2. To the Yadkin Valley

THERE was a steady trickle of settlers in those years out of Pennsylvania into the rich lands of the Shenandoah Valley and onward into North Carolina. But beyond lay the mountains, running north and south, dark, grim and thickly wooded, tangled with underbrush, blocking the westward traveler. No roads ran that way except the "Warriors' Path," a mere "trace" used only by red hunters or war parties, which wound through the Cumberland Gap and vanished, no white man knew whither.

Toward that forbidden land no settler had ever ventured. A stray half dozen hunters and explorers, taking their lives in their hands, had penetrated the wilderness briefly. Adventurers by water had skirted the Ohio and Mississippi shores of Kentucky. The natural trend of wanderers with families in search of farm land was not at first into that dangerous and unknown country, but southward, along the valley that paralleled the coast and the settlements. Many of Squire Boone's Pennsylvania neighbors undertook the journey.

Squire Boone and his family were beginning to find Berks County an unpleasant place to live in. There was friction with the godly Friends of Exeter Meeting, who had been horrified by the marriages of the Boone children. In 1742, Daniel's sister Sarah was "treated with for marrying out"—that is, "out of Unity with Friends." Sarah Boone was a dreadful example of

eighteenth-century flaming youth. To begin with, she had married a "worldling," though as the minutes charitably record, it was "1st offence of this kind." Then there is a further note: "Fr[ien]ds. appointed to speak to her Father, Squire Boone." The Meeting had meantime heard still darker rumors. It was bad enough to marry a worldling. The Friends now began to suspect that she had not married him nearly soon enough. Two Quakeresses were appointed to investigate. It was true. Sarah Boone had been with child before the wedding. The little community buzzed. The distressed father abased himself before the Meeting:

> Squire [Boone] declareth, that he was no ways Countenancing or Consenting to the said Marriage; but, confesseth himself in a Fault in keeping them in his House after he knew of their keeping Company, (but that he was in a great streight in not knowing what to do, seeing he was somewhat Sensible that they had been too Conversant before) and hopeth to be more Careful for the future.

More trouble was in store. In 1747, on the thirty-first day of the tenth month (Quaker dating, since these strict Friends refused to use the heathen names of the months), Squire's son Israel was also "testified against" in Meeting for "marrying out." Again the poor father was called to account for a "disorderly marriage," though there was no breath of scandal beyond the fact that Israel's bride was not a Quakeress. Even legitimate marriage to such a creature, the Quakers thought, was pretty serious. This time Squire Boone appears to have been firmer in dealing with the Meeting. He insisted on his son's right to marry whom he pleased. The Society of Friends did not countenance such goings-on and within a few months Squire Boone was "disowned"—a kind of Quaker excommunication. He was accused of "giving Room to a reflecting Spirit even against his Friends who sought his everlasting Peace and

Welfare." They tried to "bring him to a Sense of his Outgoings" and make him "sensible of his coming to a Godly Sorrow in himself," but it was not much use. Squire remained stubborn.

Thereafter he found himself in an exceedingly uncomfortable position. Hitherto he had been rather prominent in the Meeting. He had been an "overseer," also a trustee of the little burial ground. His daughter's forced marriage was disgrace enough, but now he had been cast out of the Meeting merely because of his son's entirely respectable marriage. Even though his wife and the rest of the family were still in good standing, the Friends could—and they probably did—make things very unpleasant.

Squire Boone stuck it out only a little while; then he sold all that he owned. He wanted to leave Berks County forever, but he does not seem to have been quite sure where he was going, for his wife, still in good standing with the Friends, asked for and duly received letters addressed to Meetings in Virginia, North Carolina, and apparently Maryland as well.

There were other and less painful motives for Squire Boone's departure. The crude agriculture of that period exhausted the land quickly. There was no rotation of crops and little fertilization of the fields. At first it had been easy to move on to better land. But now the good land in Pennsylvania was filling up. Since 1735 Dutch and Quaker settlers had been moving steadily to the "southwest"—as North Carolina was then called.

By 1750 more and more Berks County families were moving down the Cumberland and Shenandoah Valleys. John Lincoln, the great-grandfather of the Emancipator, moved off about this time and settled permanently in Virginia, whence his restless son, Abraham, later took his own son Thomas and set off for Kentucky. It was Thomas Lincoln who became father of the Emancipator. Another Berks County family migrated at

nearly the same time—the Hankses, to whom Lincoln's mother was in some way related. The Boones and Lincolns had always been closely associated. The Boones were soon to be even more closely linked with the family of Morgan Bryan, who also started for North Carolina. Squire Boone joined the trend. Perhaps he would have done so anyway; but resentment at being disowned by the Friends, his daughter's disgrace, the turmoil over his son's marriage, must have urged him on.

It was the spring of 1750 when Squire and Sarah Boone set off with their family. They had sold their land April 11, and on the first of May they started. West across Pennsylvania. Probably through the old colonial town of Carlisle—who would have supposed they would found a school for the Indians there, some day? Down the Cumberland Valley, where, later, Lee's army would come sweeping into Pennsylvania. On down the Shenandoah, where Stonewall Jackson's men would march and countermarch in years to come.

It was such interesting country that Squire Boone dallied on the way, perhaps with his friend John Lincoln on Linnville Creek, Rockingham County, Virginia. Here Henry Miller, Daniel Boone's boyhood friend, left the Boones, to settle permanently. When the two friends next met, nearly thirty years later, one was a prosperous business man, the other the most celebrated frontiersman in America.

Not until the late autumn of 1751 or sometime in 1752 did Squire Boone reach the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina; and not until December 29, 1753, did he buy land. He purchased directly from agents of the Earl of Granville, to whom the King had granted an enormous tract. The terms of the sale would worry a modern lawyer. It was not a clear title. King George II retained the right to half of any gold or silver Squire Boone might find. The noble earl himself retained a right to half the rest. The purchaser could have the remaining one

quarter. It was all rather futile, for no ore was ever found. But there was a further irksome stipulation. Even though he owned the land, Squire Boone had to pay annual rental, and he was obligated to clear three out of every hundred acres every three years. Clearing forest land was a tremendous task—trees to be cut down, stumps to be dug out, underbrush to be chopped away, stones to be moved, and the earth itself a hopeless tangle of matted roots. An acre a year meant back-breaking work.

Squire Boone had chosen a hill overlooking the Yadkin River in what was then Rowan, and is today Davidson County. Here he built a cabin whose ruins—including part of the stone chimney and a stone marked "D. Boone"—survived until about 1900.

It was wilder country than Pennsylvania. There were less than twenty-five thousand people in the entire colony of North Carolina, and the Yadkin was on its extreme western frontier. Game was everywhere—even a few buffalo wandered across the mountain in winter from the mysterious wilderness beyond. In the beginning a hunter could take thirty deer a day without leaving the valley. The market town of Salisbury was near enough to provide a market for deerskins and furs and to supply the few commodities that a frontier farmer could not provide for himself.

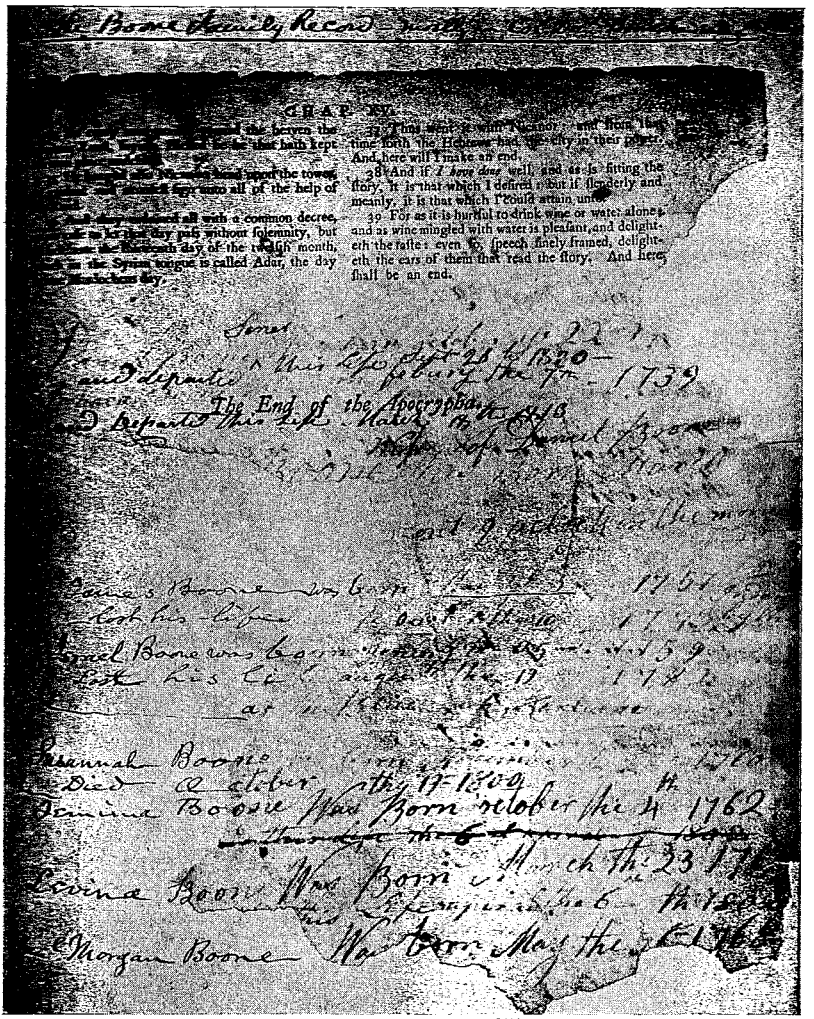
It was an exciting time, too. The Indians about the Yadkin Valley were mostly Catawbas who were usually friendly, but beyond them were the powerful Cherokees, one of the most advanced of all the tribes, whose friendship was a very uncertain quantity. Worse still, news began to trickle through the wilderness and into the settlements that the French were encroaching on the King's lands in the Ohio Valley. A young officer of the Virginia militia, named Washington, went up to warn them off, was rebuffed, and nearly murdered. He went

back again with troops, won a small skirmish, lost a large one, and was forced to surrender. From somewhere beyond the mountains—no one knew just where until Daniel Boone and his men found out years later—parties of Shawnees came down along the Warriors' Path to attack the Cherokees. White men who had been unfortunate enough to settle near the famous warpath were attacked too, with entire impartiality. The Shawnees wanted scalps. Redskin or paleface, any scalp would do. Some of the raiders in the Yadkin in 1753 bore French arms and ornaments, proof positive, if any were needed, that the French were stirring up the tribes against the British settlements.

So far Daniel Boone had never even seen a hostile Indian. He had his first experience in the Yadkin Valley when he incurred the enmity of a Catawba brave known to the whites as Saucy Jack, who was jealous because of Daniel's superior marksmanship, displayed in many a frontier shooting-match. Saucy Jack threatened to kill his rival, who was absent at the time on a hunting trip in the forests where he could have been easily ambushed. Learning of the danger, the old Quaker father seized a hatchet, remarked: "Well, I'll be first," and set out in search of Saucy Jack, who prudently vanished. Years afterward, as an Indian prisoner, Daniel Boone, shooting at targets with his captors, was careful not to shoot too well and so rouse enmity.

He was shortly to learn the first of many lessons in Indian warfare, for the secret hostility of the French soon led to the open hostilities of the French and Indian War.

Early in 1755, Major-General Edward Braddock of the British Regular Army arrived to command an expedition against the French Fort Duquesne, at what is now Pittsburgh. His force was a mixture of British Regulars and American militia, including two officers who twenty years later were to command



Wisconsin State Historical Society

BOONE FAMILY RECORD

Detached leaf of a Boone Bible now in the Draper Collection. Largely in Boone's handwriting, the annotations are by Lyman C. Draper.

opposing armies in the Revolution. Young Colonel Washington had stood on his dignity and resigned when informed that officers with commissions from the King would outrank militia officers with nothing but commissions from the provincial governors. But Colonel Washington was a valuable man. He knew better than any other soldier the country where the campaign was to be fought, and his influence in Virginia was not to be ignored. The wounded dignity of the Washingtons was assuaged by a position on General Braddock's staff. As representative of the commanding general, the colonel could look down his nose at any mere line officer, no matter whose commission he held.

A certain Lieutenant-Colonel Gage commanded the advance guard. Twenty years later, in the spring of 1775, he would be penned up in Boston and bombarded by Braddock's young Virginia aide.

Dr. Benjamin Franklin, postmaster of Pennsylvania, was very helpful to the British general in getting the troops provisioned and started. Like Colonel Washington, Dr. Franklin, too, was later to be in some danger of hanging at his Majesty's hands. The principal commissary of the expedition was that very Dr. Thomas Walker who had been one of the earliest explorers of Kentucky. One of the leading scouts was Christopher Gist, the veteran woodsman who had been Washington's guide, a neighbor of the Boones in the Yadkin Valley.

With them, probably as a wagoner, went John Finley, who only a year or so before had returned from trading with the Indians, and who had accompanied them on a hunting trip in the new and miraculous land beyond the mountains. With the expedition also was young Daniel Boone, not a soldier, just a wagoner in the North Carolina militia commanded by Major Edward Brice Dobbs, son of the Governor of North Carolina.

Major Dobbs was an officer of the British Regular Army.

Since he was in North Carolina when the war broke out, he was given a company and sent into Virginia to aid the general defense of the colonies. Later, he was promoted major and placed in command of the entire force.

Braddock's expedition was in difficulties from the start. The general had spent his last evening in London visiting a young lady of dubious repute for whom he entertained an allegedly platonic affection. In parting, he had observed to her, "Dear Pop, we are sent like sacrifices to the altar." It was an accurate prophecy.

When the general reached the Colonies, the promised preparations were a chaos. Neither the provincial troops nor the supplies that had been promised were ready. Dr. Franklin, however, was able to terrorize his Pennsylvania Dutch farmers into providing the necessary wagons for Braddock's field train. He solved the problem with typical shrewdness. The hussars would come and take the wagons if the farmers did not voluntarily provide them, he let it be known. The Pennsylvania Dutch had certain vivid recollections of what hussars had been like in the Rhine Valley. They hurriedly provided the wagons—for which eventually they got paid.

After endless delays the expedition crawled slowly off through the western Pennsylvania wilderness, its pioneers, ahead, chopping energetically to make a road which would keep the line of supplies permanently open and enable Braddock to advance as far as necessary.

The march seemed endless. The expedition halted early each day to fortify camp for the night, and there was plenty of time for talk by the camp fires. Boone and Finley met. Many a long night, by the embers of a log-fire, the North Carolina farmer boy listened open-eyed to tales of that new land called Kentucky, that hunter's paradise, that wonderful wild area of rich land, good farm land that a young man with a family could

have for the taking, land where deer and buffalo, beaver, otter, and game of every kind abounded. Sixty years later Daniel Boone still remembered the thrill of it. He may have heard similar tales from the scout Christopher Gist, who had already seen it, or from his own hunting companion, Nathaniel Gist, the great scout's son. He could have heard tales of Kentucky quite as marvelous from Dr. Thomas Walker, the explorer who had reached Kentucky in 1750, but it is doubtful whether the expedition's commissary even knew the young wagoner existed. General Braddock and all his staff officers had plenty of other things to think about just then.

Major-General Edward Braddock has been greatly maligned. He was an irritating and irritable man, but the conditions he found on his arrival in America more or less justified his exasperation. He was completely self-satisfied and of course wholly ignorant of forest warfare. So were his Regulars. But within his limits he was the very model of an eighteenth-century major-general. Not very bright, but careful, courageous, and conscientious.

Every precaution against surprise that the drill book called for, Braddock took. His tactical dispositions and reconnoissance on the march and in bivouac were models. Even on that fatal day at Turtle Creek, near Pittsburgh, only his advance guard was taken by surprise (which is more or less the function of advance guards). The small force of French and Indians ahead of Gage's troops were outnumbered two to one. They could have been brushed aside or smashed in a twinkling if either the general or his officers had had the least idea of how to fight Indians. As it was, Braddock and his army gave a magnificent display of bulldog courage, and got themselves killed off like flies by a force ridiculously inferior to their own but with the advantage of knowing nothing about a drill book meant for another kind of war in another kind of terrain.

The French, terrified at Braddock's approach, had already been preparing to surrender, when Beaujeu, a subordinate officer, begged his commander to let him at least make an attempt to stop the apparently irresistible advance of the overwhelming British force. Hurrying off to the neighboring Indians, he urged them to join his handful of Frenchmen in an attack. The Indians, also frightened, at first refused. Eventually, about eight hundred joined in forming an ambush across a ravine through which Braddock's army would have to pass.

The rest is familiar history; how Lieutenant-Colonel Gage, the British Regular, ran into the ambushed Indians and stood them off. How Braddock, Washington, and the main body came up—some of the officers, caught lunching, with napkins still under their chins. How Braddock raged up and down the field, after the best European tradition, keeping his troops out in the open where their red coats gave the Indians easy target practice. How the Virginians took cover and fought Indians Indian-style. How Washington, who had been carried for the last day or so in a wagon, riddled with fever, crawled into the saddle, fever or no fever, and rode into fire. How at last the troops could stand no more and bolted. How the wounded Braddock was carried back dying and was buried under the military road his pioneers had built so carefully. How the wagons were driven above his grave to save the dead general's scalp by concealing the spot where he lay. How years later road menders came upon the grave and recognized the body by the insignia of a general officer. How the rumor later spread that Braddock had cut down one of the Virginia riflemen with his sword and had promptly been shot by the slain man's brother.

Major Dobbs' North Carolina troops did not get into this action very heavily, if indeed they were involved at all. According to one account they happened to be marching with the

reserve, far to the rear. According to another account, Major Dobbs and his men were absent on reconnoissance. All accounts agree, however, that Boone and the North Carolina wagon train, which of course could not accompany reconnoissance in that wooded country, were somewhere in the rear with the rest of Braddock's field train.

As the troops broke, out in front of them, Daniel Boone and the other wagoners saw the terrorized mob come pouring back with the Indian knives and tomahawks flashing among them. Unable to get their wagons away, Boone and the rest slashed the traces and rode for their lives. A few wagoners were killed, but Boone and Finley escaped. The rout was finally stopped, some wagons were collected, troops reorganized, miles away. The army was so shaken that there was nothing to do but limp homeward, leaving the frontier completely open.

Some of Braddock's British grenadiers, fresh from the old country and knowing nothing of cruel wilderness ways, had surrendered to the Indians. They probably expected the ordinary treatment of prisoners of war when they were brought to the vicinity of Fort Duquesne. Even being stripped and painted black, the usual preparation for the stake, may not at first have undeceived them.

The poor devils soon learned the worst. One after another, while the rest watched in horror, they were dragged to the stake, tortured a while, and then burned to death. In the fort, close at hand, the French commander and his disciplined troops went unconcernedly about their military routine, paying no heed to the long-drawn screams of agony and the fierce yells of the torturers that echoed through the forest hour after tormented hour.

In all that wilderness from which their comrades had fled, there was only one human being to pity them. James Smith, a

British prisoner taken by the French some time before, was in the fort. Safe enough from the Indians himself, since he was in French hands, he stood in despair on the stockade, watching the prisoners brought to the warriors' camp outside, knowing well enough what was to happen. When the torture began he went back to his quarters to avoid seeing it, but no log cabin could shut out the horrible sounds.

News of the English defeat spread swiftly through the forests; but both the Catawbas and Cherokees of North Carolina remained friendly and in 1757 actually sent four hundred warriors to assist the Virginians. The Cherokees even encouraged the building of white men's forts in their country, for defense against the French and the northern Indians.

Daniel Boone was soon back in his father's cabin in the Yadkin Valley, trying to forget the horrors he had seen. His mind was occupied by pleasanter matters. He was thinking of getting married, and prudently brought a little furniture home with him from his travels.

Near Squire Boone's farm lived the family of Joseph Bryan. Mary Boone, Daniel's sister, had married William Bryan, Joseph's brother, and at their wedding young Daniel Boone, off for the wars, first saw his future wife. She was Joseph Bryan's daughter Rebecca, then only fifteen but quite old enough for marriage by the standards of that time and place.

The pair next met in a group of young people, indulging in a little mild flirtation in a cherry orchard. Rebecca was wearing a white cambric apron, priceless finery in the eyes of a frontier girl. Daniel, entranced by the dark comeliness of the strapping young creature at his side, had, none the less, certain doubts. For all their daring, the Boones were a cautious breed. Frontier matrons, with much to try their patience, were sometimes termagants. Rebecca was charming, but what about her disposition? Daniel, as he afterward confessed, slyly pro-

ceeded to "try her temper." Out of its sheath came the ever present hunting knife. Young Daniel, in apparent absent-mindedness, began to cut idly at the green turf on which he was lounging beside Rebecca. Slash, slash, a pick and a cut at a blade of grass. The absent-minded young man had cut a great hole in the precious garment. He watched Rebecca.

Rebecca was very nice about it. In fact, she was so nice that there is an alarming possibility she had seen through the whole maneuver from the very beginning. At any rate, the test having proved the lady's good temper and equanimity, on August 14, 1756, wedlock followed.

Of their courtship, only two other incidents are recorded, one of them almost certainly apocryphal. Like other North Carolina hunters, Daniel Boone occasionally brought down his deer by "fire hunting." Moving silently through the woods or floating in a canoe, the hunters flashed torches until they attracted the deer, always curious when a light shows in the woods at night. They fired at the light reflected in the animals' eyes. Daniel Boone, says the tale, caught the gleam of eyes in the woods one night, raised his rifle, and discovered just in time the figure of Rebecca. The girl rushed home to her father's cabin exclaiming that she had been chased by a panther. Not even their children ever believed the story, in spite of its wide currency.

It was the custom for a betrothed lover to bring a deer to his sweetheart's cabin and cut up the venison in her presence, proof of his skill as a hunter and ability to provide for a family. Daniel and the deer duly appeared at the Bryan cabin where Daniel flayed and prepared the carcass before an audience of girls who were not so admiring as they might have been. Daniel was skillful enough, but the young ladies commented flippantly on the amount of grease and blood with which his hunting shirt was besmeared in the process. Not that they

were squeamish—Rebecca was handy enough with the rifle to kill an occasional deer herself—but women for some reason always enjoyed teasing Daniel Boone.

The young hunter pretended to notice nothing. But as they all sat down to supper a little later he picked up his bowl of milk, glanced into it, and quietly addressed the bowl: "You, like my hunting shirt, have missed many a good washing." There was a gasp from the girls at the reflection on their housekeeping. Daniel, it was agreed, had evened up the score. Not, one would say, an overwhelmingly funny joke; and yet the backwoods chuckled over it for years.

The marriage of Daniel and Rebecca Boone must have been very much like other frontier weddings. The bride customarily rode to the altar on a pillion behind her father's saddle. After the wedding, the pillion was taken off and strapped on behind her bridegroom's saddle. His wife mounted his horse with him and rode off on her honeymoon.

It was not very private. The entire wedding party gathered in the cabin where the couple were to spend their wedding night. There was a feast, with the rough plenty of the backwoods. The bottle of corn whiskey circulated. The jests were far from mealy-mouthed, for the frontier had no doubt that marriage was indeed "ordained for the procreation of children."

When the evening was partly over, a bevy of young girls, together with the bride, slipped one by one up the ladder that led to the rough loft above the cabin and there put the bride to bed. When they were gone, a group of young men followed, performed a like office for the bridegroom, and left the pair together in such privacy as the loft of a one- or two-room cabin could afford. Late in the night, food was sent up the ladder to the newly married couple and the wedding guests gradually departed.

It was all very rough and crude and primitive; but the marriage of Daniel and Rebecca led to a lifelong devotion, a working partnership such as few sophisticated moderns achieve. Daniel may have strayed from the path of complete fidelity once or twice. There are some very queer—and probably slanderous—tales about Rebecca herself. The frontier was a rough place with a rough relish for rough jokes; it is hard now to tell what the facts are. But whatever the truth may be, there is no doubt that they forgave and forgot whatever there was to forgive and forget, working and struggling together for a long, hard, and rather happy lifetime.

The Boone and Bryan families, thus intimately linked, were never afterwards separated. Both were represented in Boone's disastrous first efforts to settle Kentucky in 1773. Both actually did settle in Kentucky later. Both moved together to the Missouri settlements when Kentucky became crowded. This was not unusual in those days, for, where communities were small and travel was restricted, family relationships meant a great deal. Families tended to intermarry, and then lived and worked together their whole lives long.

What was Rebecca Boone like? Except that she was a rather tall brunette, nobody knows now, because then it was not thought of enough importance to record. Subsequently one of the early biographers was inspired to lyric invention: "Rebecca Bryan, whose brow had now been fanned by the breezes of seventeen summers, was, like Rebecca of old, 'very fair to look upon,' with jet black hair and eyes, complexion rather dark, and something over the common size of her sex; her whole demeanor, expressive of her childlike artlessness, pleasing in her address, and unaffectedly kind in all her deportment. Never was there a more gentle, affectionate, forbearing creature, than this same fair youthful bride of the Yadkin." But that is just the way mid-nineteenth-century biographers went on.

The only way you can know what Rebecca Boone was really like is to know what she did. She married her Daniel in the Yadkin as a girl of seventeen, and she died, still with her Daniel, in Missouri as an old woman of seventy-three. Once she despaired and gave him up for dead. Many a time she had reason to despair. Two mortal years she lived alone on the Yadkin, bringing up the children while Daniel was in the wilderness. She molded bullets and she helped to fight the redskins off. She saw her husband wounded with a tomahawk and her daughter with a bullet. For a good part of her married life she was not quite sure whether her husband was alive or dead. The chances always were the Indians had killed him. The chances, as a matter of fact, were always wrong. But still it was disturbing to a married woman with a family.

Quite an ordinary girl. Quite an ordinary woman. There were a lot like that in the backwoods. It has been, on the whole, a good thing for these United States.

As Daniel Boone himself used to say, all you needed for happiness was "a good gun, a good horse, and a good wife." Now he had them all, and there is no reason for supposing that despite all his arduous labors and cruel disappointments he was ever anything but happy.

The young couple are said to have settled down after their marriage in a cabin in Squire Boone's yard, but not for long. From 1758 to 1760 there was a series of Indian wars of which the North Carolina frontier bore the brunt.

The Cherokees had remained friendly, even after such a blow to English prestige as Braddock's defeat; but there were plenty of white ruffians on the frontier to whom the only good Indian was a dead one. There were several wanton killings of Cherokees by treacherous white men. Cherokee feeling changed abruptly. The proud and powerful tribe, faithful to the red man's notions of revenge, went out on the warpath. In April of 1759 war parties were raiding the Yadkin Valley, where the

Boones and Bryans had their farms. White settlers fled to escape the carnage. Many of the Boones "forted up" in Fort Dobbs, which was besieged by the red warriors; but Squire Boone and his son took their families to safety in the East.

It is said that old Squire Boone retired to Maryland until the Indian wars were over. His son Squire, who had been learning the blacksmith's trade from Samuel Boone in Pennsylvania—rather more thoroughly than his brother Daniel—had moved with Samuel Boone's family to Maryland. This was the old man's natural refuge.

Daniel and Rebecca, however, took a two-horse wagon and went to Culpeper County, Virginia, near Fredericksburg. Here Daniel Boone probably met George Washington, whose acquaintance he claimed in after life. The young husband worked as a wagoner, hauling tobacco to market, hunting a little, shooting at targets, occasionally scouting even here for Indian "sign."

Though the books never say so, Daniel Boone almost certainly accompanied the Virginia troops who marched with General John Forbes in 1758 on his expedition across Pennsylvania with an overwhelming force to retrieve Braddock's defeat and drive the French out of Fort Duquesne once for all. In his old age Boone told a friend that he had killed his first Indian by throwing him off the "Juniata bridge" to the rocks forty feet below while serving as wagon-master with troops campaigning in Pennsylvania. Forbes' expedition is the only one with which Boone could possibly have crossed the Juniata River. Braddock's was never anywhere near it.

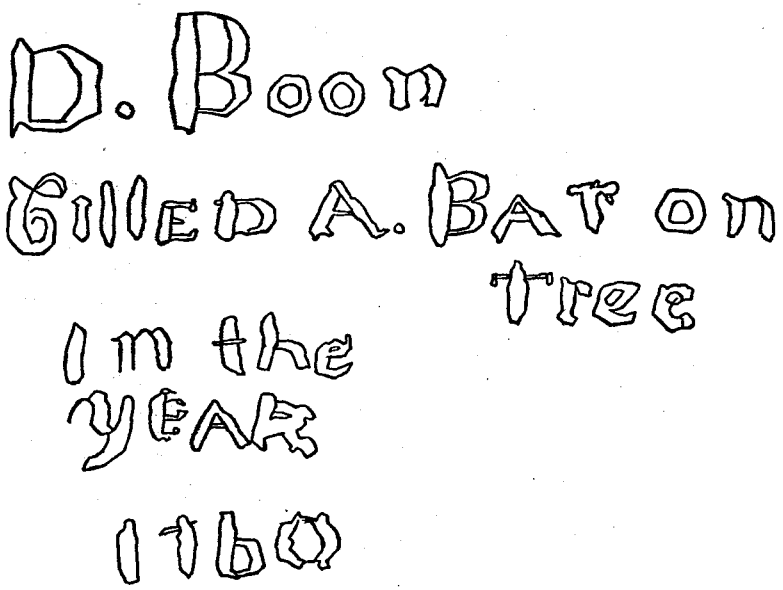
However that may be, he was soon back in the Yadkin country, for on October 12, 1759, while the Indian wars still raged, Daniel Boone was buying 640 acres of land from his father in Rowan County. A note added to the original deed explains: "Daniel Boone, Planter, bought this tract from his father for 50 pounds."

By the end of 1760 the white men had the upper hand. Strong

militia forces had laid waste the whole Cherokee country, burned the villages, destroyed the crops, and driven five thousand Indians into the hills to starve or submit. By November the Cherokees had had enough. They came to the council fire and a peace treaty was signed.

Daniel Boone lost no time in plunging into the mountains and forests with his rifle, though his family and his father's may have stayed in the safety of the East for some time. In this year he made his first trip across the Blue Ridge, guided by an old slave, and settled down in a small cabin which, before the Indian troubles, had been built for herdsmen grazing cattle in the summer.

He hunted also in eastern Tennessee and left a famous inscription carved in the bark of a beech tree on the banks of Boon's [sic] Creek. All his life he liked to leave these inscriptions, commemorating a good kill, fresh water, or just his presence in the country. This one reads:



Thirteen years later he left almost the same inscription near Long Island, Tennessee:

D. Boon killa bar on this tree 1773

There has been much controversy as to the authenticity of these inscriptions, but there is no real ground for questioning them. Scores of similar Boone inscriptions have been recorded, always in lands where he is known to have traveled. They must be genuine, for the only alternative explanation is the existence of an industrious practical joker who ranged the wilderness carving fraudulent inscriptions without ever making a mistake as to the correct locale. The 1760 inscription was known as early as 1770. The tree still stood in 1853, and some years later it was photographed.

The long preservation of these bark inscriptions is, botanically speaking, not so remarkable as it seems. Attracted by their smooth surface, Boone invariably carved his records on beech trees. The beech grows slowly; and though expansion of the trunk ultimately stretched and distorted the lettering, it could not completely obliterate the deep carvings made by Boone's keen hunting knife.

The early pioneers habitually left such inscriptions, scores of which have been copied down. Sometimes they were meant as legal records. Early land boundaries and surveys were always marked on trees. Sometimes they were meant as guides to comrades who might follow. Boone traced a lost comrade by his carving on a tree; and he himself once marked a spring with the inscription:

Come on boys here's good water

Sometimes the markings were an outlet for emotion. The famous party of "Long Hunters," robbed by Indians, consoled themselves by carving on a beech: "Fifteen hundred skins gone

to ruination," and adding their initials. Sometimes carving merely relieved the tedium of the wilderness.

Indians were not the only peril of that lonely frontier. White desperadoes were making nearly as much trouble as the Indians, for the frontier attracted people who were too bad for civilization as well as people who were too good for it.

The Cherokee wars had led to much disorder among the settlers themselves. Effective policing was nearly impossible, although local constables theoretically patrolled impossibly long hundred-mile beats through the backwoods. Horse thieves were active. Plundering of one kind led to plundering of another.

Eventually a band of desperadoes settled down to careers of professional crime in the Yadkin, carrying on their raids from a secret lair in the mountains. Two of the gang kidnapped a girl from the Yadkin settlements and rushed her into the wilderness, "designing to doom her to the basest of purposes." Several bands of settlers sallied out in pursuit.

Daniel Boone was with the band that found the girl—it was the first of his three chivalrous rescues of damsels in distress. The rescuers, following the trail as fast as they could, were amazed to meet the girl herself emerging from the underbrush. At their approach she had hidden till she could be sure who they were. Her abductors had quarreled—one can guess why—and in the excitement she had escaped.

Guided by the erstwhile captive, the vengeful little band pushed on to the kidnappers' camp. One man had escaped. The other lay unconscious where his partner had knocked him out and left him. He was seized and turned over to the authorities, but strange to say there is no further record of his case.

About a year later, stolen goods were found in the stack of fodder at one of the Yadkin farms. Forced to admit that he

had been working with the criminals, the guilty farmer saved his own skin by agreeing to guide a party to the robbers' lair. Some miles in advance of the frontier the robber band had built a little stockade against a cliff, masking their fortifications among the trees and using a "natural chimney" in the rocks to aid their concealment. No trails led in—the band was careful about "making sign." They left no trail at all because they invariably approached their fort each time from a new direction.

Daniel Boone was in the party of settlers that pushed into the woods to the fort, rushed it, captured several of the robbers, and recovered a good deal of stolen property. Their guide was very nearly shot by the infuriated wife of one of the gang.

Even in these early days Boone's wilderness wanderings were probably more than mere hunting trips. In the market town of Salisbury, where sometimes he went on legal and other business, he met wealthy men of affairs. There was Richard Henderson, eminent in the local bar, for some years a justice of the colonial courts. Squire Boone had been one of the justices of the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions before which Henderson practiced. There was Henderson's law partner, John Williams, and Henderson's friend, Thomas Hart, sheriff of Orange County. There was Hart's brother Nathaniel. Both of the Harts became lifelong friends and business associates of the Boones.

These were men of wealth, social position, power in the little society of the colony. All of them must have met Boone again and again about the law courts, and they lent sympathetic ears to the gaunt hunter's enthusiastic stories of the wild and wonderful lands whose fringes he had already touched on many a hunting trip and whose interior he wanted to explore. That would take capital. Boone was poor in those days; he had noth-

ing but a local reputation; but he made an impression on these shrewd business men.

To what extent it was Boone who interested them, or how far they encouraged Boone's enthusiasm, no one will ever know. A stupendous idea, however, was slowly taking form in the minds of Boone, Henderson, and their friends. On the seacoast every ship that docked was bringing immigrants. From the populous East they made their way slowly to the mountains. The land was filling up. Some day, some day not very distant, the slowly spreading wave of immigrants was bound to top the mountains and spread out on the lands beyond. Every business man in the thirteen colonies had his eye upon that land. Establish some kind of title to those empty acres and you could sell them off at enormous profits to the settlers who were sure to come.

The Indians? Well, these were really the King's lands which merely happened to be claimed by "the Indian nations." It ought to be easy to prove in a white man's court that the Indian had no title. The only parchments that the red men had were deerskins.

The Indians would not take kindly to the idea. The first attempt at settlement would be dangerous. The forests were thick, every bush would hide an enemy. Wild animals abounded. Save for streams and narrow buffalo "traces" the forests were trackless. Successful land speculation meant finding the best lands first. To find them you needed a farmer who knew land when he saw it, a woodsman who could find his way in the wilderness, a scout skillful enough to stay alive with death about him everywhere. You needed somebody tough, brave, honest—and poor enough to risk his life for the chance of landed wealth. Well, there was Daniel Boone!

In 1764, hunters deep in the wilderness encountered him. Boone questioned them about the country they had covered.

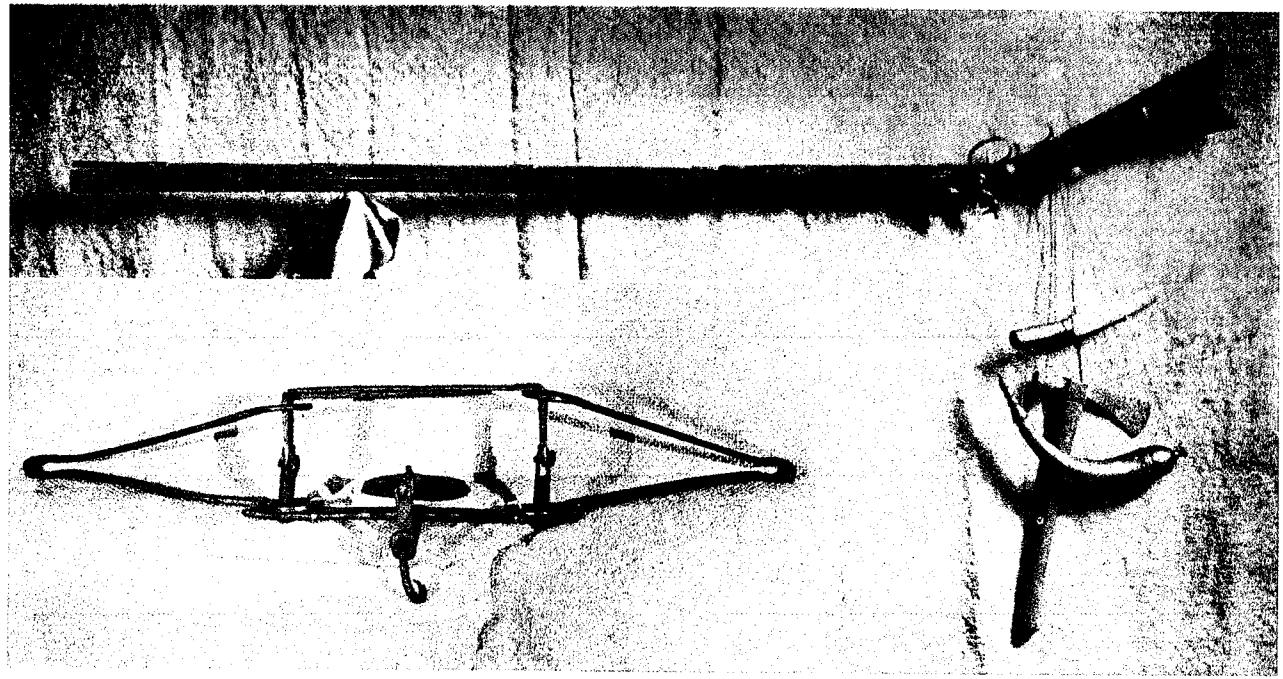


Photo Pictures, Inc. *H. Hesse*

DANIEL BOONE'S BEAVER TRAP AND ARMS

The beaver trap was made by Boone in 1796 and used in trapping with "Paddy" Huddlestone along the Kanawha River. It was presented to the West Virginia State Museum by Dr. J. P. Hale. The arms are now in the Filson Club, Louisville.

He made no secret of the reason for his interest. He was, he said, employed by Henderson and others to explore this country. That was the year when Daniel and Rebecca sold their farm and moved up the river, westward to the wilder country, closer to the mountains, closer to Kentucky.

It is no wonder that Daniel Boone's tree carvings were found far and wide in the country around the Yadkin. In the years that followed his marriage, he roamed the Yadkin, Clinch, Holston, Watauga Valleys again and again, both east and west of the Alleghenies. He knew the forests of North Carolina and what is now Tennessee. He crossed the mountains and penetrated to the borders of Kentucky and across, down the Big Sandy River.

He farmed only a little, but he hunted a great deal. For half a century or more he never missed a fall or winter hunt, except when all his time was occupied in fighting Indians. Hunting was the one thing he really lived for—long hunts alone, or with a few companions he could really trust, a matter about which Daniel Boone had high standards. The smaller the party, the better. They frightened the game less, and Indians were more easily avoided.

Hunting was more than a mere sport. It was a profitable profession. As Boone's nephew Daniel Bryan once explained to a curious inquirer: "It was not so much a ruling passion of Boone's to hunt, as his means of livelihood: His necessary occupation, from which he could not part & to which, & only it, he had ever been accustomed." True, farming helped to provide food for a pioneer family, but deer were everywhere. Venison was a staple article of diet on the frontier. A man could "hoppus" a deer to his cabin across his shoulders. Or he could "jerk" the meat in the sun, so that it would last almost indefinitely. Another way of preserving it was treatment with wood ashes and salt-

peter. But all this was for family use. There was not much market for deer-meat.

Deerskins, on the other hand, were valuable articles of commerce, much used for making leggings and breeches. In the autumn, when the skins were in prime condition, a man who understood the woods and the ways of wild things could take a few pack-horses into the forests and return with far more wealth than any farm would produce.

A horse could carry up to 250 pounds—about a hundred dressed deerskins—over the rough wilderness trails. This was heavy packing. Four or five hundred skins was a fair season's hunting. According to the market and the quality of the skins, they brought anywhere from forty cents to four or five dollars apiece, and were classified as "bucks" and "does," the former being larger and more valuable. Americans still refer to dollars as "bucks," and think they are talking slang, when they are really echoing the business terminology of their ancestors.

Many hunters used to lie in wait at the salt licks, content to shoot such game as came to them. Others watched from trees. Even the women could hunt. Rebecca Boone, from one tree on the Yadkin farm, managed to shoot seven deer and—owing to a regrettable mistake—her own mare! Her more active husband preferred to range the woods, starting in the early morning or at the rising of the moon when he knew the deer were feeding. Dew moistened the dead leaves and twigs in the early morning and at night. It was easier to move noiselessly. He taught his sons the trick of moving up toward the animal while its head was down, browsing, and of freezing into immobility as it raised its head. The best rifles of the day had little range. A hunter had to get within about a hundred yards before he fired; and even moving up the wind, that was not easy.

As winter advanced the deer grew lean and their skins were hardly worth taking, but beaver and otter pelts then became

prime. Some traders reckoned that a beaver was worth "a buck," or "two does," but as the pelts grew scarce the prices rose. Otter, too, were valuable; but Daniel loved beaver trapping almost as much as hunting deer, though to the end of his days he loathed the trapper's traditional diet of beaver tail.

The bait was simply a bit of twig rubbed with castor from the beaver's own glands. Attracted by the musky scent, the animals would swim up to touch it with their noses, holding their forepaws beneath their chins, and catch a paw in the trap. Their struggles dragged the trap into the water, they were pulled under by its weight and drowned. The trapper had only to haul in the trap and take the pelt. Otter were caught in the same way, but without bait. It was only necessary to put a trap at an "otter slide," where the animals habitually plunged into a pool.

It was cruel, but not much more so than Nature is herself. Pioneers who occasionally fed dead Indians to their dogs "to make them fierce," red hunters who tortured their enemies to death as part of a public ritual, and hoped to face the torture bravely themselves, could not be expected to worry much about the sufferings of dumb brutes whose pelts were worth money.

Farming in spring and summer, hunting in the autumn, trapping in the winter, Boone could make a living. The farm provided corn, fruit, vegetables, food enough for part of the season. Tobacco was a cash crop, everywhere accepted as the equivalent of money, but Daniel Boone rarely raised it. The forest provided the meat supply. Cattle were for milk.

A successful hunting and trapping season might bring in nearly a thousand dollars in modern currency, but there were expenses. A good "rifle-gun" was worth at least seven pounds, with powder-horn, shot pouch, and "patchen pouch" for wadding. A good hunter needed several—it was easy for rifles to get out of order in the woods. On long hunts one took a full set of

gunsmithing tools along—a hand vise and bellows, files, and screw plates. Powder was expensive. Ultimately Boone learned to make it himself. A hunter could run his own bullets in his bullet molds, but lead was hard to transport. Traps and horses cost money.

And there was always the risk of robbery by the Indians. At least one British Indian agent encouraged the Cherokees to rob any trapper caught poaching on the tribal hunting grounds. The Cherokees usually felt sure that any hunter with a large supply of peltry must certainly be a poacher, and acted accordingly. An Indian robbery destroyed everything a hunter owned. It meant total loss of all his little capital of rifles, traps, and horses plus all his profits in pelts and skins, which presently adorned some distant wigwam village. There is no doubt that Daniel Boone sometimes made large sums by hunting and trapping, but sometimes, too, he came back from the woods stripped of everything he owned. It is easy to see why he was so often plagued by debt. Equipment had to be renewed or he could not hunt.

Hunting trips during these years carried him far and wide. He climbed the mountains and from the heights looked longingly out over the country beyond. It was, he thought, the most beautiful he had ever seen. Encountering other hunters, he dragged them, too, up the crags these wonders to behold. In 1760 he was hunting in the Holston Valley with Nathaniel Gist, son of Washington's famous scout. On this trip they had a great deal of trouble with wolves, whose dens were in caves adjoining the camp. The gaunt gray beasts, not yet so timid as they have since become, swarmed about and fought the hunters' dogs, killing some and crippling others. Eventually the two separated and came back by different routes, Boone passing near the spot where his first tree-carving was later found.

Once, Boone tried to break away from it all, give up the idea

of western adventure, and settle in Florida. After the French and Indian War, East Florida had become a British colony. British settlers were encouraged to come in. In October, 1763, the new governor issued a proclamation offering a hundred acres to any Protestant immigrant. Friends from Culpeper County, Virginia, visiting Boone, told him of the proclamation. The tale of new lands stirred him, as it always did. His brother Squire, now twenty-one and only recently married, joined him and they were off with their friends, promising to be home for Christmas dinner.

In the main, however, Florida was a disappointment. It was wet and miry. Game was scarce. Once, friendly Seminoles saved them from semi-starvation, but they reached St. Augustine, explored the St. John's River, and according to legend Boone bought a house and lot in Pensacola. On the way homeward, Daniel paused to hunt, but as he had promised Rebecca, he stalked into the cabin exactly at dinnertime on Christmas Day.

And that was the end of it, for Rebecca objected. For the only time in their lives she said "no" to the spirit of adventure. She did not want to leave her family and friends. Rebecca won the argument: The house in Pensacola was never occupied. Boone and the long rifle went off to the woods beyond the Yadkin once again. A few years later, when it was a question of Kentucky, that was quite a different matter; the family and friends went along on the adventure.

Always eager to make hunters of his children, Boone began taking his son James on winter hunts as soon as the child was eight years old, teaching him the lore of the woods, the ways of the animals, the customs of the long hunters' camps. In the bitterest winter weather the child suffered from the cold. He was still so small that his father could button him up inside the capacious flaps of his hunting shirt to keep him warm at

night. As he grew older, his father kept him in the woods three months at a time.

Later, in 1767, Boone hunted with Benjamin Cutbirth, husband of his niece, Elizabeth Wilcoxen, in the Watauga country, now part of Tennessee. Association with Cutbirth whetted his interest in Kentucky, for Cutbirth had been part of the adventurous group which penetrated overland to the Mississippi, probably the first to make the journey.

That same year Boone tried to emulate the trip. With one or two companions he pushed across the Blue Ridge and reached the headwaters of a branch of the Big Sandy on the eastern edge of Kentucky. Judging from its general direction that this stream would lead them to the Ohio, they pushed on until they were west of the Cumberland Mountains, and then, probably following a buffalo trace, stumbled on Salt Spring, near Prestonburg, in eastern Kentucky.

"Ketched in a snow storm," they camped for the winter and discovered that hunting was practically needless. The salt spring brought the game directly to their camp. Here Daniel Boone for the first time saw and killed a buffalo.

Doubtful whether it was worth while trying to push on into Kentucky through such hilly country, they turned back to the Yadkin and it was some years before they knew even the name of the stream on which they had wintered. Most of this hunting was safe enough, but you never could tell about the Indians.

Only his own presence of mind saved him from them on one occasion when he was hunting alone in eastern Tennessee near modern Jonesboro. Boone was rudely awakened in the night as he lay under his snow-covered blanket. Cherokees had surrounded his camp, and one brave pulled up the blanket to see who was under it. He recognized Boone, who woke just in time to stare into a copper-colored face and to hear its owner exclaim: "Ah, Wide Mouth, have I got you now?"

Boone saved himself (as he often did) by sitting up and being friendly. He shook hands all round, expressed pleasure in seeing his red brothers, exchanged bits of news, and was very well treated. None of which prevented him from putting as much ground as possible between his red brothers and himself at the first opportunity.

Life was well enough. He was doing right by Rebecca. He was supporting his family. But ever and anon he lifted up his eyes to the westward hills and found a perpetual lure. There are men who must know what is on the other side of the hill. Of them was Daniel Boone. When the sun sank behind the Cumberland Mountains it sank into mystery. A few white men had been there and had lived to tell the story, but even they had mostly skirted along the river banks or penetrated only a little way into the tangled forests. Boone remembered the tales he had heard of the lands beyond. There lay endless hunting, freedom, independence, wealth.