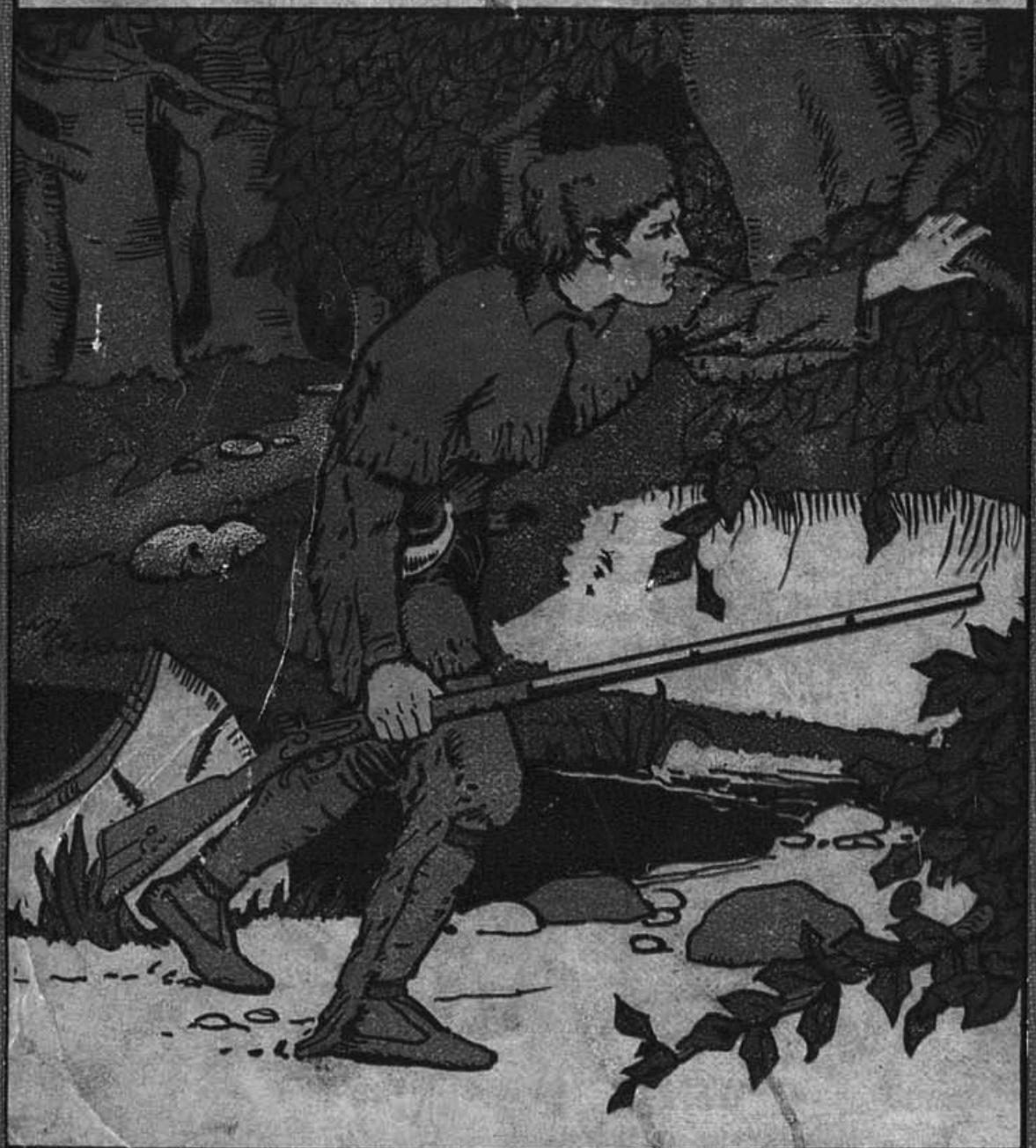
IN KENTUCKY WITH DANIEL BOONE



THE BUCKSKIN BOOKS

By JOHN T. McINTYRE

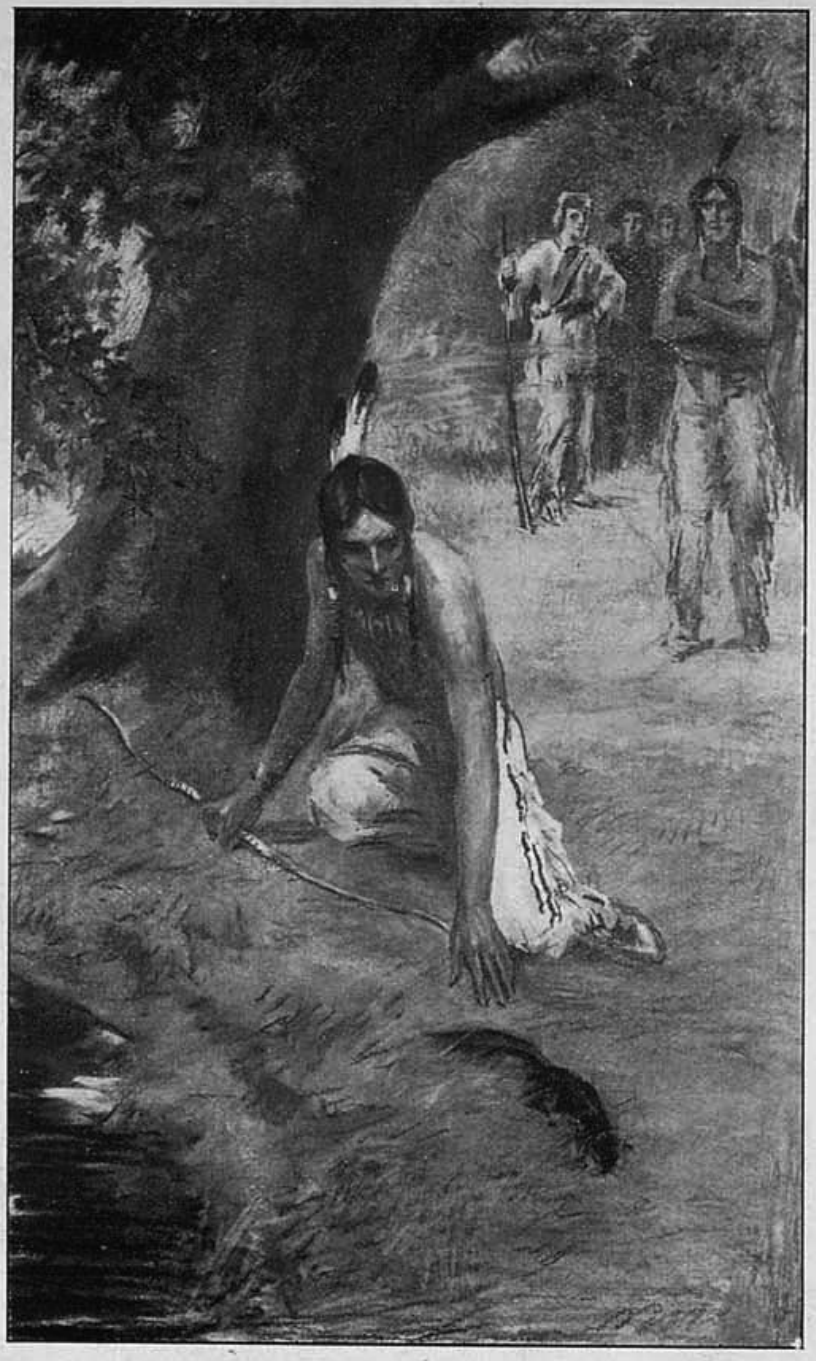
From.

Uncle Charley & Aunt Edith.

Christmas — 1919

Walter Mayer.

XXIII.



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JOHN T. McINTYRE

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Contents

Illustrations

In Kentucky With Daniel Boone

CHAPTER I

THE GRAY LIZARD SPEAKS

Along the trail which wound along the banks of the Yadkin, in North Carolina, rode a tall, sinewy man; he had a bronzed, resolute face, wore the hunting shirt, leggins and moccasins of the backwoods, and had hanging from one shoulder a long flint-locked rifle. A small buck, which this unerring weapon of the hunter had lately brought down, lay across his saddle bow. It was in the spring of 1769.

Away along the trail, at a place where the river bent sharply, a cloud of dust arose

in the trail; and as the hunter rode forward he kept his keen eyes upon this.

"Horsemen," he told himself. "Two of them, I reckon, judging from the dust."

Nearer and nearer rolled the cloud; at length the riders within it could be seen. One was a middle-aged man who rode a powerful black horse; the other was a boy of perhaps thirteen whose mount was a long-legged young horse, with a wild eye and ears that were never still.

Catching sight of the hunter, the man on the big black drew rein.

"What, Daniel!" cried he. "Well met!"

"How are you, Colonel Henderson?" replied the backwoodsman. "I didn't calculate on seeing you to-day."

"I rode over for the express purpose of having a talk with you," said Colonel Henderson. "I was at your house, but they told me you'd gone away early this morning to try for some game."

The hunter glanced down at the buck

across his saddle. There was a discontented frown upon his brow.

"Yes, gone since early morning," he said. "And this is all I got. The hunting ain't so good in the Yadkin country as it was once. As a boy I've stood in the door of my father's cabin and brought down deer big enough to be this one's granddaddy."

The boy on the long-legged horse bounced up and down in his saddle at this; the nag felt his excitement and began to rear and plunge.

"Steady, boy, steady," said Colonel Henderson. "Hold him in."

"It's all right, uncle," replied the lad. "He don't mean anything by it." Then to the hunter, as his mount became quiet: "That was good shooting, Mr. Boone, wasn't it? And," pointing to the carcass of the buck, "so was that. Right behind the left shoulder; and it left hardly a mark on him."

Daniel Boone smiled.

"I always treat my old rifle well," said he, humorously. "And she never goes back on me."

"Some time ago I had a talk with John Finley," said Colonel Henderson. "He told me wonderful tales of the hunting country beyond the Laurel Ridge."[1]

Daniel Boone's eyes went toward the northwest where the great mountain chain reared its peaks toward the sky until they were enveloped in a blue mist.

"Beyond the Laurel Ridge," said he, "there is a country such as no man has ever seen before. Such hills and valleys, such forests and streams and plains can only be in one place in the world. And there are deer and bear and fur animals; and buffalo cover the plains. Also," and a grim look came into his face, "there are redskins!"

There was a short silence; Colonel Henderson looked at the backwoodsman very thoughtfully.

[1] Cumberland Mountains.

"For some time," said he, "it has seemed to me that these settlements are not what they should be. The laws enforced by the British governor Tryon, have sown discontent among the people. New emigrants go to other places where there are better laws and less taxes."

Daniel Boone nodded.

"Tax gatherers, magistrates, lawyers and such like live like aristocrats," said he, "and the farmers and other settlers are asked to support them. We are here in the settlements, it seems, for no other purpose than to give these fellows a soft living. And they take our money and treat us like servants. A peddler who hucksters among the Indians is thought a better man than the one who has cut a form out of the wilderness with his axe."

There was a bitterness in the man's tone which seemed to please the other.

"There are a great many who feel just as you do about it," said he. "And it was

this very thing that I rode over to speak about."

Daniel Boone shook his head.

"Signing writings and sending them to Tryon will do no good," said he. "He's a tyrant and understands nothing but oppression." Then in a longing tone, his eyes on the distant hills, "I wish I were away from the Yadkin for good and all. No man can be free here as long as we have public officers who think of nothing but plunder."

"As I said before," said Colonel Henderson, in a satisfied tone, "there are a great many others who are of the same way of thinking as you. But they have nowhere to go; if a new country was opened for them, they would sell their farms, pack their goods upon their horses' backs and be gone."

There was something in the speaker's tone that took the attention of the backwoodsman. His keen eyes studied

Colonel Henderson's face; but he said nothing.

"Ever since I heard Finley talk of the country beyond the ridge," said the colonel, resuming after a moment, "I've felt that such a rare region should be opened up for settlement."

"Right!" cried Daniel Boone and his eyes began to glow.

"But," said the colonel, "I've also felt that it should not be done until the country was explored further—until it had been penetrated to its interior, until its streams were worked out on a chart, a trail made for the passage of emigrants and the most promising places fixed upon for settlements."

"Right again," said Daniel Boone. "I've been in the country and so have Finley and some others; but none of us has studied it. To do that would take a year or more; and to live a year so far from the settlements a man would have to make up his mind to troubles from the Indians."

"The Shawnees claim it," said the colonel. "If it is what I want, I will buy it from them."

"It's a hunting ground for Cherokees, Shawnees and Chickasaws," said Boone, and he shook his head as he spoke. "So far as I could see, it belonged to all of them. And it's a fighting place; when two hunting parties meet, the hatchet, knife and arrow begin their work."

Once more the colonel regarded the backwoodsman attentively.

"I never knew the prospect of danger or hard work to hold you back in anything you wanted to do," he said.

Boone laughed.

"I've always tried not to let them, I reckon," said he.

"This fall," and the colonel spoke slowly, "I am going to send an exploring party into the northwest country; and later, if it's what I think it is, I'll want a party of trail makers and a man to treat with the

Shawnees. How would you like to take charge of this matter for me?"

For a moment Boone sat his horse, staring at the speaker.

"You mean it?" he said, at last.

"I do."

The backwoodsman held out a strong brown hand; Colonel Henderson gripped it.

"I'm with you," said Boone, in a tone of deep satisfaction. "It's a thing I've been sort of dreaming of for years. That great region, now given over to the Indian hunters and wild beasts, is calling the white man. I heard its voice as I stood among the lonely hills, in the forests, and upon the banks of its rivers. Once there with their families, their plows and their horses, their cabins built, the settler will meet ——"

"Death!" said a strange voice; and, startled, both Boone and Colonel Henderson turned their eyes in the direction from which it came.

An Indian stood there—an ancient sav-

age, clad in skins upon which were painted queer symbols. Strings of amulets, bears' claws and the teeth of foxes and wolves hung about him; his face was lined with the deep wrinkles of great age, his eyes were small, black, and glittered coldly like those of a snake.

"What, Gray Lizard!" said Boone, in surprise. "Are you here?"

The old Indian advanced a step or two, supporting himself by a long staff. Keenly the serpent eyes gazed at the three whites.

"Death will meet the paleface," said he. "He will never build his lodge in the country beyond the mountains. Let him once pass the great gap, and he is no more."

Boone laughed.

"I've been through the gap, Gray Lizard," he said, good-naturedly; "and so have other white men. And we still live."

The cold eyes fixed themselves upon the resolute face; one skinny finger was lifted until it pointed at Boone's breast.

"You have," said Gray Lizard. "You have, and you are marked. Let your rifle once more break the silence of the hills or ring over the waters of the red man's rivers, and your death song is sung."

Then he turned to Colonel Henderson, and continued:

"And you, white chief, take care! The Gray Lizard has known these many moons of what you mean to do, and now he warns you. If you love your friends, do not send them beyond the Laurel Ridge. For in the wilderness their fate awaits them at the hands of the Shawnees."

He turned and was about to go; then he paused, and added:

"The Gray Lizard is old. He has seen many things. He knew the Yadkin when the white man was a stranger on its banks. Take warning by his words: do not venture beyond the blue hills."

Then, his long staff ringing on the stones, he went limping down the trail.

CHAPTER II

A COMING STRUGGLE

As the strange figure of the old Cherokee went halting along the river trail, the eyes of Boone and his companions followed curiously.

"A queer sort of customer," commented Colonel Henderson. "I don't recall ever having seen him before."

"He's a wonder worker and medicine man," said Boone. "And he spends a good bit of his time on the fringe of the settlements. Sometimes," and here a frown came upon his brow, "I've thought him more of a spy than anything else."

"At any rate he knows how to creep up on one secretly," said the colonel, with a laugh. And then, more soberly: "And he seemed rather earnest in his sayings."

Daniel Boone nodded his head.

"All these old redskins are crafty," said he. "They spend their days and nights finding out ways of imposing on their fellow savages. And managing to do this without trouble they think they can impose in the same way upon the white man."

"I see," said Colonel Henderson.

"If they can put fear in the hearts of the whites," continued Boone, "the whites will not venture into the wilderness. A settler killed now and then is the common way; but there are others, and I've heard a warning spoken by a prophet hung with totems before to-day."

The boy who had been staring after the figure of Gray Lizard now spoke.

"I've been wondering where I saw him before, and now I've remembered, Uncle Dick," said he. "Yesterday I rode up the river to visit the camp of the young braves who are to take part in the games. It was there I saw him; among the lodges."

"Ah!" said Boone; "and so the braves have come in for the games, eh?"

"More than a score of them," replied the lad. "And a fine looking lot they are, sir," with admiration.

The backwoodsman nodded.

"They are sure to be," said he, grimly. "The redskins seldom send any but the pick of their villages."

"It's been three days since they pitched their camp," said the lad. "And they've been hard at work ever since, practicing with their bows and rifles, and throwing their hatchets at marks. There's a good runner or two among them," added the boy; "and they have some fine horses."

"I've always been against these games," said Daniel Boone, as he shook his head.

Colonel Henderson looked at him in surprise.

"Why," said he, "how is that? Athletic games always seemed to me to be good for the youngsters."

"So they are," agreed Boone. "Mighty good. But these of ours are a mistake, because the lads don't put enough heart in 'em. They don't take 'em serious enough."

The colonel smiled.

"It's all in the spirit of fun," said he.

But Boone shook his head.

"That's where you're wrong, colonel," said he, "and that's where the boys are also wrong. There ain't many of us whites on this border; but over beyond the Laurel Ridge the Indians lie in clouds. And that they haven't blotted us out long since is because away down in their hearts they've thought we're better'n they are, for we've always showed we could give them odds and beat them at anything they cared to do."

"And now, you think ——"

"Our young men are letting them pull out ahead too often; and that's not a good thing to have happen. Once let the red man get the notion that he's better than the white, and this border'll be turned into a

wilderness—there won't be a settlement but won't feel the tomahawk and the torch. The white man will be turned back from the west for twenty years to come."

"I see." Colonel Henderson looked thoughtful. "I never thought of that, Daniel; and now that you put it before me I can see that you are right."

The boy had listened to what the backwoodsman had to say with much attention. Now he spoke.

"Eph Taylor was along when I rode up to the Shawnee camp yesterday," said he. "And as we went he told me how the young braves crowed over them last fall, and how they promised to beat them even worse this year. And when we got to the camp all the young warriors grinned at us and talked a lot among themselves. Eph knows some of their language and said it was all about us, and about the games and how they were going to run away from us in everything we tried."

Boone looked at Henderson and nodded, grimly.

"Do you see?" said he. "That's how it will begin. Five years from now these same young redskins will have a voice in the councils of their tribe. Let them carry this feeling of being better than us into those councils, and nothing will hold them back from a bloody war."

"Well, Noll," said Colonel Henderson to his nephew, "you see what you've got before you."

The tone was half laughing; but when Oliver Barclay made reply it was with all the seriousness in the world.

"Eph and I talked about it as we rode back home," said he. "And we made up our minds to give them a hard fight for each match as it came along. Eph and I are to arrange everything to-day; that's why I am riding over to see him."

"Well," said Colonel Henderson, "I suppose you may as well go on if that's

what you are about. I have some business to talk over with Mr. Boone, and will ride back to his farm with him. Will you be home to-night?"

Noll shook his head.

"I don't think so," he replied. Then with a laugh: "When I get down to plotting with Eph Taylor there's no telling when I'll get through."

He shook the rein, and the long-legged young horse brandished its heels in most exuberant fashion. The boy waved his hand to the two men.

"Good-bye," said he. Then to Boone, "Going to be at the games to-morrow, Mr. Boone?"

"Maybe," said the backwoodsman.

"Come along," suggested Noll. "Maybe something'll happen that'll please you."

Boone looked at the strong young figure sitting the fiery horse so easily, the clear eyes, the confident smile. And his bronzed face wrinkled in a laugh of pleasure.

"Well, Noll," said he, "I'll go. But mind you this: I'll expect something more than I saw a year ago."

"I can promise you that, anyhow," said the boy. "And maybe there'll be more. Good-bye."

And with that he rode forward along the river trail, while Daniel Boone and Colonel Henderson turned their horses' heads in the opposite direction. A mile further on Noll overtook Gray Lizard plodding on with the help of his long staff. The magician gave the boy a sidelong glance as he passed; but Noll did not check the lope of his horse, pushing on until he reached a place where a second trail branched away from the river, winding among the huge forest trees and losing itself in the billowing ocean of foliage.

He struck into this, and after an hour's riding came in sight of a well-built log house, surrounded by broad fields, from which the crops had lately been harvested.

Before the cabin door sat a tall, lank boy in a hunting shirt, busily engaged in cleaning a long flint-locked rifle. At the sound of the rapid hoof beats he looked up. Recognizing Oliver, who was still some distance off, he waved his hand in greeting; then he turned his head and spoke to some one within the cabin.

Drawing rein before the door, young Barclay threw himself from the saddle.

"Well, Eph," said he, as he tied his mount to a post, "I suppose you all but gave up hope of me."

Eph Taylor had a long, droll looking face, and as he shook his head he twisted his countenance into an expression of comic denial.

"No," said he. "I reckoned you'd be along some time soon. This thing of ours was too important to let go by."

He rammed a greased cloth down the barrel of the rifle, and twisting it about, withdrew it once more.

"I saw Sandy," added he.

At this Noll Barclay was all eagerness.

"Did you!" exclaimed he. "And what did he say?"

"Suppose I let him speak for himself," said Eph, with the same comical twist to his long face. "He came over this afternoon to talk things over with us. Ho! Sandy! Can you come here for a little?"

A short, tow-haired youth appeared at the door of the cabin; he carried a halter in one hand and a brad-awl in the other. He nodded to Oliver good-humoredly.

"Glad to see you again," said he. "How are you?"

His accent was broadly Scotch, and there was a round-bodied heartiness to him which at once inspired good will.

"I'm in right good health," said Oliver. "And I'm glad enough to see you, Sandy."

Sandy Campbell laughed. He placed a strap of the halter against the door frame and punctured it with the awl.

"I was mighty taken with your notion," stated he. "And when I got done with my work, I rode over to hear more about it."

Oliver Barclay sat down upon a rough settle which stood beneath a cottonwood; he looked at the other two boys with earnest eyes.

"What we talked over yesterday, Eph," said he, "seemed good reason enough for us to make an attempt to get the best of the Cherokees. But what I heard this afternoon puts a different face on it altogether."

Eph Taylor looked up from his rifle in surprise.

"You don't mean to say that you have changed your mind!" said he.

Oliver shook his head.

"Not a bit of it," answered he. "Indeed, I'm firmer about it than ever. But to just make an attempt to best the Indians won't do now; we must beat them!"

Both Eph and Sandy looked at him inquiringly.

"You say you heard something," said Sandy Campbell. "What was it?"

"As I rode down the trail with my uncle," said Noll, "we met Mr. Boone."

The face of Eph Taylor took on an expression of interest.

"Oh, it was something he said, was it? Well, then, I allow it was worth listening to, for Dan'l Boone always talks as the crow flies—in a straight line."

And then, while his two friends listened with great attention, Oliver repeated the words of the backwoodsman. When he had finished, Sandy nodded his head.

"It sounds much like the truth of the matter," said he.

"It is the truth!" declared Eph, emphatically. "If we give these redskins a chance to crow over us in little things, they'll think they can do it in big things. Tomorrow we must take 'em in hand and give them a good thrashing—a regular good one that they'll not forget in a hurry."

"I'm all ready for my part of it," grinned Sandy. "Or, at least I will be as soon as this halter's finished. That old Soldier horse couldn't have been better for the work if he'd been picked out of a hundred. He's got a back as wide as a floor; and I've been practicing with him all summer, never thinking I'd have any use for it."

"It's lucky you did," spoke Eph. "And I reckon the things you do'll make the redskins open their eyes. As for me," and he fondled the long rifle lovingly, "I got old Jerusha here; and when she begins to talk I allow there won't be many Shawnees that'll use better language."

Oliver smiled and nodded. To strangers there would have been a boastful note in the words of young Taylor; but not to those who knew him. The boy was a wonderful shot at all distances, but it never occurred to him to take any personal credit for this. Oddly enough he gave it all to his rifle.

"Nobody with half an eye could miss

with her," he'd frequently declare. "She's the greatest old shooting iron ever made."

Oliver sat smiling and nodding at Eph's faith in his piece, and while he did so his eyes went to the spot where the long-legged young horse was tied. Sandy noticed the look and his glance also went in the same direction.

"The Hawk will do his share," said he with an air of expert judgment. "He has speed and bottom and in a long race he'll break the hearts of those Indian nags."

"Just like his master'll break the hearts of the Shawnees that'll run against *him*," spoke Eph Taylor, with confidence.

"I'm not so sure of that," said Oliver; and as he spoke a sound from across the fields toward the line of forest took their attention. The sinking sun glanced from the lithe bronze body of a young Indian who was running swiftly and low, like a hound. "There's the fellow I'm to fight it out against," added the white boy. "And

any one who comes in ahead of him will have speed, indeed."

Eph Taylor nodded.

"He's good," admitted he. "But I count on him, Injun like, only to use his legs in the race. To beat him, all you've got to do is to use your head as well."

CHAPTER III

DANIEL BOONE, MARKSMAN

MOUNTED upon his powerful bay horse, Daniel Boone the following day rode toward Holman's Ford. This point was some eight miles from Hillsboro, and it was here that the young men of the settlement met each fall for their hardy frontier games.

Keen-sighted youths, bearing long barrelled flint-locks, eagerly awaited this, the test of their skill; sturdy wrestlers burned to match their thews against each other; and the runners, both horse and man, were equally anxious to show their quality.

The sun had reached high noon when the backwoodsman reached the ford, dismounted and tied his nag to a tree. A long line of wagons, the horses tied to the wheels, stood on the river bank; the settlers

and their families were gathered beneath the trees. Apart from these were the athletes of farm and forest, well-grown boys and brawny young men; they stood about in knots and discussed the probabilities of each event. A smaller knot than any of the others stood at the foot of a huge cottonwood; a hail went up from this as Boone went by; and he paused as he recognized Oliver Barclay, Eph Taylor and Sandy Campbell.

"Well, youngsters," said the pioneer, "how is it going?"

Eph Taylor grinned.

"There ain't been much done yet, Mr. Boone," said he. "And even with the little we've gone through, we've had trouble with the redskins."

The eyes of Boone went to a cleared space among the trees where a number of lodges had been erected; upon some skins, thrown upon the ground, lay a half score of keen-looking Shawnees. To the trees near by

were fastened a number of rangy-looking horses.

"What's wrong?" asked the backwoodsman.

"We've had the jumps," said Eph, "and none of the Indians entered for them. So Eben Clarke won 'em all. Then there was the throwing of the stone and big Sam Dutton put it further than any one else, by a good bit. The first thing the Shawnees took any interest in was the swim. It was across the river and back, to start at the word and all together. A slippery little redskin entered for that; he got into the water like a streak; and he was a real good swimmer. George Collins was off in the front and the little Shawnee went by him like a fish. Then George began to stretch out and grab the water in armfuls and pull himself after him. But he never caught him till they got to the middle of the stream on the way back. Sandy here was in the race," and Eph grinned. "He

thinks he's a swimmer, but he was still on the way over when George and the redskin were coming back. Just as George caught the Indian they both ran afoul of Sandy. And because George went ahead from that on and won the race the Shawnees say the whole consarned thing was a put up job to beat them out of the race."

"And it's not so," said Sandy, with indignation. "If I interfered with anybody it was with George Collins. I dived to get out of the Indian's way when I saw him coming and I went straight into George."

"There's only one of them who understands any English, beside old Gray Lizard," said Oliver, "and that's the tall fellow covered with the bearskin. We took the trouble to explain the matter to them; but they just shake their heads and candidly think the worst of us."

"Injuns," stated Boone, "can never be got to quite believe the white man. Maybe it's because they've been beaten so often

and in so many ways that they've come to think that he *can't* have played fair with him."

The wrestling was now going forward, and big Sam Dutton, he of the "stone throw," was disposing of opponent after opponent with ease. There being little interest manifested in this because of its one-sidedness, the master of ceremonies, a stout, humorous-looking man, called out:

"I reckon we'll now have the fancy riders out getting ready." Then in a lower tone to those near him, "This is a thing the Injuns always win, and our boys ought to be ashamed of themselves for letting 'em. Trick riding ought to be as easy for a white as a redskin."

This complaint was greeted by a laugh from those at whom it was aimed; and the laugh was still echoing when a young Shawnee ran out and across the green. To a tree some distance away he affixed a mark of painted bark, then he paced off a score of

yards, turned, drew a tomahawk and waved it as though in challenge. Then the sinewy, bronzed arm went back and the hatchet whizzed through the air; true and fair it struck the mark, burying itself an inch or more in the tree.

A yell went up from the young braves at this; there were challenging glances thrown right and left; but as none of the whites appeared disposed to accept, a fresh mark was put up. Another Shawnee stepped forward and drew out a heavy-bladed knife. For an instant he balanced it in his hand, then launched it forward like a lightning flash, straight to the heart of the mark.

Another whoop arose, and again the triumphant challenging glances went around from the young savages.

"They reckon there ain't none of you got it in you to do a thing like that," stated the master of ceremonies.

"Just you wait till the shooting," answered a voice, and a murmur went up

from among the whites. "We'll show 'em then."

"Well, you ought to," answered the stout man. "You've lived all your lives with rifles in your hands, and it's not much to your credit that you can shoot. But," and he waved one pudgy finger at them, "don't be too sure of the shooting, even at that. Maybe you ain't heard that Long Panther is here to-day! And anybody that's acquainted with that young redskin knows a Shawnee with a good eye and a steady hand."

Here those horsemen entered for the fancy riding galloped out into the open space. To a man they were Indians, in all the bravery of paint and plumes.

"Not a single one of you!" exclaimed the fat master of ceremonies, reproachfully, his gaze going from the array of confident savages to the circle of lolling young whites. "Not a single one; not a thing do you know about riding but to get into the

saddle and sit there like an old dame in a rocking-chair. Not a single ——"

But there he paused, for just then there rode into the open space a round-bodied youth with a cheerful, good-natured face, and mounted upon an ambling white horse, as fat and unlike the fiery brutes bestridden by the Shawnees as could well be imagined. A roar went up at sight of this unexpected entry; even the stoical savages grinned in ironic enjoyment of the situation.

Gravely the master of ceremonies shook the newcomer's hand.

"Young man," said he, gratefully, "you may not have much chance, but you have got pluck. What's your name and the name of that young animal you're a-riding?"

"I'm Sandy Campbell," replied that good-natured youth, "and this," patting the fat white horse on the neck, "is Soldier, a plow horse, fifteen years old, belonging to the man I work for."

Another shout went up from the by-standers; but the master of ceremonies held up his hand.

"It's not your turn to laugh," stated he. "He's making a try; and that's something more than any of you have the enterprise to do."

The word was given; one after another the young braves set their horses into a gallop; when at full speed they leaped from the backs of their mounts and, clinging to the streaming manes, ran a dozen or more yards by their sides; then with agile swings they were astride them once more. Then with a rush they approached the starting point, bringing up sharply and in picturesque fashion, the front hoofs of the horses pawing the air.

All eyes now turned upon Sandy Campbell and the sleek sided Soldier. Quietly Sandy gave the white horse the word and calmly the placid beast obeyed. At a stoical gallop he began circling the clearing; his

movements were as regular as those of a rocking-horse; and Sandy sat him in total unconcern while shouts and laughter greeted them on every hand. Then Sandy threw his right leg across the horse's broad back, sitting him sideways; it looked like an uncouth beginning of the feat performed by the Shawnees and a titter of expectancy began. This changed to a roar of derision as the fat boy slid from his perch to the ground.

But if they had watched keenly, they would have perceived that he alighted with a soft, practiced accuracy; also that the long comic bounds which followed at the side of the calmly galloping Soldier were really as light as those of a rubber ball. Then with one higher than the others, and never putting a hand upon his horse, he was upon its back once more; and Soldier drew up, switching his tail and regarding the green distance with sleepy eyes.

Without waiting for the surprised ap-

plause of the settlers to grow to the height it naturally would have reached, one of the young Shawnees shook his rein; his nimble steed darted away like the wind, an arrow flew ahead, performed a graceful arch and stuck in the ground. Racing at full speed the horse swooped down upon it; clinging with one foot and one hand the brave stooped, caught the feathered shaft, and recovering, waved it above him triumphantly.

Soldier was at once put into motion; when he had attained his best speed, Sandy's hat flew ahead to one side, and a long hunting knife followed, falling to the other side, but a dozen or more yards further along. Heading his galloping horse between these, Sandy stooped and caught the hat; then recovering like a flash, he threw himself to the opposite side, gripping the shaft of the knife as he sped by.

The shout which greeted this made the echo from across the Yadkin ring lustily;

the settlers now awoke to the fact that the round-faced youth and his fat plow horse knew what they were about. And so they eagerly acclaimed and urged them to do their best.

Trick after trick of horsemanship was performed by the Indians, and all with the ease of experts and the dash of perfect confidence. But their feats showed little imagination, and in this those of the white boy were vastly superior. Each time they displayed something new he duplicated it with an added touch, leaving them open-mouthed and aghast.

At last one of them, and their finest rider by far, broke from the line and called something to Sandy, a something which was evidently a defiance. Putting his horse to gallop, he, with much effort, swaying and uncertainty, got upon his feet and there remained until he had completed the circle, when he leaped to the ground. While the yells of the Indians were still greeting this

bit of daring, Sandy started Soldier once more. With perfect ease, and greatly helped by the beast's broad back and its rocking-horse motion, the boy got upon his feet; after making a complete round, he leaped up, turned a somersault, alighted expertly upon the platform-like back, and once more stood erect; then standing upon one foot and with the other twiddling in the air, he galloped around once more.

This was the last straw. The Shawnees could not hope to outdo this, and so retired. While the whites gathered about Sandy and his steed, Boone turned to Oliver and Eph.

"I reckon your friend didn't learn them things in Carolina," said he.

Oliver laughed, delighted.

"No," he replied. "At home, in Scotland, he was a rider in a circus; and he's been practicing and training the white horse for some time."

"Friends!" called the master of cere-

monies, "the time is drawing on, and as there are three contests still to be decided, we'd best get at them. The race for horses is next; riders will line across the trail."

At this summons, Oliver Barclay sprang from Hawk, his long-legged young horse, untied and mounted him; and as it happened as he rode to the end of the forming line, he found himself next the tall young Shawnee whom they had pointed out to Boone as being able to talk English.

"Umph!" said this personage, his swift eyes running over the points of the horse. "You ride?"

Oliver nodded. The young brave bestrode a bony, long barreled horse with small ears and a wicked head. Its bared teeth gleamed as it snapped viciously at the horses within reach.

"Maybe you run," ventured the Shawnee.

Again Oliver nodded; and a glint of satisfaction came into the keen black eyes of the brave.

"Heap good!" said he. "Long Panther will beat you in both."

Oliver smiled.

"The Long Panther is a good rider," said he. "We have seen him many times break the wild horse, and manage the swift one. And he can run. Only yesterday I saw him flying along the trail like a wolf in the track of an antelope. But," and the boy shook his head, "to win to-day, even Long Panther must do his best."

"White boy shoot?" asked Long Panther; but Oliver shook his head.

"Not enough to match myself against experts," said he. "But there are a few who will handle the rifle to-day, Long Panther, whom it will not be easy to draw away from."

The Shawnee lifted his head proudly.

"The red man will win," said he. "His eye is like the eagle's, his hand as steady as the head of a rattlesnake before it strikes."

The glance of the master of ceremonies ran along the line of horsemen. Then he pointed to a lone tree far down the river trail from which a flag was flying.

"You ride to that, around it, and back," said he. "And now, when I drop my hat, you start."

Once more the glance went along the line to assure him that all was still as it should be. Then the hat fell.

With a rush the horses shot forward along the trail; a cloud of dust overhung them and it was hard to tell who led or who trailed in the rear. Then little by little the compactness of the mass was lost; the runners began to stretch out, the swift going to the front, and the others falling back. At the flag the dust ascended in a great column; then the riders were seen plunging through it on the way to the finish.

"Long Panther in the lead!" cried Eph Taylor, straining his eyes to make out the

contestants. "And he's riding like as if he was part of the horse."

"I don't see anything of young Noll," said Boone.

Sandy Campbell was trying to keep the sun out of his eyes by holding his outspread hands over them; he searched the dusty cloud as it rolled toward them.

"I see him!" he shouted, in high excitement. "I see him!"

"Where?" demanded Eph, eagerly.

"He's about the sixth rider—far back in the dust."

"Sixth!" cried Eph, and his voice was husky with disappointment.

"But he's coming along swiftly," said Sandy. "The Hawk is stretching over the ground like a rabbit."

"I see him now!" shouted Eph. "I see him! But he's not sixth—he's fourth!"

"He's passed two of them since I spoke," said Sandy, and then with a whoop, "There goes another to the rear!"

"And still another!" cried Eph, dropping his beloved Jerusha and waving his long arms. "He's second!"

"Do you see Long Panther look over his shoulder?" called Sandy. "See how his teeth show—even at that distance! He looks as vicious as that ugly brute of a horse of his."

Whirling out of the dust came the bony steed ridden by the Shawnee; its sweeping stride covered the ground with astonishing speed, its rider was bent low over its neck, his eagle plumes mingling with the steed's flying mane. But if the stride of the Indian's steed ate up the distance, the long legs of Hawk devoured it. The eyes of the young animal fairly flowed with excitement; his wide nostrils showed red; his flying hoofs made dazzling play as they flashed and reflashed, in and out, up and down; his sleek hide was flecked with foam.

"One hundred yards to go!" cried Sandy.

"And the Hawk's nose is at the Injun's knee!" shouted Eph Taylor, arms still waving madly.

Lower and still lower bent Long Panther, whiter and whiter gleamed his teeth; faster and still faster flew the thundering hoofs of the wicked looking steed. But nothing on four feet could have outstepped the rush of the flame-eyed Hawk; no one who ever sat in a saddle could have outdone in determination the boy who bestrode him. In a half dozen mighty bounds the Hawk was nose and nose with the horse of the Indian; and then he was ahead, daylight showing between them true and fair; when he flashed by the finish he was a winner by a good half dozen yards.

White boy and red slipped from their horses almost side by side as the roar of applause went up from the crowd. Leaning against the heaving side of his mount, the Long Panther stood for a moment staring into the face of Oliver Barclay. Then,

without a word, he turned, leaving his horse standing in the trail and strode toward the lodges among the trees.

Amid the tumult of shouting the stout master of ceremonies was not idle. The next event was the shooting at all distances —and with all weapons; and the targets and marks were set up with all possible speed.

"Yes, friends," cried the stout man at the top of his voice, addressing a throng gathered about Oliver and the Hawk, "I know how you feel, for I feel just that way myself. It's a good boy and a good colt. But let's get ahead with things. Now we have the shooting on our hands—shooting with rifles or with bows and arrows, the white man and his red brother to have the use of his favorite weapon. If a white wants to use a bow, let him do so and the fates prosper him; if a red prefers a rifle, let him take it by all means and use it to the best of his courage and eyesight."

As the riflemen came forward, each with his long weapon in his grip, the throng followed and formed a sort of half circle behind them. Several of the Indians also advanced, their long bows tautly strung, their quivers full of arrows.

One by one the rifles cracked, and the bowstrings sang; mark after mark was shot away, and marksman after marksman fell back defeated. Eph Taylor advanced time after time, Jerusha in his hand; fondly he'd cuddle the smooth stock against his cheek, and when the old weapon's sharp voice rang out, it was to announce the planting of a bullet in the heart of the target.

After three-quarters of an hour the last Shawnee was eliminated; and the struggle seemed between Eph Taylor and a gray-haired, keen-eyed hunter from the region toward the ridge. It was nip and tuck between this pair; neither seemed able to perform a feat which the other could not

duplicate. The ringing of the shots, the spatting of the ball, the fall of wand or coin, or the snuffing out of candles went on with monotonous regularity; but at length this was broken by the appearance of the magician, Gray Lizard. With his amulets of skulls and claws, and pouches filled with potent charms hanging from him, his staff in his hand and his ratty old eyes filled with contempt, he advanced to the place where the riflemen were standing.

"What child's work!" cried he. "What pastime for the papooses of the village! Again and again do you repeat what you have done before. And nothing comes of it. The Shawnee is about to go! but before he goes he would like to show his white brother what he thinks is a real test of skill." Then to the master of ceremonies, "Is it the white man's will?"

The stout official scratched his head.

"It's against all the rules that I ever heard tell of," he announced. "But I'm

for letting them do it. What do you say, lads?"

A shout of assent went up from the settlers; for all were eager to see what the redskin marksman would do.

The Gray Lizard turned and held up one hand toward the little knot of savages who stood in a gloomy array at one side.

"Long Panther, by jickety!" said Eph, who had been looking toward the Indians, curiously.

"I thought he was so tarnal mad at being licked in the hoss race that he didn't mean to shoot at all," said the old hunter who had been pressing Eph close. "But here he comes, as proud as a she wolf with seven pups, and a-meaning to outshoot all creation if it can be done any way at all."

Long Panther advanced with erect head and a face like bronze, so utterly devoid of expression was it; but his keen swift eyes were full of fire and insolent challenge.

His manner was that of one who felt himself master of the situation.

"The Gray Lizard spoke well," said he. "To shoot at sticks and lights is work for the papoose, and not for the warrior. I ask but one shot; and then let any of you do as well, and I am content to say the white man is better than the Shawnee."

As he spoke his swift eyes went about among the trees; upon a huge dead limb of an oak, near to the trunk, sat a gray squirrel, his bushy tail held erect, his deft forepaws stroking his moustache.

"A live mark!" said Long Panther, as he fitted an arrow to his string. "I will take it through the skin at the back of its neck and pin it to the tree."

Almost before he ceased to speak, the arrow flew upon its mission; and the next instant the squirrel, pinned exactly as the Shawnee marksman had said, was struggling for release.

A hush fell upon the crowd; and as a

boy nimbly ascended the oak and liberated the squirrel, the master of ceremonies spoke.

"Men, it was a good shot. And, now, speak up. Can any of you do the like?"

Eph and the old hunter were shaking their heads when Daniel Boone stepped forward.

"The brave," said Boone, slowly, "has made a good shot. No one will gainsay that. But it was a trick."

All eyes were upon him; Long Panther gave him a look of fierce disdain.

"The shot," said the young warrior, "was fair, and was seen by all."

Boone nodded.

"But for all that it was a trick," said he. "It was a shot that can be made only with an arrow. A marksman can't pin a squirrel to a tree trunk with a rifle bullet, Long Panther, as you know very well."

A murmur went up from the whites; there was an eager assent to this way of looking at the matter.

"But," continued Boone, coolly, "you said that if any of us could do as well, you'd admit yourself beaten." He balanced his heavy rifle in his strong hands, a smile upon his bronzed face. "Very well. To equal your trick shot which cannot be done with a rifle, I will do one which can't be done with an arrow."

A huge gum tree reared its mighty head upon the river bank; upon a limb part way up lay a red squirrel, blinking at the assemblage with his shrewd little eyes. The heavy rifle began to lift toward this mark.

"Long Panther," said Boone, quietly, his eyes never leaving the tiny ball of red fur so high in the air, "if I bring down the little beast, dead, and with never a mark of the bullet on him, will you admit it as good a shot as your own?"

"I will!" cried the Shawnee, promptly.

The long rifle cracked, a shower of particles of bark flew up from the limb directly

under the squirrel; the concussion threw the little animal whirling into the air; it fell to the ground at the foot of the gum tree—dead.[1]

In an instant it was in the hands of Long Panther; his swift eyes searched it for the sign that would give him victory.

"Well?" asked Boone, after a moment.

The young warrior lifted his face.

"It is without a mark," said he. Then as he turned away, he added in a voice of wonder, "The white man is indeed a mighty hunter."

And when the foot-racers took their places a few moments later to decide the question of speed and endurance, Oliver Barclay was one of them. But there were no Indians among them. Curiously, the boy cast his eyes about, the words of the Gray Lizard occurring to him. Sure

[1] This shot is what came to be known later as "barking off." The American naturalist, Audubon, in his "Ornithological Biography" speaks of Boone's performing the feat a number of times in procuring specimens.

enough, there were the redskins mounted, their camp equipment upon the backs of the packhorses. With no thought of triumphing over a beaten foe, but filled with disappointment at not having the chance to try himself against the famed runner, Oliver stepped aside to Long Panther's horse.

"What! are you going before the race is run?" asked he, astonished.

The young warrior looked down into the face of the white boy long and intently; then he spoke.

"It may be," he said, "that the time will come when you and I will run a race. And if it should, see to it that you are as swift as the antelope of the plains; for it may be that you will have much at stake."

And with that Long Panther rode off along the trail after his fellow braves.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE WILDERNESS

THAT Boone had in mind an adventure beyond the Laurel Ridge was soon noised abroad.

"Going on a big hunt," said one of the settlers to another. "Taking John Finley, who some years ago led a party to the Louisa River[1] region, and some others."

"Means to stay for some time, too, I hear," said the other.

The first speaker nodded.

"Dan'l's boys are big enough to look after things now," said he. "And I guess they have money enough to last a while. And besides the fun of the hunt, Boone'll bring back rich furs, for they say the country he's going into just swarms with game."

[1] Afterward called the Kentucky River.

But that Boone had any thought other than hunting was not known to the settlements; that Colonel Henderson contemplated having the backwoodsman inspect the wilderness as a preliminary to planting colonies therein was kept a close secret.

It was one fine day in May in the year 1769 that the little party assembled for the start. Besides Boone and Finley, there were James Moncey, John Stuart, William Cool and Joseph Holden, hardy woodsmen, dead shots and men who could be depended upon in any emergency.

Besides the sinewy, deep-winded horses which they rode, they had a number of pack animals laden with blankets, ammunition and camp equipment and provisions.

"We need not take much food," said Boone, and Finley had agreed with him. "A little meal and salt and such like, that's all. For the country into which we're going, boys, is a paradise for riflemen. The streams have never been fished

except by the wandering Injuns; the herds of deer and buffalo are endless; the small game, both furred and feathered, are not to be counted."

Each of the adventurers had slung across his back the very long, flint-lock rifle made famous by their breed and generation; they also carried keen, heavy knives and hatchets; only a few pistols were to be seen among them. They wore deerskin hunting shirts and tanned leggins of the same material; their powder-horns and bullet-pouches swung from their shoulders.

Boone and the others had said good-bye to their families and now sat their horses in the trail along the Yadkin, having a last word with Colonel Henderson, who had ridden from Hillsboro to see them off. Noll Barclay had borne him company, and Eph Taylor, eager and curious, had journeyed from the forest-encircled farm to hear the latest word.

"I suppose," Oliver said to his uncle,

"that you have reasons, but I can't see why Eph and I could not ride with Mr. Boone on this adventure as well as not."

"You are too young," spoke the colonel, after the fashion of a man who had heard the suggestion in many forms before.

Boone looked at the straight, slight form of the lad, and then at the lanky Eph. He nodded his agreement with the other.

"Too young," said he. "There are times, lads, when years count, and this is one of them. It's not only your being short of endurance but of judgment that makes it impossible to take you along this time. You look at this thing as a bit of fun, and that is just what it is not. In a year or two, though," he added, "you'll both have picked up years and experience."

"But in a year or two," objected Noll, "there may be no trips into the wilderness."

Both Boone and Colonel Henderson laughed.

"The wilderness will be there for many years to come," spoke the colonel.

"And this, I think, is not the last trip into it by many," said Daniel Boone.

Young Barclay had talked over the adventure of the wilderness with both Eph and Sandy, and while none of them hoped to be taken along on the expedition, they, like every lad for miles around, longed to have fate play an unexpected prank in their behalf.

"I don't expect anything to happen," Oliver had said, fervently. "But you can never tell."

However, it did not happen, and the two boys watched the hardy band ride along the trail for the river, leading their pack animals, and plunge into the budding green sea of the forest.

Now began the long hardship of the journey across the mountains. For some days the going was not so difficult, because ways had been hewn in the forests by set-

tlers tilling the land round about; but in a little while they penetrated beyond the settled district and were voyaging in the trackless wilderness where the foot of the white man had seldom fallen. They now followed the winding paths made by buffalo and other large animals as being attended with less labor than pushing their way through the dense undergrowth and interlacing vines. Through deep ravines, down roaring mountain streams, descending into wonderful valleys, fording deep rivers, they held their way across the mountain ridge which streaked so blue across the sky-line; and at length they found themselves on the verge of that far country of which they had been in search.

Here and there in the journey they had come across the tracks of redskins; once across the tree tops they had seen tall, pale columns of smoke lifting, which told of a camp of some size. And having no desire to become better acquainted with the wan-

dering tribesmen, they had always changed their course and brought into play all those wiles known to the students of woodcraft to throw off their trail any one who might stumble upon it.

"It's always best to be careful," said Boone, during one of these sudden shifts in their course. "As far as I know there's no big party in this region, because it belongs to no one tribe and is visited only by the hunters. But never take a chance that can be avoided—that's the safe course to follow."

However, as Daniel Boone had said to Colonel Henderson, the beautiful land of Kentucky was used, from time to time, as something more than a hunting-ground. Bands of Chickasaws, Shawnees and Cherokees frequently met in the heart of the wild, and when they did, savage fighting followed. So desperate were these conflicts that the region became known by an Indian name signifying "dark and bloody ground."

Before the band of white men, as they

stood upon an eminence of the ridge on the day they first sighted Kentucky, was a vast rolling country, roamed by herds of horned beasts, splendid streams and valleys which promised a rich yield to the hand which drove the plow through it.

But after a space given to wonder and admiration, Boone noted that the sun was slipping little by little behind the green rim of the forest.

"I think, boys," suggested he, "we'd better look for a likely place to camp for the night. To-morrow we'll plunge into the new country and have a close-at-hand look at everything."

In the mountainside was a small gorge across which a cottonwood had fallen and hidden by a dense growth of thicket. Limbs were cut by hatchet and knife and placed against the fallen tree in such a manner as to form a sort of roof. Bark was pulled from those trees which gave it readily, and fitted over the limbs; soft balsam boughs

were placed in the bottom of the gorge for beds; and here the adventurers made a home in the wilds which they kept until the winter came with its snow and rigors.

A turkey was roasted above the coals, impaled upon a ramrod; flap-jacks were baked upon heated stones, and full of the spirit of the thing and gifted with wonderful appetites the adventurers fell to and made a hearty meal.

Then, afterward, they stretched out upon the soft boughs and watched the moon drift across the sky while they talked of what was to come. All was peace; save for the cry of some night bird, or the stirring of the breeze among the trees, there was no sound.

Then, without a word of warning, there was a sudden crash from the black looming forest, and the ring of a rifle-shot went echoing and reëchoing from level to level until it died away in the stillness.

CHAPTER V

CAPTURED BY THE SHAWNEES

As the ring of the rifle died away, the little band in the hut reached for their fire-arms; with pieces cocked and ready, they stole out and crouched close to the ground, silently waiting. But nothing followed; whoever fired the shot was a long distance away and the firing of the shot had nothing to do with them.

"It may have been a signal," said Boone, as he arose on one knee, his keen eyes searching the great shafts of gray moon-light which lay trailing on the mountain-side. "But it's not likely. If we've ene-mies hereabouts they'd not take that way of getting news of us to each other. For one thing, we'd hear it; for another, powder is a hard thing for a redskin to get, at best,

and I reckon they're not in a hurry to waste any of it."

"Must have been a shot by some red hunter to stop a catamount that had come to his camp," said Finley. "This looks to be a likely country for critters of that kind."

The shot, so surprising and unexpected, formed a subject for conversation during the remainder of the evening; then, posting a guard outside the hut, the explorers rolled themselves in their blankets and went quietly to sleep.

After a breakfast of broiled squirrel next morning, Boone, Finley and Stuart started out, their rifles across their shoulders, to examine the aspect of the surrounding country. If what they had come through in crossing the ridge had seemed trackless, this was infinitely more so; there were myriads of small animals and birds; the deer seemed merely wondering and possessed no fear of them. Near by was one of the

northern branches of the Louisa, and this they followed for miles; each day was given to a venture, during the entire summer and the ensuing fall. Always some of the party remained at the hut in the gorge, while the others took the buffalo paths in search of new discoveries.

November came with its chilly nights; then fell December with its sudden frosts, its flurries of snow and its long nights; and it was in that same month of December that the first mishap befell them.

It was but a few days before Christmas that Boone and Stuart started off in a direction seldom taken on former occasions. There was a light snow upon the ground—not enough to impede their progress—but sufficient to plainly show the tracks of anything that had passed that way. The timber wolves had grown especially numerous since the winter had set in, and their prints were scattered all about in the canebrakes and through the woods. Once they

came upon the clear trace of a catamount, and nothing would have pleased them better than to have followed the beast and tried their rifles upon it; however, they were in the wilderness for more important things than mere hunting, so they passed the tempting trail and pushed on, intent upon the lay of the ground, the quality of the soil, the timber and the natural drainage.

They had gone on for some hours in this way when Stuart heard Boone, who was some yards in advance, give an exclamation of surprise. The backwoodsman had paused and was bending over, studying something intently.

"What is it?" asked Stuart, as he hastened forward.

Silently Boone pointed at the snow; there, distinctly printed, was the trail of many moccasined feet.

"Injuns!" said Stuart, astonished.

Strange as it might seem, the little band

of adventurers had not caught sight of a red man since they had started out in the previous spring; and this had, somehow, caused the idea to grow among them that this particular region was being avoided by the Indian hunting parties, at any rate for the time being.

Closely Boone studied the trail; some peculiarity of the moccasin imprints struck him.

"They are Shawnees," said he; "and as far as I can make out, there must be a score of them."

"That many, at least," spoke Stuart, his eyes also examining the trail. "A hunting party pushing toward the river; maybe in search of fur."

Boone nodded, but somewhat dubiously. The sudden appearance of a large band of savages at that precise time disquieted him; he felt in it the promise of future danger.

"They've found meat scarce, I suppose," suggested Stuart, as they went on through

CLOSELY BOONE STUDIED THE TRAIL

the forest, "and so they had to go farther away from home."

"It would have pleased me just as well if they'd taken another direction, then," said Boone. "We're getting on too well with our work to be disturbed just now."

Ahead was a dense clump of dark, gloomy pine woods, on the edge of which was a fringe of dwarf oaks. A heavy growth of bush and climbing thorns had sprung up among these last; and as the two whites came to this, their long rifles in the hollow of their arms, there came a sudden rush, a fierce yell of exultation, and they found themselves borne to the ground, disarmed and bound with leather thongs.

With their rifles, hatchets and hunting knives in the possession of their captors, and their hands firmly secured behind their backs, they were permitted to rise, and found themselves looking into a circle of grim, copper-colored faces, and being examined by narrow, threatening eyes.

It was a party of Shawnees, and evidently the same whose tracks they had come across a short time before. The braves were in their full panoply of war; they carried bows and scalping knives, quivers of arrows were on their backs, tomahawks were in their belts; a few ancient looking rifles were the only fire-arms to be seen among them, however, and the powder-horns and bullet-pouches were fewer still.

A powerful looking savage, evidently a chief, and the leader of the band, now spoke.

"The white faces hunt in the hunting-grounds of the Shawnee," said he, in very bad English.

But Boone looked at him with cool, humorous eye.

"The great chief is mistaken," said he. "The white man would not so wrong his red brother."

The Shawnee chief said something to his

followers, no doubt interpreting the saying of the backwoodsman; there came a series of grunts and ejaculations from them; their copper-colored faces grew grimmer still, their eyes even more threatening than before.

"Yesterday we heard the rifle of the white face," spoke the Shawnee leader, turning again to Boone; "to-day we have heard it. We have seen the remains of deer and buffalo which he has killed; we have seen his beaver traps in the streams." There was a moment's pause, then the savage added: "What has the white face to say?"

"You might have heard our rifles speak for many days, if you had been here," replied Boone. "And that you have seen the carcasses of deer and other animals which we have killed is quite likely. But what of that? The country is open to hunters, is it not? Do not the Chickasaws and the Cherokees hunt their meat and fur

in these woods and mountains? Why, then, do the Shawnees claim it as their own?"

"The Chickasaws and the Cherokees are thieves!" pronounced the Shawnee chief. "We have taken the war-path against them; we will make a wailing in their lodges, an emptiness in their villages."

"You treat your white brother with injustice when you ambush him and take away his arms. You have suffered no wrong at his hands," maintained Boone.

Again the chief translated to his braves, and again came the grunts and ejaculations. But in spite of the threatening looks and the tightening of the savage circle, the backwoodsman proceeded fearlessly.

"If any one hunts in this region without right, it is the red man," declared he. "The whole of the country below the great river belongs to the white face. Many moons ago, at the great council at Fort Stanwix, the league of the Iroquois turned over this land to the colonists. Does the

red brother deny this? Does he not mean to keep faith?"

What Boone said was true, and the Shawnee knew it, but in the southern tribes the right of the league to cede the territory had always been denied. So the chief regarded Boone with fierce-eyed anger.

"The white face is as cunning as the snake," said he, "and his tongue is as crooked."

Then turning away from them he gave a signal; the band at once started off, the two captives in their midst, guarded by a half dozen lean, hawk-like braves. Some miles away among the hills was the Shawnee camp, a dozen or more deerskin lodges erected in a sheltered place. Fires were burning outside the tepees; several young men were cooking strips of meat upon pointed sticks.

The whites were bound to heavy stakes driven firmly into the ground; then the

band gathered about the fires, and when the meat was cooked began to eat it in silence.

"Well," said Stuart, who had said very little since their capture, "it has a bad look."

"It might be worse," replied Boone, coolly, his calm eyes studying the Shawnees at the camp-fires. "There is a good chance for us yet."

"To escape?"

Boone nodded.

"But how?"

The calm eyes twinkled as they turned upon the speaker.

"Don't offer me any puzzles to answer," said Boone. "I have no more notion 'how' than you have. But the chance will come in some way; and it will be for us to be ready to take hold of it."

Though Boone had never been taken captive by the Indians before, he knew, from talks with those who had, and from his knowledge of savage ceremony, that in cases

like their own, a certain form was always gone through before torture and death were resorted to.

"They'll keep us," he told Stuart, "and try to get us to come into the tribe. It's a strange kink in their natures that though they hate the white, they seldom fail to try to make him one of them by adoption if they have the chance."

"You think they'll try and make Shawnees of us?"

"It's like as not," answered Boone.

"Before I'll be a renegade, I'll die," said Stuart, stoutly.

Boone nodded.

"I don't know as I blame you in that," spoke he. "A renegade is as mean a critter as walks the earth. But it'd be just as well if we kept our feelings on that point from the Shawnees."

"You mean ——"

"That if we're asked to join the tribe, we'd better not refuse. It's life if we can

deceive them, and death by horrible torture if we refuse."

"I don't like the notion of even seeming to be an Injun," spoke Stuart, who was a brave man and stubborn in his courage. "But whatever you think best, that I will do."

That night they were given a couple of bearskins to lie upon, and their bonds were looked to with much care. They slept fairly well but were awake at dawn when the savages began to stir about the camp. Some meat and a sort of porridge made of Indian corn, crushed between two smooth stones, was given to them; and after they had eaten, the Shawnee chief approached, followed by the eldest of his warriors. Silently they sat before their prisoners, seeming to study them with the utmost attention. After a space the chief spoke.

"The white faces are prisoners; they were taken in war by Black Wolf and his braves; they are without arms, they are helpless."

Neither Stuart nor Boone made any reply to this; but the warriors, upon the words of Black Wolf being interpreted to them, expressed their approval by nods and throaty murmurs.

"Far away, toward the rising sun, are the friends of the white face, far away where the morning first touches the forest are his lodges. Neither friends nor lodges will he ever see again."

There was another pause; Black Wolf studied the expressions of their faces intently. But still they made no reply. The chief then resumed:

"You have killed in the hunting-grounds of the Shawnees, and for this your lives belong to Black Wolf and his braves. But the chief would spare you; he does not wish to see you die. Rather would he see you, his brothers, living in the wigwams of the Shawnees and taking to the war-path against his people's foes."

This being repeated in the Shawnee

tongue to the elder warriors, was greeted with a chorus of approving grunts. And then Black Wolf asked:

"What does the white face say?"

"The Shawnee chief is a noble hunter and a warrior whose fame runs beyond the blue ridge," said Daniel Boone. "And his words are as straight as the young birch by the waterside. It is true that the pale-face's friends are far away, and that his lodge is many days across the hills; and for both of these his heart is sore. But he would not lose his life. Other friends he can make; other lodges he can build; but he has one life only, and when that is gone he cannot call it back."

Black Wolf repeated this to his counselors and again came the chorus of grunted approval.

"It is well spoken," praised the Shawnee chief. "Do you, then, give up your people and will you go to the villages of the Shawnee and make them your home?"

"To save my life—yes."

"And you?" asked Black Wolf, his eyes going to Stuart.

"I say the same," replied that worthy.

"It is well," said the chief.

He arose, and the elder braves did likewise; turning to them he spoke briefly and to what he said they apparently agreed with readiness. One of the warriors took out his knife, approached the captives and severed the thongs which bound them.

Black Wolf signed for them to get up.

"My young men are about to start upon a hunt," said he. "It were well if the white brothers went with them."

The hunting party was already making ready; and in half an hour or so it filed out of the camp and along a buffalo track which led toward the west. The two white men trudged along the track, Boone whistling a snatch of an old English air, Stuart morose and heavy of brow.

Finally the latter spoke.

"Why are we taken out with a hunting party and provided with no weapons? It hasn't a reasonable look!"

Boone stopped his whistling.

"The whole idea of this party is just a little game of the redskins. It's not their purpose to hunt," said he.

"Not their purpose to hunt?" echoed the other.

Boone nodded.

"Just keep your eye peeled," spoke he. "Do you see how the varmints go along—careless and never noticing us? Never a look do they give us, so far as I can see. But," and he covertly clutched his companion's arm in his strong grip, "they're noticing us, never fear. They see everything we do, every look we give away from the track we're following. This is not a hunt, comrade; it's a test of our intentions. They are trying us. And the trial will go on in different ways for days. Some one

will always be watching us; to try and escape will mean death for us."

"A pleasant outlook," said Stuart, gloomily.

"But don't forget," said Boone, "that this watch upon us will not last always. Let us make it seem as if we were contented enough. If they lay little traps for us to fall into, let us step over them. No matter how good the chance seems for a while, we must not try to get away; for it will only win us a dozen or so arrows in our backs. After a little while they'll grow slack in their watching. If they see us living quietly as they live, doing the things they do, they'll come to trust us more and more. And then our chance will come—and we'll make the best of it."

Keeping up an intent observation of the savages, Stuart gradually came to the conclusion that what Boone said was true. Not a moment passed but they found themselves closely watched by the Shawnees.

And so he came to see that his friend's plan was the solution of their situation. The gloomy look vanished and the frowns followed; his manner grew as care-free as could well be imagined; he also whistled a catch now and then; and more than once he laughed light-heartedly over some small incident of the march, a thing which was not thrown away upon their red brothers.

That night they spent in a lodge which Black Wolf gave up to them; as before, they were not bound and apparently were unguarded. But both knew that the sharp eyes of the bronze warriors were peering at the lodge, that lurking forms hung silently in the shadows, and swift-winged arrows were ready to sing their death song should they make an attempt to escape.

And so it went one day after another until a full week had passed. Adventure after adventure did the Shawnees take them upon; at times they were left apparently alone for hours in the forest; the

temptation was great, but they conquered it; and always were they glad they had done so, for it was shown afterward that in each case the savages had been at no great distance, and that the thing had been one of the traps which Boone had foretold.

Little by little, in the face of this plainly shown content of the white brothers for their lot, the Shawnees became lax in their vigilance, and finally upon the seventh night of their captivity, the active-minded Boone saw their first real chance of escape. All was still in the redskin camp; the fires smouldered under coverings of ash; a pale, wintry moon looked down upon the wilderness. It had been an active day for the savages; it had been thought that a party of Cherokees had entered the region, and all the warriors of Black Wolf's band had been ranging the woods searching for their trail. And so these braves, whose duty it was to keep a careful eye upon the adopted whites, grew heavy eyed as the night wore on;

their deep breathing told the wide-awake Boone that all were asleep.

Stuart, also, was asleep; carefully Boone awoke him.

"The time's come," he whispered in the ear of the surprised backwoodsman. "Make no noise; all the critters are as sound as rocks."

Softly they crept through the opening in the lodge; like cats they moved among the other wigwams until they gained the shadows. Then Boone halted.

"What now?" asked Stuart, in a whisper.

"We've left our rifles behind. Wait here."

"You don't mean to go back!" Stuart was amazed.

"I must. Do you realize what it would mean to be away here in the wilderness without the means of getting game for food? Man, we'd die."

Seeing the force of this, Stuart released

the hold he had taken upon Boone's shoulder. Back into the Indian encampment stole Daniel Boone; straight to the tepee of Black Wolf he went, and, from his place in the shadows, Stuart saw the brave pioneer stoop and enter. Then followed a long pause. The waiting man could hear the heavy throbs of his own heart. Each moment he expected to hear the war whoop of the Shawnee, and to see the camp spring into activity.

But fortune smiled upon the daring Boone, for after a time he appeared, the two rifles in his hands, and their powder-horns and bullet-pouches slung upon his shoulders. Silently he recrossed into the shadows; quietly he gave Stuart his own piece, his own horn and pouch; then creeping like wild things of the wilderness, they stole away into the depths where the night would hide them from all hostile eyes.

CHAPTER VI

BOONE IN THE WILDERNESS

ALL that night the two adventurers pressed steadily away from the Indian encampment; they made, as far as they could reckon it, in the general direction of their camp in the gorge. The pale moon filtered through the bare branches of the trees, the stars twinkled helpfully; and when morning came dimly above the higher hills they found that they had judged their direction with singular accuracy. They were not more than a mile or two from their own camp.

"Pretty good, for going it blind," said Boone, well pleased. "And now I suppose we'll give the boys a surprise. Having been missing for all this time they'll reckon we're gone for good."

But it was themselves who received the

surprise; arriving in sight of the gorge they saw no friendly morning smoke; hurrying forward they entered the hut; no one was there; everything of any value was gone.

"Injuns!" cried Boone.

"Or they somehow heard about us being taken by the redskins, and have gone back to the settlements," said Stuart.

Just what happened at the camp during the seven days' captivity of Boone and Stuart among the Shawnees has never been written. There is no record in the annals of the time that they returned to civilization; the confusion of the camp as found by Boone might have meant that it had been deserted hastily, or that the party therein had been murdered and robbed. But which was the truth he probably never knew.

For some time the two hardy adventurers remained staring at the remains of the shelter which had been their home for more than a half year.

"Well," said Boone, "I reckon they're gone."

"Gone they are," agreed Stuart. "And as we don't know how or why, it's my opinion that this is no safe place for us."

Rapidly, but thoroughly, they ransacked the camp for ammunition; but none was to be found; then they made their way into the cane-brakes, carefully covering their tracks as they went, and took up their camp in a secluded place where an enemy could not come upon them without their having due warning of his approach.

From that time on the pair shifted their camp with each day; they lived much like the wild things of the wilderness about them, seldom making a move in any direction without studying the prospects and calculating their chances. But in spite of all this, Boone, with his usual hardihood, continued to make his inspection of the country; they extended their explorations in many directions; and though they lived

in constant peril of their lives, and their food was reduced to the meat they could kill, they were not of the sort to cuddle fear to their breasts and increase their hardships by complaint. Accustomed to hard living they took their situation calmly enough; never once did it occur to them that it would be best to leave their work incompleted and return home.

"But," said Boone, one night by their carefully-masked camp-fire, "I'd like to have powder and ball. There are only a half-dozen charges between us; and every time I let off my rifle I feel that we're slipping that much nearer the finish of the whole matter."

Some weeks went by in this way; and one morning as they followed a buffalo path they heard a steady, long "clump-clump-clump" advancing toward them from the direction in which they had come.

"Buffalo?" asked Stuart, puzzled.

Boone listened, then shook his head.

"Horses," said he. "And horses that are being ridden."

With one accord they left the track; they took up posts behind the trees, their rifles held ready for anything which might occur.

In a very little while the hoof-beats became quite close at hand; then from out of the undergrowth which lined the path rode a couple of bronzed white men, well armed, and leading a pair of packhorses. Amazed, Daniel Boone called out:

"Hello, stranger! Who are you?"

The riders checked their steeds and turned their heads in the direction of the hail.

"Hello!" cried one. "Is that you, Dan'l?"

"White men and friends," answered they in the customary manner of the wilderness.

"As I live," cried Boone, starting forward, "I think it's my brother, Squire."

At this one of the men slid from his horse's back.

"Dan'l!" he exclaimed.

The two clasped hands, their eyes full of pleasure.

"We came upon your tracks yesterday," said Squire Boone, who was Daniel's junior by some years. "But we had more trouble in following it than if you'd been a couple of black foxes anxious to save your pelts."

Daniel and John Stuart looked at each other.

"We took a lot of trouble to cover those tracks up from time to time," said Stuart, grimly. "And we did it to save our scalps."

"Ah!" said Squire. "Injuns?"

"Shawnees!" answered his brother.

The companion of Squire Boone now came forward with the packhorses and was greeted by the two explorers. This man's name is not known to history, but he had ventured much in attempting that long journey over mountains, across rushing rivers and through the vast forests, and so he will go down as one of the great un-

known pioneers of the great west—a goodly army and a stout-hearted one.

Just how Squire Boone came to appear so opportunely in the wilderness at the time he did will perhaps always remain a mystery. Some have it that he had brooded long over the absence of his brother, finally concluded that he must be hard put to it across the Laurel Ridge, and so went to his aid. Others hold the theory that it was all arranged for at the beginning. If Daniel was not back in the settlements at a given time, Squire was to set out upon a sort of relief expedition.

But, however that may be, there he was, and with two packs of necessary things, the more important of which were powder and ball, and flints for their gun-locks.

A new time set in for the hardy adventurers; in their increased numbers there was less danger of attack; in their possession of plenty of ammunition they were better able to make a defense in case the Shawnees

should reappear. However, their vigilance did not relax; they were but four, after all, and they must be as saving of good black powder as they could, so they made their camps in the thick of the cane-brakes and masked their fires and covered their tracks.

But in spite of their continued caution, danger crept upon them stealthily. While Boone and Stuart were one day in pursuit of game they came upon an Indian ambuscade. The savages leaped upon them with yells, firing as they came. Stuart fell, shot through and through; but Boone, covering his flight by the deadly cracking of his rifle, sped through the woods and escaped.

That night he rejoined Squire and the other hunter at the place appointed; and when he told his story a gloom fell upon the little camp as dark as the fate of poor Stuart.

But the deadly work of the savages was not yet done. Only a few days after this

the man who had accompanied the younger Boone upon the relief expedition disappeared. For days the brothers searched for him. They found the moccasin-made tracks of the Shawnee hunters all about, but no trace of the white man was to be found.

And so Daniel Boone and his brother were left alone in the heart of that savage country, hundreds of miles from all aid and with the fate of their companions weighing heavily upon them. But did this break down their resolution? Did the danger which hemmed them in weaken their stout spirits? Because the wilderness was hostile, because the red warriors were relentless, because death hovered over them, did their hearts misgive them? No! Rather did it add to their purpose. Their stubborn spirits were not of the sort to accept defeat until it was beyond humanity to refuse it. And they felt that it was far from that stage as yet.

So they increased their caution, always

held their weapons ready, lived like the wild things of the woods, never trusting to an appearance, never taking a sound for granted. Through the whole of the winter they lived this life of peril. And when spring came, their work not being done and their provisions and ammunition being low, it was determined that Squire go back to the settlements for a fresh supply.

"But, Dan," said the unselfish younger brother, "I don't care to leave you here in the midst of danger."

Daniel placed his hands upon his shoulders, and said, gravely:

"You are doing your share, when all's said and done. True, there is peril here; but is there more, lad, than you will face as you press back across the mountains alone?"

And so Squire mounted a horse, waved a good-bye and set out. Daniel watched him until the fresh green of the spring growth hid him from view, and then he turned to

face the wilderness alone. But, undaunted, he pushed his explorations from day to day throughout the months which followed; more and more complete did his knowledge of the country grow; firmer and firmer became his conviction that in this region there would one day grow a great state, with broad farms and populous cities.

The danger from savages was continuous; apparently the Indians saw in the presence of Boone the first step in the invasion of the white man, and so were eager to check the movement before it could be fairly started. At night the lone hunter would steal through the cane-brake toward his camp; cautiously he would observe it from a distance, and noting that it had been visited during the day, he would steal away as silently as a shadow.

Boone was a natural woodsman. In him the craft of the forest and trail reached perfection; no other man in the annals of the West possessed the cunning with which he

threw the enemy off the trail and baffled his pursuit.

Toward the end of July Squire Boone returned with horses, meal and ammunition. Then after a time they pressed on toward the Cumberland River, or what is now so called, and explored the country in that direction. More and more beautiful the region grew to Daniel; more and more he determined that it would be his future home.

"It's a paradise on earth," he told Squire. "There never was such a hunting-ground, such forests or such a chance for farming. If any man is to find peace anywhere, it is in this country which we have discovered."

And filled with this thought they completed their explorations in the following spring, and then made their way back to the settlements with the news.

CHAPTER VII

ATTACKED!

With the return of Daniel Boone and his brother to North Carolina the news of the beautiful country beyond the ridge began to spread. People were eager to hear of his adventures and of his discoveries; and from all the region around about the Yadkin they came to listen to him.

A great deal of discontent was abroad in North Carolina. The government was not at all what it should have been. Tryon was a corrupt, overbearing official, detested by the settlers; and the hardy spirits who kept the border were not of the sort to submit to tyranny. So when Boone came back with the beauties of Kentucky upon his tongue, the richness of her soil, the size of her streams and woods and the promise she

held out to all who were willing to come to her, he set them all by the ears.

But the settlements were thin and far between; men were few; conditions were such that not all could drop their affairs in the north state and undertake an adventure into the new land. This being so, by the time a party of settlers was organized to go into and take up homesteads in Kentucky, several years passed.

Among the first to enlist in this expedition were Oliver Barclay, Eph Taylor and Sandy Campbell. Eph's father meant to move his whole family into the new region, and the man for whom Sandy worked was about to do the same. Well grown, broad of shoulder and strong as young oaks, the three made no mean addition to the band.

"A few years make a great difference," said Boone, as he looked at them. They were gathered before him by the sides of the horses upon which they had ridden over to his place. His head was nodding

approvingly. "It's such lads as you that are needed where there's forests to be felled and redskins to be fought."

The boys listened to his account of his capture with Stuart by the Shawnees; also to the long months which he spent alone in the wilderness, enemies ever upon his trail, but persisting in his task in the face of all. And when, at length, they rode away, their faces were grave, their eyes shining.

"That was a fine thing to do," said Eph, in great admiration. "A very fine thing. I reckon there's not another in the settlements that would have stayed to finish up with all those dangers crowding around him."

"I always knew that Mr. Boone was like that," said Sandy. "I'd watch the way he'd ride his horse, or hold his rifle, or speak to any one who'd meet him. He had a way about him that told you he'd be a hard man to beat."

"I think to do what you set out to do is one of the best proofs of quality in a man," spoke Oliver. "Sometimes it's easy, and sometimes it's hard to do; but to do it's the thing, and nothing else will answer if you mean to be worth anything."

It was late in September in the year 1774 that Boone started, with his family, to take up his home in the country beyond the Laurel Ridge. Squire Boone was with them, and he helped Daniel and his sons to see to the packhorses, the cattle and the hogs which were taken to stock the new farm in the wilderness.

Near Powell's Valley, not many miles distant, the Boones were met by the Taylors, the family of the farmer for whom Sandy worked, and a number of other prospective homesteaders. As the expedition now stood there were some forty hardy, courageous men in its column, armed and ready for the toil of the march.

Ahead rode Oliver Barclay, Eph Taylor and young Campbell with some of the younger of the men; in a line came the packhorses and those bearing the women and children. Boone and the main body of the settlers rode beside the pack animals, their rifles across their saddle-bows. In the rear came the cattle in the care of another band of youths who had undertaken this part of the work under the watchful eye of Boone's eldest son.

For a week this formation was kept; at night they camped at sides of streams with guards set out to watch for the Indian prowlers who might have trailed them during the day and who might now be waiting for a murderous opportunity from the underbrush; also the cattle and hogs were to be kept from the attacks of those stealthy beasts which prowl the night.

They headed for that break in the mountain chain afterward known as the Cumberland Gap; never a sight of a red-

skin was had, never a sign of his trail anywhere. But there he was, nevertheless, for just eleven days after the journey began, while they were passing through a particularly difficult place, there came a sudden murderous volley of bullets and arrows in the rear, a rush of red robbers, and the scattering of most of the cattle into the woods. And six of the rear guard, including Boone's son, were left dead in the trail.

Instantly, upon the firing of the volley, the column of emigrants came to a halt; a line of defense was formed and the lightest of the horsemen began scurrying upon the trail of the savages who fled through the passes.

But no blows of consequence were struck, and the riders returned. That night a grave council was held. The women were frightened by the murderous attack; some of the men began to see visions of constant fighting ahead with little time for profit-

able work; and so they lost heart in the enterprise. They thought it best that they return.

But Boone, his brother, and others of the party were for pushing on.

"Attacks by the Indians are to be expected," said the pioneer; "they will always resist the march of the white man. And if we are to settle the rich country on the other side of the hills, it's not by weakening under the first blow they strike. We must press forward; we must strike back; we must never for a moment show the varmints that we fear them."

But the bold counsel of Daniel was not listened to. The shock of the attack, the loss of the cattle, the six youths slain, all in a moment's time, hung heavily over the spirits of the emigrants, clouding them with gloom. It was agreed among them that they would start at sunrise and head back for the settlements.

On that first spiritless day of the return

march, Oliver Barclay found himself by the side of Boone.

"Heading back for Hillsboro?" he asked.

Boone shook his head.

"No; for the Virginia settlements on the Clinch River," he replied.

"I've been thinking," said Oliver, whose hopes had received a shattering blow by the sudden change of front, "that we need not give the matter up after all."

Boone looked at him questioningly.

"There are a few who are willing to go on across the mountains. Suppose, after we leave those who feel that they must return at the Clinch settlements, we turn about and go with the few we can hold together."

Again the backwoodsman shook his head.

"I reckon you don't quite see just what your uncle, the colonel, wants done," he said. "We didn't start only for the purpose of getting into the new country. The

idea was to plant a colony. And to do that we must have people."

"But," persisted Oliver, with boyish ardor, "there's your family and the Taylors. And Mr. Miller told Sandy he'd keep to the original agreement if any one else would."

But Boone was fixed in his determination.

"We must plant a colony of some size if we plant any at all. A few families would always be in danger where enough to supply a couple of score of fighting men, if needed, would be fairly safe. For Injuns, youngster, are a careful lot; they seldom attack when there's any danger of loss. Another thing, the first lot of emigrants must be numerous enough to attract others. Men go where men are; it's only a few who have a liking for lonely places."

And so the saddened column pushed toward the Clinch River, and Boone's first attempt to settle Kentucky was at an end.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THREE BOYS RIDE ON A MISSION

However, as it chanced, it was just as well that the first attempt of Daniel Boone to colonize Kentucky failed. For a little later, the first muttering of that great Indian uprising, called the Dunmore War, began to be heard, and along the whole border ran the firebrand, the scalping knife and the tomahawk.

But previous to this outbreak of the tribes, Boone was engaged in another enterprise which tested his quality as a woodsman and explorer. Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, had some time before sent a number of surveyors to the country round about the falls of the Ohio; and now he desired that these men be guided through

the wilderness back to the settlements. Boone and a man named Stoner were engaged for this work, and set out heavily armed, but carrying little or no baggage. The surveying party was found and guided to the settlements according to contract, and without mishap. The whole journey was of some eight hundred miles and through hard country; but the two woodsmen managed to do it in the remarkable time of two months.

Louder and louder grew the muttering of the coming war; closer and closer pressed the tribes from all points of the compass. Delawares, Wyandots, Shawnees, Cayugas and Mingos; the forests gave up war parties in full paint and feathers each day; councils were held, dances were danced; vengeance was to be had, no matter what the cost, for the wrong that had been done the great chief Logan by the whites.

The soldiers were everywhere drilling to

meet the expected onslaught of the Indians; the celebrated fighting chiefs, Red Eagle and Cornstalk, were upon the border, ripe for the struggle; and Dunmore knew that if once they gave themselves seriously to the work of revenge, he'd be hard pressed to beat them back.

Soon after his return with the surveying party, Daniel Boone was made a captain by the governor and given charge of three garrisons. And to these came Oliver Barclay and his friends Eph and Sandy.

"Do you really think Chief Logan will strike?" asked Oliver, eagerly, of Boone.

"It looks like it," answered the backwoodsman. "Logan has been wronged, and as he's a man of spirit, even if he is only an Injun, why, he's up and ready to avenge it. In my opinion there'll be a flare along the whole line that'll turn many a night into day."

"What of the settlers in the outlying places?"

"I've been passing the word for them to come in. Better lose their property than their lives."

"Are they coming in?"

"A good many of them are; others are waiting to make sure that the redskins will rise." There was a pause and then Boone proceeded: "There's one thing that worries me, though, and that's the case of those people at the head of that small branch to the southwest. The scouts sent out warned everybody all through that region but them; by a kind of misunderstanding they were not looked after. As it stands, nobody is sure if they know how things stand with the Indians or not."

"You're going to have them looked after, though," said Oliver.

Boone looked worried.

"It's got to be done," said he. "But I can't go myself, and just now there is nobody to send."

"Eph and I will go," declared young

Barclay, resolutely; "maybe Sandy, too—it'll be good sport and some excitement."

"And mixed in more than a mite of danger—don't forget that," said Boone.

"If there was no danger there would be no excitement," laughed Oliver, and away he swung to search out Eph and the Scotch boy.

The latter, in preparation for action of some kind, was whetting the edge of a huge saber upon a stone which some one had given him. Eph Taylor sat at his side rubbing carefully at the lock of his much considered rifle Jerusha.

"She's in good working order as she stands," said Eph, by way of explanation. "And she always shoots true and fair; but then a little extra looking after won't hurt her now, for there's no telling when I'll get the next chance to look after her rightly."

"Now, there you spoke the truth," said Oliver. "It may be, indeed, some time, for we're going to take horse in ten min-

utes and be off to the head of the south branch."

Both Eph and Sandy at once came to their feet.

"What's happened?" asked the latter, his round, good-natured face all aglow.

"Has Logan begun the war?" asked Eph.

In a few words Oliver explained the situation; and in a marvelously short time Eph's rifle was assembled and loaded; Sandy's saber was wiped dry upon a tuft of grass and sheathed; the horses of all three were saddled and ready to start.

Boone had followed Oliver, and seeing them ready and determined, was the last man in the world to prevent their showing the quality that was in them.

"Look for the Baldwins, the McAfees and the Curleys," said he. "Find the farm of one and you'll learn from him the location of the others. And keep your eyes peeled for Injuns. Don't trust to anything

but the sight of your eyes and the touch of your hands. And if you find occasion to shoot, shoot swiftly and to kill, for the redskins are in no humor to be stopped by anything less than death."

With a wave of the hand, the three boys were off along the winding trail which led toward the river; and this they followed all the remainder of the day. They came to the branch named by Boone toward nightfall, and went into camp in the midst of a clump of white oaks.

A turkey cock had fallen a few hours before under the deadly glance of Jerusha and while Sandy and Oliver were engaged in building a fire, Eph stripped the once proud bird of his feathers and prepared him for the spit. Sandy had filled his haversack with hard biscuits which had been made for the militia, and these, with the meat of the nicely browned turkey, made a bountiful supper.

"It seems to me to be a foolish thing for

a great chief like Logan to do—this war," said Eph, as he picked a turkey bone with much satisfaction. "A man like him, knowing how little chance the Injuns have against the troops of the colony, ought to have some horse sense."

"They say Dunmore's soldiers massacred his entire family," said Oliver. "Of course, we can't get the facts just yet, but if any of it is true, why, Logan, being an Indian, can see nothing else to do."

"Many an innocent person will suffer for the doings of the hungry government and the red robbers," said Sandy with Scottish foresight. "And it's always so, I suppose, for they are the least prepared."

They spent the night among the oaks and were stirring at an early hour in the morning. The sun was not an hour old when they were in the saddle once more and were riding along the branch in the direction of the scattered holdings of the detached settlers.

At noon they halted, allowed their mounts to graze for an hour and ate a snack themselves. Then into the saddle once more and off again along the tangled way. The sun was sliding down in the west, growing greater and redder as it went, and the trees were beginning to cast long shadows in the bare spaces, when Eph Taylor suddenly drew up his horse. Holding up a warning hand, he said :

" Listen ! "

Like graven figures the boys sat their horses, their faces turned in the direction of the setting sun.

Sharp and with rending crispness of a sound traveling across a great silence, there came the unmistakable report of a rifle. A moment later there came another and still another. A clamor arose above the distant trees.

" Rifle shots ! " cried Eph.

" And the Shawnee war cry ! " said Oliver.

As one they inspected the locks of their pieces and their primings. Again and again came the rifle shots from the westward; and again and again from above the tree tops came the shrill yells of the redskins.

"We've been quite near one of the settlers' houses without knowing it," spoke Sandy Campbell. "And they are being attacked by Shawnees." Looking steadily at his two friends he added: "What shall we do?"

"There is but one thing we can do," replied Oliver.

"And that's get over there as soon as we can and do our share in teaching these varmints a lesson," finished Eph.

And they shook the reins of their good horses and sprang down the bank toward the brawling branch. There was a ford at no great distance and this they crossed with a rush, splashing the water high in the air. Then up the farther bank they sped and across a clearing which they perceived

behind a thin fringe of trees. Swift and soft thudded the hoofs of their flying horses upon the ground ; through the tops of some ancient oaks they caught the outline of the chimney of a white man's dwelling; and between the thick growing trunks they saw the plumes and war paint of the savages who encircled it.

CHAPTER IX

DEFENDING A LOG CABIN

A SWIFT glance showed Oliver Barclay that there were perhaps twoscore Indians in the band. Directly in front were about half this number fighting from behind stumps, logs and tree trunks.

"At them at top speed," said Oliver, "and each pick an important man if you can see one. After you fire, shout as loud as you can!"

Like thunderbolts the three lads swept down upon the war party of Shawnees. Shooting from the saddle, with horse going at top speed, was one of the tricks of marksmanship cherished and practiced by the youths at the frontier; and so, as the three long weapons cracked, three savages sprang into the air with tossing arms and fell dead

upon the ground. Then yelling like demons the lads plunged among the others.

Taken utterly by surprise the redskins were demoralized. Evidently they thought, judging by the boldness of the attack, that what they saw was but a part of a large force of whites; so in the panic of the moment they turned and fled.

Never checking the speed of their horses the boys dashed up to the cabin which was now in full view. Throwing themselves from their horses they proceeded to wipe and reload their rifles.

As they were so engaged the door of the cabin was flung open and an old man with a flowing white beard appeared upon the threshold. He had a blood-stained bandage about his head, and a rifle was gripped in his hand. Behind him the boys caught glimpses of a number of anxious faces.

"Glad to see you, lads," cried the old settler, welcomingly. "How many of you are there?"

"Just the three," answered Eph, a grin on his face.

The man with the white beard looked the amazement he felt.

"Only three, and come a-plunging into the critters that way?"

A murmur went up from those behind him.

"I reckon the Shawnees thought we were a regiment, at least, the way they ran off," said Oliver, laughing at the recollection.

"Yes, and by this time they've seen their mistake and will come ——"

"Whizz! Thud!"

The feathered shaft of an arrow quivered from one of the logs just below Sandy Campbell's shoulder; a hail of others flew all about them.

"They've found it out!" cried a man from within the house. As he spoke he sprang out and threw open the heavy door of a building adjoining the cabin. "Quick," said he. "Drive your horses in here."

The boys led the horses through the doorway; the man followed them in and threw a heavy oaken bar into place. The sounds from the cabin showed that the door there had also been made secure, and then the siege was once more begun.

There was a doorway leading into the cabin from the building which was crowded with horses and cattle. Through this came the white-bearded man and some others.

"We're obliged to you, young strangers, for what you tried to do for us. And we are sorry that you've run into this danger."

"We rode this way on the word of Captain Boone that some settlers were perhaps unwarned of the Indian rising," said Oliver. "Perhaps you are one of them, sir."

"My name," said the old man, "is Curley."

"Do you know anything of the McAfees and Baldwins who live hereabout?"

"They are all here," said Mr. Curley.

"They grew suspicious of things yesterday, and rode over, thinking if the worst came we'd all be together, and so have a better chance for defense."

There were at least a dozen grown men gathered in the Curley cabin, and almost as many boys, some of whom were old enough to take part in the defense. The wives and daughters of the settlers were, in the main, courageous and accustomed to the idea of danger; some of them, indeed, looked capable of taking up a rifle and using it as well as brother or husband. The heavy timber walls of the house were pierced by small openings, each of which permitted the barrel of a rifle to be protruded.

At each of these port-holes was stationed a man; keen eyes watched the movements of the Shawnees upon the edge of the clearing, and now and then a shot rang out or an arrow whizzed through the air as a red marksman sought to drive bullet or barb through an opening.

While Oliver talked to Mr. Curley and several of the other settlers and gave them all the information he possessed as to the state of the border, Eph Taylor selected an unguarded port-hole and protruded the eager muzzle of the faithful Jerusha.

"Take care of yourself, youngster," said a man in buckskins at the next opening. "Don't trust too much to your port-hole being narrow; there's an Injun there on the edge of the timber who's doing some almighty good shooting with the bow; several times he's put one of his shafts right on through."

Keenly, Eph scoured the timber line; from one place or another a rifle cracked, or a bowstring sang almost constantly. But he was not long in locating the marksman of whom the settler had spoken. He lay behind the uprooted butt of a huge tree which had resisted both axe and fire; a thick growth of weeds had sprung up about it, and it afforded a splendid vantage place

for a marauder with a quick eye and a steady hand.

Twice Eph saw an arrow speed from behind this shelter and bury itself in the timbers upon the edge of a port-hole. Then a cry told that a third shot had flown through and found a mark.

"Through the arm," said the man who had spoken to Eph. "That varmint out there has an eye like a hawk."

Carefully Eph watched the uprooted stump and studied the method of the savage sharpshooter behind it. Never once did he catch sight of any part of the Shawnee; not for an instant did even so much as a tip of a plume show above his breastwork. Satisfying himself as to this, Eph took to examining other parts about the tree butt. A stirring in the growth about its largest end took his eye; the movement was of the slightest, but the eyes of the boy were fixed upon it with all the eagerness of a practiced hunter.

The shadows from the trees had grown enormously; but the great red sun sent slanting bars of light through the maze of trunks here and there; and one of these caught a metal point just as it was steadily poised for a shot from behind the butt, and the glitter attracted the eye of Eph. The brain of the boy worked like lightning; from the position of the arrow-head he calculated the position of the arm that held the bow. The black eye of Jerusha turned grimly upon the spot in which Eph's judgment fixed the Shawnee's arm; then the rifle spoke. A cry of pain made answer and an arrow flew wild, burying its point in the ground.

"I reckon that Injun will need some care and considerable rest before he's much of a success as a fancy shot in the future," remarked young Taylor, with a grin at his neighbor.

"That was a good shot," said the man. "I sort of felt that Injun was behind the

stump there; but I couldn't get any signs of him nohow."

Darkness drew on; supper was cooked and eaten in the cabin; part of the defenders sat down to the meal while a part manned the port-holes; when the first lot had satisfied their hunger they changed places with the watchers. But with the coming of the night the attack of the Shawnees did not abate; the cracking of their rifles went on, the whizzing of the arrows continued. Finally there came a flare through the darkness; it was as though a ball of fire had described an arch, and then fallen with a thud on the roof.

The faces of the settlers blanched.

"A fire arrow!" said one.

"The varmints are trying to burn the house over our heads," cried another.

But old Mr. Curley took the matter coolly enough.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "As it happens, friends, the roof is of new green

wood, cut and put on only this summer; so the arrows won't set fire to it in a hurry."

Ball after ball of fire, each attached to a cunningly aimed arrow, fell upon the roof. But the green wood would not take the fire readily, as the old settler had prophesied. Seeing this the savages ceased throwing the fire arrows, and there fell a silence over all outdoors as complete as the darkness.

"Something is going forward," spoke Sandy, his eye at a port-hole endeavoring to pierce the black pall which enveloped everything. "The villains are not so quiet as that for nothing."

There was, indeed, something ominous in the silence; the night seemed crowded with the grotesque forms of fear; a feeling that there was something—a dreadful something—pressing toward them, settled upon the defenders.

"Ready all!" said the man in the buckskins. "We'll have them down on us in a moment."

"And remember, lads," warned old Mr. Curley, "our powder is not too plentiful. So don't waste a shot. Be sure of your Injun before you pull trigger."

The prediction of the man in buckskin was, a moment later, fulfilled. Silent as ghosts the Shawnees had formed a complete circle about the cabin and crept across the clearing toward it. Now they were close enough for a rush; the war-whoop, that thing of fear on the border, rang out; the red braves, dusky and but faintly seen, were under the log walls.

"Be sure of your shots!" cried old Mr. Curley; "pick your redskin, lads, and don't waste the good black powder!"

With cold precision the rifles spoke through the port-holes, and in each case a yell told of a warrior hit. But the Shawnees were not idle. Unseen, they had borne with them great armfuls of dry brush; under the fire of the rifles they heaped them against the door of the cabin.

THE RIFLES SPOKE THROUGH THE PORT-HOLES

Like cats others scaled the walls and gained the roof.

The first flare of the fire when the brush was ignited acted badly for the Shawnees, however. Apparently they had failed to foresee that they would be thrown into full relief by the glare; at any rate the deadly rifles of the whites swept a rain of lead among them, and a dozen fell to the earth. Enraged, the remainder charged the house, brandishing tomahawks and scalping knives; bowstrings sang and rifles cracked; the flames about the door mounted higher and higher.

Calmly the backwoodsmen went about the work of defense; steadily they loaded and fired; watchfully they peered through the port-holes.

But up to this time all had failed to hear those savages who had mounted to the roof. Safe out of the fire of the deadly rifles, a half score braves were here collected, cunningly planning their next move.

At one end of the log house there was a wide-mouthed chimney, built of green wood and thickly lined with mud. The fire over which the settlers' supper had been cooked had died down and peering down the smooth interior of this shaft, the Shawnees grinned with dreadful satisfaction.

"That fire outside there is taking hold," said old Mr. Curley below in the big room of the cabin. "The timber in the door is heavy, but as dry as tinder."

Anxiously the men looked at each other; the faces of the women were fearful. And in this tense moment there came a scrambling sound, a cloud of dust arose from the fireplace together with a shower of dull sparks. A woman screamed as the tufted head of an Indian appeared in the great fireplace to be followed an instant later by another and still another.

CHAPTER X

A NIGHT EXPERIENCE

Following the scream of the woman, Eph Taylor turned around. He was the first of the riflemen to catch sight of the intruders. Like a flash the eye of Jerusha ceased to stare upon the wild scenes going on outside; it swept inward and the crack of the good rifle spoke the death of a Shawnee. Oliver's piece accounted for another; two more fell in the act of braining a defender with their hatchets.

Taking warning from the deaths of the more adventurous the Shawnees upon the roof of the cabin made no more attempts by way of the chimney. Old Mr. Curley shrewdly judged that the swift fate which had overtaken their comrades would have this effect, but nevertheless he made sure

there would be no more surprises from that direction.

"Dick," said he, to one of his sons, a stalwart youth who had been firing from one of the port-holes with a pair of horseman's pistols, "see to the fireplace. Don't take your eyes off it, and if you catch sight of a red hide, fill it full of holes."

Just then the most important thing of all was to scatter the fire from the door before it did serious harm. The brush was blazing furiously and that the door was also burning they felt sure, judging from the jets of smoke and flame that shot between the heavy planks. The man in buckskin, who was a trapper of the region and not connected with the little settlement on the fork, now ventured a plan.

"Let one man stand ready to throw open the door, let another have a pail of water to throw on the outside of it where it is burning, and two more stand ready to kick away the brush. But before the door is

open we'll drive the Injuns in front to cover; while they are still running will be the time to act."

As this plan was as good as any, they at once proceeded to put it into operation. The rifles increased their deadly cracking and the Shawnees, who had continued their charges in order to keep the fire supplied with fresh brush, were unable to stand up under it. Helter skelter they fled for cover; the door was thrown open, the brush kicked away and a drench of water sent streaming over the burning planks. Then the door was slammed shut before the infuriated redskins had much idea of what was taking place, the bar dropped into its sockets, and the whites were permitted to breathe easier, now that all immediate danger from fire was past.

There followed some scattered volleys from the savages; but after a time a silence fell; and some distance away camp-fires began to sparkle in the forest.

"They've withdrawn for a while at least," spoke Mr. Curley. "They will eat their meat at the fires and the cunning ones among them will arrange another plan of attack."

Oliver and his friends during this lull gathered at one end of the cabin.

"It seems to me," said young Barclay, "that the Indians mean to take this house one way or another. Even if they can't capture it by attack they can starve us out."

Eph Taylor nodded his head.

"Yes," said he. "That's what it will end with if help doesn't come, I'm afraid."

"With a fresh horse and a clear way through the Shawnees, I could make Captain Boone's garrison by noon to-morrow," said Oliver. "So why wait on the chance that help will come?"

"Noll!" cried Sandy; "you don't mean to say that you'll ——"

"In a case like this," said Oliver, firmly,

"waiting is a mistake. Ill luck is as likely to befall as good. If they'll let me, I'm going to venture it."

In a moment he had left them and was eagerly engaged with Mr. Curley, the Baldwins and the McAfees. The man in buckskins also entered into the talk. Earnestly Oliver laid his thought before them; soberly they considered it; gravely they discussed its merits.

"My horse Hawk is like a cat at night," said Oliver. "He is absolutely sure-footed and seems able to see in the dark. If I can win through the Shawnees he'll carry me to Boone's camp like the wind."

The white-bearded Mr. Curley laid his hand kindly upon his shoulder.

"You are a brave lad," said he; "and it's with spirits like yours that success lies. So if you are eager to undertake this thing, I will not be one to lift my voice against it; for indeed its carrying out may mean the lives of us all."

There was a murmur at this; all seemed to be of the same idea.

Without delay, Oliver went into the building where the horses were tied. Hawk lifted his head and rubbed his nose upon his young master's shoulder. The young horse had gained in power since the day of his race with the wicked mount of Long Panther; and his increased years had lost him his coltish tricks. As he stood now he was a swift, intelligent horse of the sort which can be depended upon.

"Now, old fellow," spoke the boy as he finished with the saddle and stood patting Hawk's neck. "This is going to be a very lively night for both of us. So do your best for me; more depends on your heels to-night than ever before in your life."

Sharply Eph Taylor scoured the clearing before the cabin; other eyes, equally eager and intent, did the like for the sides and the rear. But keen as was their vision they could penetrate but a short distance into

the blackness. What was beyond the range of their sight they could only imagine.

"So far as I can see," said Eph, "there's no one to stop you. But," and he stroked his long chin, "that's not very far."

"When I give the word, open the door very softly," said Oliver. He then shook hands with those who pressed about him, wishing him a safe journey through the night; then he spoke quietly to Eph and Sandy. A moment later the door had opened and closed behind him.

Cautiously he turned his head from side to side, listening; Hawk stood as still as a beast of bronze, seeming to understand something of the danger of which he was a partaker. No sound reached the lad; from off among the trees he saw the flitting forms of the Indians about the camp-fires; but none of them seemed nearer. During the time spent at the port-holes of the Curley cabin, young Barclay had observed the lay of the land, thinking there might

come a time when a dash for liberty would be their only chance. This served him well now in the darkness; mounting, he turned his horse's head in the direction furthest removed from the Indian camp-fires, and so began his journey.

There was, as he had observed, an opening in the forest growth in this direction, and he trusted to the "night sight" and instinct of Hawk to find it.

In this his confidence was in every way warranted; in a direct line, apparently, the good horse made for the opening. But scarcely had he gained the blacker shadows cast by the trees on either side, than the horse stopped with a snort. At the same instant a number of forms leaped from the sides of the path, and Oliver was dragged to the ground.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF POINT PLEASANT

WHETHER he had received a blow upon the head, or had been stunned by the force of the fall from his horse, Oliver Barclay did not know. But, in any event, when he recovered consciousness, he found himself bound hand and foot and securely fastened to a tree in the heart of the Shawnee camp.

Near him sat a young savage whose left hand was swathed in bandages; and in the flickering firelight which fell upon this brave's face, Oliver recognized Long Panther.

"Well," said the lad with as much unconcern as he could assume, "you have me, Long Panther."

The coppery face of the Shawnee turned toward the white boy; and the light of the fire was not more deep than the light in his

eyes. But beyond this he showed nothing but the stoical front of his race.

"Yes," said he, "we have you. And I do not think another will mount and ride for help to-night."

"I hope not, if he's not to have better fortune than I've had," said Oliver.

"In two suns we could take the cabin of the white man," said Long Panther, his burning eyes turning in the direction of the Curley cabin. "But the time is short. At dawn we must take the trail. The Mingo chief, Logan, calls, and we go to him that we may strike a harder blow."

Oliver felt a thrill of gladness at the news that the siege upon the log house was to be lifted, and that the Shawnees were about to abandon their purpose.

"If I had only known that," was his thought, "I might have stayed comfortably inside and learned in the morning that all danger was past."

But, as the venture he had made had

seemed the best thing to do under the circumstances, he did not waste any regrets upon it; instead, he gave up his thoughts entirely to the situation in which he found himself, and began studying out a plan of escape.

"Many things," said Long Panther, somberly, "I have suffered at the hands of the white man. And I have desired vengeance. This," and he held up his bandaged left hand, "is the last."

That Long Panther had been the marksman behind the tree butt now, for the first time, occurred to Oliver; the bullet from Eph's rifle had found a shining mark, indeed.

"It is the hand with which I hold the bow," mourned the young savage. "And in the battles that are to come, I cannot do the work that has been given me. But the white face will pay," said he, as he arose to his feet and stood looking down at Oliver. "The white face will pay."

He turned and stalked away; and as the eyes of the white boy followed him there seemed to be an ominous something in the very way in which he bore himself—a threat of reprisal that was to come.

But whatever gloomy fears found a place in young Barclay's mind, they were not realized that night at least. He slept where he lay, under guard of three unwinking redskins. And when morning came he was given some food, his hands were pinioned behind him, and with a rope tied about his body, the other end of which was fast to the saddle of a warrior, he was forced to march in the midst of the band which began filing through the forest toward the great meeting place of the hostile tribes.

On the way they were joined by other war parties of their own nation; and by nightfall of the following day, young Barclay found himself in the heart of a vast Indian encampment. Far into the night

he saw the council fires burning and saw the chiefs and head men of the nations gathered in conference. He heard the celebrated Logan. He heard Cornstalk and his great son Elenipsico as they stood out before the leaders of the tribes and poured forth their torrents of eloquence. That he understood little or nothing of the Indian language made scarcely any difference in the effect the orations had upon the boy. The manner of the great chiefs, their expressions as they recounted their grievances, the fierce passion of their appeal to the silent circle with its iron faces, sent a chill to his heart. He saw that the coming struggle was to be no mean one, that the frontier was, indeed, to be a blaze from end to end.

But what was to be done in his own case of course naturally interested him more than anything else. In a time like this, when open war was declared and the tribes gathered to defy the forces of the colonies,

prisoners were seldom taken, and when they were, it was for the purpose of putting them to the torture.

Oliver had heard the grisly tales the old frontiersmen had to tell of the stake, of the running of the gauntlet, and the various other barbarities that the savage mind conceived, and visions of these rose before his eyes. But, for all, he was shrewd enough and clear-sighted enough to perceive that these things were gone through with at the Indians' leisure.

"Just now," he told himself, "they have much more important matters before them; I shall get their attention later; and even at that, much sooner, perhaps, than I want it."

The Virginia Legislature had called into being an army of something more than a thousand fighting men, and these were now encamped at a place called Point Pleasant, not more than a few hours' ride from the encampment of Logan and his fellow chiefs.

Oliver drew from his captor's manner that the day of battle was near; but that it was to be on the one that was next to break he had no idea until the dawn brought those preparations which were unmistakable. Like a great fan the Mingos, the Wyandots, the Cayugas, the Delawares and the Shawnees spread themselves through the forest; like panthers stalking their prey they advanced.

And this knowledge put a great hope in his heart, for on the morning his guards had not bound his arms with their customary care; in their hurry to be gone they had slighted this duty; and now Oliver knew that it required only a slight struggle to give him the use of his hands. However, he made no sign of this, plodding on in the midst of the Shawnees, apparently dejected and heavy of mind, but in reality keenly observant and watching like a hawk for any chance that would give him liberty.

Now as it happened, some of the whites desired fresh meat that morning and a hunting party of two was in pursuit of deer. These hunters, swift of foot and eager, were following the deer tracks and, for the time, never dreaming of the enemy; then they plunged upon the main body of the Indians and for an instant were so struck with surprise that they stood motionless and staring. A scattering of rifle shots followed; one of the men dropped to the earth, the other bounded away into the thicket and made back toward the encampment of the Virginia army. A few hours later the still advancing Indians encountered several large bodies of whites drawn up in military array. Under cover of a flight of arrows the savages drew back; and the voices of Cornstalk and Logan were lifted, calling on them to be as cunning as foxes and unyielding as rocks.

"This day," said Logan, "shall see the redressing of much wrong, my children.

We shall strike the hand which is lifted over us!"

"Sons of the forest!" cried the really noble savage, Cornstalk, "stand fast! The white faces are before you. The sun has lifted upon the day which is to give you victory!"

Having reached a ground which would give them an advantage, the Indians made a stand and began to rain arrows and lead upon the soldiers of the colony. In almost the first fire the colonels of the two regiments fell dead. A confusion seized the troops, and as it spread from rank to rank they began a retreat full of disorder.

This panic of the whites was seen by Oliver as he stood under guard among the trees, and the boy's heart sank at the sight.

"They run!" said a voice beside him, and turning he recognized Long Panther. "They run like wolves before a forest fire. And you, my white brother, thought they would strike hard and save you!"

Oliver made no reply; and the young Shawnee spoke to the guard in the Indian tongue. They seemed pleased at his words and called out to some others who stood by, not taking part in the attack. Like a flash the message ran along the line of the Indians; and Oliver, though he did not dream of what was coming, saw their grim looks turned upon him and caught a savage satisfaction in them.

"Once," said Long Panther, "you felt proud of your fleetness; in your pride you thought you could outrun the Shawnees." His glowing eyes fixed themselves upon Oliver, glowing with a deeper fire than ever. "And I," went on Long Panther, "told you there might come a day when the Shawnee'd run you a race. That day has now come."

"What do you mean?" asked the white boy.

"There are your friends," and Long Panther pointed toward the retreating regi-

ments. "We give you permission to go to them if—if you can outrun the arrows which will follow you."

Oliver Barclay's face blanched; but a resolution showed in his tightening jaw.

"And if I refuse ——"

"Worse may befall you."

For a moment Oliver hesitated; he saw the line of Indians, their copper-colored faces full of anticipation, the deadly bows in their hands. But he said, firmly:

"What chance have I? Your brothers will pierce me before I've taken a dozen steps." His eyes searched the ground ahead, and then he added: "Give me a start. Let me reach the boulder yonder before you give the word, and I will run."

"I agree," said Long Panther, with savage satisfaction.

He once more spoke to the Shawnees about him and again the word was passed along the line. And the satisfaction of Long Panther was reflected in the faces of all.

"When my white brother is ready," said the maimed bowman looking at Oliver, "I will speak the word."

Oliver braced himself for the ordeal.

"I am ready," said he.

Long Panther cried out a warning to the warriors; then to Oliver he said:

"Run!"

With his hands held behind him by the loosened thongs, Oliver started to run. To the right the Cayugas, the Mingos and the Wyandots were still pressing after the whites; but directly ahead all was clear. With his eyes on the boulder the boy ran slowly. This he thought the better way, as to show a burst of speed might excite the savages, and they might loose their arrows before the time agreed. As it was, their merciless natures quickly manifested themselves; when within a little distance of the rock an arrow whizzed by the boy's head. Feeling sure that this would be instantly followed by more, he increased his

HE INCREASED HIS SPEED

speed; with a headlong plunge he was behind the boulder, and a whirring as of a hundred pairs of wings was all around him, the arrows knocking up clouds of dust as they struck the ground.

A wild yell went up from the Shawnees as the boy disappeared behind the rock; at once they saw that he had shrewdly calculated upon this shelter when he asked that they not fire until he reached it. And with hatchet, knife and spear, they rushed at him.

Oliver slipped his hands free of the thongs, his quick glance going about to see what was the next best thing to do. And then as the savages sped toward him he heard a shout—deep and charged with victory. A third regiment of whites had advanced to the support of the panic-stricken ones; their rifle fire was deadly and they came at full speed. The Mingos, the Wyandots and Cayugas faltered in the face of this unexpected blow; and they

fell back upon the line of Delawares and Shawnees.

At sight of the cloud of warriors in full retreat, the Shawnees rushing upon Oliver paused. Here was graver and more earnest work than the harrying of a single boy and so they turned and hastened to the support of their friends.

Realizing what had happened, the white boy was off like a shot toward the lines of the advancing frontiersmen; how he gained this over a field swept by bullets and arrows he never understood, but gain it he did and a few minutes later with the rifle, powder-horn and bullet-pouch of a fallen soldier, he was loading and firing in the ranks with as much coolness and dispatch as the best of them.

The Indians must have had an advance party on the battle-ground some time before the main body, for it was now learned that their retreat was to a line of fortification made of logs, earth and brush. Be-

hind this they stood firm. The Indians showed that they were possessed of many rifles and a good store of powder; for hours there was a blaze of fire from across the breastwork; and the barbed arrows drove like messengers of death among the whites. Fully fifteen hundred fighting men were behind the fortification and continually the voices of Red Eagle, of Cornstalk or Logan could be heard urging them to fight on.

Charge after charge was made upon this strong place by the Virginia army; General Lewis saw his men falling all about him and realized after a little time that some other method must be pursued if he was to save his force from annihilation.

"Try and get a body of troops in their rear," was a suggestion which he instantly grasped. As it happened, the bank of the Kanawha River favored such a movement; three picked companies under three daredevil leaders were sent to make the attempt.

There was a small stream called Crooked Creek which flowed into the Kanawha. The three companies managed to cross this; its banks were covered with a rank growth of tall weeds; and through this crept the whites upon the unsuspecting savages.

At a word a deadly volley swept into the dense body of Indians; taken utterly by surprise, they were thrown into complete confusion. No foe had been expected from that quarter, and, from the fury of the onset, they thought it must be a heavy body of reinforcements. Completely disheartened they gave way; as the sun went down they were retreating across the Ohio River; and at the fall of night were pressing on through the forest toward their distant villages.

CHAPTER XII

THE FORT AT BOONESBOROUGH

AFTER the battle of Point Pleasant, which was the most severe engagement with Indians in the history of Virginia, the tribes sent messengers to make peace with the governor. In this treaty the Shawnees gave up all claim to the country beyond the ridge.

As the time for the settlement of this great region was completely ripe, Colonel Henderson rode to Boone's place on the Clinch River.

"The Chickasaws we can't reach," said he. "But we can the Cherokees. I want you to visit the chief of that nation and purchase, for my company, all their rights in the new country."

Promptly Boone started off on this mission. Penetrating to the Cherokee

country he opened negotiations with the chiefs and head men of that tribe. Success met him on every hand; the result was that Colonel Henderson later met the Indians in solemn council at Fort Wataga; the price was paid and the deed was signed; and thereafter Kentucky was, of right, free of all Indian claims.

"And now," said Boone to the colonel, "the next thing to do is to take possession. And I calculate that the least delay in that, the better for us."

To this advice Colonel Henderson gave willing ear.

"As all affairs with the Indian nations are settled," said he, "I think what you say is the right thing to do. But to tempt emigrants we must have a way for them to get into the new country without so much hardship. Enlist a company of men and cut a way through the wilderness to the place where you think a colony can be planted."

This was a tremendous task, but Daniel Boone was the man to undertake it. The hardy spirits of the border had confidence in his ability, and when he went among them for volunteers upon this new enterprise, they responded readily enough. Oliver Barclay was to go with the party in the interest of his uncle, and Eph and Sandy, full of the desire for the wilderness, were among the first to offer themselves.

Mounted upon Hawk, for the good horse had escaped the Indians upon the night of his master's capture and wandered back to the Curleys' cabin, Oliver rode along with Boone over the same trail they had traveled upon the previous attempt to get beyond the mountains.

"This time," said Oliver, "we'll reach the new country. For I suppose the Indians are fairly well satisfied by the terms they made."

Boone shook his head; there was a tight-

ening about his mouth, and his eyes held a look of unbelief.

"The Injuns are queer varmints," spoke he. "And they don't regard their word very highly. Now Cornstalk, Logan and their kind mean what they say; but the rank and file never give it a second thought if a good chance comes to them to use their hatchets and scalping knives."

"Then," said Eph Taylor, "there may be trouble even now."

"In this country and for years to come you can surely expect trouble," said Boone. "White and red will never live at peace for very long at a time. There will always be something to stir up a war."

The band gathered by Boone were good riders, accustomed all their lives to living in the open; sturdy axemen, men full of the vim and that perseverance which was so marked in their leader.

The path by which they traveled was well indicated; those who came after

would have no difficulty in following it. The month of March was drawing toward its close when one day they halted at a small stream to drink; they had dismounted and for the moment their attention was relaxed. Suddenly, without a moment's warning, a volley rang out from a dense thicket, two of the party fell to the earth—dead—and two others were wounded.

This attack was much like that on the previous expedition; never for a moment did the whites suspect that the redskins were near. But there the similarity ended. This time the pioneers had no women and children to think of; also they were, in the main, well-trained, crafty Indian fighters, and not a band of careless boys engaged in driving cattle.

The reports of the Indian rifles had hardly died away when each of the adventurers had gained a cover, tree, stump or rock; short and sharp spoke their unerring

pieces and the ensuing yells told of braves who had paid for the attack with their lives.

Seeing that the white men were in no wise daunted by the onslaught and were determined to make a grim resistance, the Indians, who had little stomach for this sort of battle, withdrew.

"They are gone," spoke young Barclay, as he mounted a hillock and saw the band skirting the forest, almost a mile away.

"For the time," answered Boone. "They don't care for a stand-up fight; but they'll always be ready for the rifle shot from ambush. Always expect them, lads; that's the only way to get through in safety."

Warily the pioneers proceeded along the track which afterward became known as "Boone's Way"; but in spite of all this caution the guile of the red man overmatched them; three days after the first ambush, they fell into another; two more

of the party fell dead, and three were wounded.

But grimly they fought the savages back; resolutely they pressed forward on their way toward the river.

"Stand by me, lads," said Boone, "and all the Injuns in the region won't drive us back."

Early in April they reached the Kentucky River; on the south side of this was a fairly clear space, near a salt lick much used by the forest creatures. With an eye to all that was needed for a place of defense, Boone selected this place and at once the work of erecting a fort began.

Scattered through the forest were a number of riflemen whose business it was to warn the workers of the approach of an enemy; the axemen made the hills and woods ring with their strokes; the trees came crashing down to be lopped of their limbs, cut into lengths and fitted into place. Log upon log the famous fort of Boones-

borough, so famous in the annals of Kentucky and the West, arose in sturdy strength.

"We'll make her bullet-proof and high enough to keep the redskins outside," said Boone, as he labored with his men in their work of construction.

The fort was two hundred and sixty feet in length and one hundred and fifty in breadth and was made up of a series of cabins, each of heavy logs and connected by a high fence of logs, pointed at the top as a sort of stockade. There was a cabin at each corner of the fort; all the cabin doors and windows opened inside the stockade. The only egress was by way of a heavy gate opening toward the river and another which opened upon the opposite side.

During the months of April and May and partly into June of the year 1774, the adventurers hewed and wrought upon their defense; in this time one man was killed by the hostiles; after that, however, there was

no sight or sound of the enemy. In the middle of June all was finished.

Colonel Henderson and some members of the company which had purchased the rights of the Cherokees arrived shortly after this; and with them came twoscore settlers, a train of packhorses and many things which made life easier for the pioneers.

It was Colonel Henderson who gave the stronghold the name of Boonesborough, in honor of the brave woodsman who had dared so much for the founding of the new commonwealth; and much elated over the recognition given his service, Boone started back toward the Clinch River with a few companions.

"We have plenty of men," said he, "but it will never be a recognized settlement without families. So I'm going to set an example to others by bringing out mine."

It was in October that Daniel Boone turned his back finally upon the eastern

settlements; and with some other hardy adventurers and their families, he set out once more through the Cumberland Gap and into the wilderness which they were to make bloom as a garden.

CHAPTER XIII

CONCLUSION

For a time the little settlement on the Kentucky grew and prospered without much notice from the Indians; but it was not long before the first rumblings of the Revolution were heard in that far-off place; it was learned, with alarm, that the colonies were rising in arms against England.

When the clash came and the colonists began to strike determinedly for their rights, the English agents in the northwest began operations which once more lighted the fires of border warfare. They bribed the savages with gifts, they supplied them with guns and ammunition and bid them wipe out the little settlements which courage and toil had built up in the wilderness.

Along the borders of the north and the west the terrible war-whoop once more rang out, and the tomahawk and scalping knife resumed their deadly work. But Boonesborough remained calm and unruffled; its settlers hunted and fished, cleared the land and planted scanty crops of corn.

In the winter of 1776 a man was killed by a swift-moving war party; not until the summer, about the very time when the Congress at Philadelphia was giving to the world its first great message of liberty, did the great war cast its first ominous shadow upon Boonesborough.

The July sun shone upon the bright waters of the Kentucky; the breeze stirred among the trees. A bark canoe, propelled by the handsome Betsey Collaway, daughter of a settler, her younger sister Frances, and a young daughter of Daniel Boone, was darting here and there like a bird. The girls had decked the little craft with wild flowers, gathered along the banks, and the

ring of their laughter floated across the river in happy chorus.

Any one listening might have noticed that the joyous sound suddenly died away. For the canoe, as it drifted under a high bank, shoved its nose into the mud; and as the girls were about to push it off, they saw the bushes part almost beside them and a number of Indians, their fingers upon their lips calling for silence, step to the water's edge.

Sheer fright kept the girls mute for an instant; and in the next it was too late to cry out, for the savages had entered the canoe, and were threatening them with their hatchets.

When they saw them huddled, overcome with terror, at one end of the canoe, they seized the paddles and drove the craft out into the river; night was falling and the passage was not noticed from the fort; and so the Indians gained the other shore. The girls were forced out of the boat and

with the weapons of their merciless captors ever threatening them they were led away through the forest.

The girls were first missed by the women of their families; a search showed that they were not within the stockade. Instantly the news spread; men dropped their tasks and became alert and active.

Questions flew about; and Sandy Campbell, coming from a runlet where he had been fishing, caught the sense of them.

"Girls!" said he. "Why, I saw them up the river a little way, in a canoe."

A half dozen bark crafts were in a very few moments being driven up and across the stream. The twilight was long and the July day still persisted, but nothing of the missing ones was to be seen. Long and loud the men in the canoes shouted; but no sound came in answer. Eph Taylor, from the craft in which were also Sandy and Oliver, spied something under a bank.

"A canoe!" he cried.

In a few moments the other searchers were at their sides; all made for the bank. It was the canoe used by the girls!

"Take care!" warned Boone. "Don't anybody get ashore!"

From his own canoe the backwoodsman scanned the bank. The daylight was still strong enough for him to see the imprint of the moccasined feet in the soft ooze.

"Injuns!" said Boone.

A murmur went up from the settlers; the import of the signs was plain.

"They have made off into the woods!" cried one of the men, excitedly. "We must not waste a minute; we must take the trail at once!"

Boone pointed grimly at the sun, which was now well down upon the horizon line.

"In a quarter of an hour it will be dark," he said. "And no trailer that ever stepped can follow an Injun track by torch-light. We'll have to wait for morning."

The night was spent in seeing to rifles and pistols and getting some snatches of sleep. At the first faint sign of dawn the trailing party, in which was Boone, Oliver and his two friends, took up the signs at the river brink and followed them off into the woods.

As cunning as foxes the Indians, knowing that they would be swiftly hunted by the whites, took pains to hide their trail from the very start. And the methods used threw off the trackers for a short time. Into a dense cane-brake led the tracks, and then they seemed to disappear. Keenly, eagerly the hunters sought here and there, but the wile of the savage baffled them.

"Lads," said Boone, finally, wiping his brow, and leaning upon his long rifle, "there's no use in wasting time. As soon as the varmints got into the cane they separated and slipped through it like ghosts. And we might hunt for hours and never pick up the trail."

"Well?" asked one of the men. "What shall we do?"

Boone led the way to the point at which the footprints ceased.

"Here's where they separate," said he, "but the separation is not for good; they keep the same general direction. And that shows that they intend to meet somewhere further on when they think we've been thrown off the track completely."

The woodsmen looked at the tracks once more and nodded their appreciation.

"Suppose we work on that," proceeded Boone. "This bit of cane is a big one; let's skirt it and run the chance of coming on the trail at the other side."

At once this was decided on by the party; with the long, swinging stride of the hunter they journeyed around the cane; this forced them to cover some thirty miles, but at the end they found that Boone's reasoning had been correct; the Indians had come together somewhere in

the tangle and there lay their trail, plainly read by all.

Trained woodsmen all, with the exception of the three boys, and even these possessed no mean skill, the settlers looked to Boone for the word of command.

"From now on, lads," said the backwoodsman, "we shall have less trouble. Look, the trail leads directly to a buffalo path; they think they've thrown us off, and they've grown careless."

Softly, swiftly the trailers struck into the path; as Boone had said, the savages had grown careless; their trail was broad and deep and could have been followed by the least skilful.

The day was well advanced, and the hardy band had covered a full forty miles through the tangled wilderness. But they were trained to long journeys and did not tire.

"We're gaining," said Boone, after an hour or so of steady following on the heavy

track. "They passed here no more than a half hour ago."

The caution of the party increased; they knew the savage nature of the Indians. Let the latter get a whisper of pursuit and the lives of their captives would be snuffed out. The long shadows began to fall in the forest; the patches of sky to be seen through the tree tops grew gray. Suddenly Boone held up his hand.

"Here they are!" said he.

Through the dense growth he pointed to a party of Indians; a few of them were dressing freshly killed game; others were engaged in kindling a fire. Bound to trees near at hand were the three girls.

"Now," said Boone, as he looked to his rifle, "make your shots count; and above all don't allow any of them to get near the girls."

At the word, the whites rushed forward. At the first crash among the underbrush the savages grasped their weapons; but the

long rifles cracked before they could act. The conditions under which the "beads" were drawn made the shots of the trailers difficult; but in spite of this a number of the Indians were hit; and all fled away into the woods, leaving the greater part of their arms and all of their ammunition behind them.

There was the utmost rejoicing in Boonesborough the next day when the trailers returned bringing the three girls with them, frightened, but safe and sound.

This incident served as a warning to the settlers on the Kentucky; the war had finally made its way to their lonely fort. Day after day they found the tracks of scouting parties all about in the forests; hostile shots began to ring in the distance. And then began the fights and sieges for which the sturdy stockade built by Boone and his companions became famous. Encompassed many times by hundreds of savages, with the arrows and

bullets flying thick as hail about it, the fort stood strong and untaken. And through it all went Oliver and Eph Taylor and Sandy Campbell, through it all went the heroic Boone, ever leading, ever daring the wilderness and its crafty savages, always strong under reverses, always wise in victory.

And when the great war was done and liberty was achieved by the colonies, the settlers came in greatly increased numbers, drawn by the wonder stories of Kentucky and the magic name of Boone.

And as the commonwealth grows strong, its wilderness falls before the axe of the pioneer, its broad farms smile where the Shawnee once roamed, the whistles of steamboats sound upon the streams which knew only the prow of the bark canoe, the thoughts of its sons and daughters go back to the old days; and they know that the greatness of Kentucky is founded upon the bold spirit and the long rifle of Daniel Boone.

CHAPTER XIV

SKETCH OF BOONE'S LIFE

DANIEL BOONE'S ancestors were English, his grandfather, George Boone, coming to America in 1717. Squire Boone, son of George, was the father of Daniel.

The Boones purchased a tract of land in what is now Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Squire Boone, Daniel's father, married Sarah Morgan; they had eleven children, Daniel being the fourth and coming into the world on July 14, 1732. This date is according to the family record kept by his father's brother James, who was a schoolmaster. Some of the biographies give different dates; but it is likely that James Boone knew the facts as well as any one.

The county of Bucks was then to all intents a frontier settlement; the Boones

lived in a log house; all about them were the woods, which were running with game, and in which hostile savages were often seen.

Even in his school days, Daniel was known as a hunter; his eye was of the best and his rifle seldom failed. His passion for the wilderness was shown in those early times when he'd wander away in the silent forest and be missing for days. Then they would hunt for him and find him encamped miles and miles away, perhaps cooking his supper at a fire of sticks and calmly planning the building of a hut which was to shelter him for days to come.

A story is told of him which proves his early skill as a hunter. With some other lads of his own age, he started off for a day's hunting of small game. The shades of late afternoon were deepening in the woods, and the boys were on their way back to the settlement when suddenly one of them cried out: "Panther! Panther!" Now

of all the beasts of the forests, the lurking panther was held to be the deadliest; and knowing him for such, the boys ran for their lives. But not so Boone. Steadily he held his ground, his eye searching for the animal. Yes, there it was; a panther sure enough, and a big one. Calmly his long rifle came to his shoulder and his keen eyes drew the "bead." And with the ringing crack of the weapon, down fell the panther, shot through and through.

Boone was still a boy when his father concluded he'd get on better if he went to North Carolina. He took up his homestead on the Yadkin River; and in this section Daniel grew to manhood, married Rebecca Bryan, and became the father of nine children.

During the whole of the dreadful Seven Years' War, the whole frontier swarmed with hostile redskins; but when this ended, comparative quiet settled down, and Daniel Boone made the first of his long excur-

sions into the unknown country beyond the Laurel Ridge or Cumberland Mountains.

The government of the colony of North Carolina had long been oppressive; free spirits like that of Boone could not stand the gall of oppression, and the thought came to him: "What a wonderful place to plant a new settlement this new country would be."

And so when Colonel Henderson spoke to him, as it is believed he did, Boone was ready, and went upon his long exploration of the country of "Cantuck," as he called it in one of his letters. Then followed the events related in this story, which runs very close to historical facts.

After the rescue of the Collaway girls and Boone's daughter from the Indians, the savages came in force and attacked the log fort; but they were driven off. A few months later they returned with two hundred braves in the band. For two days and nights their attack was continued and

at the end of that time they retreated once more, defeated.

The impossibility of holding any communication with the large settlements and the stoppage of supplies caused the hardy band at Boonesborough some suffering. They ran entirely out of salt; and as this was a thing which they must have, Boone determined to procure a supply.

Taking thirty men, he proceeded cautiously to Blue Licks with the intention of making salt from the salt water to be found in that section. While hunting and alone, Boone fell in with a band of several hundred Indians who were on their way to make another attack upon Boonesborough. They made him a prisoner, but following their usual policy they did him no immediate harm; holding him, possibly, for future torture.

Craftily Boone began casting about for the best thing to do; the Indians knew of the presence of his men; to have this huge

band fall upon the thirty might mean death to them all. Boone concluded that to surrender his command and trust to the future was the best thing to be done. So the band of whites gave up their arms, and the Indians changed their plans as to Boonesborough, proceeding instead to their town of Chillicothe, on the Little Miami.

From here Boone and some of his men were sent to Detroit, where Boone's men were turned over to the British. But the savages had conceived such a liking for Daniel himself that they refused to surrender him, determining to adopt him into their tribe. So they took him back to Chillicothe and made him a son of the Shawnee tribe.

Here he remained some months, being treated by the Indians as one of themselves; then a huge war party organized to march upon Boonesborough and take it by surprise, and Daniel saw that if the fort was to be saved, he must escape at once. Slipping

from the Indian town in the early morning, Boone began a desperate journey toward the fort, one hundred and sixty miles away. It took him five days to make the journey, and when he reached the fort he was hailed as one returned from the dead. Indeed, so sure were they that he was dead that his family had returned to North Carolina.

Boone found the stockade in bad condition, and at once set about strengthening it. However, the great band did not move against Boonesborough; the escape of the great backwoodsman must have told them that the settlers would be awaiting them, and as they had had previous experiences of this sort they set the attack for a future time.

In August, no enemy presenting himself, Boone and a small party left the fort and marched against an Indian village on the Scioto. The braves belonging to this camp were encountered in full war paint, some distance from the town, and evidently on the march to join some larger band. The

whites fell upon them and routed them, though outnumbered two to one. Suspecting that a large movement of the savages was taking place, Boone sent out a couple of scouts to get news. They soon returned saying that these suspicions were correct; and the frontiersmen hurried back toward Boonesborough in all haste.

On the day after their arrival at the fort, a great band of Indians, flying the British colors and commanded by a French-Canadian named Duquesne, made their appearance out of the forest.

The fort was summoned to surrender, but its defenders refused. They were sixty and the savages were fully five hundred; but they made up their minds to fight to the last.

The Indians, directed by their most famous chiefs, and now having the advantage of Duquesne's skilled military direction, began their attack. Never was the marksmanship of the Kentucky riflemen

more brilliant than it was in that battle. Duquesne soon saw that he was the greatest sufferer by this, as his Indians were falling all around him; so he set about mining under the river bank, meaning to blow up the fort.

However, Boone discovered this and set his men to countermining, flinging the freshly dug earth over the walls of the fort. The British leader saw by this that his plan had failed, and abandoning it began an attack as before.

This failed because of the unerring aim of the settlers; and then the attackers became besiegers, sitting down before the fort, out of rifle range, meaning to starve it into surrender. But in this he also failed; the defenders had more food than the Indians; and so, there being no way of feeding so large a band in a protracted siege, Duquesne gave up the attempt, and marched away, leaving Boonesborough once more victorious.

This was the last heavy blow aimed at the historic stockade. In spite of the war, emigrants poured into the new territory; Boone brought back his family and set to farming his acres like the others.

However, all during the affair with England, Kentucky continued to merit the name of "the dark and bloody ground." Fierce battles were frequent, and the farmer tilled his hard won field with his long rifle always ready at hand. And even after peace had been declared, the Indians, under their own chiefs and under the renegade, Simon Girty, ranged the settled places and strove to stem the tide of immigration. But the whites were not to be denied; they pressed on and on until the territory was completely won.

Through a fault in the deeds and grants, the settlements in the new country were later thrown into disorder. Boone lost all his land, and moved into Virginia with his family, taking up his home on the Kana-

wha near to the place where the great battle was fought in the Dunmore War. Later he journeyed westward toward Missouri, where he reëstablished himself. As old age and ill health came on, Boone applied to Congress to recover his land; a part of it was made over to him. His old age, and he lived to be well on to ninety, was spent roaming the woods with his rifle. He died at the home of his son-in-law, Flanders Collaway, some distance from the city of St. Louis, in September, 1820.