

Journal of Doctor Thomas Walker--1749-50

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Journal of Doctor Thomas Walker--1749-50¹

Having, on the 12th of December last, been employed for a certain consideration² to go to the Westward in order to discover a proper Place for a Settlement, I left my house on the Sixth day of March, at ten o'clock, 1749-50, in the Company with Ambrose Powell, William Tomlinson, Colby Chew, Henry Lawless and John Hughs. Each man had a horse and we had two to carry the baggage. I lodged this night at Col. Joshua Fry's in Albemarle, which County includes the Chief of the head branches of James River on the East side of the Blue Ridge.

March, 7. We set off about 8, but the day proving wet, we only went to Thomas Joplin's on Rockfish. This is a pretty River, which might at a small expense be made fit for transporting Tobacco; but it has been lately stopped by a Mill Dam near the Mouth to the prejudice of the upper inhabitants who would at their own expense clear and make it navigable, were they permitted.

March, 8. We left Joplin's early. It began to rain about noon. I left my people at Thomas Jones's and went to the Reverend Mr. Robert Rose's on Tye River. This is about the size of Rockfish, as yet open, but how long the Avarice of Miller's will permit it to be so, I know not. At present, the Inhabitants enjoy plenty of fine fish, as Shad in their season, Carp, Rocks, Fat-Backs which I suppose to be Tench, Perch, Mulletts etc.

9th. As the weather continues unlikely, I moved only to Baylor Walker's Quarters.

March 10th. The weather is still cloudy, and leaving my People at the Quarter, I rode to Mr. John Harvie's, where I dined and return'd to the Quarter in ye evening.

11th. The Sabbath.

March 12th. We crossed the Fluvanna and lodged at Thomas Hunt's.

13th We went early to William Calloway's and supplied ourselves with Rum, Thread, and other necessaries and from thence took the main wagaon road leading to Wood's or the New River.³ It is not well cleared or beaten yet, but will be a very good one with proper management. This night we lodged in Adam Beard's low grounds. Beard is an ignorant, impudent, brutish fellow, and would have taken us up, had it not been for a reason, easily to be suggested.

14th. We went from Beard's to Nicholas Welches, where we bought corn for our horses, and had some Victuals dress'd for Breakfast, afterwards we crossed the Blue Ridge. The Ascent and Descent is so easie that a Stranger would not know when he crossed the Ridge.⁴ It began to rain about Noon and continued till night. We lodged at William Armstrong's. corn is very scarce in these parts.

March 15th. We went to the great Lick⁵ on A Branch of the Staunton and bought Corn of Michael Campbell for our horses. This Lick has been one of the best places for Game in these parts and would have been of much greater advantage to the Inhabitants than it has been if the Hunters had not killed the

¹ At this time the new year in England and its colonies began on the 25th. of March, so that when this journal began it was still the year 1749. The change by which the first of January began the new year was made in 1752.

² His contract was with the Loyal Land Company, which had a grant of eight hundred thousand acres of land to be located north of the dividing line between Virginia and North Carolina, comprised in part the territory now embraced in Kentucky.

³ This river was first discovered in 1671 by Colonel Abraham Wood, who lived at the falls of the Appomatox, now Petersburg Virginia. The line of his exploration was near and parallel to that of the boundary line between Va. and North Carolina as run in 1728-29 and described by Col. William Byrd, one of the Va. Commissioners, in the "Westover Papers." He crossed the Alleghaney mountains by a gap called Wood's (now Flower) Gap, and, passing down Little River, reached New River not a great distance above Ingle's Ferry, mentioned later

⁴ The Kenawha River was in early days commonly supposed to signify in the Indian Tongue, "River of the Woods," but the name of Wood's River, as it was for some time called, evidently came from that of New River, its Main Branch.

⁵ This locality is now the thriving town of Roanoke, in the Co. of the same name.

Buffaloes⁶ for diversion, and the Elks and Deer for their skins. This afternoon we got to the Staunton where the Houses of the Inhabitants had been carried off with their grain and Fences by the Fresh last Summer, and lodged at James Robinson's, the only place I could hear of where they had corn to spare, notwithstanding the land is such that an industrious man might make 100 barrels a share in a Seasonable year.

16th March. We kept up the Staunton⁷ to William Englishes.⁸ He lives on a small Branch, and was not much hurt by the Fresh. He has a mill, which is the furthest back except one lately built by the Sect of People who call themselves of the Brotherhood of Euphrates, and are commonly called the Duncards, who are the upper Inhabitants of the New River, which is about 400 yards wide at this place. They live on the west side, and we were obliged to swim our horses over.⁹ The Duncards are an odd set of people, who make it a matter of Religion not to Shave their Beards, ly on beds, or eat flesh, though at present, in the last, they transgress, being constrained to it, they say, by the want of a sufficiency of Grain and Roots, they have not long been seated here. I doubt the plenty and deliciousness of the Venison and Turkeys has contributed not a little to this. The unmarried have no Property but live on a common Stock. They don't baptize either Young or Old, they keep their Sabbath on Saturday, and hold that all men shall be happy hereafter, but first must pass through punishment according to their Sins. They are very hospitable.

March 18th. The Sabbath.

19th. We could not find our horses and spent the day in Looking for them. In the evening we found their track.

20th. We went very early to the track of our Horses and after following them six or seven miles, we found them all together. we returned to the Duncards about 10 O'clock, and having purchased half a Bussell of Meal and as much small Homony we set off and lodged on a small Run between Peak Creek¹⁰ and Reedy Creek.¹¹

March 21st. We got to Reedy Creek and camped near James McCall's. I went to his house and Lodged and bought some Bacon, I wanted.

22nd. I returned to my people early. We got to a large Spring about five miles below Davises Bottom on Holstons¹² River and Camped.

23rd. We kept down the Holston River about four miles and Camped; and then Mr. Powell and I went to look for Samuel Stalnaker¹³ who I had been inform'd was just moved out to settle. We found his camp, and returned to our own in the evening.

⁶ It has been a generally received opinion that there were no buffalo east of the Blue Ridge, but while the locality here named is west of that mountain, it is not likely that the limit of their range was bounded by it. Col. Byrd killed buffalo in 1729 at points on the boundary line southeast of Roanoke between which and the coast there was no mountain. He states that it was not believed that they went any further north than the latitude of 40.

⁷ The north fork of the Roanoke River formed by the junction of the Staunton and the Dan rivers in Halifax Co. about ten miles north of the dividing line between Va. & N. Carolina. It rises in the Alleghaney mountains and flows S. E. The upper portion of Staunton River is now called Roanoke, the lower portion Staunton, and after the junction with the Dan the Roanoke again.

⁸ Near the present village of Blacksburg, Montgomery Co. Virginia.

⁹ This crossing of the New River was near the present crossing of the turnpike which runs from Wytheville to Christiansburg and several miles above the crossing of the Norfolk and Western Railroad. It was afterward known as Ingles's Ferry. It is still owned and occupied by descendants of William and Mary Ingles.

¹⁰ Peak Creek enters the New River near the village of Newburn, in Pulaski Co.

¹¹ Probably Reed Creek in Wythe County.

¹² This was the Middle fork of the Holston, which joins the South Fork of Holston near Abingdon and forms the Tennessee. The Holston was called by the Indians first the Cat-Cloo, afterward the Watauga. It took its name, its present name, from an early hunter and explorer named Holston or Holstein.

¹³ Samuel Stalnaker was probably, as his name indicates, one of the early pioneers from the Lower Shenandoah Valley or from Penn. of German descent, the family having numerous representatives in the Valley. He was doubtless a hunter and Indian trader who had visited the Cherokees and was acquainted with the route to Cumberland Gap, upon which Dr. Walker had never been or he would not have needed a guide. It was from him evidently that Dr. Walker received information as to certain localities he was about to visit, as Clinch River, Cave Gap, and other points of which as he advanced into Kentucky, he gave

24th. We went to Stalnaker's, helped him to raise his house and camped about a quarter of a mile below him. In April, 1748,¹⁴ I met the above mentioned Stalnaker between Reedy Creek Settlement and Holstons River, on his way to the Cherokee Indians¹⁵ and expected him to pilate me as far as he knew but his affairs would not permit him to go with me.

March 25th. The Sabbath. Grass is plenty in the low grounds.

26th. We left the Inhabitans,¹⁶ and kept nigh West to a large Spring on a Branch of the North Fork of the Holston. Thunder, Lightning, and Rain before Day.

27th. It began to snow in the morning and continued till Noon. The Land is very Hilly from West to North. Some snow lies on the tops of the mountains N.W. from us.

28th. We travelled to the lower end of Giant's Ditch on Reedy Creek.¹⁷

29th. Our Dogs were very uneasie most of this night.

30th. We kept down Reedy Creek¹⁸ and discover'd the tracks of about 20 Indians, that had gone up the Creek between the time we camped last night, and set off this morning. We suppose they made our Dogs so restless last night. We camped on Reedy Creek.

March 30th. We caought two young Buffaloes one of which we killed, and having cut and marked the other we turn'd him out.

31st. We kept down Reedy Creek to Holston where we measured an Elm 25ft. round 3 ft. from the ground. we saw young Sheldrakes we went down the River to the north Fork and up the north fork about a quarter of a mile to a Ford, and then crossed it. In the Fork between the Holstons and the North River, are five Indian Houses built with loggs and covered with bark, and there were abundance of Bones, some whole Pots and pans some broken. and many pieces of mats and Cloth. On the west side of the North River, is four Indian Houses such as before mentioned. we went four miles below the North River and camped on the Bank of the Holstons, opposite to a large Indian Fort.

April ye 1st. The Sabbath. we saw Perch, Mulletts, and Carp in plenty, and caught one of the large Sort of Cat Fish. I marked my name, the day of the Month, and date of the year on Several Beech Trees.

2nd. we left Holston¹⁹ and travelled through Small Hills till about Noon, when one of our horses being choaked by eating Reeds too gredily, we stopped having traveled 7 miles.

3rd. Our hourse being recover'd, we travelled to the Rocky Ridge.²⁰ I went up to the top, to look for a pass but found it so rocky that I concluded not to attempt it there. This ridge may be known by Sight, at a

previous information. It was not improbable that the route from the Ohio River to the Cumberland Gap and the Cherokee country, which at that time was defined and known as "the Warriors Path" was travelled by hunters and traders, and that Stalnaker was acquainted with it personally or from others. On Fry and Jefferson's Map, 1751, Stalnaker's settlement is put down as the extreme western habitation.

¹⁴ From the fact that Dr. Walker was here in 1748, historians have fallen into the error of stating that it was in this year that he went to Cumberland Gap, in company with Col. James Patton, Major Charles Campbell and others, but there is nothing upon which the assertion remains except a misty tradition. It is doubtless based upon the fact that these gentlemen, in 1748 Dr. Walker being one of the number, made an exploration with a view of taking up lands, as some of them did, on the Holston. This region then began to excite attention for settlement and the following year the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina was extended to a point beyond that at which Doctor Walker was this day.

¹⁵ The Cherokee Indians occupied East Tenn. and a part of Northwest Georgia adjacent. They were at times, and until 1759, friendly and very faithful to the Whites, furnishing volunteers in the early part of the French and Indian War. They were thus deadly enemies of the Shawnees and other tribes north of the Ohio, but in the Revolutionary War they united with them under British influence against the Americans.

¹⁶ Inhabitans--Inhabitants, settlers, meaning that he had past the frontier of civilization.

¹⁷ Enters the South Fork of the Holston River a short distance above its junction with the North Fork.

¹⁸ Reedy Creek empties into the Holston at the Foot of Long Island, a noted locality in the early history of Tenn. Nearby a fort was erected by advice of Washington in 1758, by Col. William Byrd, which was later known as Fort Patrick Henry. Just below the mouth of Reedy Creek is the town of Kingsport, Sullivan County, and a short distance below the town the North Fork puts into the Holston. It was at this point the treaty of Watauga was held March, 1775, when the Cherokees sold to Richard Henderson And Company the land in Kentucky called Transylvania.

¹⁹ On leaving the Holston River his route was northwest.

distance. To the Eastward are many small mountains, and a Buffaloe Road between them & the Ridge. The growth is Pine on the top and the rocks look white at a distance. we went Seven miles this day.

4th. We kept under the Rocky Ridge crossing several small Branches to the head of Holly Creek. we saw many small licks and plenty of Deer.

5th. we went down Holly Creek. There is much Holly in the Low Grounds and some Laurel and Ivy. About three in the afternoon, the Ridge appeared less stony and we passed it,²¹ and camped on a small Branch about a mile from the top. my riding Horse choaked himself this evening and I drenched him with water to wash down the Reeds, and it answered the End.

6th. It proving wet we did not move.

7th. We rode 8 miles over Broken ground. It snowed most of the day. In the evening our dogs caught a large He Bear, which before we could come up to shoot him had wounded a dog of mine, so that he could not travel, and we carried him on Horseback till he recovered.

8th. The Sabbath. Still Snow.

9th. We travelled to a river, which I suppose to be that which the Hunters call Clinches River²² from one Clinch a Hunter, who first found it. we marked several Beeches on the East Side. we could not find a ford Shallow enough to carry our Baggage over on our Horses. Ambrose Powell Forded over on one horse and we drove the others after him. We then made a raft and carried over one load of Baggage, but when the raft was brought back, it was so heavy that it would not carry anything more dry.

April 10th. we waded and carried the remainder of our Baggage on our shoulders at two turns over the River, which is about one hundred and thirty yards wide, we went on about five miles and Camped on a Small Branch.

April 11th. Having travelled 5 miles to and over an High Mountain, Cumberland Gap, we came to Turkey Creek, which we kept down 4 miles. It lied between two Ridges of Mountains, that to the Eastward being the highest.²³

12th. We kept down the creek 2 miles further, where it meets with a large Branch coming from the South West and thence runs through the East Ridge making a very good pass; and a large Buffaloe Road goes from that Fork to the Creek over the west ridge, which we took and found the Ascent and Descent tollerably easie. From this Mountain we rode on four miles to Beargrass River. Small Cedar Trees are very plenty on the flat ground nigh the River, and some Barberry trees on the East side of the River. on the Banks is some Beargrass. We kept up the River 2 miles. I found Small pieces of Coal and a great plenty of very good yellow flint. The water is the most transparent I ever saw. It is about 70 yds. wide.

April 13th. We went four miles to large Creek which we called Cedar Creek being a Branch of Bear-Grass, and from thence Six miles to Cave Gap, the land being Levil. On the North side of the Gap is a large Spring, which falls very fast, and just above the Spring is a small Entrance to a Large Cave, which the spring runs through, and there is a constant Stream of Cool air issueing out. The Spring is sufficient to turn a Mill. Just at the Foot of the Hill is a Laurel Thicket and the spring Water runs through it. On the South

²⁰ The Clinch Mountain which runs through part of East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia in a northeasterly direction, a very regular chain with gaps at long intervals. The small hills refered to are the paralell [sic] outliers of the Clinch Mountain

²¹ He crossed Clinch Mountain most probably at Looney's Gap and reached the Clinch River above the present site of Sneedville, Hancock County Tenn. Thence he went up Greasy Creek northwestward and entered the narrow valley between Newman's Ridge and Powell's Mountain, running paralell to the Clinch. The former, or Eastern Ridge, as Dr. Walker calls it, is twenty-five hundred feet high, and the latter, or Western Ridge, two thousand feet high as shown by the excellent contour map of the U. S. Geological Survey, with the details of Dr. Walker's route as indicated by his journal agrees with striking accuracy. On the 11th Dr. Walker went down Big Sycamore Creek, which runs southwest between these ridges, to its junction with an unnamed creek coming into it from the southwest. He travelled up the latter by a buffalo road over several divides, and on the 12th reached Powell's River, ten miles from Cumberland Gap.

²² A tributary of the Tenn. running paralell with the Clinch Mountain, rising in Tazewell and Bland Cos. Va. and interlocking with the Bluestone River and Wolf Creek, tributaries of New River. His correct nomenclature of the River indicates that he had received information concerning the route travelled from Stalnaker or other source. Haywood's History of Tennessee, in accounting for the name, ascribes it to an incident, which dates eleven years after Dr. Walker's visit, in which a man on the point of drowning called to his companions, "Clinch me...Clinch me!"

²³ Now Big Sycamore Creek.

side is a Plain Indian Road. on the top of the Ridge are Laurel Trees marked with Crosses, others Blazed and several Figures on them. As I went down the other Side, I soon came to some Laurel in the head of the Branch. A Beech stands on the left hand, on which I cut my name. This Gap may be seen at a considerable distance, and there is no other, that I know of, except one about two miles to the North of it which does not appear to be So low as the other. The Mountain on the North Side of the Gap is very Steep and Rocky, but on the South side it is not so. We Called it Steep Ridge. At the foot of the hill on the North West side we came to a Branch, that made a great deal of flat land. We kept down it 2 miles, several other Branches Coming in to make it a large Creek, and we called it Flat Creek.²⁴ We camped on the bank where we found very good coal. I did not Se any Lime Stone beyond this ridge. We rode 13 miles this day.

April 14th. We kept down the Creek 5 miles chiefly along the Indian Road.

April 15th. Easter Sunday. Being in bad grounds for our Horses we moved 7 miles along the Indian Road, to Clover Creek. Clover and Hop vines are plenty here.

April 16th. Rai(n). I made a pair of Indian Shoes, those I brought out being bad.

17th. Still Rain. I went down the Creek²⁵ a hunting and found that it went into a River about a mile below our camp. this, which is Flat Creek and some others join'd I called Cumberland River.

18th. Still Cloudy. We kept down the Creek to the River along the Indians Road to where it crosses. Indians have lived about this Ford some years ago. We kept on down the South Side. After riding 5 miles from our Camp, we left the River, it being very crooked. In Rideing 3 miles we came on it again. It is about 60 or 70 yds. Wide. We rode 8 (?) miles this day.

19th. We left the River but in four miles we came on it again at the Mouth of Licking Creek, which we went up and down another. In the Fork of Licking Creek is a Lick much used by Buffaloes and many large Roads lead to it. This afternoon Ambrose Powell was bit by a Bear in his Knee. We rode 7 miles this day.

20th. we kept down the Creek²⁶ 2 miles to the River again. It appears not any wider here at the mouth of Clover Creek, but much deeper. I thought it proper to Cross the River and begin a bark Conoe.

April 21st. We finished the Conoe and tryed her. About Noon it began to Thunder, lighten, hail and rain prodigiously and continued about 2 hours.

22d. The Sabbath. One of the Horses was found unable to walk this morning. I then propos'd that with two of the company I would proceed, and the other three should continue here till our return, which was agreed to, and lots were drawn to determine who should go, they all being desirous of it. Ambrose Powell, and Colby Chew were the fortunate Persons.

23rd. Having carried our Baggage over in the Bark Conoe, and Swam our Horses, we all crossed the River. Then Ambrose Powell, Colby Chew, and I departed Leaving the others to provide and salt some Bear, build an house, and plant some peach stones and Corn. We travelled about 12 miles and encamped on Crooked Creek. The Mountains hereabouts are very small and here is a great deal of flat Land. We got through the Coal today.

April 24th. We kept on Westerly 18 miles, got clear of the Mountains and found the Land poor and the Woods very thick beyond them, and Laurel and Ivy in and near the Branches. Our horses suffered very much here for want of food. This day we came on a fresh track of 7 or 8 Indians but could not overtake them.

25th. We kept on West 5 miles, the Land continuing much Same, the Laurel rather growing worse, and the food scarcer. I got up a tree on a Ridge and saw the Growth of the Land much the same as Far as my Sight could reach. I then concluded to return to the rest of my Company. I kept on my track 1 mile then turn'd southerly and went to Cumberland River at the mouth of a water Course, that I named Rocky Creek.²⁷

April 27th. We crossed Indian Creek and went down Meadow Creek to the River. There comes in another from the Southward as big as this one we are on. Below the mouth of this Creek, and above the

²⁴ Present Yellow Creek, upon which, nearby, is now the site of Middlesborough. Coal abounds in this vicinity.

²⁵ Clear (Clover) Creek empties into Cumberland River just above Pineville, where the River breaks through Pine Mountain, a range paralell to Cumberland Mountain, eight or ten miles distant. Yellow (Flat) Creek empties into it several miles above.

²⁶ This creek, now known as Swan Pond Creek, was named by Daniel Boone.

²⁷ The point at which Dr. Walker here reached Cumberland River is about twenty miles below that at which he crossed it on the 23rd. The creek which he called Rocky Creek is now called Patterson's and the topography at its mouth conforms to his description.

Mouth are the remains of several Indian Cabbins amongst them a round Hill made by Art about 20 feet high and 60 over the Top. we went up the River, and Camped on the Bank.

28th We kept up the River to our Company whom we found all well, but the lame horse was as bad as we left him, and another had been bit in the Nose by a Snake. I rub'd the wound with Bears oil, and gave him a drench of the same and another of the decoction of Rattle Snake root some time after. The People had built a house 12 by 8, clear'd and broken some ground, and planted some Corn and Peach Stones. They also had killed several Bears and cured the Meat. This day Colby Chew and his Horse fell down the Bank. I Bled and gave him Volatile drops, and he soon recovered.

April 29th. The Sabbath. The Bitten Horse is better. 3 Quarters of A mile below the house is a Pond in the Low ground of the River, a quarter of a mile in length and 200 yds. wide much frequented by Fowl.

30th. I blazed a way from our House to the River. On the other side of the River is a large Elm cut down and barked about 20 feet and another standing just by it with the Bark cut around at the root and about 15 feet above. About 200 yards below this is a white Hiccory Barked about 15 feet. The depth of the water here, when the lowest that I have seen it, is 7 or 8 feet, the Bottom of the River Sandy, ye Banks very high, and the Current very slow. The Bitten horse being much mended, we set off and left the lame one. He is white, branded on the near Buttock with a swivil Stirrup Iron, and is old. We left the River and having crossed several Hills and Branches, camped in a Valley North from the House.

May the 1st. Another Horse being Bitten, I applied Bears Oil as before Mention'd. We got to Powell's River in the afternoon and went down it along an Indian Road, much frequented, to the mouth of a Creek on the West side of the River, where we camped. The Indian Road goes up the Creek, and I think it is that Which goes through Cave Gap.

2d. We kept down the River. At the Mouth of a Creek that comes in on the East side there is a Lick, and I believe there was a hundred Buffaloes at it. About 2 o'clock we had a shower of Rain. we Camped on the River which is very crooked.

May 3rd. We crosses a narrow Neck of Land, came on the River again and Kept down it to an Indian Camp, that had been built this Spring, and in it we took up our Quarters. It began to Rain about Noon and continued till Night.

4th. We crossed a narrow Neck of Land and came on the River again, which we kept down till it turn'd to the Westward, we then left it, and went up a Creek which we called Colby's Creek. The River is about 50 yards over where we left it.

5th We got to Tomlinson's River, which is about the size of Powell's River, and I cut my name on a Beech, that stands on the North side of the River. Here is plenty of Coal in the South Bank opposite to our Camp.

6th The Sabbath. I saw Goslings, which shows that Wild Geese stay here all the year. Ambrose Powell had the misfortune to sprain his well Knee. 7th. We went down Tomlinson's River the Land being very broken and our way being embarrassed by trees, that had been blown down about 2 years ago.

May 8th. We went up a creek on the North side of the River.

9th. We got to Lawless River, which is much like the others. The Mountains here are very Steep and on Some of them there is Laurel and Ivy. The tops of the mountains are very Rocky and some parts of the Rocks seem to be composed of Shells, Nuts and many other Substances petrified and cemented together with a kind of Flint. We left the River and after travelling some Miles we got among some Trees that had been blown down about 2 years, and we were obliged to go down a Creek to the River again, the Small Branches and Mountains being impassable.

10th. We staid on the River and dressed an Elk skin to make Indian Shoes--ours being quite worn out.

11th. We left the River, found the Mountains very bad, and got to a Rock by the side of a Creek Sufficient to shelter 200 men from Rain. Finding it so convenient, we concluded to stay and put our Elk skin in order for shoes and make them.

May 12th. Under the Rock is a Soft Kind of Stone almost like Allum in taste; below it A Layer of Coal about 12 inches thick and a white Clay under that. I called the Run Allum Creek. I have observed several mornings past, that the Trees begin to drop just before day & continue dripping till almost Sunrise, as if it rain'd slowly. we had some rain this day.

13th. The Sabbath.

14th. When our Elk's skin was prepared we had lost every awl that we brought out, and I made one with the shank of an old Fishing hook, the other People made two of Horse Shoe Nails, and with these we made our Shoes or Moccasos. We wrote several of our Names with Coal under the Rock, and I wrote our names, the time of our coming and leaving this place on paper and stuck it to the Rock with Morter, and

then set off. We crossed Hughes's River and Lay on a large branch of it. There is no dew this morning but a shower of Rain about 6 o'Clock. The River is about 50 yards wide.

May 15th. Laurel and Ivy increase upon us as we go up the Branch. About noon it began to rain & we took up our quarters in a valley between very Steep Hills.

16th We crossed several Ridges and Branches. About two in the afternoon, I was taken with Violent Pains in my hip.

17th. Laurel and Ivy are very plenty and the Hills still very Steep. The Woods have been burnt some years past, and are not very thick, the Timber being almost all kill'd. We camped on a Branch of Naked Creek. The pain in my hip is somewhat asswaged.

18th. We went up Naked Creek to the head and had a plain Buffaloe Road most of the way. From thence we proceeded down Wolf Creek and on it we Camped.

19th. We kept down ye Hunting Creek²⁸ which we crossed and left. It rained most of the afternoon.

May 20th. The Sabbath. It began to Rain about noon and continued till next Day.

21st. It left off raining about 8. we crossed several Ridges and small Branches and Camped on a Branch of Hunting Creek in the Evening it rained very hard.

22d. We went down the Branch to Hunting Creek and kept it to Milley's River.²⁹

23rd. We attempted to go down the River but could not. it being very deep we began a Bark Canoe. The River is about 90 or 100 yards wide. I blazed several Trees in the Fork and marked T.W. on a Sycomore Tree 40 feet around. It has a large hole on the N:W: side about 20 feet from the ground and is divided into 3 branches just by the hole, and it stands about 80 yards above the mouth of Hunting Creek.

May 24th. We finished the Canoe and crossed the River about noon, and I marked a Sycomore 30 feet round and several Beeches on the North side of the River opposite the mouth of the Creek. Game is very scarce hereabouts.

25th. It began to Rain before Day and continued till about Noon. We travelled about 4 miles on a Ridge and Camped on a Small Branch.

26th. We kept down the Branch almost to the River, and up a Creek, and then along a Ridge till our Dogs roused a Large Buck Elk, which we followed down to a Creek. He killed Ambrose Powell's Dog in the Chase, and we named the Run Tumbler's Creek, the Dog being of that name.

27th. The Sabbath.

28th. Cloudy. We could not get our Horses till almost night, when we went down the Branch. We lay on to the Main Creek³⁰ and turn'd up it.

May 29th. We proceeded up the Creek 7 miles and then took a North Branch and went up it 5 miles and then encamped on it.

30th. We went to the head of the Branch we lay on 12 miles. A shower of Rain fell this day. The Woods are burnt fresh about here and are the only Fresh burnt Woods we have seen these six Weeks.

31st. We crossed 2 Mountians and camped just by a Wolf's Den. They were very impudent and after they had twice been shot at, they kept howling about the Camp. It rained till Noon this day.

²⁸ This was Station Camp Creek, which empties into the Kentucky River just above Irvine, county-seat of Estill Co. At the mouth of the creek Daniel Boone lived alone in 1770, while his brother, Squire Boone, returned to N. Carolina for ammunition, and there they spent the following winter. The Indian trace up Station Creek was known as "Ouasiota Pass," and when they reached the summit, they thought they were on top of Cumberland Mountains, the name "Ouasiota" Mountains being given to that range, together with all its elevated region eastwardly to the main chain.... "Ouasiota Pass" is laid down on Pownall's Map, 1776, with routes converging to it from Big Bone Lick, near the Ohio, the lower Shawnee town at the mouth of the Scioto, and from the mouth of the Big Sandy, called Totteroy.

²⁹ This was the Kentucky River. No stream has been called by more names. The histories of Kentucky generally credited Dr. Walker with having given it the name of Louisa, but there is no foundation whatever for this assumption, as this journal fully shows. It is put down on Pownall's and other of the early Maps as Milley's River, and it was probably known to traders and hunters at the time of Dr. Walker's expedition, from the Miami Indian name, which was "Millewakame." Of the rivers named by Dr. Walker, he never leaves us in doubt always saying so in express terms when he names one. Other names by which the Kentucky River were known were Cuttawa, Cuttawba, Catawba, Chenoka, and Chenoa.

³⁰ This was the Red River, which in ordinary seasons is a small stream, but becomes very formidable after heavy rains on its headwaters.

June ye 1st. We found a Wolf's den and caught 4 of the young ones. It rained this morning. we went up a creek crossed a Mountain and went through a Gap, and then, camped on the head of A Branch.

2d. We went down the Branch to a River 70 yards wide, which I called Fredericks River. we kept up it a half mile to a Ford, where we crossed and proceeded up the North side 3 miles. It rained most of the afternoon. Elks are very plenty on this River.

June 3rd. Whit-Sunday. It rained most of the day.

4th. I blazed several trees four ways on the outside of the low Grounds by a Buffalo Road, and marked my name on Several Beech Trees. Also I marked some by the River side just below a mosing place with an Island in it. We left the River about ten O'clock & got to Falling Creek, and went up it till 5 in the afternoon, when a very Black Cloud appearing we turn'd out our horses got tent Poles up and were just stretching a Tent, when it began to rain and hail and was succeeded by a violent Wind which blew down our Tent & a great many Trees about it, several large ones within 30 yds. of the Tent. we all left the place in confusion and ran different ways for shelter. After the Storm was over, we met at the Tent, and found that all was safe.

5th. There was a violent Shower of Rain before day. This morning we went up the Creek about 3 miles and then were obliged to leave it, the Timber being so blown down we could not get through. After we left the Creek we kept on a Ridge³¹ 4 miles, then turned down the head of a branch and it began to rain and continued raining very hard till Night.

June 6th. We went down the Branch till it became a Large Creek. It runs very swift, falling more than any of the Branches we have been on of late. I called it Rapid Creek. After we had gone eight miles we could not ford, and we camped in the low Ground. There is a great sign of Indians on this Creek.

7th. The Creek being fordable, we crossed it and kept down 12 miles to a River about 100 yards over, which we called Louisa³² River.³³ The creek is about 30 yds. wide and part of ye River breakes into ye Creek--making an Island on which we camped.

8th. The River is so deep we cannot ford it and as it is falling we conclude to stay and hunt. In the afternoon Mr. Powell and my Self was a hunting about a mile and a half from the camp, and heard a gun just below us on the other side of the River, and as none of our People could cross, I was in hopes of getting some direction from him, but I could not find him.

June 9th. We crossed the River and went down it to the mouth of a Creek & up the Creek to the head and over a Ridge into a Steep Valley and Camped.

June 10th. Trinity Sunday. Being in very bad Ground for our Horses we concluded to move. we were very much hindered by the Trees, that were blown down on Monday last. We Camped on a Small Branch.

11th. It rained violently the Latter part of the night till 9 o'clock. The Branch is impassable at present. We lost a Tomohawk and a Cann by the Flood.

12th. The water being low we went down the Branch to a large Creek, and up the Creek. Many trees in the Branches are Wash'd up by the Roots and others barked by the old trees, that went down ye stream. The Roots in the Bottom of the Run are Barked by the Stones.

June 13th. We are much hindered by the Gust & a shower of Rain about Noon. Game is very scarce here, and the mountains very bad, the tops of the Ridges being so covered with ivy and the sides so steep and stony, that we were obliged to cut our way through with our Tomohawks.

14. The woods are still bad and game scarce. It rained today about Noon & we camped on the top of a Ridge.³⁴

³¹ This was the watershed between the Licking and Big Sandy Rivers.

³² This was evidently Paint Creek, near the mouth of which is Paintsville, the County seat of Johnson Co. The valley of the upper Licking is much more elevated than that of the Big Sandy, and the descent to the latter is quite abrupt.

³³ This river was named Louisa, after the sister of the Duke of Cumberland, for which soldier Dr. Walker seems to have had a great partiality. It has always been said that it was named for the wife of the Duke, but he was never married. The stream is known as the Louisa or Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy, and is joined by the Tug Fork, the northeast boundary between [West] Virginia and Kentucky, at Louisa, C. H. seat of Lawrence Co., 40 miles north of Paintsville. The Indian name of the Big Sandy was Chattaroi or Chattarawha. It was also called Totteroi.

³⁴ This was the dividing ridge between the two forks fo the Big Sandy. He was now travelling towards the southeast. having this day passed the divide between the waters of the Louisa and Tug Forks of the Big Sandy.

15th-16th. We got on a large creek where Turkey are plenty and some Elks. we went a hunting a killed 3 turkies. Hunted and killed 3 Bears and some Turkeys.

17th. The Sabbath. We killed a large Buck Elk.

18th. having prepared a good stock of meat we left the Creek crossing several Branches and Ridges. the woods still continue bad the weather hot and our horses so far spent, that we are all forced to walk.

June 19th. We got to Laurel Creek early this morning, and met with so impudent a Bull Buffaloe that we were obliged to shoot him, or he would have been amongst us. we then went up the Creek six miles, thence up a North Branch to its head, and attempted to cross a mountain, but it proved so high and difficult, that we were obliged to camp on the side of it. This ridge is nigh the eastern edge of the Coal Land.³⁵

20th We got to the top of the Mountain and could discover a Flat to the South and South East. we went down from the Ridge to a Branch and down the Branch to Laurel Creek not far from where we left it yesterday and Camped. my riding horse ws bit by a Snake this day, and having no Bears Oil I rub'd the place with a piece of fat meat which had the desired effect.

21st. We found the Level nigh the Creek so full of Laurel that we were obliged to go up a Small Branch, and from the head of it to the Creek again, and found it good travelling a Small distance from the Creek. we camped on the Creek. Deer are very scarce on the Coal Land. I having seen but 4 since the 30th. of April.

June 22nd. We kept up to the head of the Creek, the Land being Leveller than we have lately seen, and here are some large Savanna's. Most of the Branches are full of Laurel and Ivy. Deer and Bears are plenty.

23rd. Land continues level with Laurel and Ivy and we got to a large Creek with very high and steep Banks full of rocks, which I call'd Clifty Creek, the Rocks are 100 feet perpendicular in some places.

24th. The Sabbath.

25th. We crossed Clifty Creek. Here is a little Coal and the Land still flat.

26th. We crossed a Creek that we called Dismal Creek, the Banks being the worst and the Laurel the thickest I have ever seen. The Land is Mountainous on the East Side of the Dismal Creek, and the Laurels end in a few miles. We camped on a Small Branch.

27th. The Land is very High and we crossed several Ridges and camped on a small Branch. it rained about Noon and continued till the next day.

28th. It continued raining till Noon, and we set off as soon as it ceased and went down the Branch we lay on to the New River, just below the Mouth of the Green Bryer. Powell, Tomlinson and myself striped, and went into the New River to try if we could wade over at any point. After some time having found a place we return'd to the others and took such things as would take damage by water on our shoulders, and waded over Leading our Horses. The Bottom is very uneven, the Rocks very slippery and the Current strong most of the way. We camped in the low Ground opposite the mouth of the Green Bryer.

29th. We kept up Green Bryer.³⁶ It being a wet day we went only 2 miles, and camped on the North side.

June 30th. We went 7 miles up the River which is very Crooked.

July ye 1st. The Sabbath. Our Salt being almost spent, we travelled 10 miles sometimes on the River, and sometimes at a distance from it.

2nd. We kept up the River the chief part of this day and we travelled about 10 miles.

3rd. we went up the River 10 miles today.

4th. We went up the River 10 miles through very bad Woods.

5th. The way growing worse, we travelled 9 mile only.

6th. We left the River. The low Grounds on it are of Little value, but on the Branches are very good, and there is a great deal of it, and the high land is very good in many places. We got on a large Creek called Anthony's Creek which affords a great deal of Very good Land, and is chiefly Bought. we kept up the Creek 4 miles and Camped. This Creek took its name from an Indian, called John Anthony, that frequently

³⁵ This was the outcrop of the Pocahontas coal field in W. Virginia, now extensively mined, the Norfolk and Western Railroad penetrating that region and having been extended down the Tug Fork to the Ohio at Kenova, just above the mouth of the Big Sandy.

³⁶ The route of Dr. Walker from this point homeward needs but little comment. He followed substantially the present line of the Chesapeake & Ohio R. R., crossing the Alleghaney divide on the 8th. of July, passing Hot Springs on the 9th, and reaching Augusta Court House (Staunton Va) on the 11th. Crossing the Shenandoah Valley and passing over the Blue Ridge at Rock Fish Gap, he completed the circle of his arduous expedition of four months and seven days by arriving at Castle hill on the 16th of July.

hunts in these Woods. There are some inhabitants of the Branches of Green Bryer, but we missed their Plantations.

July 7. We kept up the Creek, and about Noon 5 men overtook us and inform'd that we were only 8 miles from the inhabitants on a Branch of James River called Jackson's River. We exchanged some Tallow for Metal and Parted. We camped on a Creek nigh the Top of the Alleghaney Ridge, which we named Ragged Creek.

8th. Having Shaved, Shifted and made New shoes we left our useless raggs at ye camp and got to Walker Johnston's about Noon. We moved over to Robert Armstrong's and staid there all night. The People here are very Hospitable and would be better able to support Travellers was it not for the great number of Indian Warriars that frequently take what they want from them, much to their prejudice.

July 9th. We went to the Hot Springs and found Six Invalids there. The Spring Water is very Clear and warmer than New Milk, and there is a Spring of cold Water within 20 feet of the warm one. I left one of my company this day.

10th. Having a Path we rode 20 miles and lodged at Captain Jemysen's below the Panther Gap. Two of my Company went to a Smith to get their Horses shod.

11th. Our way mending, we travelled 30 miles to Augusta Court House, where I found Mr. Andrew Johnston, the first of my acquaintance I had seen, since the 26th day of March.

12th. Mr. Johnston lent me a fresh horse and sent my horses to Mr. David Stewards who was so kind as to give them Pastureage. About 8 o'Clock I set off leaving all my Company. It began to Rain about 2 in the afternoon and I lodged at Captain David Lewis's about 34 miles from Augusta Court House.

13th. I got home about Noon.

We killed in the journey 13 Buffaloes, 8 Elks, 53 Bears, 20 Deer, 4 wild Geese, about 150 Turkeys, besides small game. We might have killed three times as much meat, if we had wanted it.