climbs to the gap. For a short distance on the south side at the bottom of the mountain, in 1980 the old road could still be seen crisscrossing the paved highway. Prior to entering the village of Cumberland Gap, Tennessee, the old highway, now removed, begins the climb to the Gap proper, whereas the old trail

led directly along the creek bed into this town. At the north end of this village, the Cumberland Gap National Park begins and the old trail that climbs the mountainside can still be followed by anyone with strong legs and a good heart. At the top of the mountain, near the gap, this hiking trail once joined the highway, at the Virginia-Kentucky border, but as mentioned, this part of the old road was removed when the new highway tunnel was constructed.

From the saddle northward, the old trail was altered to some extent when the old highway was built. A large projection called Indian Rock was originally located just beyond the gap, but part of this formation was removed by explosives. Before the old three-lane highway was removed, an older road could first be seen on the west, then crossing to the right side at the overpass. The old trace obviously climbed and descended the Cumberland Mountain in a more direct fashion than did old Highway 58.

There is a question of exactly where the original trace came down the northern side of the mountain. Old surveys and maps suggest that the trail was more or less going westward when coming down the mountain, whereas the old highway was built going down headed north, then swinging around westward and southwest, making a 180 degree curve. One of the National Park employees suggested that during the Civil War, several different roads existed going over the mountain and through the Gap, which makes sense. Pulling artillery up the side of a mountain would completely block an ordinary road during for long periods of time.

Coming off the Cumberland Mountain on the Kentucky side, early travelers reached the Davis Branch of Yellow Creek, a stream which leads into the Middlesboro valley or basin. The exact location of the original trace can be followed through this area by means of several old surveys found in the Kentucky and Lincoln County records. These documents, dating back to July, 1782, include the "settlement road," Davis' Station and mill, and two "improvements." [fn 18]

As Dr. Walker noted, what was later called Yellow Creek "made a great deal of flat land" where Middlesboro is now located. [fn 19] The road more or less followed the creek, but crossed it several times. Dr. Walker continued along the creek (which he named "Flatt Creek") for about six miles to somewhere near the present the northern limits of the present Middlesboro, where he camped on a bank "where we found some good coal." Calk was rather critical of the area since he wrote "Come to a very ugly creek with steep banks and have to cross several times on this creek." We can deduct that the Henderson party also camped in this general area as they crossed the gap at one o'clock.

As mentioned, the original trace ran by Davis' Station which was built on the east side of Davis

Branch, opposite the mouth of Little Yellow Creek. The mill was located about a half mile up the Little Yellow Creek toward the present reservoir. The path was on the south side of the station and almost exactly followed the park road for a short distance to the west. It then turned a little more to the north, passing about 300 yards in front of the site of the present park building. It apparently crossed Cumberland Avenue near the Coca Cola Plant, very likely at 13th Streets, and then led northwest along the creek to the junction with Bennett Fork. In this area the road appears to have followed the old creek which was then very crooked. Munsell's map of 1818, and the original map by the U.S. Geological Survey, made between 1882-6, and published in March 1891, shows the original creek location. But when the 1927 version of the U.S. Geological Survey map was made, many of creek in Middlesboro had been straightened. See illustrations.

There is some confusion about the name of Yellow Creek. Thomas Walker and his party were still using the name Flat Creek during their survey in 1779-80. Filson's map of 1785 shows the creek but does not name it, although both Flat Creek and Yellow Creek were used in surveys by 1782. [fn 20] Elijah Barker's map, which was probably drawn circa 1791, is the first to show the name as Yellow Creek. This tributary of the Cumberland River flows about 9 or 10 miles between its mouth at the Cumberland River and where it was first seen by Boone in the Middlesboro basin. On the old Munsell map, we see the creek forking in the basin, but he only names two of the branches, Bennetts Fork, and farther south, the branch called Little Yellow Creek. On the original USGS map, published in 1891, before Middlesboro was established, again these two branches are labeled, with the main creek farther north called Big Yellow Creek. The east end of Stoney Fork was also called Yellow Creek on this map, and Lick Branch was then called Stevenson Branch. On the 1927 version of the USGS map, other branches are added, these being Davis Branch, which comes in from the east side of the town and Parkers Branch, which flows through the south end of the Middlesboro basin. When the 1959 USGS map was made, Bennett Fork, Stony Fork and Lick Branch had been altered to flow around the west and north limits of Middlesboro, and intersect with the Four Mile Run. On the latest USGS map, the name of this relocated Bennett Fork was changed to Yellow Creek.

Today, if one tried to drive along the old trace from the gap through Middlesboro, the route can only be approximated by following the National Park road, driving through the entrance and turning left or west on Cumberland Avenue, then crossing the railroad tracks and turning right or north on 19th Street. Then continue northward on 19th Street until it ends, then jog westward to State Highway 441/3486. As you are leaving the greater Middlesboro area, you will again see Yellow

Creek to the east of the road.

North of Middletown the creek and trace passed by a community called Binghamtown. Here, the old maps all show the trace running along the west side of the creek. Beyond Binghamtown the road passes a number of small hills or knobs prior to entering the lower Yellow Creek valley. The lower or downstream part of the valley is narrow, with the road running about 100 feet from the creek. In January, 1969, large patches of cane could be found in this bottom, and the hills on both sides were covered with trees. On one of the old surveys, an improvement was shown at Browne Branch, where the flat land in the bottoms is large enough to plant about 100 acres of corn. [fn 21]

Just below the present village of Meldrum the old trace left Yellow Creek and passed northward up the valley between Log Mountain and Rocky Face. The present Highway 25E still uses this route and as late as 1969, when the old road could be seen crisscrossing as one climbed to the gap before reaching the headwaters of Cannon Creek. A mountain called Rocky Face is to the right as one leaves Yellow Creek, and it was aptly named. The trace proceeded down the south fork of this creek then up the north fork to another gap where it entered the valley formed by Clear Creek. Dr. Walker apparently camped on Yellow Creek on 14 April 1749, but was forced to move north "7 miles along the Indian Road" as this creek bottom was "bad ground for our horses." Today the highway has been widened and many of the hills were cut down and the valleys filled to accommodate a better flow of traffic.

Dr. Walker's next camp was on Clear Creek which he then called "Clover." The next day he went hunting, and discovered a river about a mile below his camp, which he named Cumberland. The Henderson party did not dally in this area, and made the trip from their camp on Yellow Creek to the Cumberland River crossing in one day.

Clear Creek, it would appear, is only one of the names given to this tributary of the Cumberland. Dr. Walker named the branch Clover Creek since "Clover and Hop Vines are plenty here," and it would also appear that it is labeled "Buffalo Creek" on Filson's map of 1785. The name Clear Creek first appears in Daniel Smith's Journal in 1779, and it is later seen on Munsell's map of 1818. The old trace crossed Clear Creek at longitude 66-44-24 N and latitude 83- 41- 48 W.

In January 1969, the section of the road leading along Clear Creek and an adjacent stretch along the Cumberland River was improved. This work consists of removing some of the west side of the Flag Top Mountain and part of the base of Pine Mountain, which certainly obliterated any trace of the old road that then existed. Soon after, a dam was built on Clear Creek which has flooded most of the bottoms to the west of the road. As one approaches the Cumberland River, the rocky gap of

Pine Mountain comes into view; it is a very impressive sight, for the beauty of this thousand-foot water gap is not exceeded by the more famous Cumberland Gap.

Going into Pineville, the old trace, like the modern highway, followed the narrow valley at the base of Pine Mountain. There is no bottom land at this point, so the old trace apparently followed along the same narrow plateau that is still used, though since improved by rock excavation. Upon entering the city, this plateau widens and the old trace was about 50 feet east of the old highway. [fn 22] Pineville is fitted into the small erosion plain and surrounded by the steep sides of Pine Mountain.

On 18 April 1749, Dr. Walker noted in his Journal, "Still Cloudy. We kept down the Creek to the River along the Indian Road to where it crosses. Indians have lived about this Ford some years ago." Apparently at that time, a trail, but not the one commonly used later, ran down Clear Creek to the Cumberland River, which is the way Dr. Walker traveled. Twenty-six years later, on April 9 and 10, 1775, the Henderson party camped and hunted on the south side of the ford. Governor Hamilton reported that he "forded the Cumberland or Shawnee River" on 25 April 1779, "which is about 200 yards over." The latter name, Shawnee, was used on all of the early French and some of the English maps. [fn 23]

Several years later, another party led by Dr. Walker, after surveying the boundary line between North Carolina and Virginia "Lay in a bottom just below the ford of the Cumberland" on 16 November 1779 and calculated the latitude as approximately 36-44-30 North, an error by only 1 3/8 miles. This speaks well for Dr. Walker's surveying ability. It is also interesting to note that by this time the old Indian trail was generally known as the "Kentucky Road." This was one year after Evan Shelby had claimed 200 acres at the Cumberland ford. His survey shows that the ford of the Cumberland River was about two blocks west of the existing bridge for highway Ky 66. [fn- Shelby survey]

In May of 1780, a party of twelve men traveling from Lexington to Virginia were ambushed by Indians near the Cumberland ford. Col. Fleming found the bodies of John and Robert Davis and buried them near the road. At least seven men, possibly more, escaped and finally reached the settlements in Virginia. [fn 24] After the wagon road was built, the Kentucky legislature authorized the building of a toll gate on the road (in March, 1797), which was located at this ford. Robert Craig was appointed keeper to collect the fee of 9 pence for each person or horse, and 6 shillings for a four wheel carriage. [fn 25]

The old road, north from the Cumberland ford followed the northeast side of the River from

Pineville toward Flat Lick across the river from the modern highway. Surveys made in 1886 indicate that the old trace was on the existing L&N railroad bed except opposite Turkey Creek where it ran a few hundred feet to the southeast. In 1969 one could still travel along this side of the river although the main highway, US 25, is on the west side. The river bottom along this stretch of the old trace is generally wide and flat; a few scattered farm houses were encountered, with the fields used as pastures. The ground is rich as cane could be seen growing along the fence rows with large patches near the river. The Calk Journal mentioned the "turrable cainbrakes" encountered in this area. About four miles out of Pineville the valley narrows and the eastern hills again become rocky with a double layer of cliffs near the river bank. After passing this place, there is another large bottom encountered where the Kentucky Utilities power plant is located. At this point the old road follows close to the base of the large hill hereby making a short-cut across the long bend in the river.

The exact spot where the old trace left the Cumberland River would appear to be about 4,000 feet west of the present highway bridge, near Pogue Hollow. [give longitude & latitude here] This point is indicated by several old surveys, entered for John Harris, Francis Taylor, Daniel Broadhead, and Robert Buckner. [fn 26] Although none of these surveys are drawn well enough to be conclusive about the exact location of the original trace, they nevertheless furnish the only reliable information on the routing. It should be pointed out that the road location shown in these surveys varies from that described by William A. Pusey in *Wilderness Road* which shows the old trace farther to the west near the highway. [fn 27] The route shown on the old surveys is shorter than that favored by Pusey, thus it is the most obvious way for travelers on foot or horseback. The routing in this area was apparently moved westward at some later date to avoid crossing a hill in heavily loaded wagons.

At Flat Lick, tradition insists the old Indian trail parted from the route used by the white settlers. This may he simplification of the truth, for it is likely that the Indians passed through this area on several paths blazed by the buffalo. Nevertheless, Daniel Boone certainly blazed his trail northward from Flat Lick in 1775, a route followed not only by Henderson's party, but many other travelers for years to come. Although hunters and surveyors may have traveled the same route prior to 1775, the way was thereafter credited to Boone. [fn 28] We know that some previous travelers used a path known as Scagg’s Trace, which was possibly followed by Daniel Boone, but there is no mention of this older trace in any of the documents or surveys until the road reaches Hazel Patch, so it may or may not have been the same as Boone’s Trace, or perhaps even the same in some places, but not in others.

Flat Lick is said to have been a frequent camping place for both the Indians and the Long Hunters prior to the establishment of the Kentucky settlements. The nearby Stinking Creek probably acquired its name from the smell produced by the rotting animal entrails deposited therein by these hunters. General Hamilton confirmed what he described as "a Remarkable Buffaloe salt lick," and said Flat Lick is the place where the junction of the Kentucky Road and the "great path of the Shawnee" occurred. This ancient Indian trail proceeded up the Trace Branch of Stinking Creek on its way to the Ohio. The Transylvania settlers, according to Calk's Journal, must have camped in the area on 11 April 1775. Calk mistakenly called Stinking Creek "Richland Creek," but later correctly identified the latter.

The distance from the Cumberland Gap to the Cumberland ford is presently 15 miles by highway, and it is nearly another 10 miles to Flat Lick. From the gap to the ford, Dr. Walker estimated the distance to be 17 miles, and both Fleming and Brown quoted the distance as 15 miles. For comparison, Filson's book gives the distance as 13 miles. From the ford to Flat Lick, Calk and Fleming give the distance as 10 miles, as compared to 9 miles used by Filson, Brown and Speed. [fn 29]

Endnotes

13. *Journal of Thomas Walker, First Explorations of Kentucky* (Louisville, 1898.)

14. William Calk, "Journal of William Calk," Kentucky Pioneer, transcription of journal copied by Neal Hammon from originals pages. This journal is now in possession of the Kentucky Historical Society. All future quotations of William Calk throughout this article are from the same source.

15. James Nourse Journal, University of Chicago Library, Durrett Collection, old typescript. Further quotations of above used throughout article from same source.

16. John D. Barnhart, *Henry Hamilton and George Rogers Clark in the American Revolution,* (Crawfordsville, Ind., 1951), 196-98.

17. Robert L. Kincaid, *The Wilderness Road*, Middlesboro, 1966, p 193. Quote from Moses Auston, 1796 from "A Memorandum of M. Austin's Journey in the American Historical Reviews", (April, 1900). It is also possible that either John or Robert Davis, who were found massacred by the Indians near the Cumberland Ford in 1780, was her husband.

18. Surveys for Jacob Myer, Ky. number 5239, (Lincoln County Survey Book Vol. 4, p76) 995 acres entered 3 Dec. 1791, surveyed 5-22-1798 on Yellow Creek; Thomas Fleming, Ky. number 2204, (Lincoln County Survey Book Vol. 4, p 56, 2000 acres entered on 18 July 1782 and surveyed on 3-

16-1797 on Yellow Creek. Hereafter the Kentucky or Virginia survey number will be listed without the word number, and LCSB shall be used instead of the Lincoln County Survey Book.

19. The Journal of Thomas Walker, loc. cit. The name Flat Creek was still being used on surveys years later. Future comment by Dr. Walker from this source unless noted.

The flat land around the present Middlesboro, Ky. was formed by an ancient meteor crater which may also have contributed to the formation of Cumberland Gap.

19. Survey for George Brooks, Ky.7589, (LCSB 4:57) 2000 acres , entered 18 July 1782 and surveyed 18 May 1797 on Yellow Creek.

20. Survey for Arthur Campbell, Ky. 1605 (LCSB 4:41) 600 acres entered 2 June 1780 and surveyed 8 Feb. 1796, on Flat Creek.

21. Survey for George Brooks, loc. cit. footnote 19.

22. Survey for Evan Shelby, Ky. 3549 (LCSB 4:53) 100 acres entered 24 April 1780 and surveyed 10 Nov. 1794 on Cumberland River and Stinking Creek.

Endnotes

23. The early French maps, such as Jacque Bellin's "Carte de la Louisiane," printed in 1744, labeled the Cumberland River "Riviere des Anciens Chouanons" (River of the old Shawnees). Even some of the English maps, such as Captain Gordon's drawings of the Ohio River made in 1766, still refer to this river as the Shawnee.

24. Col. William Fleming's Diary, Travels in the American Colonies (New York, 1916).

25. Robert L. Kincaid, *The Wilderness Road* (Middlesboro, Ky., 1966), page 204-05.

26. Survey for Francis Taylor, Va. 1964 (LCSB 1:241) entered 30 Dec. 1782, surveyed 23 Oct. 1797 on Cumberland River; Daniel Broadhead, Ky.1600 (LCSB 4:70) surveyed 8 Dec. 1795 on Cumberland River; & John Harris, Ky.2773 (LCSB 4:07) 6910 acres entered 30 Dec. 1782, and surveyed 20 Oct. 1797 on Yellow Creek; Robert Buckner, Ky.4567 (LCSB 4:78) 2125 acres entered 30 Dec. 1782 surveyed 23 Oct.1797, on Cumberland River.

27. Pusey, William Allen, *The Wilderness Road to Kentucky* (New York, 1921). The data in this publication relating to the various roads is discussed hereafter without the use of footnotes.

28. Daniel Boone himself claimed that he marked the road in 1775 in a letter to Governor Shelby written in 1795.

29. The sources of the distance comparisons used herein are from Thomas Speed, *The Wilderness Road*, (Louisville, 1886).

Chapter 4: Flat Lick to the Laurel River

Immediately north of Flat Lick, the exact location of the Boone's Trace along Stinking Creek is given on a land survey dated Oct. 9th, 1783. This survey for Phillip Buckner assignee of James Taylor, for 757 acres of land on Stinking Creek, a branch of the Cumberland River; it mentions that the "Kentucky Road" crosses the northern and southern boundaries of the property. [fn 30] The former can be located exactly in the existing village of Baugham on the present Highway US 25E. The southern point is less definite being "same course continued up the creek 120 poles farther to saasafrass and Beech near the Bank of the creek where the said road to Kentucky Crosses said Creek . . ." The survey would indicate that this point is on the branch just to the northeast of the Evergreen Cemetery. Thus the trace closely followed the old, pre-1950 paved highway to Fighting Creek headwaters.

Somewhere on or near the section of the road mentioned above, Middleton's Block House was constructed circa 1793. [fn 31] It was named for Lt. Walter Middleton, who headed the company of militia stationed there to protect the travelers from Indians. Elijah Barker's map shows this blockhouse as being located just west of Turkey Creek.

At the juncture with Fighting Creek, the trace ran directly to the Trace Branch of Little Richland Creek. This fact can be confirmed by the survey of James Grey entered 1 Feb. 1793 and made on 6 Oct. 1779 in which he begins "on a ridge about 15 poles from the old trace." [fn 32] William Pusey believed that the exact route was via Shy Mug Branch of Fighting Creek and Hammon's Gap On a flight over this area in 1966, I detected a trail running over the hill at this gap. However, it appeared that less climbing would have been involved if the trace had proceeded across the ridge at an unnamed gap at the head of Shy Mug Branch, about one-half mile west of the above location.

The valley formed by Trace Branch is reasonably flat and wide for this area. However, where this small valley meets the one that was formed by Richland Creek, it takes on the appearance of a large plain. The bottom land of the Little Richland is over a thousand yards wide, and completely flat. However, as these creek beds were originally covered by thick cane, the old trace probably followed the edge of the hills, just as State Road 11 does today.

Just north of the existing village of Hendrick, the old trace crossed the Little Richland Creek and proceeded westward across the flat bottoms to the valley formed by the main branch of Richland Creek. [fn 33] Calk, with Col. Henderson's party, writes that they camped at the edge Richland

Creek on the evening of 12 April 1775 because the water was high. He also wrote that there they met a number of settlers who were fleeing Kentucky because of Indian raids. Fleming stated that he went up this creek when returning to Virginia in 1780, and Filson noted that the road went "down" this creek 8 miles on the way to the Bluegrass. It is interesting that both men used up and down incorrectly.

Until my investigation in 1966, the exact location of Boone's Trace into Laurel County was in doubt. Certainly it proceeded north-eastward along one of the branches of Richland Creek, but as these fan out in an arch covering ten miles, the fork used was open to speculation. William Pusey believed that the trace followed the middle fork of Richland Creek to Booger Hollow, then proceeded up this branch to the head, where the trace crossed the ridge. Several of the old surveys indicate otherwise. An entry by James Barbour dated 14 April 1800, definitely shows the "old trace" running along Poplar Branch, and the survey for George Wilson made 29 June 1795, shows what is referred to as "a remarkable gap. . . . on a large buffaloe Lick" at the head of this watercourse; a third survey, dated 27 Sept 1798, made for John Christian, places the "old settlement trace" on the northeast side of "Linn Camp Creek" (the East fork) which indicates that it ran to the present village of Grey. [fn 34]

Therefore, it would appear that Boone again used an existing trail to advantage, in this case an old buffalo road, in crossing the ridge into Laurel County. The trace then turned northward toward Raccoon Springs which was a noted landmark for the early Long Hunters. [fn 35] James Knox and Henry Skaggs had camped on the east fork of Robinson Creek in the vicinity of this spring while on a hunting expedition prior to 1774. [fn 36]

Although it is not certain how the trace ran prior to reaching the first branch of Robinson Creek, the route probably was on or near the present Kentucky highway 233. In any event the creek was crossed where this road meets Ky. 830 according to the survey of Francis Mexan, entered November, 1784. [fn 39] This plot begins "where the old Kentucky path crosses same (i.e. Waters of Robinson Creek). From here the trace continued along the creek for about three-quarters of a mile, towards the McHargue Church.

From this point northward to the Laurel River, the Trace was nearly as given by L. B. McHargue. [fn 38] It crossed another branch of Robinson's Creek and led directly to Raccoon Springs, then northward along the ridge for two miles, finally descending at Happy Hollow, a small branch of the Laurel River. The exact point where the trace arrived at the Laurel River can be confirmed by a survey for George Brooks, entered in March, 1782, and made 27 May 1797. [fn 39]

This survey shows the "old road" crossing the Laurel River immediately south of a small branch at the above mentioned hollow. If the survey were to be interpreted as showing the exact position of the trace, it would indicate that it descended from the hill in the draw which is about 1,500 feet southwest of the route designated by McHargue.

The location of the trace indicated by the early surveys would correspond to the notes left by various travelers. The Henderson party, wrote Calk, made the trip from Richland Creek to the Laurel River in one day, on 13 April 1775. General Hamilton described this section as being "exceedingly difficult, lying over very steep hills." Daniel Smith, while surveying with a party in 1779, stated that they "moved into the Kentucky road" and along it to the Laurel River after leaving their camp on a branch of Lynn Camp Creek. Unfortunately, no mention was made of either the distance or direction of travel and the crude map that he made is of little help.

Fleming described a spring that he passed in 1780 that would fit the description of Raccoon Springs: his journal stated that two men were killed in an ambush which occurred a half mile from it where the road followed the "ridge with steep draugh on each side." When passing through the area in 1783, he said he "Halted at Lin Camp C[reek]." No mention is made of Robinson Creek although he mentions that "Stocks Creek" was crossed between Raccoon Springs and Richland Creek. Apparently the name of Stock Creek did not survive. Some of the old surveys also mention a "Goose Creek" in the general vicinity of the present Corbin.

James Nourse, Jr., who traveled up the road in January of 1780 wrote, "Thursday got to Richland creek- good cane- Friday to Lyn Camp creek- went down it two miles to cane, and then but middling. Saturday to Laurel River, could get no cane tho I have heard since, there is good cane two miles up it." [fn 41]

The area between Flat Lick and the Laurel River is hilly, but by no means mountainous like the country to the south. The major branches of Richland, Lynn Camp and Robinson Creeks have eroded the hills to the point that they are intersected by wide, fertile valleys at frequent intervals. These bottoms were apparently traveled by buffalo and the early pioneers as they offered feed and water to the animals. The pioneers also followed the ridges on occasion, which certainly would have been dryer and easier for traveling. In most of the old journals, the major complaint is about the mud.

Raccoon Springs is hard to find as it about 75 yards off a locally used road, and on a privately owned farm. The spring is located in a small draw on the southern part of the terrain, and the water is said to flow even in the driest seasons. The owner of the land informed me that numerous

arrowheads and other Indian artifacts have been found in his field near the spring, indicating that this area was a favorite camping place prior to the coming of white men.

The distance from Flat Licks to Richland Creek is given as 9 miles by Filson and Speed, and 11 by Brown. From Richland to the Laurel River is 13 miles according to Brown, and 16 by Filson and Speed, thus their totals nearly agree. In addition Filson notes that it is 8 miles "down Richland Creek." The actual distance is 9 miles to the main fork of Richland Creek and 18 miles from there to the Laurel River, giving a total of 27 miles which is nearly the same as that of these early reporters.

Endnotes

30. Survey for Phillip Buckner Va.1781 (LCSB1:241) 757 acres surveyed 9 Oct. 1783 on Sinking Creek.

31. Although Middleton's Blockhouse is shown north of the road and to the west of Turkey Creek on Elihu Barker's map, the survey of John Harris for 6910 acres noted above would indicate that the blockhouse was about 80 poles to the east of this creek.

32. Survey for James Grey, Ky.3412 (LCSB 4:59) 1000 acres entered 1 Feb. 1783 and surveyed 6 Sept. 1797 on Cumberland River and Stinking Creek.

33. The survey for Clough Overton (LCSB, 1) 200 acres, shows a trace passing down on the east fork of Richland Creek, then turning north. The branch is presumably Little Richland Creek.

34. Survey for James Barbour, Ky. 5564 (LCSB 4:155) 8000 acres entered 14 May 1784 and surveyed 14 April, 1800 on Cumberland River; survey for George Wilson, Ky. 1221 (LCSB 4:35) 9725 acres entered 26 Jan. 1786 and surveyed 29 June 1795 on Richmond Creek and Laurel River; survey for John Christian, Ky.4680 (LCSB 4:101) 2000 acres surveyed 27 Sept. 1795 on Lynn Camp Creek. The drawing shows a branch of the East Fork of Lynn Camp Creek and the road is labeled "The Old Settlement Trace."

35. Although the name "Raccoon Springs" was apparently known to the early Long Hunters, only one land entry could be found using this landmark as identification. This was found on a survey for Garrett Minor and P. Harris, (LCSB, 4:77).

36. Survey for Payton Sterns, Ky.2290, (LCSB 4:49) 6072.5 acres, mentions the old camp of Knox and Skaggs.

37. Survey for Francis Mexan, (LCSB, IV, 61)1763.5 acres entered Nov. 1784 and surveyed 11 Oct. 1797.

38. L. B. McHargue, "Boone's and Skagg's Traces Through Laurel County," Information Series No. 3, The Sentinel-Echo, London, Ky., 1942. This article was later supplemented by Russell Dyche,

"The Wilderness Road and Other Early Trails and Roads Through the Wilderness," (Division of State Parks, Frankfort, Ky., 1946), and Neal Hammon, "Boone's Trace Through Laurel County," Filson Club Quarterly, (1968), Vol. 42, p21-25. The location of the early trace (as noted by McHargue) was subsequently found to be in error In several places.

39. Survey for George Brooks, Ky. 6058 & 6059, adjoining plots of 1000 and 7000 acres entered 29 March 1782, and surveyed on 12 Jan. and 24 May 1797 on Laurel River.

40. Survey for Rowland Madison, Ky. No. 1791 (LCSB 4:45) 45) 8000 acres. {this can be omitted see fn 51}

41. Neal Hammon, The Journal of James Nourse, Jr. 1779-1780, FCHQ, July 1973, Vol. 47, page 263.

Chapter 5: Laurel River to Hazel Patch

From the Raccoon Spring, the road ran northward, along a road called Slate Ridge Spur. From the end of this road the old trace went west and northwest down to the hill into the headwaters of the Happy Hollow Branch. From here it continued northward, joining what is now the present highway US 25 into Farison. Instead of proceeding with the present highway, Boone's trace angled to the right and went through the existing Levi Jackson park then followed highway 229 for a short distance, perhaps 3000 feet. It was at the point that Boone's Trace and the 1796 Wilderness Road ran together; but Boone's trace continued northward, whereas the new road then crossed the Laurel River and was the same as Ky. Highway 229. Thomas Station was on the section where the two roads ran together, just about 1400 feet beyond the boundary of the park. A large survey of this area, for 7000 acres, made in January 1789 for George Brooks that shows the "new road" and the old trace crossing through this area prior to joining. [fn 42]

Boones Trace ran along the east side of the Laurel River, curving farther east at the base of a hill called Rocky Knob, and crossed the river in the near vicinity of where Sally's Branch joins the Little Laurel River, then continued northward on the east side of the Little Laurel River, crossing it approximately where the Hal Rogers Parkway (formerly the Daniel Boone Parkway) crosses it today.

Between the Laurel River and Hazel Patch, Boone's Trace is not the same as that described in the McHargue Report or in William Pusey's book, according to old surveys; thus the surveys available for this area cast doubt on the reliability of those findings. According to McHargue, after the trace crossed the Laurel River near Happy Hollow, it ran northward past the existing village of Fariston, to the McNitt massacre site which can still be seen in the Levi Jackson State Park. The road then led north-northwest before turning east, and crossed through the city of London where the courthouse now stands. This latter bit of information apparently came from Collins' History of Kentucky. [fn 43] The city of London, of course, was not founded until 1826, but a proposed village called "Riceton was in existence on this site at an earlier date, as it appears on Gridley's map of Kentucky which was drawn prior to 1806. The McHargue Report then goes on to relate that the trace ran northeast from the London courthouse, and for the most part followed the present State Route 638 to the Twin Branch of Raccoon Creek. Both the Drakes and McFarland defeats took place on this part of the trail, about three quarters of a mile apart, near the Macedonia Church. From the Twin Branch the trace crossed the ridge to the northwest, into Little Raccoon Creek, then ran

westward to Hazel Patch. A more exact description of McHargue's route is given in my article entitled "Boone's Trace through Laurel County," Filson Club History Quarterly, Volume XLII (1968).

South of the present Levi Jackson Park, the McHargue route is confirmed by two old surveys, both entered by George Brooks in March, 1782, and surveyed in 1779. [fn 44] These surveys show both the "old" and "new" trace, which combine into a single road just north of the park. Also shown is a "Thomas' Station" on the east side of the Little Laurel River, about 3,000 feet north of the McNitt Cemetery. From this point on, the surveys show the trace as described in my 1980 article on Boone's Trace.

The survey of John Drew, for 27,500 acres of land on the northwest side of the Little Laurel River, indicated that the road proceeded up the east side of the river past Rocky Knob to a point just downstream of the present Highway 80, where the crossing occurred. [fn 45] The trace then continued northward on the west side of the river, passing 'M Station," probably Moddrel's Station, shortly after the crossing. [fn 46] This route places tile trace about 9500 feet east of the London courthouse, and in fact misses the city entirely.

There are two other facts that support the contention that this survey shows the true course of the old trace. First, Brown's Journal states that it is five miles from the main Laurel River to the crossing on the Little Laurel River. At the point shown on the survey the crossing would be about five-and-a-half miles from the main Laurel, whereas by the route described by McHargue, the distance is only three miles. Secondly, in spite of Lewis Collins' *History of Kentucky*, the Laurel County courthouse is too far west to be on the logical route between two known points on the trace, i.e., the McNitt and the McFarland massacre sites. [fn 47]

After crossing the Little Laurel River, the John Drew survey indicates that the trace ran northward between the forks of this stream; another survey for James Ganon shows the trace crossing the headwaters of a branch that flows southeasterly into the main branch of this stream. [fn 48] This branch is identified on the survey as follows: "lying on the west prong of the North Fork of Laurel River heading with the waters of Raccoon Creek to begin at the trace leading from Kentucky to Holston . . ."

Unfortunately neither of these surveys are accurate enough to give the exact location of the traces in the area, and although both of these surveys are somewhat vague, together they would indicate that the general course of the road was up the ridge from the Little Laurel crossing. thereby more or less joining and following the present Kentucky Highway 638 past the Macedonia Church

into the headwaters of the Slate branch of Raccoon Creek and along this existing road to the site of McFarland's defeat, which is approximately 4,000 feet north of the church. A shorter way would have been to continue north for about 10,000 feet after crossing the Little Laurel River, and joining highway 586 at this point, about 4000 feet south of the old Macedonia Church. At the site of the McFarland defeat, Boone's trace turned northwest again instead of passing down this creek as described by McHargue. A survey of Hezekia Pigg shows the trace from the headwaters of Freeman's Branch, running northwest to the Hazel Patch Creek, including the crossing of the Little Raccoon Creek about 1,500 feet northeast of the existing Viva Church. [fn 49] Another survey for Jerah Tamplin depicts the road north of the Pigg survey as far as the present Mount Carmel Church. [fn 50]

From the data on the above mentioned surveys, it is clear that the old trace led more or less directly to Hazel Patch from the vicinity of the present Levi Jackson Park. It did not swing over to the main branch of Raccoon Creek as McHargue's account relates, neither did it follow the present Highways 25 and 490 as William Pusey believed. The student may also note the surveys do not place the road near the point where McHargue places Julian's defeat, on the hill below the mouth of Freeman's Branch. Yet the latter point is not contradictory as many early pioneers often left the established trails to camp or to find feed for their horses.

It is interesting to note that Calk, on 14 April 1775, described the trip northward from the Laurel River as being on "a very mirey road," and stated that the party camped on a creek that he believed to be a branch of the "Loral," prior to reaching "the plais caled the Bressh." Col. Fleming, when traveling south from Hazel Patch on 14 May 1780, "cross(ed) some hills and swamps" on the way to the "Lawrel" River. James Nourse, Jr., came through the area on Sunday 30 January 1780, and was having trouble feeding his horse and himself. He wrote, "traveled fifteen miles to Raccoon Creek and down the creek two miles to cane-mostly eat out and what is not, frost bit. Cut the tops for the horses but it does not seem to satisfy them."

Brown's Journal was the first to place Raccoon Creek in its proper position four miles south of Hazel Patch. Fleming notes two Raccoon Creeks but one obviously refers to the branch of Robinson's Creek near Raccoon Springs. The other, along with Nourse's account quoted above, probably refers to the fork now called Slate Lick Branch. One of the old surveys states that Little Laurel River was formerly called Frazers' Creek. [fn 51] The various distances from the Laurel River to Hazel Patch are given as 12 miles by Fleming, 15 by Filson and Speed, and 17 by Brown. The actual distance is about 15 miles by the route shown on the old surveys, and 18 miles by

McHargue's version of the trace.

The area between the Laurel River and the Rockcastle River is unusually flat for southeastern Kentucky. The land is now mostly covered with small farms intermixed with patches of woods. Hazel Patch is the place where Boone's and Skaggs' traces parted, and for this reason it was sometimes called the Road Forks. In the latter part of the eighteenth century a blockhouse was built here, possibly by a man named Wood who later moved to the head of White Oak Creek. [fn 52] A state marker on Highway 490 about three quarters of a mile north of the present Hazel Green School now locates this site. Munsel's map of 1818 shows Hazel Patch as the point that separated Rockcastle and Knox counties, and also noted that "Pearls" house was a short distance to the south. The Pearl family still owned this land in 1980. According to tradition, the blockhouse at Hazel Patch is located at latitude 37 degrees, 14 minutes North & longitude 84 degrees 5 minutes and 48 seconds West. The closest landmark is the Landrum Cemetery location on the west side of Kentucky highway 490, located 2600 feet south of the Mount Carmel Church in Oakley community.

In spite of some information to the contrary, the name Hazel Patch referred exclusively to this area until circa 1872, when the name was adopted by a new community of railroad construction workers living several miles further down the Hazel Patch Creek, when the railroad was constructed circa 1870. Although a number of publications state that the name Hazel Patch has not applied to the original area since about 1800, the facts indicate otherwise. All maps printed prior to 1872 show Hazel Patch where Boones Road parted from Skaggs Trace.

Endnotes

42. Geoge Brooks survey on little Laurel River, ibid.

43. Lewis Collins and Richard H. Collins, *History of Kentucky*, (Covington, 1874), II, p 458.

44. Survey for George Brooks, Ky 5058 and K 6059, ibid.

45. Survey for John Drew, 27,500 acres entered 14 Oct. 1784, and surveyed 23 Dec. 1793.

46. Moddrel's Station was built about 1792 and abandoned in 1795. It was named for Lt. Robert Moddrel who commanded the twenty-two militia stationed there. Although the McHargue report states that the station was located south of Farrison, the above survey would indicate otherwise.

47. The exact locations of these sites are given in my article, "Boone's Trace Through Laurel County," Filson Club Quarterly (1968), Volume 41, p 25.

48. Survey for James Gannon, (LCSB 4:71) 500 acres.

49. Survey for Hezekia Pigg, Ky 3089 (LCSB 4:37) 1943 acres entered 3 Nov. 1783 on Rockcastle River.

50. Survey for Jerah Tamplin, Ky. 2224 (LCSB 4:54) 1000 acres entered 21 May 1783 and surveyed 31 May 1797 on Hazel Patch Creek.

51. Survey for Rowland Madison, Ky. No. 1791 (LCSB 4:45) 45) 8000 acres, dated 26 Sept. 1795, reads as follows: "on a branch of the Cumberland formerly called Frazers Creek or Little Laurel River."

52. It would appear that this blockhouse was named for a man named Wood. By 1818 a Wood lived several miles north of the Rockcastle River on the State Road, according to the map of Luke Munsell.

Chapter 6: Hazel Patch to Boone's Gap

Between Hazel Patch and the crossing of the Rockcastle River there are no surveys or other records to indicate the exact location of Boone's Trace. Both McHargue and Pusey claim that the trace led north, passing close to Mount Carmel Church at Oakley. The road is then said to have turned northwest for about three miles, finally arriving at Parker's Creek which it followed to the river. Today, Ky. Highway 490 going through the Mershon community closely follows Boone's route. Just north of the Mount Carmel Church, on the property of Henry McWhorter, a rock carved with Boone's name was discovered circa 1920, which, if authentic, would place the old trace slightly to the west of the present highway. [fn 53]

In the vicinity of Rockcastle River the routing of the trace cannot be disputed; Calk stated that after fording this river he proceeded "down it 2 miles and then turned up a creek that we crossed about 50 times, some very bad fords with a great deal of good land on it." The creek referred to is still called Trace Branch, in memory of the old road. Presently a road leads up this creek through a deep narrow valley to the top of the ridge. The climb to the ridge is quite steep, as is the descent to Crooked Creek on the other side. It would appear that this hill was crossed near Windy Gap where the 1891 U.S. Geological Survey showed a trail which may have been the vestige of the old trace led down the hill to Crooked Creek. From there the trace led into Roundstone Branch of the Rockcastle River, which was followed northward to Boone's Gap. This creek was frequently referred to as the "far fork of the Rockcastle." [fn 54]

On 16 April 1775, the Henderson party reached Crooked Creek and "went a little down" before camping. Calk refers to this and all other streams to the north as "waters of the Caintuck." The trip northward from the Rockcastle is described by Felix Walker as follows: "upon leaving the Rock-Castle we had to encounter and cut our way through a country of about twenty miles, entirely covered with dead brush, which we found a difficult and laborous task. At the end of which we arrived at the commencement of the cane country, traveled about thirty miles through thick cane and reed, and as the cane ceased, we began to discover the pleasing and rapturous appearance of the plains of Kentucky. . . " [fn 54]

James Nourse, Jr., had a different impression of the country. He wrote on 3 February 1780, "Thursday, endeavored for the far fork of the Rockcastle but could not reach it-camped by the side of a mountain, and was obliged to feed on corn. These two days passed, I have scarce seen the track of a single Deer, and all other game very scarce-Friday went 4 miles to the far fork of Rockcastle,

and there camped and stayed to recruit our horses. Went up the river a buffalo hunting without success, obliged to eat our bacon. Saturday made an early start and went 20 miles to Silver Creek- good cane- some very good bottom land along the Rockcastle then came over a great deal of white oak middling land." [fn 55] Whenever Nourse mentioned the Rockcastle, or far fork of Rockcastle, he was obviously referring to what is now called Roundstone Creek.]

The Roundstone near Crooked Creek is very winding and narrow, but becomes wider a few miles to the north. An attempt to drive a jeep along this narrow stretch in 1965 was facilitated only by using the railroad bridges and tunnels. Presently where roads exist, they follow the eastern side of the hills, as the bottoms are planted in corn.

There are several old surveys along Roundstone Creek that prove that Boone's Trace was in the main branch practically all the way to Boone's Gap. [fn 56]

Northward from Renfro Creek these bottoms are quite wide with a number of large and small valleys interrupting the surrounding hills. This valley tightens again upon approaching the Madison County line, where the trace led through the passage called Boone's Cap. Presently the railroad crosses at the lowest point of the gap where the old trace was probably located. It would have been near this point that the early pioneer could first look down into the Bluegrass of Kentucky, as is so often portrayed in numerous illustrations.

It is interesting to note that, except for Filson's early map, no others show any roads or trails in the Roundstone Creek to the south of Boone's Gap. Yet the surveyors of the era were aware of not one, but two Boone's Traces in Rockcastle County. [fn 57] The second Boone's Trace was his route in August, 1775, when he guided his family and "21 guns" to Boonesborough. On this trip he traveled as far as the present Broadhead on Dix River with the party made up of Hugh McGary, Richard Hogan, Thomas Denton, and their families, who were destined for Harrodsburg. At Broadhead the Boone party "bore a more northerly direction for Boonesboro while the McGary party went down to Dick's River." [fn 58] On this trip Boone traveled down the branch of Dix River known as Boone Fork, then proceeded north via Bowman's Fork, and arrived at Roundstone Creek in the vicinity of Hurricane Branch.

It must be admitted that Boone's Trace, in the vicinity of the modern Berea, was no more than a blazed trail, with little or no means of identification. James Nourse tells of the problem of following this trace in his Journal: "Wednesday 28 June 1775, traveled and missed our way, got up a steep mountain, beat all about the ridge-at last found another steep place, where we got down off the mountain whose sides were in general perpendicular; we had a view of fine country to the west.

Traveled without being able to keep any course till night- made a fire and suped. Thursday 29th, got up and settled that we should steer something to the south of west, which we did, brought us to large lick-kept down the buffalo path-then crossed a large meadow at least a hundred acres-still keeping our course. At nine o'clock got into the right path at 1/2 past 10. arrived at water where there was an Indian mark on a tree." [fn 59] Even Colonel Henderson, on his way back from St. Asaph's in the summer of 1775 "crossed it inadvertently and got out of our way."[fn 60]

Apparently Roundstone Creek takes its name from the lick which was located just south of Boone's Gap. Roundstone Lick is mentioned in the Madison County Order Books in August, 1787, but the name Roundstone Creek does not appear in the records until later. [fn 61] Luke Munsell's 1818 map still refers to this creek as Roundstonelick Creek. The earlier records refer to this creek as the north or far fork of the Rockcastle, and was occasionally but erroneously labeled “Scaffold Fork." [fn 62]

Endnotes

53. I talked to Mr. McWhorter in 1968 and he stated that the Boone rock was found some distance to the northwest of his house some time about 1922. The rock was removed and taken to a nearby church where it remained for some years. Presently, this rock is on public display in front of the church.

54. One author suggests that Boone’s trace left the creek and detoured via “Boone Hollow” for about 2 ½ miles, but this proposed route is longer, and requires that the travelers climb more hills than just following Roundstone Creek; thus without further proof, I do not think this suggestion is credible. Traveler’s journals mention the trace being along Roundstone Creek, sometimes call the far fork of Rockcastle.

54. Felix Walker’s Narrative, March 1775, DeBow’s Review of February, 1854, quoted by George W. Ranck, *Boonesborough*, (Louisville, 1901) p 163. Other quotes by Felix Walker from same source.

55. Neal Hammon, The Journal of James Nourse, Jr., FCHQ July 1973, page 264.

56. Surveyed for James Renifro, V5700, (LCSB, II, 396) 300 acres surveyed Jan. 1785 and V6348, (LCSB, II 397) 400 acres surveyed 9 Feb. 1785. and for William Pane, V 4272, (II, 397), 1000 acres surveyed 10 Feb. 1785; and for William

Mayo, Jr. V116, (LCSB, II, 408), 1000 acres surveyed 24 March 1785; and for Thomas Smith, K2774, (LCSB, IV, 68), 1000 acres, surveyed 28 Oct. 1797, entered 14 Dec. 1781.

57. Surveyed for Catlett Conway, V6180, (LCSB, II, 441),18,000 acres, dated 22 March 1785. This survey states that the "road from the settlement to Boonesborough formerly went up (a branch of Dicks River) about three or four miles above Englishes Station." The survey also mentions "crossing a branch of Rockcastle [i.e. Roundstone] and Boones Trace" well to the north of Dicks River.
58. Lyman C. Draper, ed. Ted Franklin Belue, *The Life of Daniel Boone,* (Mechanicsburg, 1998) page 383.
59. James Nourse Sr. (1731-1784) was born in London, England and migrated to America in 1769, settled near the Potomac River in Berkley, Va. (now W.Va.) He visited Kentucky in 1775 during which time he kept a journal which was later published in the Journal of American History, Vol.XIX, Nos 2-4, 1925.
60. DM 4B25.
61. The survey for James Smith, (LCSB IV 68) dated 27 Oct. 1797 names Roundstone Creek.
62. Elijah Barkers map made c1797 shows Scaffold Fork in place of Roundstone Creek.

Chapter 7: Boone's Gap to the Kentucky River

Once through Boone's Gap, the pioneers experienced the country some called the "Kentucky levels", which we now call the outer limits of the Bluegrass. The pioneers had no problem in deciding that this land was far superior to that in other parts of the country, and so it became the first large area, west of the Appalachian Mountains, to be claimed and surveyed by English speaking people. In fact, a large part of that area, over 142, 000 acres, had been surveyed on military warrants and the land registered in the surveyors office of the Fincastle, Virginia, a year before Daniel Boone blazed his road to Kentucky. When Felix Walker passed Boone's Gap, he wrote that he had discovered "the pleasing and rapturous appearances of the plains of Kentucky. A new sky and strange earth seemed to be presented to our view. So rich a soil we had never seen before; covered with clover in full bloom, the woods were abounding with wild game – turkeys so numerous that it might appear but one flock universally scattered in the woods. It appeared that nature, in the profusion of her bounty, had spread a feast for all that lives, both for the animal and the rational world..... We felt ourselves as passengers through a wilderness just arrived at the fields of Elysium, or at the garden where was no forbidden fruit. " [fn 63]

Unfortunately, for Felix Walker and the others with Daniel Boone, the situation was not so blissful as they first thought. On March 25, 1775, Boone's camp was attacked by Indians about an hour before dawn. Killed in the attack was Captain Thomas Twetty and his negro slave, Sam; Felix Walker was injured. The three of them were comfortably sleeping in a tent when the attackers fired a volley into the camp. Boone and the others, in the darkness, managed to escape into the woods. Twetty's bulldog defended his master until tomahawked, which probably prevented Twetty's immediate death.

The attack ended as suddenly as it had begun. The Indians, after taking a couple of horses, disappeared into the night. The road cutters cautiously returned, and with the first light built two or three cabins for protection and to shelter the two wounded men. Thomas Twetty, shot through both knees, soon died in the "Little Fort," as it was then called. Several days later, Felix Walker was carried in a litter between two horses to the Kentucky River, where the forts at Boonesborough was later built. [fn 64] A few days after this attack, Boone found young Samuel Tate wandering around in the woods. He was a survivor of another party that also had been ambushed. In this attack Thomas McDowell and Jeremiah McPeters had been killed. It is perhaps a coincidence that Boone's party was attacked on the headwaters of what was even then called Taylor's Fork of Silver Creek;

the surveyor, Hancock Taylor had been shot by Indians in 1774, and with the help of his companions had reached this creek where he died and was buried; his grave (now on the south part of land owned by the Eastern Kentucky University) was only about a mile downstream from the Little Fort, also called Twetty's Fort.

Richard Henderson, the leader of the Transylvania Company, who was guiding the settlers into Kentucky over Boone's newly blazed trail, was greatly alarmed by this attack. His party had just left Martin's Station in the Powell Valley, when they received the news of the ambush. Most of the group pressed on, in spite of their meeting dozens of settlers who were fleeing from Kentucky because of the recent trouble. By Saturday, the 15th of April, the party with Henderson had crossed the Rockcastle River, following Boone's path. They were aware that it was important to quickly reinforce Boone's new outpost on the Kentucky River, as there is safety in numbers. But prior to their arrival, another company of men, led by Colonel Thomas Slaughter, by chance arrived a Boonesborough; they had traveled to Kentucky by boat, coming down the Ohio River part of the way, and then traveling overland to the Bluegrass. Upon reaching central Kentucky, they began exploring the area, and accidentally discovered Boone's men working on a fort on the banks of the Kentucky River. Slaughter's men stayed in Boonesborough for about two or three weeks, until they were sure the Indian threat was past.

Boone's Trace, northward from Boone's Gap, according to Victorian tradition, is said to have passed through the existing city of Berea on its way north. Of course, the town of Berea was not in existence in 1774, or even in 1818. But this did not stop William Pusey from showing Boone's Trace leading directly through the city, then gradually swinging northeastward into Silver Creek. However, all of the early maps and surveys show the first roads to the east of Pusey's proposed route, so his version is obviously incorrect.

By Saturday, the 15th of April, the party with Henderson had crossed the Rockcastle River, following Boone's path. William Calk, one of the settlers with this group, recorded their progress:

> Sunday, 16 April: Start early - 2 mi down the river [Rockcastle] and then turn up a creek [Trace Branch] that we cross about 50 times. Some very Bad forrds with a great deal of very good land on it. In the evening we git over to the waters of Caintuck & go a little down the creek and up there we camp.
>
> Monday, 17 April: This is a very rainy morning hut breaks about 11 o'clock & we go on and camp this night in several campings on some of the creeks of Caintuck [Roundstone].
>
> Tuesday, 18 April: We go on about 11 o'clock we meet some men from Boons camp that

caim to Caintuck . . . . we camp this night just on the Beginning of the good land near the Blue Lick. They kill 2 bofelos this evening.

Wednesday, 19 April: . . . . about 11 o'clock we came to where the indians fired on Boons Company & killed 2 men and a dog and wounded one man in the thigh. We campt this night on oter creek.

Thursday, 20 April: We start early and git down to Caintuck to Boons fort about 12 o'clock. [fn 65]

The journal of William Calk, although brief, accurately gives the progress of Henderson's party. The exact route they followed, on the other hand, must come from other sources. Various writers in the past, including myself, erroneously speculated on the location of Boone's Trace through Madison County. [fn 66] The way is roughly shown on Filson's map, which indicated that the road led up Roundstone Creek, past the Blue Lick, and finally followed Otter Creek down to the Kentucky River. But certain obscure records in Madison County throw more light on this subject; taken geographically, they more accurately locate certain sections of the old trace, and at the same time offer some interesting facts on our early history. [fn 67]

One survey shows a mile and a half section of Boone's Trace near Berea. [fn 68] This plat places the route just southeast and parallel to the Brushy Fork of Silver Creek, heading in the direction of the Blue Lick.

John Snoddy, in a deposition, said, "I came to Kentucky with Daniel Boone in the year 1775 and came by the blue lick crost Silver Creek and went up Harts fork and so on to what is now called Boonesborough." [fn 69] As the buffalo roads generally led to and between the main licks, we can again surmise that the trace followed one of these paths from the Roundstone Lick toward the Blue Lick.

The next case in the Madison County Complete Books which locates Boone's Trace, shows over four miles of the route between Hays Fork of Silver Creek and the Little Fort. [fn 70] The crossing of Silver Creek was about a mile east of the junction of Hays Fork and Harts Fork, and the trace led northward from this point to Harts Fork and along this branch before cutting over to the "Little Fort." Thus the old trace in this area was west of the modern highway, U.S. 25, and ran roughly parallel to it. The "Little Fort" is the place where the aforementioned Indian attack occurred on the morning of 25 March, 1775. A study of a map will quickly reveal that to connect the sections of the trace now established by the surveys will form a crooked "S". From the head of Roundstone Creek the trace led northeast toward Blue Lick, but then it must have curved back toward the

northwest to make the crossing of Silver Creek shown on this survey. To have led directly into the center of the Blue Lick would have necessitated a lengthy detour, so I am of the opinion that it only passed near, not through, this famous landmark.

The Blue Lick was near the head of the Blue Lick Creek, between Robe Mountain and Joe Lick Knob. One of the so-called 'Pilot Knobs" is found about 2 1/2 miles to the southeast of the lick, well off of the trace. As this hill called Pilot Knob does not afford a very good view towards Richmond, the name probably derived from the fact that it was used to "pilot" the traveler who looked upon it from below. Had the traveler needed a vantage point, he would have used Joe Lick Knob where the view is better in any direction.

A number of depositions were taken from the early pioneers regarding the area. Page Portwood, John Snoddy, Sam Estill, James Estill, William Bush and others, generally agreed on the location of the original trace as was shown on these Madison County surveys. The "Little Fort" or Twetty's Fort was discussed in some detail as the trace passed by this landmark. Samuel Estill stated that "it was notoriously known by the Little Fort but after [it was] called Twetties fort as Twetty was killed at or near the fort and as I understood was buried at the fort and I saw T.T. on a tree which was the first two letters of his name." [fn 71]

The depositions also reveal other interesting facts about this section of Madison County. The land drained by Silver Creek and extending up to the headwaters of Otter Creek was described as being a large body of cane land, in which there were plentiful growths of locust trees. The cane predominated south of Estill's Station, which accounted for the name "Stock Field" in Squire Boone's old settlement entry. Hays Fork was called Boone's Fork by some, perhaps because Daniel Boone had an interest in the settlement claim of his son-in-law, William Hays, who made the original entry. The depositions also locate a tree on the old trace where Daniel Boone carved his name, which was just north of Hays Fork, on the entry of Anthony Bledsoe. This tree became notorious, as it was noticed by many of the settlers traveling along the trace, and was shown on the old surveys. The present location of the Boone tree can be established by the fact that it was on the north side of Hays Fork about 3000 feet north of the old Richmond air strip.

Many historians have speculated on the condition of this early trace. Was it a road which was easy to follow or just a path identified by some blazed trees? Sam Estill was asked this question about the route along Silver Creek and answered as follows:

> Question: "Was Boons trace so plain that any person could travel it without a pilot?"
>
> Answer: "Boons trace was a marked trace but it was pretty difficult to follow though the

thick cane, though I have followed it." [fn 72]

The Madison County records contain other cases on land disputes in the Silver Creek area. One shows that additional roads were established by 1780, called "Adams Trace" and the "Road from Estill's Station to the Blue Lick." [fn 73] According to the surveys, neither of these routes were the same as Boone's Trace, although Adams Trace may have used a short section of the old trail.

The relationship between Boone's Trace and two other famous sites, Twetty's Fort and Estill's Station, is discussed in various depositions connected with these land suits. When Thomas Warren was asked if Boone's old trace passed Twetty's Fort, he answered, "There was a trace that went near to it called Boons Trace, I suppose about the distance of thirty or forty yards from it." [fn 74] Others confirmed this fact. Samuel Estill's deposition on this subject is informative. [fn 75]

Question: Did said Boons trace pass on or near the plantation at Estill's old station in 1780?

Answer: Yes, it went through the track of land near the improvement.

Question: Was there a plain road from Estill's Station in [the] Spring and Summer of 1780 into said Boons trace going toward Boonsborough and passing on by this place [Bond Estill's Spring]?

Answer: Yes.

John Snoddy first stated that he "had seen Twitties fort but am not certain whether the Trace passed it or not." In the next question he was asked if there was any other trace that led from "the old settlement to Boonsborough besides this trace called Boons trace." His answer was, "I do know the next fall after I came out [referring to 1776] there was another trace that some called it Boons trace and some called it Calloways Trace." [fn 76] In another deposition, when asked if Boone's Trace passed along by Twetty's or the Little Fort, he replied, "Yes it did and one end went to Boonsborough and the other to Powells valley." Question: "Did you know of any other trace at that time that was called Boones trace that went to Blue lick and by Twetty's [sic] fort."

Answer: "I did not." He also said that he knew "this [Boone's] trace leading from Boonsborough to the Blue Lick which was the same with Estills trace in the year 1780." [fn 77]

North of Twetty's Fort, Boone's Trace passed over into the headwaters of Otter Creek. A survey from "Green Clay vs. William Brisco and others" shows the entire area from Estill's Station to the Kentucky River. [fn 78] Six miles of the trace from Boonesborough along Otter Creek is set down on this plat, as well as another short section further south. The depositions in this case establish that the old trace passed Bond Estill's spring which was on Pumpkin Run, named for the

wild pumpkins found growing there by the first settlers. This run was often used as a camping place by the early pioneers.

Unfortunately, the survey does not show all of the trace, but it apparently followed a course almost due north from Bond Estill's spring, and fell into the main branch of Otter Creek near its junction with Dreaming Fork. Thus, from Twetty's Fort this old trail would have crossed to the east side of the present highway U.S. 25 near the site of the historical marker, and passed along about 6500 feet east of the Richmond Court House to the creek, where it continued down to the Kentucky River. Sam Estill thought the distance along the creek bottom was 8 or 10 miles. [fn 79]

One deposition explained why Boone's Trace followed the meanders of the creek, rather than cutting straight across the curved sections. It reads as follows:

> Question: In passing from Boonsborough up Otter Creek along Boons old trace for 5 or 6 miles did the hills and Cliffs make down to near the bank as to compel travellers to keep pretty close to the bank on account of their not being able to pass said Hills and Cliffs, so as to mark a trace up creek straighter or farther off the said creek than the one made by Boone.
>
> Answer: I believe the buffaloes made the road and that Boon Marked and traveled the same road. The hills were Caney and Steep and the bottoms of the creek was the most convenient place for a road. [fn 80]

An interesting fact about the site of Richmond is told in a deposition given by Archibald Wood. He stated that "the fork that goes up through Richmond was called the Town Fork owing to an old Indian town near where the courthouse now stands." [fn 81] noh

When Boone and his road cutters evacuated the "Little Fort" on the 1st of April, 1775, they carried Felix Walker along in a litter tied between two horses. Their route, as previously mentioned, led down Otter Creek to the bottoms on the south side of the Kentucky River. Here they encountered "a lick with two sulpher springs" where "a number of buffaloes, of all sizes, supposed to be between two and three hundred, made off from the lick in every direction, some running, some walking, others loping slowly and carelessly, with young calves playing, skipping and bounding through the plain." [fn 82] The men soon set to work and constructed some cabins which were known as Fort Boone; apparently Daniel Boone and a few others occupied these cabins until the latter part of 1776. This first fort was located about 60 yards south of the river bank near the old ferry crossing where the park camp grounds is today.

When Col. Henderson finally arrived on the 20th of April, he was not completely satisfied with what he found. His diary illustrates this point: "On Viewing the Fort, and finding the plan not

sufficient to admit of building for the reception of our company and a scarcity of ground suitable for clearing at such an advanced season, was at some loss how to proceed. Mr. Boone's company having laid off most of the adjacent good lands into lots of two acres each and taking as it fell to each individual by lot was in actual possession and occupying them. After some perplexity resolved to erect a fort on the opposite side of a large lick near the river bank which would place us at the distance of 300 yards from the other fort, the only commodious place near or where we could be of any service to Boone's men or vice-versa." [fn 83] Henderson continues to describe how he and two others who remained with him first built a "magazine" on the fort site, the others in the party having gone off to build their cabins elsewhere. Henderson's temporary camp on the later fort site was about 50 yards from the river and 50 yards from the "devine elm" where the first Kentucky convention was held a month or so later.

Several plans have survived which show the main fort at Boonesborough. One was copied from Henderson's papers and another was made by Moses Boone. [fn 84] The two drawings are in general agreement in most respects. Henderson estimated that the fort was 260 feet long and 180 feet wide, with the long side fronting the river. Moses Boone stated that the fort contained about an acre, and was one-third longer than wide. Calculations would thus show his version to be 180 feet wide by 240 feet long. Both drawings establish that there were blockhouses or "bastions" on all four corners, and cabins along all of the walls. The plat attributed to Henderson places the gates in the center of both the front and back walls, while Moses Boone's drawing shows only the main gate in the front wall. Both agree that Henderson lived at the down-river corner, and had a second cabin for his kitchen. Moses Boone indicated that three additional buildings were inside, but separated from the fort walls. One of these cabins was the house of his father, Squire Boone, and another his gunsmith shop. The third building inside the walls was the home of Col. Richard Callaway. Moses Boone also stated that after his uncle Daniel returned from captivity in 1778 the fort was put in repair with new stocking added where necessary and the walls extended to the east. At the same time, he said that a second story was added to the southeast and southwest corners, but that they were not roofed over, as there was insufficient time before the attack. This sketch also shows the "treaty spot" which was "60 yards" directly in front of the south gate, and on "trail from the spring to the Indian camp." This spring itself was northwest of the fort gate, according to the drawing.

A third plat of Boonesboro survives which is of some interest. [fn 85] This drawing, originally published in *Collins History of Kentucky*, shows the entire village which was incorporated in 1787, including the location of the fort, the lick, town lots, and streets. The original Boone's Fort was

located on the north side of the lick near the ferry. "Main Street," as shown on this old document, would correspond to Boone's Old Trace, whereas a separate "Boones Road" leaves the township near the modern Ky. Highway 627. Possibly one reason for this name was that this road led toward, and perhaps to, the 1000 acre tract on Tates Creek that Henderson awarded to Daniel Boone for blazing the trace to Kentucky.

History relates that the small, then unoccupied "Fort Boone" on the north side of the lick was burned by the Shawnees during their attack in July 1777. [fn 86] How long the main fort at Boonesborough lasted is still a mystery. Certainly it did not survive long after the Indian menace disappeared, and was gone before some of the original inhabitants died. Possibly the logs in the fort were used by the inhabitants of the town to build new cabins on the town lots. In any event, only a few chimney stones were still present in the latter part of the nineteenth century. However, most of the roads to the fort survived, but with improvements and minor relocations.

The road cutters, it would appear, received the sum of 10 pounds, 10 shillings, for "work making roads to Cantucke." Although this amount would seem only a pittance by modern standards, at the time it would purchase 1050 acres of Bluegrass land at the Transylvania price, today worth over four million dollars. The road cutters, however, were not furnished equipment by the company once they reached Kentucky, as can be seen by Michael Stoner's purchase of "powder, lead, and osnaburgs" from the company store for 7 pounds, 3 shillings and 6 cents. [fn 87] Although the road cutters were undoubtedly motivated by the prospect of cheap land, they must also have had a lust for adventure. These men who volunteered to lead the way to the Kentucky River certainly obtained that goal, if they remained at Boonesborough.

Some of the men with Daniel Boone, in spite of the bad memory of being attacked by Indians, were very much attracted by the land on Silver Creek, where the attack occurred, and soon after started to claim the land in that area. Squire Boone, Daniel’s brother, was one of the first to buy 1000 acres from the Transylvania company. The tract he selected was a large field of cane, about two and a half miles south of Twettys Fort and on the west side of Boone’s Trace. He named the place Stock Fields, as he intended to raise cattle on the land.

Nathanial Hart chose land near Squire Boone, and next to a tract that Joseph Hughes purchased from the company. William Hicks picked a tract of land west of Twettys Fort, that included the grave of Hancock Taylor. There are no surviving records from the company to show the exact sizes of these claims, but many of them, including the land of Squire Boone, Nathaniel Hart, and Joseph Hughes were surveyed by John Kennedy, who worked for the Transylvania Company.

Daniel Boone was awarded a 1000 acre tract around a salt lick on Tates Creek, located about 5 or 6 miles southwest of Boonesborough. The land was surveyed for him by another Tranyslvania surveyor, William Bayly Smith, in 1776. According to a letter by Richard Henderson, Boone was awarded 2000 acres by the company, but the location of the second 1000 acre tract is in doubt. At the time Boone started working for the Transylvania Company, 100 acres of Kentucky land could be purchased for one pound sterling. Thus if he had received money instead of land, his pay for cutting the road would have been 20 pounds for about 20 days of work. On today's market, Boone would have been earning about $650 per day since silver now sells for about $41 per ounce.

But Daniel Boone did not sell his Transylvania land. Even worse, the Virginia legislature failed to accept or legalize Henderson's purchase from the Indians and failed to confirm the companies title to the Kentucky land, so none of the new settlers, including the Boone brothers, ever had a valid title to the land they purchased or earned. The matter was finally settled by the Virginia Land Law of 1778, which permitted settlers to purchase their settlements and preemptions from the state, and promised that the earliest claims would have preference. Thus Squire Boone, William Hicks, Nathaniel Hart, and Joseph Hughes had no problem in convincing the land commissioners that they were the earliest claimants, and deserved the legal right to land. Daniel Boone probably could have obtained his land on Tates Creek, but instead, he claimed that particular tract for his brother, George Boone, and ask the court to award him land on the headwaters of Stoners Creek, where he previously had a hunting camp. About 1779 or 1780, Daniel Boone also purchased the 1000 acres awarded to Joseph Hughes, possibly to have land closer to Boonesborough, and to be near his brother Squire. It is doubtful that either Squire or Daniel ever resided on their land on Silver Creek.

The northern part of Boone's trace was never the main route into Kentucky, thus it never developed into a good road. Most travelers who entered the state used the "Settlement Road" which passed through Crab Orchard and Logan's Station. Except for occasional land surveys, there are few mentions of Boone's trace in the county records and later journals. If we are allowed to read between the lines in these old records, we must conclude that the original trace was only a blazed path, the exact route of which was soon forgotten even to the early inhabitants. It is even likely that part of Boones Trace was later called by other names, such as the road from "Estils to the Blue Lick."

The total distance traveled by Boone from the fort at Long Island to Boonesborough, Kentucky was about 189 miles; as mention, there was already a reasonably good road to Cumberland Gap, the

first 77 miles of the journey. From Cumberland Gap to the Kentucky River was 112 miles, more or less. They started on the morning of 10 March, and were attacked on the 25th, when they reached Taylor's Fork of Silver Creek, where they were delayed; on 1 April they traveled the remaining 13 miles to Boonesborough. Thus, we can calculate that Boone and his men averaged a little over 11 miles per day; although they all had horses, blazing trees and cutting brush must have slowed their progress considerably.

In retrospect, the route picked by Boone is an excellent way to central Kentucky. With minor variations it was used by the railroads a century later because of the directness and superior terrain features. A comparison with Skagg's Trace will show that Boone used the shortest route to the Bluegrass, and that his road was as good in regard to fords, watering and feed for animals. The probable reason for the unpopularity of Boone's over Skaggs' Trace was the longer distance to the first inhabited station, along with an initial avoidance of Boonesbrough because of the doubtful legality of the Transylvania Company land claim. The use of a road in the wilderness is important for its survival, since use is the only way it will retain its identity. By 1785 Boone's Trace, like the buffalo paths it followed, was probably overgrown with cane and brush and blocked by fallen trees from lack of use.

Endnotes

63. Felix Walker narrative, loc. cit.

64. Felix Walker narrative, loc. cit.

65. Journal of William Calk, loc. cit.

66. Neal Hammon, *Early Roads into Kentucky*, KHS Register, April 1970, p 116.

67. Land suits between June 1807 and February 1828 were recorded in the Complete Books, records in the Madison County Circuit Court in the court house in Richmond, Kentucky. Five volume, formerly labeled A through E, are still available for inspection; they contains both depositions and surveys. Hereafter these records are called MCR, followed by the letter and page number.

68. MCR Vol. C, Stephen Walker vs. John Montgomery, starting on p.187, surveys on pp.218-219, circa 1813.

69. MCR Vol. C, p.389, from Merewether Heirs vs. Wolfscale, taken in Richmond, Ky., on 7 Aug. 1809.

70. MCR Vol. B, p. 503, William Blythe's Heirs vs. John Kincaid, March term, 1810.

71. MCR Vol. B, p 528, Blyths vs Kincaid]

72. MCR Vol. B, p 529.

73. MCR, Vol. C, p 174- 85. William Rush vs Samuel Jameson, 6 Sept. 1813

74. MCR Vol. D, p 24, 3 March 1814]

75. MCR Vol D. p 24, 25 Feb. 1813, Samuel Estil's deposition.

76. MCR Vol B, p 526, cAug 1784]

77. MCR Vol C, p 125, 11 March 1808]

78. MCR Vol.D, p 15. 1 Dec 1812]

79. MCR Vol D, p 25

80. MCR Vol D, p 20, deposition of David Lynch 27 May 1814]

81. MCR Vol D, p 17, 20 Aug 1814]

82. Felix Walker narrative, loc. cit.

83. Henderson's Journal, loc cit.

84. Ranck, Boonesborough, p 34 and DM 19C12.

85. Town Plan of Boonesborough, recorded in the Madison County Order Book C, p 639, dated July Court 1810, This plat is essentially the same as the one published in Collin's History of Kentucky, Vol 2. p 514.

86. John Bakeless, *Daniel Boone, Master of the Wilderness*, (New York, 1939) p 153.

"On July 4 [1777] ....Blackfish again attacked Boonesborough, concentrating his forces and keeping up the siege for two days, During the attack the Indians burned an old structure, now empty, variously known as Fort Boone and the Little Fort, from which the settlers had moved when the new stockade was finished."

87. Ranck, Boonesboro, p 25.

Chapter 9: Other roads into Kentucky

As previously mentioned, Boone's Trace was not the first road into Kentucky. There were at least two, and possibly more Indian roads leading to the Bluegrass and beyond. The best known of these roads is the warriors' path called the Athiamiowee, that was frequently used by the war parties traveling between the Shawnee in Ohio and the Cherokee in Tennessee. According to Simon Kenton, war roads were distinctive in leading from one Indian community to another and in the marks and blazes upon them. Buffalo roads were wider than war road, and much more worn down.

The Athiamiowee went northward through the Cumberland and Pine Mountain gaps and forded the Cumberland River at what is now Pineville, Kentucky . It followed the Cumberland River to Flat Licks, and went up the Stinking Creek, crossing over into the water of Goose Creek, a branch of the South Fork of the Kentucky River. From here northward the route of this Indian road is speculative, but most historians believe that it led to the Station Camp Creek, crossed the Red River near the mouth of Lulbegrub Creek, and passed near the old Shawnee village of Eskippakithike, In northern Kentucky the Warriors Path crossed the Licking River at the Upper Blue Licks, reaching the Ohio River near Cabin Creek in Mason County.

There was another Indian trail that crossed the Pine Mountain at Pound or Sounding Gap, that is mentioned in a deposition by Daniel Boone. [fn 88] This Indian road very likely split at the gap, with an eastern branch going northward to the vicinity of the present Prestonsburg, Kentucky, and beyond; and a western branch more or less following the North Fork of the Kentucky River to the Bluegrass area. John Floyd's surveying party followed this branch of Indians road down the Kentucky River when returning home in 1774. [fn 89]

Another trail used by people traveling to and from Kentucky was called Skagg's Trace. This hunting path was named for Henry and Richard Skaggs, who hunted in Kentucky as early as 1769. This route was used by Harrods men and probably Daniel Boone when he returned home in 1774. Going to Kentucky, it left the Indian Road at Flat lick, and appears to have been more or less the same route followed by Daniel Boone in 1775 as far north as Hazel Patch. Unfortunately, no actual records have survived to confirm the location of this path between Flat Lick and Hazel Patch. At Hazel Patch, Skagg's Trace went westward along the Hazel Patch Creek to the Rockcastle River, then down that river to Skeggs Creek, and up that creek to the headwaters. From there it crossed over onto the Little Negro Creek, a branch of Dicks River, and down Dicks River to the Crab Orchard and Stanford.

In 1783, the Lincoln County court ordered a roads to be established from Crab Orchard to Danville, Harrodsburg, and McAfee's station, extending this road northward. From McAfee's Station, Squire Boone blazed another trail northward along Hammon Creek and westward down Guist Creek and beyond to Louisville. A detailed description of the location of these roads can be found in the Lincoln County Minute books. [fn 90]

By 1795, the new Commonwealth of Kentucky authorized the construction of a good wagon road to Virginia, between the Cumberland Gap and the Crab Orchard. Several men including Daniel Boone applied for the job, but Colonel James Knox and Colonel Joseph Crockett were the men selected and paid £2000 to do the job. By October 1796 the state was able to claim that this road was completed, and "waggons loaded with a ton weight may pass with ease, with four good horses." From that time on, the route was called the Wilderness Road or the Kentucky Road.

The new route followed the old Warriors Path and Boone's Trace as far as Flat Lick. From there, it ran south of the old trace, passing through the present Barbourville, Kentucky. From there to London, if took about the same course as the present Kentucky Highway 229 to the Levi Jackson Park, and near there, crossed Boone's old trace, and passed through what is now the city of London, Kentucky. From London, it ran more or less with the present U.S. Highway 25 to Wood Creek, where it turned north and led to the top of Wildcat Mountain. It continued along the ridge between the Rockcastle River bend, then northward to a ford below Livingston, Kentucky.

From Livingston, the new wagon road went up the south fork of he Ford Hollow Creek to the top of Sand Hill, then followed Chestnut Ridge into the present Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. Continuing northwestward, it crossed Renfro Creek, and went down the Boone Fork of Dick's River to the present Broadhead, Kentucky, then followed the south side of Dick's River to Crab Orchard. Some modern historians claim that this Wilderness Road went on to Harrodsburg and Louisville, but this is technically incorrect. The original road built by the state ended at Crab Orchard, and the roads leading to Harrodsburg and Louisville were built and maintained by the counties, not the state. The county roads from Crab Orchard to Harrodsburg and beyond were established in 1782, about 14 years before the Wilderness Road was started.

Finally, by 1798, another state road was constructed to provide a wagon road between Hazel Patch to the Madison Court House, now Richmond, Kentucky. This road was to be built and maintained by charging tolls. The exact course of this road is not difficult to follow, as it is well documented by various maps and records; part of this road was chosen to be the boundary between Rockcastle and Jackson counties, a line that has not changed since the road was built. At the

termination of the two counties, the road continued northward near the same route now used by Highway 421 to Hays Fork, then northward to Richmond.

When the two new state wagon roads were finished, the traffic on Boone's Trace and Scagg's trace greatly diminished, and in certain places, the trail were hardly used at all, and subsequently vegetation covered them, and they disappeared. But both of the state wagon roads could still be used in 1966 when I started conducting my research, but in places, it was necessary to use a jeep or similar vehicles to climb the steep hills and ford the muddy creeks.

Endnotes

88. Boone depo, crossed pound or sounding gap
89. Hanson's Journal, entries from 25 July to 8 Aug. 1774 describe the route.
90. Neal Hammon, Pioneer Routes in Central Kentucky, FCHQ, Spring 2000, p 125-143.

Appendix A:

Deposition of Daniel Boone:

The Deposition of Daniel Boone and others taken at the house of Flanders Callaway in the County of St. Charles Missouir Territory, on the 6th day of October 1817, agreeable to two dedimusses to us directed, two Justices of the Peace within and for this Country to be read in evidence in certain suits In Chancery, now depending and undetermined in the Greenup County Circuit Court in the State of Kentucky wherein Dr Trimble and J. Young are Complainants and A. Buford and others, Defendants- The Deponent being about 84 years of age and being duly sworn, and interrogated, deposes & says:

Q by Complainants- Were you well acquainted with the Ohio river from what is now called Big Sandy to what is now called Little Sandy Creek as early as May 1780 & previous to that time. If so you will please state what was the reputed distance between the two Creeks.

A. I was not personally acquainted but by good information- In the year 1774, I was requested by Governor Dunmore to go to Kentucky and bring in the Surveyors. I was at General Lewis' own house, a few days before I started and he undertook to give directions how to travel and where to find the surveyors. He directed me to cross the Cumberland Mountains at what we now call the Sounding Gap, at an old war-road that would convey me immediately on the waters of Big or perhaps Little Sandy- He said it made but little odds which of them I fell upon, as the[y] both mouthed close he supposed it might together- I asked him how close he supposed it might be. He said twelve or fourteen Miles- He said that his men frequently went down to the mouth of the Little Sandy and back again in two days to the camp, with loads of meat, where he lay near the Mouth of Big Sandy near three months in the year 1754, as near as I now can recollect, when he was on a Campaign which was then and is now Called the Sandy Creek Campaign. That the Creek now called Little Sandy was not then known to them by any name, but knowing that they were camped on Big Sandy they gave the creek below, the name of Little Sandy. But when I received my orders from Governor Dunmore, he changed my route and ordered me as soon as I got over the Cumberland Mountains to take the Kentucky [River] and Meander to its Mouth.

In the year 1775, Colonel Thomas Slaughter, and Valentine Harmon of North Carolina was on their way from Fort Pitt by water- their object was Harrod's town and when they came to the mouth of the Big Sandy they left the boat and took it on horseback- Harmon being a good Woodsman- They struck the Kentucky river about 1 mile above Boonsboro and came down to where we was at work building a fort about the 20th of April and they stayed with us two or three weeks, in

which time they informed me of a Salt Spring they had found which proved to be on Salt Lick Creek; and in order to enable me to find that Salt Spring, they gave me particular directions in writing as follows:

Started from the mouth of Big Sandy and kept down the Ohio about 12 or 14 miles, crossed some small creeks until we came to the mouth of a creek which we could not cross at the mouth with our horses We turned up the same about one or two miles as we thought, when we came to the large falls which we crossed with ease and then proceeded on down the Ohio to Salt Lick or what is now called the Ohio Salt Lick, thence along the Buffalo paths to the Blue Licks. [fn 91]

Endnote:

91. Deposition of Daniel Boone, 6 Oct. 1817, DM 6C105. For text of all Daniel Boone depositions see Neal Hammon, The *Daniel Boone Papers*, (edited by Sam & Carolyn Compton) CD Edition, The Boone Society, 2005.

Research on Traces into Kentucky

My interest into the location of the early trails leading into central Kentucky from the Cumberland Gap began in the 1950's after talking to a neighbor of mine, Mrs. Fred Williams, the daughter of William Allen Pusey, the author of *The Wilderness Road to Kentucky*. She told me that her father had written this book after making several trips down to southwest Kentucky in his model T Ford circa 1920. About 1958, I had started making an annual trips to southeastern Kentucky to hunt deer, and on occasion I had been told by the residents of an area that I was hunting on Daniel Boone's trace. It was then I decided to research this subject.

My first project was to read what had previously been printed on the subject. Then using William Pusey's book as a guide I began to acquire old maps of the area, and see what information could be obtained by past writers and artists. By far the best information was obtained by writers who had traveled on the old roads, and kept journals of daily experiences. Filson's famous map gave some clues, but the best information came from the Luke Munsell's map made in 1818. Maps made by the United States called *The Official Atlas of the Civil War, U.S. Army* were also helpful to show if the old trail were still in existence circa 1867.

In Laurel County I found that Mr. L.B. McHargue, the editor of the local newspaper, the Sentinel-Echo, had collected information on Boone's Trace, and published what he thought to be the location of the original road, which was supplemented by a map prepared with the help of his friends, Mr. Russell Dyche and Mr. J. H. Graham. By the time I began my research, these gentlemen were deceased, and to prevent the information from being lost, I wrote a short article to cover their findings, which was published in the Filson Club History Quarterly in January, 1968.

It is interesting to find that in the same 1968 issue of this Quarterly, Robert F. Collins, the Forest Supervisor of the United States Department of Agriculture, said that "The Daniel Boone National Forest hopes to be able to acquire some portions of the old Boone Trace ..... and to reconstruct and mark this trace so that visitors ..... such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and similar groups, can walk this portion of the Boone Trace and receive a certificate which attests to the fact that they have walked in 'Daniel Boones's moccasins.' If possible, the Forest also desires to acquire the site of Wood's Block House and to reconstruct this structure and set up a small area around it as an historical site with explanatory signs indicating the historical significance of this site."

About 1967 Robert E. McDowell, Editor of the Filson Club History Quarterly suggested that searching out the original land surveys along the old trace might be a better way to discovering the

location of the early traces and roads. This proved to be correct. Initially I started by searching through all of the survey books of Lincoln County, Virginia, (later Kentucky) as these early land surveys and grants encompassed the entire area from Cumberland Gap to Harrodsburg. After inspecting about a thousand surveys, I finished Volume 4 on 26 March 1969, and stopped; by then the surveys that had been entered in the Lincoln County records were lacking the southern part of Kentucky, the area having been removed and made into newer and different counties.

Whenever any old pioneer survey mentioned or showed a road or trace, I would photocopy that survey, and use it to plot out an identical drawings of the tract on tracing paper to a scale of 1:24000, (one inch = 2000 feet) the same scale used in the U.S. Geological Survey maps made and printed by the government. I then purchased about 45 USGS map that covered where I believed the traces to be, in the area from Cumberland Gap to Harrodsburg and Boonesborough; I hoped to establish were the old surveys were, so that the roads might be located. The attempt to correctly find the proper place for the surveys on the maps was by trial and error. The only way this could be done was by matching the rivers, creeks, and other terrain features on the survey with similar features on the maps. All together, I found about 50 of these surveys to be of interest, and they were scattered from Cumberland Gap to Roundstone Creek. Several even overlapped, since overlapping claims and surveys were common in pioneer times.

In 1969 I gathered together the facts I had discovered, and wrote a forty page article that I called, Early Roads into Kentucky. By then, I had traveled on every part of each of the roads, and was familiar enough with the terrain that I believed that I could predict the most probable route of the sections of the roads that could not be determined by the old surveys. In most cases, this was simply a matter of using common sense. This article was published by the Kentucky Historical Society in the Register in April 1970.

As luck would have it, in the summer of 1969 I was visiting the Madison County Court House in Richmond, Kentucky, and discovered that in their archives were five volumes of what were called the “Complete Books,” lettered A through E, which contained data, depositions, and surveys from the Circuit Court land suits filed in Madison County between June 1808 and February 1825. Some of these land suits contained additional information on Boone’s Trace in that county. I immediately wrote another article using this new (to me) information, which was called “The First Trip to Boonesborough,” and published in the Filson Club History Quarterly in July, 1971.

This road information contained in these articles was condensed and republished in the Kentucky Encyclopedia in 1992, edited by John E. Kleber. In 1999, using additional information I

had gathered over the years, I wrote another article that was called “Pioneer Routes in Central Kentucky;“ this was published by the Filson Club History Quarterly in the Spring of 2000.

I was recently encouraged to write this book by Dr. John Fox, Samuel Compton, Scott New, and others interested in Boone’s Trace. Unfortunately, I had tossed out all my old surveys and other data used to write the previous articles, so it was necessary to start collecting this material again, but I found this was easier to do now, as agencies with the records are better organized.

After an email to Kandie Atkinson at the Kentucky Department of State, I was able of obtain photocopies of many of those old surveys for a modest fee. This time, instead of making copies of the surveys on tracing paper, I used a computer CAD program, and digitized the old documents. I also downloaded the necessary USGS topographical maps from the internet, then applied the digitized surveys to these map, all without leaving my computer. Computers do not increase the accuracy of the old surveys, but they certainly make it much easier to move them around on the map to find their most probable location.

But the question can be asked, how accurate were these pioneer surveys? In a strictly technical sense, they were not accurate. In attempting to take old patent surveys and impose them onto topographical maps, you have a built-in error for which there is no way to compensate. A proper survey, even back in colonial Virginia, was presumed and therefore required to be a horizontal measurement. Yet, it was practically never done. So they applied what is sometimes called “slope chaining.” They simply dragged the chain along the surface of the ground. Attempting to impose pure measurements onto a topographical map will necessarily produce error in the locations of the lines/rivers/settlement road, and could produce exceedingly great errors. The lines and therefore the location of the road, based on measurements from some named and known monument to where the line crosses the road, could be hundreds of yards on the map from where they actually lie on the ground. [fn 92]

The accuracy of any survey made in pioneer times would generally increase as the survey became smaller; the smaller the survey, the likelihood that the surveyor would correctly locate a road or a river would increase. On a ten acre survey, for example, it would be nearly impossible to get the directions and distances wrong. As the size goes up, the odds of making mistakes go up as well. And it was not only human errors that must be considered. In many cases, the surveyor would purposely increase the lengths of the boundary lines. The law then allowed some moderate oversize, but it appears that in some cases the surveyor increased the lengths of the lines as a favor to a friend,

or perhaps because he was given a little extra money by the owner. For four or five silver crowns, a surveyor might walk a little farther when laying out the boundaries.

But for the purpose of generally locating Boone's Trace, it is not necessary that these surveys pinpoint the exact position. The main thing that we learn from them is that the traces or road was within or on the land surveyed, and near some designated river, creek, or other landmark. In between these surveys, the road positions can only be estimated by using common sense.

For those readers who are interested in the viewing the old surveys that mention any of the old roads used by the pioneers, they can be found at the Kentucky Department of State in Frankort, Kentucky. This state agency also has an web page on the internet, where most of the surveys can be obtained without leaving your computer. The surveys that I used on this project are listed in Appendix B.

The area just northwesterly of the Cumberland Gap is one of the best and most interesting areas to research the location of the old trace that led into Kentucky. For those interested in a more detailed example of my research, I shall explain how I conducted my research in this area. First, I relied on old maps, surveys, and some interesting journals where some of the travelers on this road tell how it was.

William Caulk was one who left a crude journal on his trip; on 8 April 1775, while with Henderson's party of would be settlers, he crossed Cumberland Mountain at the Gap, and after arriving in the Middlesboro basin, he wrote:

"We come to a very ugly Creek with steep Banks & have it to cross several times on this creek. We camp this night." The next morning he reported that they stayed in camp to wait for the cattle that were being driven along the trail, and when they arrived, they slaughtered one to eat. A short but informative report. This establishes that the trace was along the creek.

The first map that gives any detailed information about this area is the map published by Luke Munsell in 1818, at a scale of approximately six and a half miles to the inch. One of these maps has been hanging in the Old Kentucky State Capitol for years. In the area where Middlesboro is located today, it shows Yellow Creek, Bennets Fork [sic], the Little Yellow Creek, and an un-named branch, where there is a salt lick. On this map the road is shown as going along Yellow Creek, and crossing it three times, the last time being where Bennetts Fork joins Yellow Creek. From that point northward, the road is on the west side of Yellow Creek.

The next follow up document made in the Middlesboro area to be considered is the 2000 acre survey for Thomas Fleming, Kentucky Survey number 2204, made on 16 May 1797 by surveyor

William Henderson. The description begins “on Yellow Creek Waters and Bounded as follows to Wit Beginning at A two Sweet gum trees standing in a large Marsh being the North Easter Corner of John Smiths 300 acre Entry thence S9E 205 po[les] to the Settlement Road in all 219 po[les].” Within the boundaries several creeks are shown, which are obviously Yellow Creek, Davis Branch, Little Yellow Creek, and Parkers Branch. At the junction of Davis Creek and Little Yellow Creek, Davis Station is noted, and farther south on Little Yellow Creek, this survey shows a mill. The road is also depicted as running more or less east and west, passing near the Davis Station. It also appears that corner B of the survey, where the survey boundary meet the road, is on the existing Cumberland Ave, near or on 13th Street.

The very first official government survey in Kentucky was labeled the Cumberland Gap Sheet, 30 Minute Series, made by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, between 1882 and 1886, and published in 1891, to a scale of 1:125,000, (approximately 1 inch = 2 miles). When this map was made, Middlesboro had not been established. This Gap Sheet, as it was called, clearly shows Yellow Creek and all the branches, as well as the road used at that time. This would have been what was then known as the Wilderness Road, which varied slightly from the road on Munsel’s 1818 map. This minor difference was in a small area, between the present intersection of 14th Street and Cumberland Ave. and where Yellow Creek jointed with Bennett Branch. The older map showed the road on the east side of the creek, whereas the 1882 survey placed the road on the west side.

But in either case, all the evidence is that from the earliest times, the trace and the road followed Yellow Creek, on one side or the other. The trick then, is to locate the exact course of the creek as it was circa 1775. And in this respect, it is logical to assume that the course of the creek in 1775 was nearly the same as it was in 1882, when the first official U.S. was made.

After Middlesboro was established circa 1788, the contours in the Middlesboro basin were changed to allow the construction of streets for the new town, and to prevent flooding. The Middlesboro basin had always been prone to flooding. Here the headwaters of Yellow Creek fanned out in all directions, draining the mountains that surrounded the nearly flat basin. During every hard rain, the water from a widely dispersed area would flow down Davis Branch, Little Yellow Creek, Parker Branch, Bennett Fork, Stony Fork, Lick Branch, and Four Mile Creek into the flat basin, which then became one large swamp. This was a well know fact for the city founders, as the entire basin had flooded as recently as 1885. [fn 93]

However, the entire basin is not flat. Southward from the valley formed by Four Mile Creek, there are a series of little hills that extend down nearly to Cumberland Avenue, with Yellow Creek to

the east and Bennett Fork to the south of this higher area. Some of these high places are as much as 80 feet above the lowlands. When the founding fathers decided to improve the drainage of the town, they cut a ditch between Four Mile Creek and Lick Branch, and continued the ditch southward to where it was about a mile west of Lick Branch, blocking Stony Fork along the way. (see illustration) The purpose of this project was to keep west Middlesboro from flooding.

And to improve matters more, some of the creeks were straightened. Yellow Creek was relocated and straightened northward of the intersection with Bennett Fork; the direction of the creek was made to run parallel to the city street, just west of 15th Street, which eliminated 16th Street. The old creek had curved westward north of the junction, running nearly to where the rail road yard is located today; thus the creek at this point was moved 800 feet east. This relocation of Yellow Creek extended 3500 feet northward of the junction with Bennett Fork. As previously mentioned, this junction is just north of the existing Old Lincoln High School Park.

In other places creeks were straightened in order to conform to the road pattern of the new town. Parkers Branch, for example, originally ran northeastwardly from Cumberland Avenue, into Yellow Creek, but was changed to run north with the street pattern, and now empties into Bennett Fork. Likewise, Bennett Fork was changed considerably to conform with the city street pattern. When you are driving, to approximate Boone's Trace through Middlesboro, start at the National Park road, and drive through the entrance and turn left or west on Cumberland Avenue, then cross the railroad tracks and turn right or north on 19th Street. Drive northward on 19th Street until it ends, then jog westward to State Highway 441/3486. As you are leaving the greater Middlesboro area, you will again see Yellow Creek to the east of the road. This highway returns to US 25E at the village of Meldrum, where the old trail left the creek.

For a better and closer look at the creek, turn north at 15th Street, go north three blocks to Ashbury Avenue, and then turn left or west, and proceed another block to the Old Lincoln High School Park. From this park you can see the place where Bennett Fork joins Yellow Creek, which was one of the crossing places of Boone's Trace. From here the original creek and road angled off to the northwest, toward the railroad tracks. Or you can detour back onto 15th Street again, follow it northward, and in just over a half mile, you will be back to the area where the original creek and road ran along near each other.

Thus by consulting old journals and maps, and reconstructing the creeks in Middlesboro, I was able to get a better idea of where Boone's Trace and the later Wilderness Road was located.

Endnotes:

92. Bud Salyer of Moorehead, Ky. email to author, 8 July 2011.

93. Kincaid, page 323.

List of Surveys:

Kind	No	LC no.	Surname	first or other	size	place	survey date	in hand		notes
Ky	1210	4.33	Thompson	George	6600	Stinking Cr.	6-20-1795	yes		may not apply
Ky	1221	4.35	Wilson	George	9725	Richmond Cr. & Laurel R.	6-29-1795	yes		buffalo road
Ky	1245	4.45	Madison	Rowland	5799.5	Station Camp Cr.	7-25-1795	yes		does not apply
Ky	1505	4.39	Buchannon	Alexander	1300	Richland Cr	10-1-1795	yes		may not apply
Ky	1600	4.41	Broadhead	Daniel	10,000	Cumberland R.	12-8-1795	yes	x	
Ky	1605	4.41	Campbell	Arthur	600	Flat Cr.	2-8-1796	yes	x	
Ky	1791	4.45	Madison	Rowland	8000	Little Laurel R.	9-26-1795	yes	x	
Ky	2204	4.56	Fleming	Thomas	2000	Yellow Cr.	3-16-1797	yes	x	Davis Station
Ky	2224	4.54	Tamplin	Jerah	1000	Hazel Patch Cr.	5-31-1797	yes	x	
Ky	2290	4.49	Sterns	Payon	6072.5	Laurel R.	10-3-1795	yes		Knoxs
Ky	2472	na	McGavock	James	243	Skegg Cr.	1-14-1797	yes	x	second crossing
Ky	2613	4.31	Drew	John	27,500	Rockcastle & Little Laurel R.	12-23-1793	yes	x	
Ky	2651	4.64	Johnson	& Rhea	1276.5	Cumberland R.	10-13-1797	yes		May not apply
Ky	2772	4.68	Smith	Thomas	1000	Rockcastle R.	10-28-1797	yes	x	Boones trace
Ky	2773	4.7	Harris	John	6910	Cumberland R. & Stinking Cr.	12-30-1798	yes	x	
Ky	2774	4.68	Smith	James	1250	Rockcastle R.	10-27-1797	yes		
Ky	2869	1.79	Todd	Robert	880	Hazel Patch Cr.	8-9-1797	yes	x	

Ky	3089	4.37	Pigg	Hezekia	1943	Rockcastle R.	11-28-1794	yes	x	
Ky	3412	4.59	Gray	James	1000	Cumberland R.	9-6-1797	yes		may not apply
Ky	3549	4.53	Shelby	Evan	100	Cumberland R. & Stinking Cr.	11-10-1794	yes	x	
Ky	3695	4.6	Walter	& Overton	1000	Richmond Cr.	4-14-1800	yes		Knox camp
Ky	4382	4.78	Harmon	Valintine	500	Skegg Cr.	11-17-1797	yes		a trace on Dry Fk
Ky	4567	4.78	Buckner	Robert	2125	Cumberland R.	10-23-1797	yes	x	
Ky	4680	4.101	Christian	John	2000	Lincamp Cr.	9-27-1795	yes	x	old trace on reserve line
Ky	5239	4.76	Myer	Jacob	995	Yellow Cr.	5-22-1798	yes	x	
Ky	6058	4.57	Brooks	George	1000	Big Laurel R.	1-12-1798	yes		adj othersurvey
Ky	6059	4.57	Brooks	George	7000	Laurel R.	1-13-1798	yes	x	
Ky	7589	4.57	Brooks	George	2000	Yellow Cr.	3-18-1797	yes	x	imp Browne Br.
Va	204	1.114	Trigg	Stephen	400	Skagg Cr. & Rockcastle R.	3-3-1782	yes	x	
Va	503		Kennday	John	400	Paint Lick Cr		yes		does not apply
Va	1779		Boone	Daniel	1000	Silver & Muddy cr.	2-11-1783	yes	x	
Va	1781	1.241	Buckner	Phillip	757	Stinking Cr.	10-9-1783	yes	x	
Va	1964	1.241	Taylor	Francis	620	Cumberland R.	10-9-1783	yes		fill in survey
Va	5700	2.396	Rentfro	James	300	Rockcastle R.	1-29-1785	yes		BT mentioned
Va	5713		Rentfro	James		Rockcastle	3-24-1785	yes		fill in survey
Va	5715		Rentfro	James		Rockcastle		yes		
Va	6180	2.441	Conway	Catlett	18,000	Dicks River	3-22-1785	yes	x	BT no. 2

Va	6348	2.397	Rentfro	James	400	Rockcastle R.	2-9-1785	yes	x	
LC		1.?	Overton	Clough	200	Richland				
LC		4.77	none							Raccoon Springs
LC		4.61	Mexan	Francis	1763.5		10-11-1797			
LC		4.71	Gannon	James	500					
Va	4272	2.398	Payne	William	1000	Rockcastle	2-10-1785	yes	x	
Va	116	2.408	Mayo	William, Jr.	1000	Rockcastle	3-24-1785	yes	x	
LC		4.85	Heston	George						
LC		4.155	Stagal	George	63	Dicks R.	8-31-1801			
Ky	5564	4.155	Barbour	James	8000	Cumberland				
LC		4.77	Minor &	Harris		Raccoon Springs, Robinson Cr				
Ky	5558	4.178	Myers	Jacob	140	Roundstone	11-10-1797			on Boons old trace

Maps for Boone's Trace:

USGS maps, current editions:
Middlesboro South V48 ½ N
Middlesboro North ½ S
Middlesboro North ½ N
Pineville T48 ½ N
Artimeus T47 ½ N
Fount S47 ½ S
Heidrick S46 ½ S
Corbin S45 ½ N
Lilly R45 ½ S
Lilly R45 ½ N
London Q 45 ½ S
London Q 45 ½ N
Parrot P45 ½ S
Livington P44 ½ S
Livington P44 ½ N
Mt.Vernon P43 ½ N

Wilde O43 ½ S
Wilde O43 ½ N
Berea N43 ½ S
Berea N43 ½ N
Richmond South M43 ½ S
Richmond South M43 ½ N
Richmond North L43 ½ S
Richmond North L43 ½ N
Ford K43 ½ S

Other Maps of interest:
Filson
Barker
Munsell
US Civil War Atlas
1886 USGS Cumberland Gap
1926 USGS Middlesboro