

FRONTIER FORTS OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

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THE 7 ORIGINAL FORTS

The actual military defense of Virginia's extreme western frontier did not begin, on a large scale, until the spring prior to the outbreak on Dunmore's War in the fall of 1774, more commonly referred to by historians as the Point Pleasant Campaign.

It has been stated by some writers that not a single palisaded fort existed along the Clinch frontier until after the circulation of Lord Dunmore's order requesting that such be built. Those making these statements used the argument that after the end of the French and Indian War that peace existed and there was no need of palisaded forts. It is probably quite true that prior to 1774 there were no real palisaded forts, the inhabitants depending on strongly built fort houses with port holes for warding off surprise Indian attacks. Some of these still stand today, such as the old Osborne house in lower Castlewood and the Dickenson house on Clinch River north of Castlewood. However, those who aver that prior to 1774 peace existed between the Indians and whites need to review their frontier history.

Admittedly, peace did exist on paper as the treaty of Fort Stanwix and Lochaber prove, but a paper peace meant little to many of the savages who probably had never heard of it, or to those who did not concur with it in the first place. Consider the killing of Boone's party on Wallen's Creek on October 10, 1773, almost a year prior to Dunmore's circular letter regarding the erection of forts.

John McCulloch, whose father Thomas McCulloch had settled on Moccasin Creek in 1769, states that in June 1771 all of Moccasin Creek was evacuated for fear of Indians and remained so for more than a year. (1)

On June 30, 1773, Colonel Evan Shelby had a roster of 71 Militiamen. (2) Captain William Russell also had four Indian scouts on patrol on the 15th of April, 1774, (3) two months prior to Dunmore's request for forts, and again in 1773, Colonel Evan Shelby lists a group of four scouts on Clinch River, among whom was William Moore of Moore's Fort. Does it not seem strange to aver that peace existed when we see a contingent of 71 militiamen, scouts on patrol, and the massacre of five people on Wallen's Creek?

There were seven of the original forts erected in compliance with Lord Dunmore's order, four on the lower Clinch under Captain William Russell's militia command, and three on the upper Clinch under the militia command of Captain Daniel Smith. These forts were erected by the local militia under the supervision of Colonel William Christian who had

been sent out to the frontier by Colonel William Preston who was militia commandant for the area.

When Captain Russell received Lord Dunmore's orders for building forts it happened to be muster day for the militia in Cassells Woods, and he immediately, on June 25, 1774, laid the facts before his constituents and informed Colonel Preston of their actions on June 26, 1774, (4) saying: "My company yesterday voted two (2) forts to be immediately built, I think in as convenient a place as we can get, and we shall immediately begin to build them."

Two weeks later, on July 13, 1774, Captain Russell again wrote to Colonel Preston the following letter showing that his people had changed their minds about the number of forts to be built and states that the forts had already been erected.

"Since I wrote you last, the inhabitants of this river have altered the plan for two forts only, on this river, below Elk Garden, and have erected three; one in Cassells Woods which I call Fort Preston; a second ten miles above which I call Fort Christian; the third, five miles below the first, which I call Fort Byrd, and there are four families at John Blackmores near the mouth of Stony Creek, that will never be able to stand it alone without a company of men. Therefore, request you, if you think it can be done, to order them a supply sufficient to enable them to continue the small fortification they have begun." (5)

None of the names given to the forts by Captain Russell to enhance his military status caught the fancy of the settlers and were never used by them. This is understandable since Colonels Christian and Preston both lived near present day Blacksburg, and Colonel William Byrd lived far away at Westover on the James.

FORT PRESTON

The fort that Russell named Fort Preston was on the lands of David Cowan in Upper Castlewood, (Russell Co., Va.) and stood just back of the present Masonic Lodge Hall. It was called Russell's Fort by some because it was here that Captain Russell had his military headquarters and used the fort also for personal shelter. It is also sometimes referred to as Cowan's Fort and later Charles Bickley bought the Cowan land and it was then called Bickley's Fort. A fort in this area was also called Bush's Fort and is probably this same fort, but some contend otherwise.

Russell's Fort, or Fort Preston was perhaps a much smaller fort than Moore's or Blackmore's, and is mentioned in pension statements less often. It was attacked on more than one occasion by Indians and it was at this fort that Ann Bush Neece was tomahawked, scalped and survived. It continued in use until the cessation of Indian hostilities.

FORT CHRISTIAN

Fort Christian, better known as Glade Hollow Fort lies between Dickensonville and Lebanon (Russell Co., Va.) on Cedar Creek. It is hard to determine just who owned the land when the fort was erected in 1774, as no one had deeds to lands prior to the sitting of the Commissioners in 1781, only warrants, and these warrants changed hands and were assigned many times to others before actual recording took place. Some available data indicates that the land may have been in possession of one James Smith who seems to disappear from the records after 1777. This assumption is based upon letters written by Colonel William Christian and Arthur Campbell, the former being on the Clinch at this time supervising the erection of the forts.

On July, 12, 1774, the day before Captain Russell wrote to Colonel Preston giving the names of the forts, Christian wrote to Preston, heading his letter "Captain's Russell's Fort", and saying:

"There are four forts erecting on the Clinch in Captain Russell's company, one at Moore's four miles below this; another at Blckmore's sixteen miles down; and one at Smith's twelve miles above this place. I am about to station 10 men at Blackmore's and 10 here. Captain Russell thinks this will do as the other forts are very strong and well supplied with men." (6)

Arthur Campbell in a letter relating to Elk Garden and Glade Hollow Forts, states:

"I give no orders regarding Elk Garden and Glade Hollow, only that I would write you so and so. I believe a wiser head than yours and mine put together would not please Jemmy Smith." (7)

These two letters seem to indicate that James Smith had something to do with Glade Hollow Fort, and since he was not a militia officer it must have meant possession of the land.

In 1777, Robert Dale settled on a tract of land on Big Cedar Creek in Glade Hollow and obtained a patent warrant for the same. This may be the land upon which the fort stood and upon which James Smith was residing at an earlier date. John Carr, who was born on Carr's Creek in 1773 refers to Dale's Fort on the Clinch, which was surely a reference to the Glade Hollow Fort. (8)

Tradition says that after the cessation of Indian hostilities the old Glade Hollow Fort was converted into a church known as the Glade Hollow Church. That a church did exist here is shown in Semple's "Baptist in Virginia", Table of Holston Baptist Association, page 358, which reads: "The Glade Hollow Church was planted by T. Burgess and S. Goodwin in 1788". There were baptist churches in this district at a much earlier date, but they were broken up by the Indian wars (Semple's, Baptist in Virginia, Table of Holston Baptist Association, page 360).

The Glade Hollow was taken off from Clinch River Church, which is one of the two old churches mentioned above as broken up by the war. A few members returning after the

war, the church was reconstituted (Semple's, Baptist in Virginia, Table of Holston Baptist Association, page 361).

Tradition states that Squire Boone, the brother of Daniel, preached in the Clinch River Church at Castlewood. If this is true then the church was active between 1773 and 1775, which period covered Squire Boone's stay on the Clinch.

MOORE'S FORT

Russell's Fort Byrd was located in lower Cassell's Woods on the road leading to Dungannon, and is now owned by W. S. Banner and known as the "Sally Meade" place. This fort was built upon the land of Willaim Moore, who along with his brother, Joseph, settled in Castlewood in 1769, hence the name Moore's Fort. The Moore brothers assigned their land warrants to Captain John Snoddy when they left the Clinch and since Captain Snoddy was a militia officer and at times was in command of Moore's Fort, as well as owning it, it was sometimes called Snoddy's Fort. Moore's Fort was the largest and most widely known of the Clinch chain of forts.

No description has been left of the size or shape of Moore's Fort, but we know it had two gates, a front and back one, with the front gate opening toward the spring which one may still see by visiting the spot. This was the fort that sheltered Daniel Boone and his family after their return to the Clinch in 1773, when Boone's son and others were killed by the Indians on Wallen's Creek in his first at a Kentucky settlement. By petition of the people of Blackmore's Fort, Daniel Boone was placed in command of Moore's and Blackmore's Forts in 1774 as a Captain of militia and continued in command of them until he went to Kentucky in the spring of 1775 to found Boonesboro. While living on the Clinch, a son was born to Daniel and Rebecca Boone, whose name was William, and who died soon after birth and lies in an unmarked grave in the old Moore's Fort Cemetery on the brow of a hill overlooking the fort and Clinch River.

An amusing story is told of the Boone family while they were living in Moore's Fort by Mrs. Samuel Scott of Jessamine County, Kentucky, who was also at the time living in the fort. Mrs. Scott says the men had become very careless in guarding the fort, lounging outside the gate, playing ball and in general lax in their duties. One day Mrs. Boone and her daughter, Mrs. Hannah Carr and some of the other ladies loaded their guns lightly, went out from the fort, shut the gates and shot their guns off in rapid succession like the Indians. The men all scrambled for the fort, but finding the gates shut none could get in, but one young man who managed to climb over the stockade wall. So great was their consternation that some of the men ran right through the pond in front of the fort. After they were finally let in at the gates Mrs. Scott says the men were so mad some of them wanted to have the women whipped. (9)

We learn from the pension statement of James Fraley that Moore's Fort must have been Large - perhaps the largest fort on the frontier. He says that there was continuously some 20 families in the fort, with 20 or 25 men out on patrol as Indian Spys. Considering the large size of pioneer families, plus the militia assigned to protect the fort it surely must

have sheltered from one hundred and fifty to two hundred people, and it would have taken a large stockage to quarter and shelter this number of people. (10)

Moore's Fort was attacked many times by Indians, and many settlers and militiamen were killed in and around the fort.

BLACKMORE'S FORT

This is the "small fortification" that Captain Russell wrote Preston was being built at Blackmore's at the mouth of Stony Creek, but which in time grew to be the second most important fort on the frontier. Built on the lands of Captain John Blackmore, who along with his brother Joseph had come from Fauquier Co., VA, with their families to carve out homes in the wilderness in the year 1772.

Being more exposed it was attacked by Indians more often than Moore's and many people were killed and captured in and around this fort. The fort stood on the north side of Clinch, just outside the village of Fort Blackmore. It was to Blackmore's that all the people came when the forts in Powell Valley were evacuated in 1776, just prior to the outbreak of the Cherokee War, as did the people from Rye Cove Fort. It must have been of large proportions, but no one has left any known description of this fort. According to Samuel Alley who was born in sight of the fort in the year 1801, it was torn down and no vestige of it remained in 1887, when he paid a visit to his old home and found the ground where the old fort stood being tended in corn. However, nearby stood an apple tree planted by his father which to that day was known as the "John Alley Apple Tree." (11)

Across the road in a fringe of trees and brush, and slightly northeast of where the old fort stood is the old fort graveyard, with rows of small, uncut stones marking the final resting place of those who died from either the stroke of disease or tomahawk in the long ago.

Always known as Blackmore's Fort, the village today, almost two centuries later still bears the name except in the reverse order of Fort Blackmore.

THE FORTS ON THE UPPER CLINCH RIVER

Of the seven original forts built by order of Lord Dunmore, the last Colonial Governor of Virginia, three were located on the upper Clinch River and were under the military command of Captain Daniel Smith. Of these three, perhaps the most noted and possibly the largest was

ELK GARDEN FORT

This fort was located just south of State Route 19, on land now owned by the Stuart Land and Cattle Company, and in the general vicinity of the Elk Garden Methodist Church. Just who owned the land on which the old fort stood has not been ascertained, but those owning land in the immediate vicinity of the fort was Captain John Dunkin, Captain John

Kinkead, Richard Price and Solomon Litton. That it was a stockaded fort is beyond question, but as to its size and shape nothing is known.

No record has been found of an actual Indian assault directly upon the Elk Garden Fort though it is very possible there was such, as many people were killed and captured in the Elk Garden section from 1774 to the end of Indian depredations which ceased with the slaying of the half-breed Chief Bengé in 1794. The fort was manned throughout this period by militia.

Andrew Lyman who filed his pension application in Bath Co., Ky. in 1834, says:

"In 1776, I entered the service under Captain John Kinkead and marched immediately to the station called Elk Garden, and as the object of our service was to keep down the Indians, we were put to repairing and fixing up the station." The statement of Lyman shows that although the fort was only two years old, it was in need of repair, which shows that green logs embedded in earth as a stockade soon rot and no doubt, the stockades had to be repaired and rotten logs replaced frequently, as well as repair to the cabins and buildings insided the stockades.

WITTEN'S FORT

The second fort under Captain Daniel Smith's command was Witten's Fort, also sometimes called "Witten's Crab Orchard" and "The Upper Station". This fort was the home of William Witten and was located not far from the county seat town of Tazwell. It has been restored, less the stockade, as a tourist attraction alongside State Route 19, near Tazwell.

Apparently, from all available records, we must come to the conclusion that Witten's Fort was a small affair, as the militia complement stationed to defend the fort was usually a small force, despite that fact that it was wide open to the Sandy War passes.

In the pension application of James Elkins, filed in Clarke Co., Ky. in 1832, he makes this statement:

"The next tour of duty was at "old" Mr. William Witten's Fort on a tour of three months in the fall of 1777, from Russell Co., Va., under Captain Thomas Maxwell as a volunteer. On this tour we ranged the country, but the principal part of our time we were gaurding the above fort."

MAIDEN SPRINGS STATION

The third fort under Captain Daniel Smith's command was the Maiden Springs Station located at the Maiden Spring branch of Clinch River, and was the home of Rees Bowen. No description has been found as to the construction details or size of this fort. There is no account that it ever came under direct assault by the Indians, but it did remain one of the frontier defense bastions throughout the troubled Indian days.

Rees Bowen was born in Maryland in 1742. He fought in the Point Pleasant Campaign in 1774, and went to the relief of the Kentucky Stations in 1778. During the illness of his brother, Captain William Bowen, he succeeded as Lieutenant to his brother's command at the battle of King's Mountain and was shot dead by a Tory from behind a baggage wagon.

Thus is completed the description of the seven original forts built on the Clinch frontier. It may be of interest to the reader to know who manned and protected these forts and the frontier during the well documented period of Dunmore's War, as militia rosters have been preserved of the first men to man these forts immediately after their construction.

The first roster lists the forts, distance from each, and the name of the officer in charge and the number of men assigned.

<u>FORT</u>	<u>NO. MEN</u>	<u>MILES</u>	<u>OFFICER IN CHARGE</u>
Blackmore's Fort	16	-	Sergeant Moor
Moore's Fort	20	20	Boone (Daniel)
Russell's Fort	20	4	W. Poage, Sergeant
Glade Hollow Fort	15	12	John Dunkin, Sergeant
Elk Garden Fort	18	14	John Kinkead, Sergeant
Maiden Springs Fort	5	23	Joseph Cravens, Sergeant
Witten's Big Crab Orchard	3	12	Ensign (John) Campbell

This list is dated 6 October 1774. (Draper Mss 3 QQ 116)

AT THE ELK GARDEN FORT - 13 AUGUST TO 18 NOVEMBER, 1774

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. James Anderson | 2. Robert Breeze |
| 3. Robert Donnelson | 4. Thomas Donnelson |
| 5. Ben Jones | 6. David Kincaid |
| 7. John Kincaid, Sergeant | 8. James Laughlin |
| 9. John Lewis | 10. Henry Mannadue |
| 11. Richard Price | 12. Thomas Price |
| 13. David Priest | 14. Samuel Priest |
| 15. William Priest (Later killed
by Indians) | 16. Ericus Smith |

AT THE GLADE HOLLOW FORT - 29 AUGUST to 6 NOVEMBER, 1774

1. Jeremiah Able
2. William Buster(d)
3. Richard Byrd
4. Isaac Christian (Killed by Indians, Rye Cove, 1776)
5. Abraham Cooper
6. Francis Cooper
7. James Coyle (Killed by Indians, 1780)
8. John Dunkin, Sergeant (Captured by Indians, 1780, released 1783)
9. William Ferrell (Killed by Indians)
10. Joseph Horne
11. Solomon Litton (Prisoner of Indians 1780-83)
12. James McCarty
13. Henly Moore, Ensign
14. James Price

15. Drury Puckett
16. Archibald Scott (Killed by Indians 1785)
17. James Scott
18. Richard Thompson
19. William Wilmoth
20. Archibald Woods

AT THE MAIDEN SPRINGS FORT - AUGUST TO NOVEMBER, 1774

1. Rees Bowen (Killed at Kings Mountain)
2. Robert Brown, Sergeant
3. Thomas Bromley
4. James Crabens
5. John Cravens
6. Joseph Cravens (Sergeant from 22nd. Sept.)
7. Rober Cravens
8. James Douglas
9. John Flintham
10. Samuel Fowler
11. John Jamison
12. Andrew Lammey
13. James McElhenny
14. John Newland
15. Samuel Paxton
16. James Rogers
17. David Ward
18. Henry Willis
(Draper Mss 6 XX 106)

AT THE BIG CRAB ORCHARD (Also called Maxwell's Mills & Witten's Fort)

First Listing - August to October, 1774

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Levi Bishop | 2. Andrew Branshead |
| 3. William Brompton | 4. David Bustar(d) |
| 5. John Campbell, Ensign | 6. John Crawford |
| 7. Samuel Doack | 8. George Dougherty |
| 9. James Edwards | 10. James Fullen |
| 11. Michael Graves | 12. Alexander Grant |
| 13. John Grinnup | 14. Francis Hambleton |
| 15. Isaiah Hamilton | 16. John Hamilton |
| 17. Alexander Henderson | 18. Francis Hines |
| 19. James Mitchell | 20. Robert Moffet |
| 21. Thomas Potter | 22. Benjamin Rediford |
| 23. Edward Sharp | 24. Isaac Spratt, Sergeant |
| 25. Andrew Steel | 26. George Vaut |
| 27. Thomas Whitten, Sr., Sergeant | 28. Thomas Whitten, Jr. |
| 29. John Williams | 30. Roland Williams |
- (Draper Mss 9 DD 2)

AT THE BIG CRAB ORCHARD FORT - OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER, 1774

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Christian Bergeman | 2. Richard Breeze |
| 3. Robert Brown | 4. Phillip Dutton |
| 5. Johnathan Edwards | 6. Daniel Henderson |
| 7. Thomas Jones | 8. Jacob Kinder |
| 9. Peter Kinder | 10. William King |
| 11. William Lashley | 12. Thomas Meads |

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 13. William Pharis (Ferris) | 14. Michael Razor |
| 15. Thomas Rogers | 16. Jeremiah Whitten |
| (Draper Mss 6 XX 106) | |

STRENGTH OF THE UPPER CLINCH STATIONS AT THE END OF OCBOBER, 1774

At Elk Garden - 1 Sergeant, 15 men
 At Fort Christian - 1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant, 15 men
 At Maiden Springs - Brown & Cravens (Sergeants) and 15 men
 At Whitten's Fort - 1 Ensign, Sergeants Spratt & Whitten, and 44 men
 Total men & officers - 97
 (Draper Mss 5 XX 2)

INDIAN SCOUTS ON THE CLINCH IN EARLY 1774

1. Ephraim Drake
 2. William Herrell
 3. Edward Sharpe
 4. Richard Stanton
- Sent out by Capt. William Russell as scouts, 15 April 1774. (Draper Mss 3 QQ 18)

SCOUTS LISTED BY CAPTAIN DANIEL SMITH ON CLINCH - AUGUST TO OCTOBER, 1774

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Rees Bowen | 2. William Bowen |
| 3. William Crabtree | 4. Robert Davis |
| 5. James Fowles | 6. Samuel Hays |
| 7. John Kinkaid (17 days) | 8. Thomas Maxwell (10 days) |
| 9. William Priest 7 days) | 10. John Sharp (7 days) |
| 11. David Ward | |
- (Draper Mss 5 XX 2)

ROSTER OF TROOPS UNDER CAPT. DANIEL SMITH 4 Oct. 1774

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Thomas Boylston | 2. Robert Brown |
| 3. Saul Cecil | 4. Israel Harmon |
| 5. Vincent Hobbs | 6. William McAdoo |
| 7. William Magee | 8. Thomas Maxwell |
| 9. Holton Munsey | 10. Samuel Munsey |
| 11. James Myers (Marrs) | 12. John Myers (Marrs) |
| 13. David Patton | 14. Thomas Shannon |
| 15. John Smith | 16. Joseph Turner |
- (Draper Mss 3 QQ 114)

While fort Christian (Glade Hollow) was erected in Captain William Russell's command originally, it seems later to have been transferred to the command of Captain Daniel Smith.

No list for the forts in Russell's command in 1774 have been found, which were Blckmore's, Moore's and Russell's Forts. A later list has been uncovered for Moore's Fort, which is given below.

LIST OF TROOPS AT MOORE'S FORT JUNE 30, 1777

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Patrick Porter, Sergeant | 2. Lewis Green, Jr. |
| 3. Robert Kilgore | 4. James Alley |
| 5. Charles Kilgore | 6. Samuel Alley |
| 7. Samuel Porter | 8. Zachariah Green |
| 9. John Alley | 10. Alexander Montgomery, Sr. |
| 11. Alexander Montgomery, Jr. | 12. Andrew Cowan |
| 13. Frederick Friley | 14. John Kinkead |
| 15. John Barksdale | 16. James Ozburn (Osborne) |
| 17. Thomas Osburne | 18. Nehemiah Noe |
- (Draper Mss I XX 20 and I XX 24)

DANIEL SMITH'S FORT

Some 16 miles north of Lebanon, on Highway 19, on Indian Creek in upper Russell Co., is a State Highway Historical Marker, which bears this inscription:

Near here in 1774, stood Daniel Smith's Fort, also known as Fort Christian. The fort was named for Smith who was a surveyor and Captain of militia on the upper Clinch.

To prove that this marker has an error, I herewith quote two letters written at the very time these forts were being built on the Clinch frontier. The first of these letters was written by Captain William Russell, who was in command of the forts on the lower Clinch below Elk Garden. Russell's letter is dated July 13, 1774, and written to his superior military officer, Colonel William Preston, and reads:

Since I wrote you last the inhabitants of this river have altered the plan for two forts only, on this river below Elk Garden, and have erected three; one in Cassell's Woods which I call Fort Preston; a second ten miles above which I call Fort Christian; the third five miles below the first which I call Fort Byrd... (12)

Colonel William Christian, the same man for whom Fort Christian was named was in Cassell's Woods at this very time supervising the construction of the forts, having been sent to do so by Colonel Preston. On July 12, 1774, Colonel Christian wrote to Preston, heading his letter up "Captain Russell's Fort" in which he writes:

There are four forts erecting on the Clinch in Captain Russell's company; one at Moore's four miles below this; another at Blackmore's sixteen miles down; and one at Smith's, twelve miles above this place. (13)

Captain Russell says that Fort Christian was ten miles above Castlewood, and Colonel Christian says it was at Smith's twelve miles above. These distances from Castlewood puts the location of the fort on Big Cedar Creek in Glade Hollow and it can be none other that the Glade Hollow Fort, so Glade Hollow Fort and Fort Christian were one and the same.

It will be remembered that at the time of the erection of these forts that Fort Christian was in Captain Russell's company below Elk Garden and it is not likely that Russell would have had the audacity to name Daniel Smith's very own fort over which he had no military authority whatsoever.

It is approximately 40 miles from Russell's Fort in Castlewood to the site of Smith's Fort on Indian Creek, north of Lebanon, and this certainly does not agree with the distance given by both Russell and Christian from the Castlewood Fort to Fort Christian.

Some say that near Belfast stood Smith's Fort built in 1774 by Capt. Daniel Smith, and that after Daniel left the Clinch it became the fort of his brother, Colonel Henry Smith who lived at Clifton in upper Russell County. This may be true as Colonel Henry Smith became militia commandant for Russell Co. after its formation in 1786, but in either event it certainly must have been a "family fort" defended by its occupants, as no record has been found to prove that it was manned by State Militia and no known Revolutionary War soldier who has left a pension statement says he served in Smith's Fort.

There is only one document that might suggest that Smith had a fort on Indian Creek, and that is a letter written by Col. Arthur Campbell to Colonel William Preston, dated September 9, 1774, in which he states:

Yesterday morning early, one John Henry was dangerously wounded upon Clinch, about four miles from Captain Smith's Station. I have sent out orders to this, and the next company on the Holston for all the men that have arms and ammunition to assemble tomorrow in order to patrol a few days in the Rich Valley, and some of the best hands to go over and see what has become of Captain Smith, as he is very weak at his own station, having only eight men the last account. (14)

Campbell's letter does lead one to believe that Captain Smith had a fort at his home on Indian Creek, but why was it not mentioned in the military correspondence of 1774, and why were no militia troops assigned to defend it? There can be only one answer and that is, that it was a family fort as previously suggested and then the question arises, was it a stockaded fort, or only a fort-house?

OTHER FORTS ON THE CLINCH

NEW GARDEN STATION

In the beautiful New Garden section of Russell Co., VA, on the south side of the Clinch was another very early fort called the New Garden Station. This is another the historians have passed by and no historical marker denotes its existence, even the people now living in the area are unaware that a fort ever existed there. This section of Russell Co. was settled very early, in fact as early as 1769, and upon whose land and when the fort was built is not known.

Certainly it can be proven that the fort stood upon Thompson's Creek, from this entry in Washington Co., VA Land Entry Book, dated August 20, 1780, which reads:

We, the Commissioners, etc...do certify that Israel Christian is entitled to 100 acres of land near the New Garden Fort, on the north side of Clinch River, on the waters of Thompson's Creek.

The New Garden Station may have been built as early as 1774 and manned by the settlers in proximity to it. Certainly there is no militia list for it at this early date, and neither is it listed as one of the garrisoned forts under Captain Daniel Smith's command at this time.

Settlers of the New Garden section would have been at the complete mercy of the Shawnee entering through the Sandy war passes, and sanctuary in either Elk Garden or Castlewood fort would have been miles away. Considering these conditions and the very early settlement of the area it seems that an early fort would have been a most urgent necessity of the settlers.

Both Andrew Lynam and George Huffaker in their pension application say they served at this fort under a Lieutenant James Leeper in the year 1777, with Huffaker saying that when he served there Alexander Smith and a Mr. Jackson lived there.

Robert Sinclair says in his pension claim that he served there in the fall of 1776 or 1777 under Captain William Norton. These statements not only prove the existence of the fort, but also that it did exist at an early date.

George William Settle in an unpublished history of Russell County entitled "A Brief History of the Earliest Generations and Events, Etc., In the Eastern Part of Russell Co., VA", page 53, states:

About one half mile north of Oaks Garage, or around 300 yards up the ridge from Robert Green's was an Indian fort where twenty-five or thirty people lived for protection against the Indians. Some old man told me they would go down to the big spring below the road, eat and go back to the fort, but never without the men along with their rifles.

The above traditional statement may actually pinpoint the location of the New Garden Fort.

TATE'S FORT

Tate's Fort on Moccasin Creek in Russell County was another the early historians completely overlooked, and only two historical references brought it to light. The first made by Mrs. Samuel Scott of Jessamine Co., KY, who in referring to her stay on the Clinch makes this statement:

We moved out of Tate's Fort, close on Moccasin Creek, over to Holston to get ready to come to Kentucky. (15) This was in the spring of 1780 and she joined a party of emigrants to Kentucky in 1784.

The other statement was made by Captain John Carr, of Sumner Co., TN, who was born on Carr's Creek in Russell Co., VA, in 1773, and moved with his widowed mother to the Cumberland settlement in 1784. In speaking of the year 1776, he states:

My father settled on Big Moccasin Creek with some 15 or 20 families from Houston's Fort. The Indians were so troublesome that we built a "new fort". It was called Tate's Fort, where we fortified in summer and returned home in winter. (16)

Carr's statement needs some clarification and he does not mean that his father settled on Moccasin Creek in 1776, but that it was this year in which they moved out of Houston's Fort where they had refuged in the past and built a new fort for their convenience. His father had settled on Moccasin Creek much earlier for John, himself, was born there in 1773, and his father died there in 1782. This, then, places the construction of Tate's Fort in the year 1776.

That Tate's Fort was a stockaded affair certainly cannot be doubted, for 15 or 20 families could never have crowded into a fort house. It certainly must have been manned and defended by its occupants for I find no record of militia ever having been stationed there.

This fort was built on the lands of Colonel John Tate who had settled on Moccasin Creek in the year 1772, on a tract of 174 acres of land surveyed for him December 13, 1774. (17) I have not found any account that this fort was ever attacked directly by Indians.

RYE COVE FORT

On March 25, 1774, Captain Daniel Smith, who was the Surveyor for Fincastle County, surveyed 225 acres of land on Cove Creek in the Rye Cove of present day Scott County for Isaac Crissman. Crissman entered his land in Fincastle County, March 28, 1774. The exact date that he settled on the land is not shown. He and two members of his family were slain at or near the spot in 1776 by the Indians. The Washington Co., VA, court appointed Archibald Scott, who was later himself slain by the Indians, as Administrator of Crissman's estate on January 28, 1777. Crissman had served in the militia as a private at Glade Hollow fort during the Point Pleasant Campaign in 1774.

Prior to his death at the hands of the Indians, Crissman had built a fort on his land, probably sometime in the year 1774. John Redd who had come to Powell Valley with Captain Joseph Martin in 1775, knew Crissman, and has left the only known description of the fort. Of it he says:

Rye Cove Fort was about 8 miles from the North Fork of the Clinch, situated about a half mile off from Cove Creek on its west side. There were several springs at the fort. It enclosed about half an acre of land. (18)

This fort has been referred to as Crissman's Fort, but more commonly as the Rye Cove Fort. In military correspondence it is called Fort Lee, but not a single soldier who served there and left a statement has ever referred to it as Fort Lee, but always as Rye Cove Fort. It was one of the major forts and was garrisoned throughout Indian times with militia. Many people were killed and captured in the Rye Cove, including troops and spys sent out from the fort.

There has been some thought that Crissman's Fort and the Rye Cove Fort were separate forts, due to the fact that Captain Joseph Martin and his troops were paid for building a fort in Rye Cove in 1777. I think, however, that it can be proven that Fort Lee, Crissman's Fort and Rye Cove Fort were one and the same, and that Martin and his troops were paid for repairing the old fort, not building a new one. First let us go to the pension declaration of Charles Bickley, filed in Russell Co., VA, in 1838, in which he states:

That he entered the service in the month of September or October, 1775, under the command of Captain William Russell, Lieutenant William Bowen and Ensign James Knox, and was rendezvoused and stationed at Rye Cove, where he remained in the service guarding and defending that fort until January 23, 1776, when he was discharged. That in the ensuing summer of 1776, exact date not remembered, he was engaged in hoeing corn in the county of Russell when an alarm that Indians were in the neighborhood was raised. The people assembled at the fort (Russell's) and the company of militia from Reed Creek in Wythe County, under the command of Captain John Montgomery, Lieutenant Michael Daugherty and Ensign John Simpson, were on their march to the Rye Cove Fort, preparatory to an expected expedition against the Cherokee, when he, Charles Bickley, enrolled and marched as a Private under the said officers to Rye Cove where they remained a short time. Colonel (Anthony) Bledsoe, then in command of the forces on the frontier, ordered the evacuation of the Rye Cove Fort and marched to Blackmore's Fort on Clinch River, where a junction was made with the forces then in the fort and they marched from Fort Blackmore into Tennessee, where they were joined by Colonel (William) Christian and Major Evan Shelby.

On return of Christian's Army at the close of the Cherokee Campaign, it was disbanded, except a few companies scattered here and there on the frontier. One of these companies under command of Captain Joseph Martin was stationed in the Rye Cove during the winter and spring of 1777. They were stationed at Crissman's Fort. While here Martin's Company was attacked by Indians under the leadership of a son of Nancy Ward's, known among the whites by the name of Little Fellow.

It was during the winter of 1777 that Martin's troops were paid for building the fort in Rye Cove and Bickley says they were stationed in Crissman's Fort, which seems to prove that they were paid for repairing the old fort built by Crissman, which Bickley speaks of as both Rye Cove and Crissman's Fort.

During 1792 and until after the last Indian raid on the frontier in 1794, Captain Andrew Lewis, (Jr.), son of the historically famous Andrew Lewis of Salem, was in charge of the frontier militia with his headquarters at Fort Lee in Rye Cove.

CARTER'S FORT

Further westward in the Rye Cove of Scott County stood Carter's Fort, supposedly built by the Carter brothers, Joseph, Thomas and Norris. Most early historians place the date of this fort around 1786, but it can be proven by Revolutionary War pension claims that this date is at least a decade too late.

James Elkins says in his pension statement filed in Clarke Co., KY in 1832, that he served at Carter's Station in the Rye Cove in the latter part of the summer of 1777, under Captain William Bowen. His statement is no doubt correct for Lieutenant William Bowen is shown to have been in the Rye Cove, both in 1776 and 1777, according to early military records. How many years prior to 1777 this fort existed is not known, but the Carter brothers were very early settlers in the Rye Cove with land entries in old Fincastle County in 1774. Since this was the most westward fort in Scott County and openly exposed to Indian forays it is reasonable to think that the early settlers of Rye Cove would have had a fort for their protection at a very early date. This was undoubtedly a palisaded fort and it stood close along the old "Hunter's Trace" passing through Scott County.

HOUSTON'S FORT

Still in Scott County on the waters of Moccasin Creek was Houston's Fort. While the Moccasin Creek waters are a tributary of the Holston River, this stream was more in the Clinch River defensive area than of the Holston, and it was thought for several years after the first settlers that Moccasin Creek was a tributary of Clinch River.

The fort was built by William Houston and his neighbors in 1774, upon land which had formerly been settled by Thomas McCulloch in 1769, and abandoned by McCulloch in June of 1771, because of fear of Indians. William Houston, assignee of Thomas McCulloch, seems to have taken up his abode on the land in 1772. Nearby stood a grist mill which Houston had built to serve his and his neighbors need for bread.

In the late summer of 1776, probably in August, Fort Houston was attacked by a large force of Cherokee Indians, said by some people who were in the fort to number 300. This attack was driven off when two companies of militia under Captain Daniel Smith and Captain John Montgomery were sent to the relief of the station from Fort Blackmore where the troops were gathering for Colonel William Christian's Cherokee Campaign.
(19)

Samuel Cowan who lived in lower Castlewood had raced across country on a borrowed stud horse belonging to Deskin Tibbs to warn the station that Indians were in the area and arrived before any attack had been made upon the fort. After delivering his message he insisted upon returning to his home against the advise of those in the fort and started upon his return and was fired upon a short distance from the fort. The defenders of the fort hearing the shots sallied out to his assistance, found him shot and scalped, but still alive. He was carried into the fort, but died a short time afterwards. The horse Cowan was

riding was uninjured and reached Castlewood, covered with sweat and lather from the long run, and Mrs. Cowan seeing the riderless horse fainted, knowing that her husband had been shot from the horse. (20)

John Carr, who was in the fort with his parents, and at the time, only three years of age, wrote to Dr. Lyman C. Draper in 1854, that he could remember his father holding him up to a port hole to see the Indians firing upon the fort. (21)

Mrs. Samuel Scott, another intimate of the fort, said that when the fort was attacked there were about thirty people in the fort, with perhaps ten of these being men, and that the Indians stayed around several days killing livestock. (22)

ROCKY STATION

On the old Kentucky Trace between Woodway and Dryden in the vicinity of the Litton Dairy farm, stood Rocky Station which was the only fort in Powell Valley to remain open during the dangerous days of the Revolutionary War when the Indians, aided and abetted by the infamous British agents living among them were inciting them to slaughter innocent women and children along the western frontier.

The Rocky Station was garrisoned by a Company of Rangers who patrolled Powell Valley and watched the war paths from the Cherokee and Shawnee nations especially Cumberland Gap, which pass was used by both nations. Colonel Charles Cocke assumed command of this station in 1780, and remained in command until after the Revolutionary War. Colonel Cocke was particularly alert, often delegating command of the fort to a subordinate and going out as an Indian spy himself. We sometimes find this station referred to as Cocke's Station, because Colonel Cocke was in command there.

There are numerous account of Indian attacks upon the fort, and its Rangers had many encounters with them throughout the valley, especially those bands dedicated to stealing horses, which acts seemed to increase many fold during the Revolution. (23)

Rocky Station was perhaps erected in 1775 or 1776, and was the home of Isaac Crissman, Jr., who is assumed, without proof, to have been a son of Isaac Crissman who build Crissman's Fort in Rye Cove and was slain by the Indians in early 1776 in Rye Cove. At least Isaac Jr., was heir-at-law to an Isaac, Sr., in possession of this property. Washington Co., VA, Land Entry Book 1, shows that Isaac Crissman, whether Junior or Senior not known, made actual settlement on the land in 1775. In a letter written by Colonel Joseph Martin to the Governor, dated November 8, 1791, he says: Crissman's Station is north of Clinch Mountain in Powell Valley. (24)

MARTIN'S STATIONS

In the year 1769, Joseph Martin of Henry County came to Lee County, leading a group of land seekers into Powell Valley in search of land. After losing their trail and having much

difficulty in finding the valley, they finally arrived, staked out vast acreages under the Loyal Company grant and returned to Henry County.

In January, 1775, Martin with a group of men from Henry County returned to the valley. Among those accompanying him was John Redd, Mordecai Hoard, Brice Martin (his brother), and William Parks, the latter killed by the Indians the following year on his land claim. These men and others staked out their claims and were improving them for home sites. Sometime between January and June of 1775, this little group built a fort of which John Redd leaves this description:

Martin's Fort was on Martin's Creek. The fort was located on the north side of the creek. There were some 5 or 6 cabins; these built some 20 feet apart with strong stockades between. In these stockades there were port holes. The station contained about half an acre of ground. The shape was a parallelogram. There were two fine springs near the station on its north side. The station was not reoccupied after 1776, or during the Revolutionary War. (24)

This station was evacuated in June of 1776, just prior to the outbreak of the Cherokee War. Captain Joseph Martin, after the Cherokee Campaign was appointed Indian Agent to that nation and moved his headquarters from the valley to Long Island. When Long Island was ascertained to be in the state of North Carolina, Martin then moved back to the Valley. In 1783, the Governor of Virginia and Council authorized the building of a fort at Cumberland Gap which fort was erected under the supervision and on the lands of Captain Martin, in the fall of 1783. This new station was some 18 or 20 miles below Martin's Old Station and 2 miles from Cumberland Gap on Indian Creek, or on Station Creek, a tributary stream, for certainly that is how the stream got its name. Unfortunately no one has left a description of the new station, but it is sometimes referred to as "the Blockhouse" suggesting that it had bastions at the corners. This was the last stop-over for emigrants on the great Wilderness Road before their entry into Kentucky. Martin retained possession of this station until 1788, (25) when he sold it and returned to Henry County never to return to the western frontier in which he played so great a role, and has been almost forgotten by historians writing of the area.

There is a State Historical marker locating the site of Martin's Old Station at Rose Hill, in Lee Co., VA. The location is correct, but the marker states that the fort was built in 1768, which is an error. Martin's first venture into the valley, as previously stated was in 1769, and no fort was built since their stay at this time was only a few days. The location of Martin's two forts can be easily verified by a letter written by him from his home in Henry County to the Governor of Virginia, on November 8, 1791, wherein he states:

From Moccasin Gap to Martin's Old Station, 25 miles; from thence to Martin's New Station, 20 miles; from thence to Cumberland Gap, 2 miles. He further states in this letter that about 100 souls were living at or near the Old Station, and at Martin's New Station and the neighborhood about 50 souls. These two stations were always in Virginia, and when both Walker and Henderson ran their lines they were so run as to leave Martin's Stations within the state.

MUMP'S FORT

John Redd, in his Narrative in the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography states that in the fall of 1775, William Mumps, with a small band of men built a fort at the Sinking Springs, about 20 miles from Martin's Station. The Sinking Springs was the present site of Jonesville, the county seat of Lee County.

William Mumps and his men were probably from Henry Co., VA, and likely induced by Martin to make settlement in Powell Valley. Redd says the fort was evacuated in 1776, and never again reoccupied. In June of 1776, shortly before the evacuation of the fort the historically famous George Rogers Clarke was a guest at Mump's Station on his return from Kentucky, which he had left because of fear of an Indian War.

Redd says the fort was evacuated in 1776 and never again reoccupied, yet Alexander Ritchie, Jr., in his Revolutionary War pension claim gives the line of forts and stations in use by the militia and he states: A fort where Lee County Courthouse now stands.

In this statement he is referring to the year 1777, or thereabouts. It is possible that he was referring to Mump's abandoned fort and that it was an occasional use by the militia after 1776, however, this is only a supposition. It is unknown if this was a stockaded fort, but in all probability, due to the exposed location, it had some sort of rude fortification around it.

PRIEST'S FORT

This is another fort found only in the memoirs of John Redd, and of it he says:

That it was located some 5 or 6 miles above Martin's Station and was on no water course. It was built about the same time as Mump's Fort, and William Priest, its builder, was perhaps a Henry Co., VA man in the valley through Martin's influence. Five or six miles from Martin's Station would locate this fort between the towns of Rose Hill and Jonesville, in Lee County.

This fort was evacuated at the same time as Mump's and Martin's, and the men from both fled to Fort Blackmore, in June, 1776, when alarmed by the outbreak of the Cherokee War. All evidence points to the fact that it was, as Redd says, never reoccupied after the initial evacuation, as no other mention of it has been gleaned from any source.

OWEN'S STATION

The only known mention of Owen's Station comes from the pension statement of James Kincaid, filed in Lafayette Co., MO. He tells of going to Owen's Station ten miles below Martin's Station in Powell Valley, in present day Lee Co. Ten miles below Martin's Old Station would place Owen's Station some eight miles from Cumberland Gap, and in the vicinity of the present village of Ewing. Kincaid's reference was to the year 1776 or 1777, and no other reference has been found mentioning this station.

In the year 1786, a William Owen was living in the vicinity of Owen's Station, and this station may or may not have been his home.

YOKUM'S STATION

Located in Powell Valley on the banks of Powell River, between Dryden and Woodway, near where the highway crosses the bridge at the Wygal place. Yokum's Station seems to have been a neighborhood fort for the scattered settlers of Turkey Cove. The station was perhaps the home of one George Yokum and anything of his personal life is unknown to this writer.

It appears that the station was built some time after 1780, since this is about the time that Turkey Cove began to be settled, with Vincent Hobbs and some others settling there in this year.

No description has been found for this fort and none of the military correspondence or pension claims make mention of it. This leads to the assumption that it may have been only a neighborhood fort manned by the settlers. The only intimation that militia troops might have been stationed there comes from the assignment order for militia troops in 1792, which shows a Captain, Sergeant, Corporal and 24 Privates stationed in the Turkey Cove, but does not show at what particular places, if any, they were stationed.

In a letter written from Morristown, TN, September 9, 1925, by Mr. William A. Orr, who grew up in the neighborhood of the fort, to Dr. David F. Orr, he says:

When the fort was built there was only a trail from it up and down the river, up Turkey Cove and on over Lovelady Gap and across Natural Tunnel in Scott County. It was then part of Washington County. Do you remember a large pile of rocks at the Comfrey Patch? That is where the fort stood. It was from there that Captain Hobbs went when he shot Benge.

It is true that it was from this fort that Captain Vincent Hobbs led his small band of settlers that killed the half-breed Indian Chief Benge in present Wise Co., VA, forever freeing the frontier from the Indian scourge. All of Hobb's men lived in and around Turkey Cove and most of them were members of the militia in Captain Andrew Lewis' (Jr.) Command, which again might suggest that some militia was stationed at this fort.

GIBSON'S STATION

Gibson's Station was located in lower Lee Co., VA about five miles from Cumberland Gap, and is still, today, called Gibson's Station.

In 1775, Ambrose Fletcher made a settlement on a tract of land in the western end of what is today Lee Co., VA, and on the 10th of August 1785, Fletcher assigned his certificate for land to Major George Gibson. This tract was entered before the Commissioners of Washington Co., VA on August 10, 1781, by Fletcher, and is

described as 400 acres of land lying in Washington Co. in Powell's Valley, and known by the name of the "Indian Old Fields". George Gibson had this land surveyed on December 8, 1785, and was issued a patent for the same on August 1, 1785. (26)

George Gibson doubtless moved on this land shortly after acquiring it and established a station, since, and to this day known as Gibson's Station. His home was a two story log house nearby a spring. The spring was inside the fort, and the chimney of the old Gibson home is still standing, but another house has been built to it. The location is beyond the Southern Railroad underpass about 300 yards beyond on the right.

Apparently this was another of the neighborhood forts, for I find no record that militia was ever stationed there. It was likely defended only by its occupants.

George Gibson was a son of Robert and Isabella Gibson, and was born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1732. Came to America when quite young with his parents and settled in Augusta Co., VA. About 1776 he married Elizabeth Smith, a daughter of Zachariah Smith of Augusta Co. When upon coming to Southwest Virginia, it is said that he first settled in the vicinity of Abingdon, before coming to Powell Valley around 1785. He was a Lieutenant in the French and Indian War, and served during the Point Pleasant Campaign in 1774. During the Revolution he served in the Continental Army, was promoted to Major, and is said to have been at the Battle of King's Mountain. He died at Gibson's Station, April 3, 1819.

The Indians captured his son, Matthew Moss Gibson, when he was a small child and he lived with the Indians until grown, when he was identified by a birthmark and ransomed by his father. Family tradition states that he never became accustomed to living with his family, and would often be found outside the door listening and not entering the house. That he often returned to his Indian parents, staying awhile and then returning to his own parents. He later moved to Missouri where he spent the remainder of his life.

DAVIDSON'S GARRISON

While not on the waters of either the Clinch, Holston or Powell Rivers, Davidson's Garrison on the waters of Bluestone River in present day Tazewell Co., VA contributed to the defense of the upper Clinch and Holston Rivers in preventing entry by the Shawnee toward the headwaters of both streams. The fort located on Cove Creek, about 3 miles from its mouth, which stream is a tributary of the Bluestone River, and the Bluestone settlement is often mentioned in military correspondence during the troubled Indian days, but never Davidson's Fort, which seems strange, as the head of the Clinch and Bluestone settlements were wide open to the Sandy War passes, and also from the fact that state militia was stationed at this fort.

The fort was built by the Davidson family who were direct emigrants from County Down, Ireland, first settling on Jackson's River in Augusta Co., VA, later moving to Crab Creek in Montgomery County and from thence to Cove Creek in Tazewell Co. In this family there were at least three sons, William born in County Down, Ireland, in 1759, his

brothers Joseph, born in 1767, and Andrew Davidson. Both William and Joseph served in the militia at their fort, and it is from the pension statement of William, that we draw our information and the knowledge that such a fort really existed. In his pension statement filed in Tazewell Co., VA, he states:

The company stationed in Davidson's Fort in the spring of 1777 was divided into 3 or 4 companies, and when the spys would come in and report Indian signs, it was the duty of the companies to go in turns in pursuit of them. He says the settlement where he lived in Montgomery (now Tazewell) County was very weak and from 1777 to 1786 they had to call on the country to the east for assistance, and that a company as sent in each of the aforementioned years from the eastern part of Montgomery Co., part of which were stationed in the garrison with him. That they usually went on their spying missions from Davidson's Fort across Bluestone River, across the Dividing Ridge between the waters of Bluestone and Guyandot, and around this ridge between the Bluestone River and Davidson's Garrison. (27)

An interesting sidelight on this fort is that from 1777 to 1786, it was under the command of Captain James Moore, who along with his entire family, were so cruelly destroyed by the Indians on July 14, 1786. A small booklet published many years ago under the title "The Captives of Abbs Valley" by an unnamed relative tells the tragic story of the destruction of the Moore family, except a son, James, who had previously been captured by the Indians and was still a prisoner when his family were all slain.

James Moore was appointed Captain by the court of Montgomery Co., on April 8, 1778, on the waters of Bluestone. The same court on August 23, 1786, entered this interesting order:

George Peery appointed Captain in place of James Moore, deceased, Joseph Davidson, Lieutenant, and Andrew Davidson, Ensign, in the same company.

RICHLANDS STATION

This is another of the vague stations about which too little is known. There are several references in official communications of troops being stationed in the "Rich Lands", however, no particular station is mentioned.

This station may have been the home of one James Fowler, who served as a scout under Captain William Russell, and was at Fort Blair on the Point Pleasant Campaign in the fall of 1774, and he, Fowler, was dead prior to 18th of August 1778, the date the Washington Co. Court appointed administrators of his estate.

In Washington Co., VA Survey Book, page 120, is a land entry which reads: On the North Fork, both sides of Clinch, in the Rich Lands... We, the Commissioners, etc., do certify that John Fowler, heir-at-law to James Fowler, deceased, assignee of Thomas Sharp, is entitled to 200 acres of land by settlement in the year 1772, lying on the North Fort of the Clinch River, being the same where James Fowler resided in his lifetime.

Joseph Starnes, in his pension statement says that he served under Captain Aaron Lewis in a tour of 3 months at a place called "Fowler's Station." (28)

That Fowler's Station and the Richland Station were one and the same is perhaps logical reasoning, and certainly it was a very early station, although we do not know the year in which it was built. In the year 1792 a list of troops and their places of stationment shows a Sergeant, Corporal, and 12 Privates to be stationed at Brown's or Fugate's in Richlands. This may mean that by 1792 the old station had been abandoned and the above two mentioned places may have been fort-houses where troops were stationed.

When William Ferrill was killed by Indians in New Garden in June, 1778, Captain Daniel Smith ordered the Sergeant in charge of Richlands Fort to take half his men stationed there and go to the assistance of Captain John Kinkead in New Garden. This order shows that Richlands Fort was a garrisoned station in 1778, with a Captain Edmondson being in command, but absent at the time.

DUMP'S CREEK STATION

Upon whose land and when this station was built cannot be stated at this time. Next to nothing is known regarding it, with few references available and only one pension statement reference which may be found in the application of Patrick Coyle, filed in Wayne Co., KY, in 1833, in which he says:

That he entered the service in October, 1780, under Lieutenant James Hawkins and was stationed at Dump's Creek.

It is possible that the Dumps Creek Station may have been only a fort house and not a stockaded fortress, however, this fact is unknown.

GUEST STATION

Of all the frontier stations along the Clinch this one presents the greatest enigma. The location is between Big and Little Tom's Creek, on Guest River at the present site of Coeburn, Wise Co., VA. Outside of deed references which mention this station frequently no other direct reference has been found pertaining to it, and no militia correspondence or pensions applications make mention of it.

Charles B. Coale, in "Wilburn Waters" tells of the Indians going to this station in 1777, after their capture of Jane Whittaker and Polly Alley, and finding it well defended make no attack upon it. Coale gives no authority for this statement and search for it has proven fruitless. Who built the station and for what purpose is unknown. There are several opinions, but opinions unless backed by factual data should never become a part of written history. This writer does categorically deny that it has any relation with Christopher Gist as has been written, since Gist did not travel through the present bounds of Wise County.

Elder Morgan T. Lipps, who settled on Tom's Creek in the spring of 1838, states in his diary: (29)

That the old settlers showed him some of the logs of the old fort and chimney rocks still lying upon the ground when he arrived there in 1838. Even if Christopher Gist did visit this spot in 1750, he could never, with the help of a small Negro boy, have built a structure whose remains would have lasted 88 years after his departure.

That some sort of fortification existed at Coeburn is unquestioned, since from the earliest times the place was called Guesses Station, and retained that name until the coming of the railroads when the name was changed.

FORT PATRICK HENRY

A few forts along the Holston River played a part in the defense of the Clinch River Valley settlements, and only those playing some sort of defensive role will be mentioned in this manuscript.

Fort Patrick Henry often referred to as the Long Island Station (present Kingsport, TN) was built in 1776, largely by the troops of Captain William Russell, while waiting there for the gathering of the troops for Colonel William Christian's Cherokee Campaign. Long Island in the Holston, upon which the fort was built was a spot held in veneration by the Cherokee Indians Nation and was not ceded to the United States until after the turn of the 19th century. The fort was the main defensive bastion against the Southern Indians and was active until cessation of hostilities. It was at this fort that Captain Joseph Martin had his headquarters as Indian Agent until it was determined that the island lay in the state of North Carolina instead of Virginia.

John Redd who has left an excellent description of this fort, describes it thusly:

The fort was built on the Holston in 1776; was built on the North bank about 200 yards below the upper end of the island. The place selected for the fort was where the bank of the river was very high, I suppose some 20 feet, and the water some 4 or 5 feet deep. The ground enclosed by the fort was about 100 yards square. There were only three sides enclosed, the bank of the river being almost impregnable. The fort was built similar to that built by Joseph Martin in Powell's Valley, with the exception that the walls had bastions at the corner. The house for the store was in the center of the square and also the house for the commander. There were several small springs that broke out of the bank of the river which were used, but the river was our main dependence for water. (30)

THE ANDERSON BLOCKHOUSE

The Blockhouse on the Holston was one of the most widely known places on the Wilderness Road. It stood in Carter's Valley on the outer edge of the Holston River settlements, about four miles southeast of Moccasin Gap, in Scott Co., VA. It seems to

have been the only Blockhouse within the area, insofar as available data reveals, the other forts consisting of log cabins and stockades.

The Blockhouse was built by John Anderson sometime prior to 1782. It had two rooms, a lower and upper floor. The walls of the upper floor had the usual port holes, and the upper story extended out wider than the first floor. During the period of greatest travel over the Wilderness Road, John Anderson, as proprietor of the Blockhouse was host to literally hundreds of people who stopped over on their way to Kentucky and elsewhere.

When danger of Indian attack had passed, John Anderson built nearby a larger two story house with log kitchen, into which the family moved, and the old Blockhouse was converted into a "loom-house." It was continued in this use until 1876, when it, together with the newer house was consumed by fire.

Dr. William A. Pusey, of Chicago, author of "The Wilderness Road to Kentucky," had a monument erected on, or near the site of the old Blockhouse, the inscription which reads as follows:

This Tablet Marks The Site of the Blockhouse the meeting point of the pioneer roads to Kentucky from Virginia and North Carolina, and the gathering place of pioneer travellers at the entrance to the wilderness. Erected by a descendant of William Bowen who recorded that, "We waited hereabouts near two weeks and then set out for the Wilderness, with 12 men and 10 guns, this being Thursday, 18th July. (1782)

JEREMIAH HARRISON'S FORT

This fort was located on the North Fork of Holston. In the year 1782 tithables of Washington Co., VA, three adult Harrisons were listed. They were Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah, and from the Biblical names they are assumed to have been brothers. Jeremiah bought a tract of 400 acres and he later took up a tract of 340 acres. The 400 acre tract was on Sinking Creek of the North Fork of Holston and is dated in the Fincastle Survey, May 28, 1774. Yet the 340 acre tract appears in the Washington Co. Survey book, and it is this tract he sells to David Smith on June 14, 1787. (31) The first mention of any fort here comes in a letter of Arthur Campbell to William Preston, dated October 6, 1774, (32) in which he says: He has stationed on the main path to Clinch, opposite the Town House (33) to protect the settlers, and he mentions the families of Vance, Fowler, Harrison, etc., including John Campbell who had been serving as an Ensign to Captain Daniel Smith on Clinch.

This Jeremiah Harrison and others, probably brothers, must have come to the area very early at the settlement certificate mentions settlement in 1772. They certainly appear to be the same family as lived in Augusta Co., VA, from the earliest times, for instance, entry of 15th of September, 1742, shows Jeremiah Harrison and Isaiah Harrison as delinquents in the company of Hugh Thompson. (34) They appear to be sons of Joseph Harrison who died in early 1748, with Isaiah as Administrator of his estate appointed on

may 18, 1748, with Isaiah as Administrator of his estate appointed on May 18, 1748, (35) with Jeremiah as his security.

In the summer of 1774, Jeremiah Harrison was paid for the pasturage of 135 steers for use at the Maiden Springs Station. (36) There were two Jeremiah Harrisons in Augusta Co., VA and they have different named wives. Apparently Jeremiah Harrison left the Holston and moved on to Kentucky where he is listed in a deposition in Woodford Courthouse, KY, dated July 14, 1781. (37) That these men were old, or aging, when Dunmore's War broke out is likely as they are not reflected in any muster lists.

Isaac Crabtree in making a supporting statement to his brother Abraham's pension application filed in Wayne Co., KY, in 1828, tells of their being sent to Jeremiah Harrison's Fort in 1776, and Jacob Crabtree, says that he was discharged from the militia at this fort in 1776.

It is fairly evident that Harrison's Fort was a stockaded affair, but probably small due to the fact that it did not lie on an exposed frontier, and how long it remained in use is unknown, as no reference have been found concerning it, other than those above mentioned.

VANCE'S STATION

This was a sister station to Jeremiah Harrison's Fort, and about five miles separated the two forts on the North Fork of Holston. This fort, like some others came to light in Revolutionary War pension statements. Vance's Station was no doubt the home of old Alexander Vance. The station is mentioned in both the pension statements of Abraham and Isaac Crabtree, who lived with their father William Crabtree on the North Fork of Holston, near the present Saltville, VA. The Crabtree brothers mention going to Vance's Station after a tour of militia duty at Blackmore's Fort and at the Flat Lands, which is believed to be another early name for Flat Lick, that section around Duffield down to Pattonville in present Scott and Lee Counties.

Old Alexander Vance owned 289 acres of land on the North Fork of the Holston River surveyed and recorded in Washington Co., VA, in June, 1783, although he had been living on the land many years prior to this survey and entry. This land included the mouth of Beaver Creek. Somehow, later, this land became the property of General William Tate who lived at Broadford in Smythe Co., just upstream from Saltville.

There were two Vance families in the area, one living on the North Fork of Holston River and the other on Beaver Creek near Bristol.

In 1818, one Abner Vance of the North Fork of Holston family was hanged at Abingdon for murdering a member of the Horton family who had debauched Vance's daughter. Vance felt he had gotten an unfair trial and while in prison wrote a very stirring and tragic ballad which in early days virtually became a folk song and was widely sung around the hearthside of the pioneers and known as the "Vance Song."

On December 6, 1774, Colonel Arthur Campbell wrote concerning Vance and Harrison's Stations in this manner, and this may be the clue to the dates one, if not both of these forts were built.

Upon the alarm of (Samuel) Lammey being taken, Vance and Fowler's wives, with several other families convened at Mr. Harrison's, which lies upon the main path to the Clinch in the Rich Valley, opposite the Town House. Upon request of several inhabitants on both sides, I ordered six men to be stationed there for ten days, two of which were to be out ranging. Henry and John Dougherty moved their families to this side of the mountain, disagreeing with ye majority of ye inhabitants, as to the place to build a fort. Mr. John Campbell's wife has been on this side of the mountain this past two months and (Campbell) himself has acted as Ensign to Captain (Daniel) Smith on Clynch ever since that Gent was ordered to duty.

Archibald and John Buchanan's families and Andrew Lammey came here, (to Royal Oak) who has continued on this side yet. Captain Wilson went immediately with 15 men, and ranged near a week in the neighborhood where Lammey was taken, and left four of his best woodsmen with neighbors for several days longer. I also ordered two of the most trusty persons I could get to act as Spys along Clinch mountain for ten days, which they performed. I am satisfied, faithfully, besides the six men at Harrison's I ordered Mr. Vance's and Fowler's wives three men a week, particularly to assist about saving their fodder, which they got secured safely. (38)

Campbell's reference to a disagreement between the settlers as to the proper place to build a fort, is undoubtedly the beginning of both Vance and Harrison's Stations, thus placing their erection in the year 1774.

Samuel Lammey was taken captive by the Indians on Holston, carried into Captivity and never returned. He was taken by a band under the leadership of the Shawnee Black Hawk.

BENHAM'S FORT

Located on the North Fork of the Holston River near Mendota, VA was the fort of John Benham. This was perhaps only a family fort for no mention is made of militia troops ever having been stationed there, or that it was in use after the Revolutionary War. The date the fort was built is unknown, but John Benham settled there in 1769. He owned a thousand acres of land along the Holston River about four miles below the village of Holston. (39)

John Benham was evidently a brother-in-law to the elder Vincent Hobbs, and Benham had a son named Vincent as did Hobbs, and both had sons named Joel. The Hobbs and Benhams lived on adjoining farms. There was also a connection between these families and the family of John Douglas who was killed by the Indians at Little Moccasin Gap in 1776. (40) John Douglas who lived with his father Edward Douglas on Clinch River, near

Flour Fork in present day Scott Co., VA, may have been returning from a visit with these relatives when slain by the Indians.

John Benham, builder of Benham's Fort died in 1800.

WILLIAM WYNN'S FORT

This fort was the home of William Wynn and may have been only a fort house or small fort. It seems likely that it must have had some sort of rude palisades due to its exposed location, and seems to have served Wynn and his neighbors and was at times also guarded by state militia.

William Wynn was born August 10, 1729, and died July 8, 1808, and is buried near the old fort. From his birth date it can be seen that he was too advanced in years to take a very active part in the militia. His first wife was Cynthia Harman, and his second wife was Mary, the daughter of William Whitley. William Whitley was murdered by the Indians on the head of Clinch river in the fall of 1789, and cruelly mutilated, even his heart and entrails torn from his body and cast upon the ground and bushes. (41)

Wynn's Fort was located at Locust Hill on the North fork of Clinch River, about one and a half miles from the present town of Tazewell, VA, and was probably erected in 1774. Whether it was ever directly attacked by the Indians is unknown, but due to its proximity to the Sandy War Passes it may have been.

SCOTT COUNTY FORT HOUSES

In that section of Scott County from Dungannon down to Gray's Island, along Clinch River is one of the most interesting sections of Scott Co. It was settled very early with residents there in 1770. Along that very short stretch of river, approximately two or three miles from Hunter's Ford to Gray's Island, then called the Big Island, there seems to have been at least four fort-houses, at least it is believed these were fort houses and not stockaded forts. This conclusion is deduced from the fact that the residents of this area, during Indian forays, are shown to have been inmates of Moore's and Blackmore's Forts.

Again knowledge of these forts became known from studying Revolutionary War pension claims of men who served in them and from land deed records and litigation suits in the High Court of Chancery of Augusta Co., VA. Elisha Wallen says in his pension application that:

We were organized by law and by the officers named, and were divided out along the line of the following named forts, to-wit: Blackmore's Fort, Rye Cove, Rocky Station, Stock Creek, Duncan's Fort and Osman's Fort. If that is not enough, Charles Kilgore says in his pension statement:

In the following year (1779) in summer, he again volunteered under Captain John Snoddy and Lieutenant (William) Cowan for the purpose of guarding Osman's Fort on Clinch

River in said county of Washington. He remained in the said fort for three months, with said company, guarding the same.

To further add to the confusion Alexander Ritchie, Jr., says in his pension claim:

The militia was arranged from that of Captain's Company (24 men) to a Sergeant's command at the different stations and forts from Blackmore's Fort to Martin's Station, about 20 miles from Cumberland Gap; Moore's Fort in Castlewood, Rocky Station, Rye Cove Station, Shallow Ford of Clinch; Stock Creek and Duncan's Fort.

Ritchie says in an amended statement that he served 6 months beginning in April, 1780, at Duncan's Fort. Here we have three militiamen, all living in the same general area of Scott Co., as well as others not quoted, who tell of having served in the same forts which should prove the truth of their existence.

In disposing of these forts, first there is mention of Stock Creek and Shallow Ford of Clinch. Of these two the writer has no knowledge. The "fort where Lee County Courthouse now stands", if this was not the abandoned fort built by William Mumps, already mentioned, then the writer has no knowledge of another at this place.

Osman's Fort I believe to be a corruption in the spelling of Osborne, and being the home of perhaps one William Osborne, which is not quite clear, but certainly not to be confused with Stephen Osborne at Osborne's Ford, as the former stood near Gray's Island on Clinch. A deed to one William Osborne in Scott Co., dated October 9, 1829, reads:

A certain tract or parcel of land, lying and being in Scott County, on the south side of Clinch River, it being part of the same bottom that joins Buster's Shoals, opposite a placed called Nicholson's Fort, containing 41 acres more or less. (42)

Here we pick up another fort which was the home of Benjamin Nicholson who settled there about 1772, later sold his land and emigrated to Clarke Co., KY. The Nicholson lane was sold to William McClain and his "fish-trap" is mentioned as the place where Elizabeth Livingston crossed the Clinch with Indian Chief Bengé when he had her captive in 1794. The Nicholson land was near Gray's Island and this fort has been found mentioned in deed references only.

Another in this same area, with no further reference found except in a Russell County Deed, which reads:

One certain tract of parcel of land known by the name of Ritchie's Fort, containing 360 acres (43).

Originally this would have been the home of Alexander Ritchie, Sr., who came to the area from Prince Edward Co., VA, and was the father of Alexander Ritchie, Jr., whose pension statement has been heretofore quoted. The strange thing, however, is that in his

pension claim Alexander, Jr., makes no mention of his father's fort. The Ritchies settled on this land in 1772, later selling it and leaving the area. It was sold to one William Osborne of Pendleton Co., SC, and he in turn sold the same land on October 20, 1792, to one James Osborne and it is again referred to as "Ritchie's Fort". Since this fort land was sold to two men named Osborne it may be logical to assume that Ritchie's Fort and the fort referred to as "Osman's Fort" were one and the same, the name changing with ownership.

DUNCAN'S FORT

Duncan's Fort was the home of Raleigh Duncan and stood between Dungannon and Gray's Island on the Clinch River. Raleigh Duncan and his brother, John, first settled on a tract of land at Hunter's Ford in 1772, which they were jointly developing into a plantation. John was killed by the Indians in 1774, and Raleigh and the widow of John fell into dispute over the Hunter's Ford land and Raleigh moved down the river to another tract of land in 1775 and here he built his home which was Duncan's Fort. (44)

Alexander Ritchie, Jr., in his Revolutionary War statement says that he lived at Duncan's Fort from March 1778 to April 1779, and that he enlisted again in 1779 and 1780 under Captain John Snoddy for six month tours of duty for the purpose of guarding Duncan's Fort. In 1786, he was appointed, along with John Alley as Indian Spys by Colonel Henry Smith of Russell Co. He states they left Duncan's Fort every Monday with their provisions on their backs, ranged across the Cumberland Mountain and Sandy in Kentucky, returning to Duncan's Fort on Sundays. These statements show that the fort was an active military defense from 1778 to 1786, and perhaps before and after these dates.

Raleigh Duncan came to the Clinch from Culpepper Co., VA, and was born in 1723, and died at Duncan's Fort in 1786.

Note: Father of Jael Duncan who married Samuel Stallard

PORTER'S FORT

Other than the old Kilgore fort house which is still standing, Porter's Fort was perhaps the most widely known fort house in present day Scott Co. It was the home of Patrick Porter, who emigrated from Guilford Co., NC, in October, 1772, and established his fort-house and grist mill on the waters of Falling Creek, near Dungannon. This was nothing more than a strongly built fort-house and according to the pension statement of his son, John Porter, it was built only for family protection. (45A)

It is well authenticated that the Porter family sheltered in Moore's Fort during Indian forays, and Patrick served in the militia protecting this fort in the year 1774. There is no factual evidence that Porter's Fort was ever under direct Indian attack.

Just below the falls of Falling Creek, Patrick Porter built his grist mill, the first ever approved by court order on the Clinch river, permission being granted by the court of old Fincastle County, in 1774. Despite the fact that it was the first mill ever approved for the Clinch, it was not the first mill. The Lynch Mill at upper Castlewood was in operation for sometime before Porter's Mill was erected, but no order has been found granting permission for this mill.

Patrick Porter was born in 1739, and had married Susanna, the daughter of John and Ann Houston Walker.

DORTON'S FORT

Located about one mile southeast of Nickelsville on the Combs Farm, this was the home of old William Dorton, Sr., who was killed by the Indians in July, 1780. (45) Undoubtedly this was just another family fort-house, and there is no record of it ever having a complement of militia. When it was built is unknown, but likely sometime in the 1770's. The family of William Dorton continued to live at the place after he was slain. The court records of the 1780's refer to it as "Dorton's Old Fort", meaning that it may have fallen into disuse and disrepair.

Little is known of the life of William Dorton, Sr., prior to his untimely death at the hands of the Indians, even the place and details of his death are unknown. His son, William Dorton, Jr., was in one of the parties that pursued the Indians under Benge after his capture of the Livingston family in 1794. This party led by Captain William Dorton, Jr., overtook one of the Indian parties, who seem to have split into three separate groups after the capture and killing, and killed one of the Indians in that particular group. (46)

SCOTT'S FORT

Leaving the waters of Clinch and crossing through Kane's Gap of Powell Mountain we come to the headwaters of Wallen's Creek, a tributary of Powell River and Scott's Fort. This was the home of Archibald Scott, built in 1775, and nothing more than a fort-house and not stockaded. It stood on a section of the old Kentucky Trace and was a noted stop-over for emigrants travelling to Kentucky.

Archibald Scott and his four children were massacred. Here on the evening of June 20, 1785, and his wife, Fanny, taken captive and carried north by the Indians, presumably led by the half breed Benge. She eventually escaped and returned to the Clinch frontier where her story has become one of the classical Indian stories of Virginia's last frontier.

After the destruction of the Scott family the old fort became the home of Robert Duff, who had married Fanny Scott's niece and remained a famous stop-over on the Kentucky Trace for many years afterwards.

Scott and his children were buried near the old fort house, but no markers were ever erected at their graves and today only the general location of their resting place is known.

The Duff family graves are well marked and it is interesting to read the epitaphs of some four or five members of the family who served in the Confederate Army.

CHADWELL'S STATION

Mordecai Hoard of Henry Co., VA, came to Powell Valley in Lee Co., with Captain Joseph Martin in 1775 and took up a 400 acre tract of land in the Martin grant of 1769. He also took up another tract of 860 acres. Hoard returned to Henry Co. where he died. Captain David Chadwell, also a native of Henry Co., bought from the heirs of Hoard the 400 acre tract and 707 acres of the other tract. Deeds for these tracts being dated November, 1791, however, David Chadwell was in the area as early as May 1790, and immediately upon coming here he built a Station or Fort, which was widely known as "Chadwell's Station."

The station was a stop-over for people traveling westward over the Wilderness Road, as well as being a refuge from Indian attacks for Chadwell and his neighbors. Whether this was a stockaded fort or just a fort house is not known. There is today a church in this area called Chadwell's Station Church.

After settlement David Chadwell began acquiring other lands and by 1801 he was assessed with 1800 acres of land in Lee Co. He continued to acquire land in both Lee Co., and adjoining Claiborne Co., TN, and finally moved to Tazewell, the county seat of Claiborne Co., leaving his Lee Co. lands in the hands of his children. He died at Tazewell, in 1832, at the age of 100, having been born in 1732, and is buried there at Breastwork Hill. He married Elizabeth Turner and their children were: [1] John Chadwell, b. 1771, m. Mary "Polly" Adams, b. 1772; [2] David Chadwell, Jr., b. 1776, m. Nancy Lane; [3] Susanna Chadwell, b. 1773, d. 1846, m. 1st Benjamin Posey, 2nd Daniel O'Daniel; [4] Barthena Chadwell, b. 1775, m. 1st Moses Cotterill, the Ensign who was chased across Powell Mountain by the Indian Chief Bengé in 1793, m. 2nd Jerome Skelton; [5] Mary "Polly" Chadwell, Aug. 30, 1777, d. 1855, m. 1st Walter Middleton, Feb. 29, 1801, m. 2nd Benjamin Cloud who died in 1845 at Chadwell Station; [6] William Chadwell, b. 1783, d. Dec. 5. 1857, m. Catherine Lane, b. 1795 in Grainger Co., TN; [7] Alexander Chadwell, b. 1783, d. 1868, m. Lucy Bailey, b. 1789, d. March 31, 1859, d/o Carr and Mary Bailey of Henry Co., VA; [8] Nancy Chadwell, b. 1774, m. in 1790 to James Brittain.

We know that David Chadwell, who was a Captain in the Revolution, was in the area of his station as early as May, 1790, for on that day he was granted permission to establish a grist mill on his property.

David Chadwell had a sister, Jemima, who married William Cox and settled also in Lee Co., VA. This could possibly have been the Mrs. Cox shot at by the Indians, on march 17, 1785, mentioned in letters to the Governor of Virginia from both Captain Joseph Martin and Colonel Arthur Campbell.

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