The Iroquois called the country Ken-ta-ke—"prairie" or "meadow land"—which, in various spellings, became its permanent name. Teeming with deer, buffalo, bear, elk and wild turkey, it attracted Cherokee, Shawnee, Seneca and Catawba hunters from a considerable distance north of the Ohio and south of the Cumberland. Their fierce jealousies often impelled the rival tribes to turn their arrows against one another, prompting the Cherokee, who claimed the land, to dub it the Dark and Bloody Ground—a legend disputed by many historians.

From the comfortable distance of Philadelphia, however, Benjamin Franklin could praise it as one of the finest sections in North America. No region, he wrote, equaled it for the extreme richness and fertility of its soil, its healthy temperatures, its mild climate, its limitless hordes of wild game, its facility of trade with the Indians and its "vast convenience of inland navigation or water carriage."

The first English explorers and hunters of consequence in Kentucky came with two great land companies which were organized almost simultaneously. One of these, the Loyal Land Company of Virginia, founded in London in June 1749, secured a grant of 800,000 acres north of the North Carolina boundary and west of the Alleghenies. The company chose Dr. Thomas Walker, a physician and experienced surveyor from Albemarle County, Virginia, to inspect the country and to select the location of the grant. Leading five companions, Walker in the spring of 1750 reached a gap in the mountains which he named Cumber-
land in honor of the duke who, four years earlier, had routed the forces of the Young Pretender at Culloden Moor.

From Cumberland Gap Walker followed Yellow and Clear creeks along the Warriors' Path to a river which he also named Cumberland. On one of its banks, about four miles below the present town of Barbourville, two of his companions, Henry Lawless and John Hughes, built the first log cabin raised by white hands between the Cumberland and Ohio rivers.

Walker and his men are remembered only for their discovery of Cumberland Gap, but what they missed in achievement they more than made up in adventure. Once a bear bit one of them and wounded three of their dogs; at another time, they barely escaped a charging buffalo. An elk killed one of their dogs, and rattlesnakes frequently bit their horses. Despite such hazards they killed enough game and animals to arouse the envy of a Nimrod and then returned home only to find that the Loyal Land Company had dissolved.

The other organization active in exploring Kentucky was the Ohio Company, whose large grants between the Monongahela and Kanawha rivers and, later, on both sides of the Ohio we have previously discussed. The Ohio Company agreed to settle 300 families and to erect a fort near the present city of Pittsburgh and another near the mouth of the Kanawha. It instructed its agent, Christopher Gist, to seek and survey good level ground as far as the Falls of the Ohio—the present site of Louisville. Descending the Ohio in the spring of 1751, Gist landed on the Kentucky side and visited Shawnee Town where he was well received. Some days later, advancing toward the Falls, he met Hugh Crawford, a licensed trader, who presented him with two teeth of a mastodon found in what became known as Big Bone Lick. The amazed explorer learned that

the Rib Bones of the largest of these Beasts were eleven Feet long, and the Skull Bone six Feet wide, across the Forehead, & the other Bones in Proportion; and that . . . several Teeth . . . were upwards of Five Feet long, and as much as a Man could well carry: that he had hid one in a Branch at some Distance from the Place, lest the French Indians should carry it away—The Tooth which I
brought in for the Ohio Company, was a Jaw Tooth of better than four Pounds Weight; it appeared to be the furthest Tooth in the Jaw, and looked like fine Ivory when the outside was scraped off . . .

Gist's amazement at these prodigious relics soon changed to fear of present danger. Learning that Indians were in the vicinity, he fled southward, crossed the Licking, Kentucky and Red rivers and Walker's route and eventually returned to the Kanawha.

The next year a Pennsylvania trader of Irish descent, John Findlay—or Finley, as his name was sometimes spelled—descending the Ohio with three or four companions as far as the Falls, accompanied a party of Shawnee to their town of Eskippakithiki, eleven miles east of what is now Winchester. He was still in the village when some traders from Pennsylvania and Virginia who were returning from the Catawbas assembled there in January 1753. The traders began to quarrel over their barter outside the village and soon fell into the hands of straggling Indians. Findlay and a companion, protected by the friendship of the villagers, returned to their homes.
The incident is important because Findlay learned from the traders, who must have followed the Warriors' Path to the country of the Catawbas, about Cumberland Gap. His stories of this gateway to Kentucky and of other places he had seen inspired Daniel Boone sixteen years later to undertake an expedition in behalf of the Transylvania Company.

The outbreak of the last French and Indian war brought the expeditions in Kentucky practically to a halt. And they did not resume appreciably until, nine years later, the Treaty of Paris drove the French from the continent, cowed their Indian allies and gave England the region between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi. Then white men, feeling secure from the Indian menace, advanced into the Old Southwest in greater numbers than before.

Typically American in their restlessness and love of adventure, the dauntless hunters and traders evinced little or no regard for the forbidden line drawn by the Proclamation of 1763. In this they merely reflected the attitude of some of the most influential men in the colonies. "I can never look upon that proclamation," wrote George Washington, "than as a temporary expedient to quiet the minds of the Indians." Aspiring to western lands himself, Washington later expressed the conviction that the proclamation must fall ... especially when those Indians consent to our occupying the lands. Any person, therefore, who neglects the present opportunity of hunting out good lands, and in some measure marking out and distinguishing them for his own, in order to keep others from settling them, will never regain it.

Most of those who trekked into the wilds of Kentucky immediately after the war lacked the genuine qualities of the pioneer. They hungered, not for new homes and knowledge, but for the excitement of the chase and for the profit they hoped to obtain from sales of peltries. Such was Captain James Smith, who in the summer of 1766 led four men—one of whom was a young mulatto—through Cumberland Gap and hunted with them along
the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers. Such again were Isaac Lindsay and his four companions, who in the same year conducted a successful safari in the vicinity of Stone's River.

In 1769 men of more responsible temperaments began to arrive in Kentucky. These men loved exploration more than adventure, knowledge of the country more than material gain. Known as Long Hunters because of the duration of their absence from home, they pushed deep into the Dark and Bloody Ground and returned from it with graphic and detailed information without which settlement might have been delayed and possibly frustrated. To this group belonged Benjamin Cleveland of the upper Yadkin Valley. In the midst of their extensive explorations from 1769 to 1772 Cleveland and his men met a group of Cherokee who deprived them of their supplies and their clothes and sent them home. To keep himself and his men from starving, Cleveland was obliged to kill his faithful hunting dog which, he said later, provided him with the sweetest meat he had ever eaten.

In the summer of 1770 Uriah Stone began an expedition which, though fraught with failure and even tragedy, resulted in discoveries that were to prove invaluable to newcomers. Each of his men was equipped with two horses, traps, a large supply of powder and lead, a small hand vise and bellows, files and screw plates with which to repair rifles that “got out of fix.” After exploring in various sections of Kentucky they encamped near a buffalo trail in present Sumner County. Two of them, Isaac Bledsoe and Casper Mansker, traveling on the trail in opposite directions, each discovered a salt lick to which he gave his name.

In the flat surrounding his lick Bledsoe said he saw thousands of buffaloes. These animals paid him no heed until the wind blew; then, scenting him, they broke and ran in droves. The other members of the expedition had less romantic adventures. Indians, always lurking around them, attacked them in their camp, taking their peltries and shooting one of them, Robert Crockett, from ambush. After sustaining several such experiences the hunters journeyed to Spanish Natchez, and in the spring of 1771 they returned home.

A few months later Joseph Drake and Henry Scaggs organized
a party of forty men from the New River and Holston valleys. Dressed in hunting shirts, leggings and moccasins, and well supplied with horses, ammunition, dogs, blankets and salt, they pushed deep into Kentucky. Scaggs wrote later that he saw thousands of buffaloes, elk and deer, with "wild turkies scattered among them; all quite restless, some playing, and others busily employed in licking the earth." The buffaloes and other animals had eaten away the soil so deep "that they could, in places, go entirely underground."

After some weeks twenty-six of the men tired of the wilderness and returned to their homes in Virginia; fourteen elected to remain. Of these all but three soon departed on a long trip of exploration. One day a band of straggling Indians under the half-breed, Will Emery, attacked the camp, capturing two of the men and carrying away the peltries which the party had accumulated in months of hunting. The other man managed to escape. The explorers, returning to camp to discover that their friends and peltries were gone, left emphatic record of their frustration on a barkless poplar:

2300 Deer Skins Lost Ruination By God

Too angry to admit defeat, the hunters resolved to retrieve their losses around Bledsoe's Lick. What they saw there filled them with amazement. Within four or five miles of the lick the cane had grown so thick that they thought they had come to the wrong place. What had caused this phenomenon? On examining the lick itself they discovered the answer. Around the lick, for several hundred yards, they found countless buffalo skulls and bones; indeed, the flat around the lick was bleached by them. Some years later Isaac Bledsoe told William Hall, a pioneer chronicler, that the French voyageur, Timothé de Monbreun, had hunted around the lick shortly after its discovery. He had killed buffaloes for their tallow and tongues. With the help of a companion he had loaded a keel boat and descended the Cumberland.

The Drake and Scaggs expedition had significant results. The
elaborate and detailed information which Scaggs brought back doubtless influenced Richard Henderson and his associates to accelerate their plans for colonizing Kentucky. Already their future scout, Daniel Boone, the greatest of the Long Hunters, was in the Dark and Bloody Ground extensively and systematically exploring the country.

Daniel Boone is the childhood friend of countless Americans. Some know him well, others little; but to all he is the embodiment of what they want and admire most for themselves: love of adventure and of unseen places, physical prowess, resourcefulness and moral courage in the face of danger, rich and ample reward for services rendered and an independence of action that scorns all authority not emanating from the people.

Boone was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, on October 22 (Old Style; November 2 New Style), 1734. His parents, Squire Boone and Sarah Morgan, were Quakers of wavering conviction. By defending the right of two of their children to “marry out,” they were excommunicated as “worldlings.” Their crime was that they had too steadfast a respect for reality. To them Quaker pacifism seemed wise in preaching but unwise in practice. Life in the wilderness of Berks County was full of hazards; it needed a fighter to surmount them; and the Boones, while giving lip service to Quakerism, kept feet on the ground and finger on the trigger.

Daniel was a fighter from childhood. When two girls disturbed his sleep under a tree by emptying a pan of fish entrails on him, he sent them home with swollen faces and bloody noses. The complaint of their mother brought Sarah Boone to the defense of her son: “If thee has not brought up thy daughters to better behavior, it is high time they were taught good manners.”

Daniel disliked his father’s occupations, farming and blacksmithing: drudgery is irksome to a restless soul. All his life he seems to have sought escape from civilized responsibility as though it revolted his nature. He was happy only in the wilderness, and the wilderness taught him the three things he knew, and knew infinitely well: hunting, exploring and Indian psy-
chology. Of formal education he had little, but in it he revealed traits of an original mind. His handwriting was an audacious scrawl; his spelling, unorthodox; his sentences, free of prevailing syntax. Legend says that one of his uncles who undertook his education failed to improve his spelling and complained to his father. "Let girls do the spelling," replied Squire Boone, "and Daniel will do the shooting."

To Daniel shooting was almost as vital as breathing. And circumstances soon removed him to surroundings where good shooting was indispensable to keeping alive. In 1742 his sister Sarah shocked Quaker godliness by "marrying out" to the father of her unborn child. Five years later Daniel's brother Israel took a bride who also was not a Quakeress. When Squire was called to account for the "disorderly marriage," he replied emphatically that his son should have the right to marry whom he damned pleased, whereupon the Quakers disowned him. Squire found in this circumstance an opportunity to better his lot. Deciding to move to better land, he sold his property and in the spring of 1750 took his family westward across Pennsylvania and then by slow stages down the Cumberland Valley and finally to the Yadkin Valley in North Carolina. In 1753 he purchased land three miles west of the present town of Mocksville in the vast tract that the King had granted to the Earl of Granville and upon it built a cabin.

In 1755 Daniel served as a wagoner in Braddock's campaign, during which he became acquainted with John Findlay, who was destined to serve as his guide in Kentucky. On the day of defeat when his wagons were surrounded, Boone slashed the harness, leaped onto one of his horses and dashed into the forest.

During these years Daniel grew to that romantic figure with which every schoolboy is acquainted. His contemporaries describe him as a man of average height with broad shoulders, dark hair, friendly blue eyes arched with fair eyebrows, thin-lipped wide mouth and nose of a slightly Roman cast. Such was Boone when in 1756 he fell in love with and married Rebecca Bryan.

The bride, "whose brow," says a sentimental chronicler, "had now been fanned by the breezes of seventeen summers," was the
daughter of Joseph Bryan, a recent backwoods settler. According to the same writer, she 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 expression was that of "childlike artlessness"; her address, "pleasing"; and her deportment, "unaffectedly kind." "Never," concludes our chronicler, "was there a more gentle, affectionate, forbearing creature, than this same fair youthful bride of the Yadkin."

Their was doubtless a typical frontier wedding. The bride customarily rode to church on a pillion behind her father's saddle. After the ceremony the pillion was removed and strapped behind the bridegroom's saddle. Wife and husband then rode off on their honeymoon, which they enjoyed in the company of their friends. The wedding party, gathering in the cabin where the couple was to spend the night, prepared a feast which usually included venison and corn bread. The jug made the rounds; the fiddlers drew the dancers to their places; and ribald hints on the pleasure of procreation provoked hearty applause and guffaws.

In the course of the evening the bride climbed the ladder to the loft of the cabin, where her girl friends, following her one by one, put her to bed. When the girls descended the young men performed the same office for the bridegroom. Late in the night the celebrants sent food up the ladder for the newlyweds and left them to their nuptial pleasures.

Their marriage lasted fifty-six years, until Rebecca died at the age of seventy-three. In that expanse of time she had many opportunities to prove her patience and loyalty. Once Daniel was absent for two years on a hunting trip. At another time she heard he was dead. Still another time, she saw him wounded by a tomahawk. For a good part of her married life she was not quite sure whether her husband was alive or dead. Yet such was her confidence in his ability to extricate himself from any difficulty that she patiently awaited better news. Invariably it came. As Daniel used to say, all you needed to enjoy happiness was "a good gun, a good horse, and a good wife," and during his long life he was fortunate enough to have all three.
For Daniel the ideal life was that of a Nimrod dwelling in an earthly paradise full of deer and bear and buffalo. Such was the joy of Epaphroditus Bainford, whom William Byrd met in 1728 along the North Carolina frontier while running the dividing line between that colony and Virginia. "This Forester," wrote Byrd, "Spends all his time in ranging the Woods, and is said to make a great Havock among the Deer, and other Inhabitants of the Forest, not much wilder than himself." Boone, too, played havoc with wild game in the bottoms of the creek near his home. Many bears, attracted by the nuts that dropped generously from numberless beech trees, roamed into the region. Daniel and his father killed ninety-nine of these animals in a single hunting season. Thereafter the stream became known as Bear Creek.

Soon Indian warfare flared along the frontier, bringing Daniel's hunting temporarily to an end. When the Cherokee began to raid the Yadkin Valley, the Boones and the Bryans fled from their farms with other settlers. Daniel and Rebecca jumped into a two-horse wagon and drove to the vicinity of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Here Boone probably met George Washington, hunted animals and Indians and hauled tobacco to market.

Perhaps, too, he accompanied John Forbes, when in 1758 that general led his army across Pennsylvania for the purpose of retrieving Braddock's defeat and driving the French out of Fort Duquesne. In his old age Boone said that while serving as wagon master with troops campaigning in Pennsylvania he killed an Indian by throwing him off the "Juniata Bridge" to the rocks forty feet below. Forbes's expedition is the only one known that could possibly have crossed the Juniata River.

By the fall of the following year Daniel was again in the Yadkin Valley, where for fifty pounds he bought 640 acres from his father. Eventually he was able to resume his hunting trips. After the Cherokee were subdued in 1760, Boone struck deeper into the wilderness.

Awareness of ability often engenders pride which loves to commemorate its owner in long-lasting inscription. Boone left record of his hunting prowess on many trees. Near a cave sur-
rounded by happy hunting grounds in what is now Washington County, Tennessee, he left on a beech tree an inscription known to all:

D. Boone

Cilled A. Bar on
tree

In the
Year 1760

The beech tree yields easily to inscription. Its soft, smooth surface allows the hunting knife to carve deeply in its trunk, and although its slow growth stretches and distorts letters and figures, it protects them from obliteration. For the pioneers it served the purpose of commemorative stone or medal, danger signal, good and bad news, relief from boredom, outlet for pent-up emotion and legal document. The discovery of a spring, the tracing of a lost companion, the triumph of a hunt, the marking of a claim—all these found expression in the pliant and preserving wood of the beech. “Fifteen hundred skins gone to ruination.” Thus it once consoled a group of Long Hunters who, after an arduous season, unfortunately encountered an overwhelming number of Indians in their path.

For the pioneer hunting was at once a sport, a livelihood and an occupation. He lay in wait at salt licks; he watched from behind trees; he ranged the wilderness. Boone usually started out either early in the morning when the dew had softened the dead leaves or at moonrise when the deer were feeding. He also loved to trap. If he sought beaver, he would bait a twig rubbed with castor found in the perineal glands of that animal. The beaver, attracted by the scent, would swim up and touch the bait with his nose and catch his forepaw in the trap. Struggling for his freedom, he would drag himself into the water and, pulled under by weight, would drown. Boone needed no bait to trap otter. This animal simply fell victim to a trap placed at an “otter slide,” where it habitually plunged into the water.
The pioneer found prosperity only in the forest. Deer was his most profitable game. He would "hoppus" a buck or a doe across his shoulders to his cabin, where he could either jerk the venison in the sun or preserve it with wood ashes and saltpeter. The skin he often converted into leggings and breeches. In a fair hunting season he realized about four hundred dressed deerskins, a fourth of which, averaging two hundred and fifty pounds, he could load on his horse in a single trip back home. Each skin was classified "buck" or "doe" and brought him from forty cents to four or five dollars, depending on its quality and on the market.

The pioneer needed every dollar he realized from a successful hunting season. A thousand dollars a year in our modern currency barely sufficed to defray his expenses. He paid perhaps seven pounds for a "rifle-gun," powder horn, shot pouch and "patchen pouch" for wadding. A trip to the wilderness made several "rifle-guns" necessary and a full set of gunsmithing tools including a hand vise and bellows, files, and screw plates. This was not all. He also needed several horses, traps and ammunition and other articles—all of which were very expensive.

In the next few years Boone roamed many miles away from home. Sometimes he threaded his way deep into the wilderness of North Carolina where the mountains exhibit their variegated colors ranging from amethyst or deep purple to pale mistlike gray—depending on mood of day or time of year. In the spring the hollows and the moist, open spaces at the foothills flame with azaleas and rosebay, while the lower woods gradually thicken with mountain laurel and rhododendron—all white and pink—which by June invade the higher slopes and summits. In this enchanted region Boone saw Blowing Rock overlooking an immense primeval forest studded with green hills; he saw Mount Mitchell with its eternal hood of snow; he saw the Grandfather, perhaps the oldest mountain on earth; he saw Pilot Mountain towering amid luxuriant growth, so called because it served the Indians as a guide in their ceaseless wanderings. At Linville Boone watched the cataract taking its shimmering leap into the gorge.

Sometimes he hunted in company. Once in the Holston Valley he and Nathaniel Gist, son of the famous explorer and guide,
were attacked by a pack of hungry wolves whose dens were in caves adjoining the camp. The animals also fought their dogs, killing some and crippling others. Eventually Boone and Gist eluded the wolves and returned home by different routes.

In the fall of 1763 a new field of adventure opened up to Boone. By the Treaty of Paris East Florida had become English. The need for settlers impelled its governor to issue a proclamation offering a hundred acres to any Protestant immigrant. This generous offer and the fascination which tales of a strange land always held for Boone directed his thoughts southward. He bade Rebecca farewell and joined by friends and his brother Squire, who had just turned twenty-one and had recently married, set out.

The promised land proved unpromising. Boone and his friends found the weather wet and the game scarce; they shivered while they nearly starved to death. They explored Florida from St. Augustine to Pensacola where Boone, according to legend, bought a house. If the house existed, he was destined never to occupy it. On his return home Rebecca threw cold water on what little ardor he yet retained for the new colony, and it sizzled out of his thoughts.

One day late in 1768 or early in 1769 John Findlay drove a scraggy horse and wagon down Yadkin Valley, selling pins, needles, threads and Irish linens. When he was not hunting and exploring somewhere on the far-flung frontier, he eked out a living by peddling what few household articles the backwood folk could not produce. From the Pennsylvania settlers at Salisbury or at the Forks of the Yadkin, he learned that Boone was living in the region. He knew Daniel but had not seen him since they had served as wagoners in Braddock's expedition more than ten years before.

Findlay was soon sitting by the fire in Boone's cabin, regaling his old friend with tales of Kentucky. His Irish fancy grew more and more exuberant as he unfolded his repertoire of experiences. Kentucky—there was the paradise for a hunter! There you saw deer at every lick; there you found buffalo on every trail, thousands of them, so that you had to be careful to avoid being
crushed by them when they stampeded and made the earth for miles around rumble with their hoofs. There at the Falls of the Ohio you saw wild geese and ducks so plentiful that you did not have to shoot them! And there was real land—lush, green, fertile—endless acres, in every direction, all for the taking!

The Indians? Well, they were dangerous, but they did not bother a trader; indeed, they welcomed you just as they had welcomed him when just last year he had gone down the Ohio. Why, he had even gone inland on a hunting expedition with them and had set up his trading post in the middle of Kentucky, exchanging goods with them as fast as they could bring in their pelts. Then with his canoe loaded to the brim he had paddled up the Ohio as far as western Pennsylvania, where he had changed his pelts for good hard cash!

Findlay told Boone that he planned to return to Kentucky and that he wanted a skillful woodsman to accompany him. Would Daniel like to go along? Enthralled by the stories of adventure and success he had just heard, Daniel jumped at the opportunity. Things had not gone well for him in the backwoods of North Carolina. The farm had provided him and his family with such a scanty livelihood that he had been obliged to borrow money from several principal families of the county. When he was unable to repay it at the promised time, they had sued him in the local court at Salisbury. That had disgusted him—all the more because he felt unhappy where he was; he longed for the wilderness, his natural abode. Now the golden opportunity had come; he would make a name for himself; he would undertake an expedition into Kentucky!

But such a trip needed financial backing. Where was he to obtain it? He decided to appeal to the one man he knew who had long dreamed of establishing a land company in Kentucky—Richard Henderson, recently appointed an associate judge of the newly created Superior Court of North Carolina. Henderson was destined to figure prominently in Boone’s career as well as in the history of the Old Southwest. He was the prototype of the American capitalist of a later day: exceedingly ambitious yet intensely practical, as most of the leading frontiersmen have been. A man of indefatigable energy and wide imagination, he had edu-
cated himself; had assisted his father, Samuel Henderson, the High Sheriff of Granville County; and had, after reading law for a short time in the office of John Williams, been admitted to the bar. His oratorical gifts soon won him a large and lucrative practice. His legal circuit often brought him to Salisbury where he became well acquainted with Squire Boone and Daniel, who regaled him with bizarre and fascinating tales of western exploration. These only increased Henderson's desire to establish a colony in Kentucky.

Henderson had already befriended Boone. When Daniel was sued for debt Henderson had acted as his lawyer. In order to collect his legal fees Henderson in turn had been obliged to sue Boone. But, admiring the rugged scout's past services in western exploration, Henderson was unwilling to press action against him. Instead, he continued litigation from court to court. In March 1769 Boone was summoned to appear in court at Salisbury. The hunter seized the opportunity to lay before Henderson designs for an extended exploring trip into Kentucky with Findlay as his guide. Henderson gave his consent. He hired Boone to explore the whole country north of the Kentucky River.

On May 1, 1769, Boone and Findlay began the journey to Kentucky. Accompanying them were Daniel's friend and brother-in-law, John Stuart, and three "camp-keepers," Joseph Holden, James Mooney and William Cooley—all of whom were equipped with blankets or bear skins, household utensils and enough rations to last them until they reached good hunting grounds. The six men passed through Cumberland Gap, followed the Warriors' Path and eventually reached the west branch of the Rockcastle River. At first Boone explored alone in the country north of the Kentucky; then he and Findlay explored in the Elkhorn Valley.

For six months the party saw no Indians. But in December while Boone and Stuart were crossing a canebrake on a buffalo trail near the Kentucky River, they encountered a band of mounted Shawnee returning from a hunting trip in the Green River country to their homes north of the Ohio. Taking the two white men prisoner, the Shawnee conducted them to their own camp where they took everything of value, including rifles and
ammunition. They had no intention, however, of killing or even of detaining the explorers. They wanted only the pelts which they regarded as their own property.

A few days later, therefore, the Indians’ leader, Captain Will, provided Boone and Stuart with moccasins, a doeskin for patch-leather, a small “trading gun” and enough powder and shot to kill food for themselves on their way to the settlements and released them.

“Now, brothers, go home and stay there,” said Captain Will as he bade them farewell. “Don’t come here any more, for this is the Indians’ hunting ground, and all the animals, skins and furs are ours. If you are so foolish as to venture here again, you may be sure the wasps and yellow jackets will sting you severely.”

Boone and Stuart had no intention of heeding Captain Will’s warning. Pursuing the Indians to their camp during the night, they retrieved four or five of the horses and put many miles between themselves and their former captors. In the morning, confident that he had eluded them, Boone stretched himself on the ground to rest while the horses were feeding. Imagine his consternation when he looked up and saw Captain Will and his band galloping toward them. The white men were captive again before they had time to think of getting away. Tying a horse bell around Boone’s neck and compelling him to caper about for their entertainment, they asked in broken English, “Steal hoss, ha?”

Then, informing them that they would be released as soon as they had crossed the Ohio, the Indians marched Boone and Stuart northward. By that time, the Shawnee reasoned, their horses would be safe from further attempts to steal them. In this hope they were disappointed. A few nights later Boone and Stuart dashed into a canebrake. The excited Indians made sure their horses were secure and then, shouting madly, surrounded the canebrake in the hope of catching Boone and Stuart should they emerge. The two men stayed where they were and eventually escaped.

Hurrying back to their camp, they found it abandoned. Their companions, having given them up for lost, had started back for the settlement. Boone and Stuart soon overtook them, but the
others had had enough of adventure. Findlay journeyed northward to visit relatives in Pennsylvania, while Holden, Mooney and Cooley returned to their homes on the Yadkin. Not long after their departure, Squire Boone, loaded down with supplies and accompanied by a friend, Alexander Neely, came on his brother and Stuart. Henderson and his associates in the land company they hoped to establish, having heard nothing of Boone, had surmised that he and his companions must have run short of ammunition, flour, salt and other necessary articles. Desiring Boone to continue his explorations, they had sent Squire with the supplies. Squire and his friend resolved to follow Daniel and Stuart wherever they went.

The explorers encamped near the mouth of the Red River and soon provided themselves with what they needed for the winter. Neely had brought along a copy of Gulliver's Travels and had begun to read it to his companions. One day while he was regaling them with the account of Glumdelick and its inhabitants, the Luldegruds, they saw Indians approaching. These were promptly driven off, whereupon Neely rejoiced at the defeat of what he called "the Luldegruds." Flattered by this metaphor, they forthwith commemorated their victory by giving the creek that flowed near their camp the name of Luldegrud which it still holds.

All winter long they hunted and trapped. Boone and Stuart, being the best of friends, usually hunted together, but once they decided to separate and meet again at camp in two weeks. Stuart crossed to the south side of the Kentucky River in a small canoe he and Daniel had built. Daniel anxiously awaited his return. At first he attributed Stuart's prolonged absence to the swollen river, but when the water subsided and his friend still failed to return, Daniel decided to search for him. He found Stuart's trail; he found a recent fire; he found his friend's initials carved on a tree; but he found Stuart nowhere.

Five years later while Boone was blazing the Wilderness Trail for the Transylvania Company, he found his brother-in-law's remains in a hollow sycamore near the crossing of the Rockcastle River. Stuart's initials on a brass band of his powder horn provided grim proof of the identity. Stuart's left arm was broken;
The bone still bore the discoloration of a bullet; the skull showed no traces of the scalping knife. What had caused his death—Indians, an accident, attacking wolves? The wilderness has kept its secret to this day.

Stuart’s disappearance discouraged Neely, who returned to the settlements, leaving the Boone brothers alone in the wilderness. They stayed until May 1770, when, their ammunition running low, Squire Boone again departed for the settlements to obtain supplies. Left all alone, Daniel ranged the woods as far north as the Ohio, acquainting himself with the Kentucky and Licking valleys. He visited the Big Bone Lick where he examined the fabulous fossil remains of the mammoth and the mastodon, and then went to the Blue Licks where he saw with amazement and delight thousands of shaggy buffaloes gamboling, bellowing and making the earth rumble beneath the trampling of their hoofs, just as Findlay had described. One day while he stood on a cliff near the junction of the Kentucky and Dick’s rivers, he suddenly found himself hemmed in by a party of Indians. Seizing his only chance of escape, he leaped into the top of a maple tree growing beneath the cliff, slid sixty feet below and made his getaway to a chorus of guttural “Ughs” from the dumbfounded Indians.

At last he made his way back to camp where on July 27, 1770, Squire rejoined him. His brother had traveled to and from the settlements undisturbed, had sold their furs, paid off his debts, provided for both families and had brought back new supplies. The brothers immediately started eastward to hunt. Legend says they reached the Kentucky River and settled in a cave near the mouth of the Marble Creek in Jessamine County. Soon they moved to another cave on Harmon Creek in the same county.

When their ammunition and supplies ran low, Squire made another trip to the settlements. Daniel, thinking Squire was too slow in returning, went east to meet him and luckily encountered him along the way. The brothers resumed their explorations, advancing as far as the valleys of the Green and Cumberland rivers, where they hunted and spent some time with Casper Mansker and his companions. Then, their pack horses loaded with pelts, they set out for home; but when in May 1771 they
reached Cumberland Gap, they bumped into a party of Indians who robbed them of all their earthly possessions. Daniel Boone scarcely regarded this as a reversal of fortune. He had realized his dream—he had seen Kentucky. His descriptions of the golden land he had explored made Henderson all the more eager to establish a colony there when his judgeship should expire two years hence.