

Indians. When the first explorers came to this region, they found Lawrence County crossed by many trails, the favorite hunting ground of various strong savage Indian tribes, chief among these were the Shawnee and Cherokee. The Shawnee had their villages chiefly in the Ohio River Valley and the Cherokee south in Tennessee, Lawrence County and the entire Big Sandy Valley was the war path and hunting ground of both tribes. The Shawnee war path led across the entire southwestern portion of Lawrence County. Game was very plentiful in this County and Indian Tribes roamed the valley for several years after they had disappeared from all other parts of Kentucky. The Indians knew the Big Sandy River by name signifying "River of Sand Bars", "Salt Creek", "Mystery River", "The River of Many Buffalo", and "The Fire River", - from the natural gas springs burning along its course.

During the French and Indian War and including the year from 1754 to 1774 the Big Sandy Valley was used constantly as a warpath; painted warriors infested this county so that few white men dared enter. Marauding Indians from the Big Sandy Valley, by their bloody warfare and destruction of settlement in Virginia caused Governor Denividdie of Virginia to send out the "Sandy Creek Voyage" as it was called by the early settlers. George Washington was then commander of the Virginia Military forces and he named Major Lewis to head an expedition of 400 backwoodsmen to march from Camp Frederick in Virginia down the Big Sandy River to the Ohio and destroy the Shawnee villages. This expedition started out in the early spring of 1756; their food supply was limited and the heavy snows and cold rains disheartened and disorganized the men. At a point on Rockcastle Creek in Lawrence County the men refused to proceed further. The food supply was exhausted and as the men retreated up the stream they were actually starving. When they reached Burning Springs, a natural gas seepage in what is now the adjoining county of Martin, they cut buffalo hides, which they had left there on the way down stream, into tugs or thongs, broiled them on the burning gas and ate them. The cutting of these tugs gave Tug River

its name.

Lord Dunmore was determined to make peace with the Indians, and after numerous battles the Indian realized it was useless to try to keep the white settlers out of the Sandy Valley hunting ground any longer and a treaty was made by Lord Dunmore about 1774. This treaty with the Indians was hardly realized, however, when the Revolutionary War broke out in 1776 and the British came the chief supporters of the warring red savage. Scalping parties continued to come across the Big Sandy Trail to burn, capture and pillage the Virginia Settlements.

In 1787 a mixed band of Cherokees and Shawnees captured Jennie Wiley, wife of Thomas Wiley a settler in Ab's Valley in Virginia, and this dark and horrible tragedy led to the founding of Harmon's Station in Johnson County and likewise gave Lawrence County a series of historical events that have been preserved mainly in tradition for over a hundred years. The story of Jennie Wiley is the most romantic history in the early settlement of Lawrence County and in fact the entire Sandy Valley as her adventures with the Indians cover several counties. The facts of Mrs. Wiley's Capture by the Indians are related in most every home in the Sandy Valley, they have been handed down from parent to child and like all traditionary accounts differ somewhat as to detail. In so far as possible I shall relate only the facts in this story pertaining to Lawrence County.

Jennie Wiley was one of the early settlers in Western Virginia and in the fall of 1887, while practically all the settlers were away on a hunting trip in the Big Sandy Valley, a mongrel band of Indians including both a Cherokee and Shawnee Chief, murdered her three children and brother, burned the home, captured Mrs. Wiley and a small child and started with them down the Sandy Valley trail to the Shawnee Village on the Ohio River. At the first large stream flowing into Tug River below Marrowbone Creek on the W. Va. side the Cherokee Chief dashed out the Wiley Child's brains against a beech tree. This

creek has since been called "Jennie's Creek" and in later years Mrs. Wiley identified the tree where her child was killed. When the Indians camped at night Mrs. Wiley had to witness the warriors stretch the scalps of her children over hoops made from green boughs. Both Tug and Levisa Forks were so swollen from the recent heavy rains, they were raging rubbish filled torrents. Mrs. Wiley was dragged by two Shawnees across both of these streams. The Indians with their captive followed a rough trail through valleys and over hills down the Big Sandy. In Lawrence County territory they followed what is now called Cherokee Creek to Big Blaine Creek. In a rock house near the present village of Cherokee a son was born to Mrs. Wiley and here at the mouth of Cherokee the Indians camped all winter and Mrs. Wiley and her child lived in the rock house. When this baby was about three months old, the Cherokee Chief, in order to determine whether or not the white child would be a brave warrior, tied the baby to a piece of wood and set it adrift in the Cherokee Fork of Blaine Creek. The child cried the minute it touched the cold water and after Mrs. Wiley rescued it from the creek the Indian killed it with a tomahawk and scalped it. Mrs. Wiley buried it in the rock house near Cherokee in Lawrence County. Not long after the murder of the child the Indians with Mrs. Wiley left the camp at the mouth of Cherokee and trailed up Hoods Fork of Big Blaine, crossed the dividing ridge and followed Laurel Fork out of Lawrence County into Johnson. After being in captivity about eleven months, Mrs. Wiley escaped from the Indians and after many hardships and wading various deep streams (streams that were later named Jenny Creek, Wiley Creek, etc by the settlers in honor of Mrs. Wiley because she made her escape by wading miles against their swift current) she came to Harmon Station, the fort in Johnson County that had been erected by Matthias Harmon and a party of settlers from Virginia while pursuing the Indians with Mrs. Wiley. After returning to the Virginia settlement and living there 12 years Mrs. Wiley and her husband settled in Kentucky in Johnson County about 15 miles from the old Harmon Station Fort where she was rescued.

from the Indians and about 10 miles from the Indian Camp where she was held in captivity. Wiley descendants are now living in the Big Sandy Valley.

About the time of the Wiley massacre the blockhouse near Louisa erected in 1779 by Vancouver had to be abandoned because of the Indians, but was reestablished about 1792. The Treaty of peace made with the northwest Indians at Greenville, Ohio in 1795 opened the entire Sandy Valley for settlement by the white man.

Several Indian towns, villages and camps are said to have existed in Lawrence County, a point near the post office of Mattie was an Indian town in early times, and another existed about 7 or 8 miles above Louisa on a small creek that flows into Levisa Fork from the west. Practically all the "rock-houses" in the county were long ago the homes of the savage red man. Various streams, villages and post offices have derived their names from the Indian and the adventure of Mrs. Wiley. The most notable ones in this locality are Cherokee Creek, Wiley Branch and Indian Creek and the villages of Cherokee and Smoky Valley.

LAWRENCE COUNTY

ARCHEOLOGY. Indian graves, bones, arrowheads, spear heads, and other paleolithic remains have been found in this county. Mainly in the vicinity of Blaine, Laurel and Georges Creeks. About a mile below the Mattie Post Office on Little Blaine Creek are a number of Indian graves, each one covered with a mound of stone. Indian graves of this description are quite common in this county and are always found on top of ridges. Excavations were made in a mound in Horseshoe Bend on Big Laurel Creek and bones tomahawks, and arrow heads were found. An Indian mound is said to be located on the Jack Preece farm on Blaine Creek just below the Carter Bridges. Arrowheads have been found in practically all the region drained by Blaine Creek. A stone with prehistoric inscription is said to have been found on Georges Creek and displayed in a drugstore window in Ashland. About a mile from the Yatesville Post Office, on top of a ridge ~~which~~ was once a part of the Shawnee warpath were two Indian mounds about 10 feet high and 20 feet in diameter and composed of stones and earth. These mounds were on the farm of Roy Carter and were opened about 1910. Skeletons, beads, pipes, flint rocks, crude stone utensils, stone axes and numerous arrowheads and round bolders were found.

Collins' History of Kentucky Vol. II page 461 describes the following phenomenon in this county:

"On Big Blaine Creek in Lawrence County, on the night of February 13, 1873, a strange rumbling sound, resembling distant thunder, was found to have originated from an opening in the earth, of a dark color or smoky appearance, and about two feet in diameter, near a ledge of sand stone. Pieces of this stone weighing about 10 pounds were broken off and thrown a considerable distance. The earth around this opening, for several feet, was thoroughly cleared as if swept with a broom, from all accumulations of loose dirt, leaves and small stone. Three other explosions near the same spot were heard, within three days before."

HISTORY
LAWRENCE COUNTY

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Ely- The Big Sandy Valley, Catlettsburg, 1887
Duke- The South in the Building of a Nation, Vol. I - Southern History
Publishing Society 1909
Jillson - The Big Sandy Valley, Louisville - 1923
Connelley - The Founding of Harman's Station and the Wiley Captivity
The Torch Press, New York - 1910

Experts Interviewed:

- Tom Thomson - Attorney, Louisa, Kentucky
L. E. Wallace - County Surveyor, Louisa, Kentucky
George Kouns - County Treasurer. Louisa, Kentucky

9. Lawrence County has no surviving slaves in so far as I am able to ascertain. "Aunt" Sarah Garred, who died last December was the last one of Lawrence County's slaves. Most of the slaves in this county were brought by the wealthiest families from Virginia and North Carolina and there is no record of any having been sold publicly here. Attorney, W. M. Fulkerson's father owned a number of slaves and he kept them housed in an upper story and always removed the ladder so the slaves could not get out of the house to run away. Mr. Fulkerson had one slave, Erin, that could not keep awake. One day while making maple syrup, Mr. Fulkerson, Ben Burk and Jim Anderson, finding Erin asleep, built a fire all around him. Erin soon got hot, began sweating and gradually opened his sleepy eyes. Upon seeing blazes all around him, his sleepy eyes popped open and he was heard to exclaim "In Hell, just as I expected".

Slaves Among the old records lodged in the Lawrence County Court House none excite more interest than the wills of the first settlers. These old faded documents the last testaments of the dead pioneers throw much light on the lives of the early Kentucky folks. These wills furnish unmistakable evidence of their being animated by deep religious fervor in making their last decrees as indicated by the devout phrase "In the name of God, Amen". Particularly impressive are the clauses disposing of slaves, often with the clause that they be not separated where kinship was involved. Often slaves obtained their freedom, by the provisions of the will of a master or mistress.

10. In the will of John Carter Nov., 19, 1855 all his slaves were bequeathed to his wife Martha. The will of Martha Carter dated July 15, 1861 has the following concerning slaves: "To my son George Carter I bequeath one black girl named Lucy and a black boy named Columbus. To my son John Carter I bequeath one black man named Charles and one black woman named Nelly. To my son Millard I give one black boy named Harry, a son of Nelly. To my

son Landon I give one black girl named Allie. To my daughter Martha I give one black girl named Frances and all her increase during her lifetime. Should my daughter Martha die without heirs then my son George is to have Francis and all her increase. All these above mentioned slaves having descended to me from my father (the Banner) estate in Virginia".

A few years before the negroes were freed the slave called Columbus asked his master to take the slaves he had inherited from his mother and sell them to some other master so that when "Mr. Lincoln do free us you won't lose your part of the money we are worth of your mother's estate". Columbus was evidently feeling unusually kind toward his master at this time, but just a few months previous he had run away and been gone for several weeks, however at harvest time he suddenly returned saying "Ya suh I lowes as how you all would be needin' me 'long 'bout dis time" when the Civil War ended Lum, as he was called, went to Ironton and started a butcher shop where his sons are still living now. Lucy stayed on with the Carter family after she was freed and took care of the two sons after their mother's death. Having lived with the family so many years she was hardly thought of as a negro slave, but rather a mammy and when she died she was buried in the family graveyard.

9. Attorney W. M. Fulkerson has fond recollections of Hannah the old negro slave that had belonged in turn to his grandfather and his father. Mr. Fulkerson's grandfather was one of the early settlers of Lawrence County, he came from Virginia about the time the Loars settled here. This pioneer Fulkerson owned several slaves, but the two best remembered by the grandson are Hannah and Aggie. Grandfather Fulkerson put these two little pickininnies in a coffee sack, stuck their heads out through a hold in the sack, threw the sack across his saddle and in this manner Hannah and Aggie left Virginia and came to Lawrence County, Kentucky, to make their home. Attorney W. M. Fulkerson says the first time he remembered seeing Hannah she was about 90 years old and she knew him at once, by his resemblance to

his father. He said Hannah had something around her neck in a little hand knitted sack which she called her witch ball. She said she had lost this witchball one time and Sally (a member of the family) had been bewitched and died while the ball was lost. Mr. Fulkerson has a quilt that Hannah helped make about 1840. She had helped raise the cotton, spin the cloth, and dye it with berries and make the quilt.

11. Mandy Mayo was another negro who possessed the wonderful witchball. She was one of the most trustworthy of the race deeply religious and a favorite with the white folks. After washing and ironing and carding and spinning through the many years she was in the very last stages of T. B. and realized she was going to die, but not from any disease, only because she had lost her witch ball and she had been bewitched and since her witchball was gone she had no way to ward off the evil spirit of the witch. No explaining or prevailing could convince Mandy either that it wasn't a witch that was causing her death.

10. Other early pioneers of Lawrence County who mentioned their slaves in their wills are as follows: William Buchanan, August 20, 1861 bequeathed to his son Oliver two negro slaves, Polly about 25 years old and Betty about 18. In the will of David Garred May 18, 1840 his negroes were bequeathed to his wife Jane during her lifetime then at her death they were to be equally divided among his children.

In the will of John Damay of Dec. 20, 1832 he mentioned the slaves thus: "I desire that my slaves, Albert and America shall stay with my family till Nancy Margaret, the youngest becomes of age, and then that Albert shall belong to my son, Ezekial".

In the will of Wm. Pennington in 1857 he conveyed to his son William, one copper colored negro woman named Sarah. In the will of the Lawrence County pioneer Andrew Loar, dated Feb. 1851 his slaves are thus mentioned: "I bequeath to Elizabeth Burk and her heirs forever one negro girl named Elender age about 14 years. I also bequeath to Herman Loar one

negro girl named Fan. To my brother Peter Loar, I bequeath the balance of my estate including negroes. It is my desire that Peter Loar shall within one year after my death, set free my negro woman Rhoda and her child and any children she may have at that time and that he convey by deed to Ben Burk in trust for the use of my negro woman Rhoda and her children forever a certain tract or boundary of land, coal banks excepted."

9. Practically all the slaves in Lawrence County were handed down from father to son although we find a few records where they were mortgaged or deeded to other masters. One of the old pioneers is said to have had one particular slave named Lizzy that he would always mortgage when he was hard up, but he would always manage to get Lizzie back again. Mr. Fulkerson has deeds conveying slaves to his grandfather, father and uncle.

Stories 3.

3. The story that is probably related

HISTORY

LAWRENCE COUNTY

9. Attorney W. M. Fulkerson, Louisa, Ky.
10. Lawrence County Clerk's Records Will Book 1
Deed Book 1
11. Rev. H. B. Hewlett, age 80, Louisa, Ky.

WPA.

FOLKLORE

I was born in Sandy Valley but I drifted far away,
I went back to see the old home and my pals of other days,
Gone were all familiar faces, most of them were new to me,
Things have changed in Sandy Valley since the days of used to be.

Others own the ridge and valleys
I can call it home no more.
Other voices sing the old songs
Other children round the door.

Other voices sing the old song
When the evening sun is low
Mother sang in Sandy Valley
In the days of long ago.

Take me back to Sandy Valley
In the days of long ago.
Take me back by dad and mother
Let me rest forever there.

When its spring time in the mountains
And the dogwood blossoms glow
We'll be back in Sandy Valley
As in days of long ago.

FOLKLORE

THE MILLER

There was an old miller and he lived all alone
He had three sons that were almost grown
He was about to make his will but he had nothing
But a little old Mill

CHORUS:

Tum fral de ral de ittle all dee day.

Up he called his eldest son.

Son oh son my life's most gone.

If to you my will I'll make

Tell me the toll you intend to take."

"Pap you know my name is Ralph

Out of a bushel I'll take a half.

If a fortune I do make

That's the toll I intend to take.

Up he called his second son,

"Son oh son my life's most gone.

If to you my will I make

Tell me the toll you intend to take."

"Pap you know My name is Dick

Out of a bushel I 'll take a peck

If a fortune I do make

That's the toll I intend to take."

FOLKLORE

Up he called his youngest son

"Son oh son, my life's most gone

If to you my will I make

Tell me the tool you intend to take."

"Pap you know I'm a darlin boy

Taking toll is all my joy

If a fortune I do lack

I'll take it all and swear I never seen a sack."

You're right the old man said

You're already learned my ways

To you my mill I will provide

So the old man stretched out his legs and died.

CHORUS:

THE TRUE LOVER

As I was walking in the garden A brave young soldier came by

He stepped up to me just to view mw, saying,

"Young Miss won't you fancy me."

You're not a man of noble honor, You're not the man I take you to be

Or you wouldn't impose upon a fair young lady.

Whose bride I never expect to be."

I have a true lover in the army, for seven long years he has been gone.

If he's gone there seven years longer no one on earth shall marry me.