

DAWN OF TENNESSEE VALLEY AND TENNESSEE HISTORY

*"To ye Men that are the bold, the brave and that
Daire."*—Cadwallader Jones (1698)

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Carter's Valley; and Haywood says they were out for eighteen months. They named Walden's Ridge for Walden,¹⁴ and Newman's Ridge for another of the party, names borne by those ridges, really mountains, to this day. A group of much the same personnel returned in 1763 and explored and hunted in upper East Tennessee and on the Cumberland and its upper tributaries in the Tennessee country, naming streams there.¹⁵ A station was fixed on a creek which they named Greasy Creek, near the line between the present counties of Hawkins and Claiborne. "Here the hunters killed a great many bear, and their garments were very much besmeared with grease; at the place where they went to the creek to drink there is a small rock upon which they were used to lie down and drink; the rock, like the garments, became greasy, and hence the creek took its name."

Haywood further states¹⁶ that in the same years, 1761-63, one Swift¹⁷ was in the Kentucky country and left a journal which showed that he was associated with two Frenchmen¹⁸ who, when Indians threatened to give trouble, returned to French Lick of Cumberland.

The year 1766 witnessed several hunting parties out in our region. Four young men from the Yadkin, Benjamin Cutbird, John Stewart (brother-in-law of Boone), John Baker and James Ward traveled through

that of Carson & Newman College at Jefferson City. The name of John Newman appears upon the tax list of Greene county for 1783, Greene's boundaries then including a wide expanse of territory.

¹⁴ Walden would say, a pioneer related: "Name it and take it."

¹⁵ *History of Tennessee*, 33-34.

¹⁶ *Ib.*

¹⁷ Was Swift one of the Walden party? A Capt. Flowers Swift, was prominent in Wythe county at a later date.

¹⁸ Evidently from the French settlement at Kaskaskia in the Illinois.

gaps of the mountains to the waters of the Tennessee and finally reached the Mississippi.

In the spring of that year a close friend of Boone, Captain William Linville, his son John, and John Williams, a lad of sixteen, ventured from the Forks of the Yadkin to hunt on the Watauga west of the mountain ranges. While asleep in their camp, Indians killed the two Linvilles. The boy Williams was shot in the thigh and the bone fractured, and in an attempt to escape the bone snapped. He then crawled on his belly to a log and finally contrived to mount his horse. He rode eastward from near the mouth of the Watauga for five days. Blackberries were his only food.¹⁹ Governor Tryon wrote of him: "I am informed he is since dead of his wounds," though the information was incorrect.²⁰

In the same year five hunters from South Carolina were on the Cumberland where at the mouth of Stone's River they found James Harrod and **Michael Stoner**.²¹ Isaac Lindsey led the party, but the names of the other four are unknown.

Towards the end of June, 1766, Captain James Smith, Joshua Horton (Houghton), Uriah Stone, William Baker and a negro slave boy explored along the Cumberland down to the Ohio, finding nowhere "any sign of white men." On reaching the mouth of the Tennes-

¹⁹ Hoyt, *Papers of A. D. Murphey*, II, 386. Arthur, in his *History of Watauga County, North Carolina*, says that Linnville River, Mountain and Falls in Western Carolina bear the family name.

²⁰ To Supt. Stuart, July 30, 1766. *N. C. Col. Records*, 245. However, he recovered and lived to an old age in Surry county, Hoyt, p. 386.

²¹ These two had come by water from Fort Pitt. Harrod was destined to fame as founder of Harrodsburg, in Kentucky. Stoner then or soon afterwards made improvements on a claim to "a certain place known by the name of Stoner's Lick, on the east side of Stoner's River." This, in 1780, he conveyed to Richard Henderson of North Carolina.

I thank you for your remembrance of my situation respecting my lands on the Frontiers. I learn that Government has reserved on the lands on the Cumberland for Soldiers.¹⁴ If I should be deprived of a certain tract of land on that River, which I purchased three years ago, and have been at a considerable expense to improve, I shall in a manner lose my all. It is known by the name of the great French Lick on the South or West side, containing three thousand acres. If you can do anything for me in saving it, I shall forever remember it with gratitude.¹⁵

Clark's solicitude over his lands may be measured by the fact that Governor Henry had already (December 12, 1778) assured him: "As soon as there is Opportunity, I shall not forget you".¹⁶ The fact that Clark had invested practically his all in the lands and their improvement indicates that he purposed to settle at French Lick. What would have been his career and influence in the development of Tennessee had this stalwart figure of a purposeful age settled there?

The perilous plight of the surveyors at work on the Cumberland and other western waters caused Colonel Wm. Preston, who had sent them out, to direct seasoned scouts to be speeded to the West to warn them to

¹⁴ In December 1778, Virginia established a reservation for her soldiers' bounty lands in Kentucky. Clark and Henry thought the reservation included the French Lick region, but this was shown to be erroneous by the state-line survey of 1779.

¹⁵ *American Historical Review*, I, 94, from Canadian Archives, Series B, Vol. 122, p. 304. See also Williams, "Conquest of the Old Southwest" in *Tenn. Hist. Mag.*, VI, 215; *Illinois Historical Collections*, III, 304-5. It was to purchase "cabin rights" from Clark that Robertson made his arduous trip to see him in 1779. Clark's claim was finally settled through John Catron of Nashville, later a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. *Cal. Tenn. Papers*, 345.

¹⁶ *Official Letters of Governors of Virginia*, I, 340.

return before war became flagrant. Capt. William Russell chose two men who had, as long hunters, gained a rather detailed knowledge of the Cumberland and Kentucky regions: Daniel Boone and Michael Stoner. His instructions to them were to search the country as low as the Falls of Ohio (site of Louisville), and return by way of Kasper Mansker's Lick, on the Cumberland, and come back home through Cumberland Gap.¹⁷ The scouts set off the day they were chosen, June 27, 1774, and returned in August.¹⁸

February 22, 1774, Superintendent Stuart wrote to Governor Martin of North Carolina that—

The Cherokee nation is still extremely uneasy at the encroachments of the white people on their hunting Grounds at Watauga River, where a very large Settlement is formed upwards of fifty miles beyond the established Boundary, and, as I am apprehensive that it consists of Emigrants from your province to which it is contiguous, I must beg your excellency's interposition to endeavor to prevail on them to remove; otherwise, the serious consequences may in a little time prove very fatal. I have in the meantime ordered an Interpreter with a party of principal Indians to warn them to remove within a certain time, and should they then neglect to move off, I am much afraid it will be impossible to restrain the Indians from taking redress

¹⁷ Thwaites and Kellogg, *Lord Dunmore's War*, 51.

¹⁸ It may be doubted whether they reached the Cumberland country. It is probable that they learned at the Falls that the surveys on the Cumberland had been finished. "Boone has instructions to take different routs, till he comes to the Falls of Ohio, and if no discovery there . . . which will give them opportunity to discover if they [surveyors] have advanced towards Cumberland River, to make what few surveys were to be there in which Tower [tour] (if they are alive) it is indisputable but that Boone must find them." *Ib*, 88-9.