CASTLE'S WOODS:
FRONTIER VIRGINIA SETTLEMENT, 1769-1799

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
East Tennessee State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
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June 1966
CASTLE'S WOODS: FRONTIER VIRGINIA SETTLEMENT, 1769-1799.

This thesis is a narrative account of the frontier settlement of Castle's Woods. The community is an interesting case study of the ideas of Frederick Jackson Turner regarding the frontier.

Castle's Woods in many ways fits the pattern of the typical frontier community. Apparently first settled by a long hunter, Castle's Woods, like a magnet, drew westward the classic frontier types, hunters, farmers, speculators, surveyors, artisans, and preachers. Even some aristocrats settled there. The usual frontier customs and activities were observed in the community. These included a considerable amount of lawlessness. The greatest problem for the settlers in Castle's Woods was the Indians who were a menace from the time of the first settlement until nearly the end of the eighteenth century. After the Indian problem had been eliminated, the frontier stage quickly passed away.

As the first and most important settlement in Russell County, Castle's Woods became the county seat when that county was formed. The magistrates were thorough in the performance of their duties, including the regulation of the personal behavior of the local citizens. The spread of religion to the frontier had a tremendous effect on the residents of Castle's Woods and helped to improve their behavior.

In some respects Turner's ideas are substantiated; in others they are violated by the history of this community. At any rate, the community stands today as a monument to an era which long ago passed away.

A large amount of primary materials were used in this study. The most important sources were county records, state archives, national archives, and the Draper Manuscripts.
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CHAPTER I

SETTLEMENT

The frontier community of Castle's Woods in many ways fits the pattern of the typical frontier settlement. Apparently first settled by a long hunter, Castle's Woods, like a magnet, drew westward the classic frontier types, hunters, farmers, speculators, militiamen, surveyors, and artisans. Even some aristocrats settled there. The usual frontier customs and activities were observed in the community. These included a considerable amount of lawlessness. The greatest problem for the settlers in Castle's Woods was the Indians who were a menace from the time of the first settlement until nearly the end of the eighteenth century. After the Indian problem had been eliminated, the frontier stage quickly passed away.

As the first and most important settlement in Russell County, Castle's Woods became the county seat when that county was formed. The magistrates who governed the county were thorough in the performance of their duties, including the regulating of the personal behavior of the local citizens. The spread of religion to the frontier, especially the Methodist faith, had a tremendous effect on the residents of Castle's Woods and helped to improve their behavior.
The importance of Castle's Woods is twofold. First, it had its day of importance as a stepping stone to the West. Secondly, it is important as a case study of the American frontier.

The first permanent settlement in Russell County, Virginia, was Castle's Woods which was founded in 1769 and located on the Clinch River. The settlers who reached Castle's Woods in that year had overcome more than the mere physical barriers of mountains. The Indians were hostile. So was the British government which no longer favored the expansion of the frontier since the French had been eliminated as a competitor for the western lands. In order to pacify the Indians, King George III issued the Proclamation of 1763. He forbade settlement west of the Blue Ridge Mountains and required those already settled in the western country to move out. The Proclamation did little to help

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1Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Abingdon, Virginia, both claim to the oldest settlement in the Mississippi Valley. Since the actual settlement of both began the same year as that of Castle's Woods, Castle's Woods has an equal claim. For this study, the original name of Castle's Woods will be used; however, the post office which was established in 1892 has always been called Castlewood. The original post office was called Bickley's Mills. This was established in 1832, and in 1893 its name was shortened to Bickley Mill. This office was consolidated with Castlewood in 1907. Jane F. Smith, National Archives to author, June 11, 1965.

the Indians, for hundreds of settlers came from such places as Maryland, Pennsylvania, and older sections of Virginia. Land speculation boomed. The colonial government in Williamsburg paid the veterans of the French and Indian War with grants of land west of the mountains. Amounts varied from five thousand acres for a field officer to fifty acres for a private. These grantees scurried to the frontiers to seek and secure their claims. In reality the Proclamation of 1763 was ignored in Southwest Virginia.

The Indians who opposed the entrance of the white men into southwestern Virginia did not live there. The area was disputed territory between the Shawnee and Cherokee tribes. Both often used the land as a hunting ground. Of the two tribes, the Cherokee were closer. The center of their nation was near the present town of Tellico, Tennessee. An agricultural people, they were not migratory except when it

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5 Lewis Preston Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, 1746-1786: Washington County, 1777-1870 (Richmond: J. L. Hill Printing Company, 1903), p. 25. Some local historians have attacked the accuracy of Summers' work in recent years. Although there are many errors in the book, it is the only comprehensive work on Southwest Virginia.
became necessary to hunt or trade. Since they were closer to the Holston frontier, they more often attacked the settlers there.\textsuperscript{6}

The Shawnee lived on the Scioto and Miami Rivers in the north. More warlike than the Cherokee, they often killed and captured early settlers. Most of the invasions by Indians on the warpath on the Clinch settlements were made by them.\textsuperscript{7}

The year 1763 was a turning point in American history. After that date, the British tried to exercise more control over the colonies; and for the first time, they assumed direction over Indian affairs. Indian agents were appointed by the government in London.\textsuperscript{8} Before that date Indian affairs had been handled by the colonial governors. In order to carry out a coordinated program, two Indian superintendents were appointed. Sir William Johnson was the superintendent in the North while John Stuart was the agent in the South. In 1767 when the government decided to open some land west of the mountains for settlement, each of these men called for a meeting with


\textsuperscript{7}Summers, \textit{History of Southwest Virginia}, pp. 32-33.

\textsuperscript{8}Ibid., p. 85.
the Indians in his area of responsibility. The first meeting was arranged by Stuart with the Cherokee at the Indian village of Hard Labor, South Carolina, in 1768. A treaty was signed by the Cherokee establishing a boundary between themselves and the whites. The line began at Tryon Mountain, North Carolina, ran to Fort Chiswell, Virginia, and then went to the mouth of the Kanawha River. Officially, the area of Castle’s Woods was not yet opened for settlement.9

Because the Treaty of Hard Labor was unsatisfactory to Southern land speculators and settlers, John Stuart held another meeting with the Cherokee in 1770. The Treaty of Lochaber that resulted from the meeting threw open the territory on the upper Clinch River for settlement and made legal the settlement of Castle’s Woods which had already begun.10

The first settler, Jacob Castle, though perhaps not a permanent resident, was in Castle’s Woods long before the


Treaty of Lochaber. Fact and fiction combine to make him a most interesting person. Castle, according to tradition, was an albino who often wandered off by himself from the frontier settlements of Augusta County. For long periods of time he lived with the Indians. Once he bought from them a tract of land giving them in return a butcher knife and a rusty musket. This area of land has since been known as Castle's Woods. Whether these traditions are true is a moot question, but a Jacob Castle does appear in the records of Augusta County and he apparently is the same one who first settled in Castle's Woods.

The first records of Jacob Castle indicate that he sold a portion of land in Augusta County in 1740. Later he sold the rest of his land, and in 1746 he was ordered to work on a road from Adam Harman's house to the North Branch of the Roanoke River. Harman was the overseer of the project.

11 Goodridge Wilson, "Castlewood Section is Rich in History," Roanoke (Virginia) Times, July 20, 1965. As stated above, no Indians lived in the area at the time the white man came, but a village once existed at Castlewood and artifacts are still being found. The exact area of Castlewood is difficult to define. For this study, Castlewood will be defined as the area in western Russell County from Carterton to the Scott County line and from Dickensonville to St. Paul.

12 Lyman Chalkley (ed.), Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia. Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800 (Rosslyn, Virginia: 1912), I, p. 23; Lyman Chalkley, "Before the Gates of the
Harman and Castle seem to have been bitter enemies. In 1749, Harman charged Castle with threatening to aid the French. Since this was just before the French and Indian War, Castle was tried on a charge of treason. Castle was acquitted, but the case actually had deeper roots than the court records reveal. Castle, according to some historians, was in league with the Indians living in the present location of Castle's Woods; these Indians frequently raided the older settlements of Augusta County. Harman, who had been robbed by the Indians, believed that Castle instigated the acts. Therefore he obtained a warrant for the arrest of Castle and brought a group of men to Castle's Woods to apprehend him.

One of the men in Harman's party was named Clinch. When the posse reached Castle's Woods, the Indians helped Castle resist the attack and the party had to retreat across the river. Clinch, who was lame, fell behind the rest of the posse and was either shot by an Indian or fell from his horse. Seeing that Clinch had difficulty in moving in the stream, an Indian rushed forward to scalp him but was


himself killed. Because of Clinch's participation in this incident, the others named the river for him. This story about Clinch could, like the story of Castle, be true, for Dr. Thomas Walker in his journal of a trip through Southwest Virginia in 1750 said: "Clinch River was named for a hunter whose name was Clinche." 

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15 Lewis Preston Summers, Annals of Southwest Virginia, 1769-1800 (Abingdon, Virginia: 1929), p. 14. The Indian name for the Clinch River was the Pellisippi while the French called it the Shawanone. The early English name was the Shawanoa. See Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, p. 24. Some writers have said that the Clinch got its name from the fact that an Indian who had been pursuing a white man caught up with him in the stream. They clench and the river thus got its name. See Bickley, History of Tazewell County, p. 355. Another writer stated that two men were fishing on the river and began quarrelling and striking at each other. One said, "Why don't you clinch him?" See John L. Addington, Sr., An Honored Family or the Genealogy of the Addingtons, With a Few Short Stories of the Early Settlements of Russell County, Virginia (Nichelsville, Virginia: Saratoga Printing Company, 1906), p. 23. John Haywood in The Civil and Political History of the State of Tennessee From Its Earliest Settlement Up to the Year 1796; Including the Boundaries of the State (Knoxville: Heiskell and Brown, 1823), p. 32, said a member of Boone's party in 1761 was about to drown and called out "Clinch me."
Although no other records of Clinch have been found, other references concerning Jacob Castle do exist; in 1759 he signed a petition requesting the building of a road and acted as an appraiser. The Augusta County records indicate that he had left the area by 1764. Perhaps by that time he had decided to move permanently to the interior where he could be bothered by no one except his Indian friends. In 1782, Jacob Castle was granted a warrant for land which he claimed in Russell County in 1798. Thus Jacob Castle, if this was the same man, had, by the latter part of the eighteenth century, settled down.

Hunters, as Castle seems to have been, often were found far beyond the farmers on the frontier. They went on long hunts into the interior seeking deer skins. Normally these hunters, unlike Castle, traveled in groups for protection against the Indians. The long hunter was usually dressed in buckskin moccasins and leggings, a hunting shirt of leather, and a cap made of beaver or

16 Chalkley, Chronicles, I, pp. 1, 40, 102, 434; Chalkley, "Before the Gates of Wilderness Road," pp. 197-198; Kegley, Virginia Frontiers, pp. 117-118.


18 Russell County Surveyors Book I, p. 297.

19 Williams, Dawn of Tennessee, p. 319; Bickley, History of Tazewell County, p. 341.
otter. With him went his hatchet, knife, shot pouch, rifle, and enough provisions to last about two days. After that he depended upon his rifle to supply him with food. He also needed an ample amount of courage for such adventures but the profits were usually high enough to pay him well.

Following the long hunters into the interior were the settlers. The first permanent settlers arrived in Castle's Woods in 1769. They were squatters. Several years passed before any of them were able to claim their land. And by then some of the original settlers had moved on to Kentucky and Tennessee. Much of the land in Southwest Virginia had been granted to the large companies, such as the Loyal Land Company, and to rich individuals such as Evan Shelby, William Campbell, and Arthur Campbell. People who did not have the necessary money to purchase from the speculators, or did not care to invest their funds (perhaps with the thought of later moving on to Kentucky) simply cleared land for fields and constructed their cabins on land that had not been surveyed. Population in such places grew fast. In 1769 and 1770, many families moved into Castle's Woods.


21 Williams, Dawn of Tennessee, p. 332.

22 David Campbell to Lyman C. Draper, March 30, 1842, Draper Manuscripts 10DD114. The Draper Manuscripts are
The first settlers apparently were William Snoddy, William Cowan, John Cowan, and Patrick Porter. Others soon followed. To some extent the settlement was a family matter; Patrick Porter was married to Susanna Walker; William Cowan was married to Jane Walker; Andrew Cowan, who soon came to Castle's Woods, was married to Mary Walker; Samuel Cowan, a later settler, was married to Ann Walker; Alexander Montgomery, who was later the blacksmith and gunsmith of the community, was married to Martha Walker. The Cowans and Porters had moved from County Down in Ireland to Pennsylvania about 1726. They moved from there to North Carolina where they met the Walkers and then came to Castle's Woods in 1769. During the winter of 1769 they built cabins and trapped. In the spring they returned to North Carolina where they gathered their families and took them to Castle's Woods. The men built a fort which was probably only a fortified cabin. It was called Snoddy's Fort because John Snoddy, who was later a militia officer, was in command. Settlement had begun.23

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23 M. B. Wood to Draper, August 23, 1883, Draper MS 4C27; William Russell to Governor Harrison, September 25, 1783, in William F. Palmer (ed.), Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts, from January 1, 1782, to
Other settlers in Jastie's Woods in 1769 were William Moore, Joseph Moore, John Smith, David Gass, James Wharton, Frederick Fraley, Nathaniel Gist, and James Anderson. By the end of 1774, many others arrived in the community including Matthias Mounts, John English (who settled across the Clinch River on Sugar Hill in 1772 which makes him the first settler in present Wise County), William Pitman, Daniel Hamlin, Henry Hamlin, William Russell, Edward Russell, 


William Robinson, Edmund Smith, Michael Stoner, Edward Stapleton, James Bush, Archelaus Dickenson, Henry Dickenson, Humphrey Dickenson, John Anderson, Thomas Osborne, Abraham McClelland, and John Boles.\textsuperscript{25}

Settlement in Southwest Virginia increased so rapidly that in 1769 the colonial legislature passed a law creating a new county, Botetourt. Before that date, the area had been a part of Augusta County. So certain were the legislators that this rapid colonization would continue, they predicted that new counties would soon be needed farther west.\textsuperscript{26}

On May 10, 1770, during the first year of existence for Botetourt County, the county court ordered Anthony Bledsoe to prepare a list of the taxpayers living along the Clinch River. This is the first official mention of any


\textsuperscript{26}William Waller Hening (ed.), \textit{The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619} (Richmond: 1821), VIII, pp. 395-398.
settlement in the area. The list of taxpayers, or "tithables," as they were then called, for the year 1772 has been preserved; included were sixty-three persons in the Clinch area. This indicates that many more persons were there, for tithables included only white males, slaves and "bond servants" who were over sixteen years of age. The tithe was a head tax or a poll tax. It was not literally a tithe and was usually quite small. Citizens of Castle's Woods composed the bulk of the group on the Clinch River who paid the tithe in 1772. The shortage of money on the frontier is demonstrated by the fact that the tax for that year was twenty-five pounds of tobacco, with the value of the tobacco being figured at one penny per pound.

The early settlers of Castle's Woods could not claim the land on which they lived because it had previously been granted to the Loyal Land Company. Many of them were entitled to grants as a result of service in the French and Indian War; thus they began to agitate, as many others did in the colony, for the right to stake their claims where they lived. Finally the colonial Council decided on

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27 Summers, *Annals of Southwest Virginia*, p. 82.
December 16, 1773, that such claims could be made anywhere the land had not been cleared. Thus in 1774, many frontiersmen were able to have their land surveyed and recorded. But those who did not have militia claims had to wait until after 1779 when the state legislature established a land office for the first time. The legislature also provided that each squatter could claim four hundred acres on which to live. In addition he could obtain another thousand acres, which was called a preemption right. If the preemption right could not be found joining the original land of the settler, it could be located anywhere there was vacant land. In this manner the citizens of Castle's Woods acquired their lands.

Because of the almost constant threat from the Indians who resented the intrusion of the settlers on their hunting grounds, the residents of Castle's Woods built two forts. Snoddy's Fort was the first. The name is rarely found, but it probably was the same as the one which was later called Moore's Fort since John Snoddy once owned the land on which Moore's Fort was built.

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31 Hening, Statutes, X, pp. 35-50; Draper MS 10D114; Abernethy, Western Lands, pp. 224-25.

32 Washington County Records of Entries and Surveys I, p. 140.
The exact location of Moore’s Fort can be determined; it was located about one half mile west of "Brick" Church on the road that presently runs from Castlewood to Dungannon. As early as 1774, William Moore had surveyed a tract of land on the south side of Clinch River. This land was later owned by Frederick Fraley and the entry in the county records states that the land was "known by name Moor’s Fort."34

The pioneers often used different names for the same forts; and thus in 1774 William Russell referred to Moore's Fort as Fort Byrd.35 William Russell was a politician interested in advancing his own cause and was not above changing the name of a fort if it impressed his superiors. William Byrd III, for whom the fort was temporarily named, became a Tory during the Revolution and the name was not retained. Moore's Fort has retained a much wider usage.

The exact location, and name, of the other fort in Castle's Woods is disputed. It was located on the property of David Cowan. Perhaps it was near the Bickley Cemetery.

33Montgomery County Record of Plotts A, p. 83.

34Washington County Record of Entries and Surveys I, p. 140; also affidavits of S. A. Fraley, R. L. Gose, and Elle Banner Fields, in possession Mrs. Steve Banner Castlewood.

35Russell to William Preston, July 13, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ64.
(or what is called "Mud Store"). 36 Most records indicate that the distance from Moore's Fort to Cowan's Fort (or Russell's Fort) was either four or five miles. 37 The distance from Brick Church to Bickley's Cemetery is five miles. William J. Dickenson in the 1870's told Charles B. Coale that Jacob Castle built his cabin near Mud Store and this later became Bush's Fort. 38 The fort had other names. Although William Russell, and sometimes others, in official correspondence called the fort "Fort Preston," 39 it was usually referred to as Russell's Fort. This evidently resulted from the fact that Russell was in command at the fort. Russell himself lived about a mile from Cowan's. 40

36 Thwaites and Kellogg, Dunmore's War, p. 80; Draper MS 4C26; Washington County Record of Entries and Surveys I, p. 153.

37 Draper MS 24C74; Christian to Preston, July 12, 1774, Draper MS 3Q63; Thwaites and Kellogg, Dunmore's War, pp. 85, 234; David I. Bushnell, Jr., "The Virginia Frontier in History-1778." Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXIII (April, 1915), p. 122.

38 Coale, Wilburn Waters, p. 167; inscription on tombstone of Charles Bickley in Bickley's Cemetery states, "He was one of three men who defended Bush's Fort against 17 Indians." See also Draper MS 4C27; William J. Dickenson, Genesis of Dickenson Family, p. 2.

39 Arthur Campbell to Preston, October 13, 1774, Draper MS 3Q123; Thwaites and Kellogg, Dunmore's War, pp. 250-251; Draper MS 3Q64.

40 Washington County Record of Entries and Surveys I, p. 2b; Draper MS 24C74.
The Cowan land was later sold to Charles Bickley and descendants of the Bickleys still own most of the land. An oft repeated tradition has it that Russell's Fort was located behind the present Masonic Hall in Castlewood, but the statement of John Gass who was in Castle's Woods as a child in the 1700's seems to refute this belief. He said: "Moore's and Cowans Forts were not on the bank of Clinch River. Cowan's Fort was on a small creek but I do not remember its name. Moore's wasn't on any creek." This would seem to place Cowan's Fort on Mill Creek. The Cass family did not leave Castle's Woods until 1777, and the fort seems to have still been called Cowan's Fort then. Henry Hamlin in 1777, in a receipt for flour delivered to the militia, referred to the fort as Cowan's Fort.

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41 Ibid., p. 33. Pension statement of James Fraley, June 23, 1834, National Archives, Washington.

42 G. A. Wilson, "Oldest House in Russell County Once Sheltered Daniel Boone," 1931, MS copy of newspaper article in Russell County Library, Lebanon; Alice E. Meade "Site of Russell Fort," MS prepared in 1937 as a W. P. A. project, MS in Clerk's office, Lebanon.

43 John Gass to Draper, November 28, 1850, Draper MS 24C100.


Apparently the fort was called Russell’s Fort by his superiors when they were writing to each other; locally it seems to have been called Cowan’s Fort and later Bush’s Fort. All were the same.  

When the threat of an Indian invasion came in 1774, William Russell and others were hard at work on the forts. Russell stated in 1774 that “my hands are so sore at work about the fort, I canscarce write.” The forts by 1774-1775 were large enough to hold most of the families of the area. The families would flee to the forts when the first “alarm” of an Indian attack was sounded. The Indians would scalp or kill anyone regardless of his age, sex, or condition. Of the two forts at Castle’s Woods, Moore’s

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46 Pendleton, History of Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia, p. 257, states “William Russell lived at or near Castle’s Woods, where he erected a fort in 1774 on the land of one Cowan;” Thwaites and Kellogg in Dunmore’s War, p. 80, state: “Russell’s Fort at Castlewood on Clinch—likewise called Cowan’s Fort, from David Cowan on whose land it was built. Russell later called it Fort Preston.” Contemporary records also sometimes called it Bickley’s Station or Hamlin’s Fort. Hereinafter it will be referred to as Russell’s Fort.

47 Thwaites and Kellogg, Dunmore’s War, p. 91; Draper MS 3Q64.

was the larger as it "constantly" had about twenty families living there. In addition, about twenty or twenty-five men were usually stationed there as soldiers to guard the fort. 49

When the Indians attacked the settlers could not always make it to the forts. While the home of Samuel Porter was being built near Temple Hill, a small band of Indians suddenly appeared from the woods and made a dash for two of the sons of Porter; however, some bear dogs which the family owned attacked the Indians. This gave the boys an opportunity to escape and hide in the rafters of the unfinished house. On another occasion, the Porter family was able to get to Russell's Fort when the Indian chief Benge and a party were raiding the countryside. One night the two Porter girls went to get a bucket of water. They passed by a hemp shock behind which Benge was hiding. He did not bother them since he did not wish to arouse the fort. Later Benge told about the incident when he saw a black-haired squaw and a red haired squaw go to the spring and back passing so close he could have touched them. 50

In 1773, Patrick Porter, the father of Samuel Porter, moved westward from Castle's Woods to become one of the first...

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49 Pension Statement of James Fraley.

settlers in what is now Scott County. The elder Porter built a small fort and a mill on Fall Creek. The mill seems to have served the people in the lower part of Castle's Woods.

Another of the first settlers was David Gass. He was born in Pennsylvania about 1729. Gass first moved westward to ablemarle County, Virginia; later, in 1769, he moved to Castle's Woods. Gass, like so many others, felt the urge to move on to Kentucky and went with Russell and Daniel Boone when they set out for Kentucky in 1773. Gass owned land about two miles below Moore's Fort. On this land he had a cabin in which Boone lived from 1773 to 1775 before he moved to Kentucky. Gass made two trips to Kentucky to see the country; and in 1776 he stayed there for nine months. While there he built a cabin and raised a crop of corn. The following year he moved his family to Kentucky where he eventually died in Madison County in 1806. His son stated that David Gass was a brother-in-law.

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51 Summers, Annals, p. 599; Draper MS 4C26; Addington, History of Scott County, p. 44; Honeycutt, "History of the First Settlements of Scott County."

52 Thwaites and Kellogg, Dunmore's War, p. 173; Notes from John Gass, November 14, 1844, Draper MS 24C74; 24C75; John Gass to Draper, November 6, 1847, Draper MS 24C79.

53 Draper MS 24C74, 11CC11; Montgomery County Record of Plotts A, p. 84.
to William Cowan, which indicates there was at least one more of the Walker sisters. 54

Michael Stoner, another early settler in Castle's Woods, was also associated with Daniel Boone. Stoner was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. His German parents died when he was quite young, and the local authorities placed him with a saddler to learn a trade. But he would not be tied to a saddler's bench. At the age of twenty-one he went to Virginia and settled in Castle's Woods. Stoner, a short stock man, spoke with a strong accent. An outstanding example of a frontiersman, he went with Boone to Kentucky in 1774 to warn surveyors, helped Boone cut the Wilderness Road, and was said to have been the best shot in Kentucky. At least one writer has stated that Michael Stoner was a better woodsman than Daniel Boone, but Boone who had a way of inspiring men “talked his way into immortality.” 55

Of the first settlers in Castle's Woods, many later moved away. One who stayed was Frederick Fraley.

54 Draper MS 11C11; Thwaites and Kellogg, Dunmore's War, p. 173; Draper MS 24C75; Dunmore's War Records, pp. 226-227, a collection of pay records in Virginia Archives, Richmond.

55 George W. Stoner to Draper; Draper MS 24C53, 24C55; Arnow, Seedtime on the Cumberland, pp. 114, 189, 200; Thwaites, Daniel Boone, p. 116.
He acquired the land on which Moore's Fort was located and built a home there. His ancestors, probably his parents, had originally come from Germany. First they settled in Pennsylvania, and later they moved to Rowan County, North Carolina. From there they moved to Castle's Woods. A prolific man, Frederick Fraley fathered thirteen children; many descendants are still found in the area. The house that he built was made of oak logs which were squared and fitted tightly. The corners were dove-tailed and fastened together with iron spikes which had to be imported from settlements farther east. Walnut was used for the floors, window frames, doors, and most of the interior of the house. Upstairs portholes were cut through the walls on all four sides. These could be used to fire on the Indians when they attacked. Like most frontier houses, Fraley's home was sturdy and was built for defense more than comfort.56

Portholes were not uncommon in early homes; the house of Henry Dickenson was similar in construction to Fraley's. Located near the Clinch River, this simple house, like many other homes, was a small fortress. Henry Dickenson, who settled in Castle's Woods in 1770, was the son of a man

who came to Virginia from England. Dickenson's father married a woman by the name of Jennings and the couple reared eight children. Four of these later moved to Russell County, and the family and their descendants have, without doubt, had a greater impact on Russell County than any other family. They have held great political power in local government through the years. Humphrey and Archelaus were the first of the Dickenson family to move to Castle's Woods from their home in Price Edward County. They began farming north of the Clinch River; however, Humphrey was found dead on a rock in the river. He had been shot, apparently by an Indian. An inventory of his property in August, 1773, indicated that he had prospered because he owned, among other things, twenty-six head of cattle and four slaves. The total value of his property was 1590 pounds and 16 shillings.57

Archelaus Dickenson lived near Zion Church. He did not remain long in the area because one day he found a rattlesnake in the bed with his baby. With great disgust, he moved out and returned to a more civilized place, Abingdon.58


58Dickenson, Genesis of Dickenson Family, p 2; Montgomery County Record of Plotts A, p. 80.
James Dickenson, another of the brothers, settled on Moccasin Creek in Russell County while the third brother, Henry Dickenson, settled in Castle's Woods near the land of his brothers. There he built a cabin in which he lived until the Indians became so troublesome that he had to move to the fort. Later he, too, moved to Abingdon where he remained until the end of the American Revolution. After that he returned to Russell County settling on Copper Creek at the place now called Dickensonville. Like many other frontiersmen, Henry Dickenson raised a large family. He fathered twelve children. 59

Frances, or Fanny, Dickenson married Archibald Scott and settled with him on Walden's Creek in what is now Lee County. Later when her husband was killed, she went to Castle's Woods to live. 60

The Bickleys, like the Dickensons, were of English stock. Joseph Bickley was the first of the family who came to Virginia from England. He arrived about the turn of the eighteenth century and settled in King and Queen County. His son, John Bickley, continued the westward movement and settled in Amherst County. John's son, Charles Bickley, who

59Dickenson, Genesis of Dickenson Family, pp. 2-3; Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, p. 628; Montgomery County Records of Plotts A, p. 73.

60Dickenson, Genesis of Dickenson Family, p. 1.
was born in 1753, settled in Castle's Woods in 1770. Charles Bickley was married to Mary Hatler. One of their daughters, Elizabeth, married Henry Dickenson. This was one of the early intermarriages among the first families of Castle's Woods; the marriages have often occurred since. The Virginia frontier, like all frontiers, was hardest on women, and when Mary Hatler Bickley died, Charles married Delilah Winfreld. Descendants of this union still abound in the area. 61

Certainly one of the most important settlers in Castle's Woods was William Russell II. Descended from an old English family, William Russell I emigrated to Virginia about 1701. He had important connections and possibly was one of the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe who crossed the Blue Ridge Mountain with Governor Spotswood in 1716. Eventually he settled in Culpepper County, where he was elected vestryman of his church and was admitted to the bar. He also was a lieutenant colonel in the militia and served briefly in the French and Indian War. He died in 1759 at the age of seventy-two. His oldest son, William II, was born in 1735. At the age of nineteen, William II went

to college at William and Mary with the intention of becoming a lawyer, but he stayed only a year. Soon after he quit school he married his first wife, Tabitha Adams, whose father was an Indian trader and tobacco farmer. Tabitha Russell had twelve children, the last five of whom were born in Castle's Woods. During the French and Indian War, William Russell was sent on a mission to the Cherokee in the region of Chattanooga. For his service in the war, he received a grant of land in Kentucky which seemed to be a great attraction to him for many years. Then in 1770, Russell moved with his family to Castle's Woods. He took his slaves and built a home.62

These were some of the settlers. Not all who came to Castle's Woods remained there; for many of them, the community was only a temporary home before they moved on to Kentucky. They were attracted largely by the unsurveyed and free land on which they could settle. The people who

came to Castle's Woods were Irish like the Cowans, German like the Fraleys and Stoner, and English like the Dickensons, Bickleys, and Russells. Most had not been in Virginia long, but they were not necessarily from obscure families. Some came from Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley and then to Castle's Woods, while others lived for a while in North Carolina, and still others came from the eastern sections of Virginia. A heterogeneous group, they worked together for their common good on the far frontiers of Virginia.
CHAPTER II

THE FRONTIER MOVES ON TO KENTUCKY

The years from 1773 to 1775 were important ones in Castle's Woods. At first the frontiersmen concentrated on improving their community. Then as settlement began to push into Kentucky, Indian troubles began. Eventually the troops of the governor took the war to the Indians and defeated them in a pitched battle. After that the settlement of Kentucky began; although Castle's Woods by 1775 was behind the "cutting edge" of the frontier, it remained a frontier community.

The quiet months came first. The formation of Fincastle County in 1773 made local government much more accessible to the settlers of Castle's Woods. William Russell was present at the first meeting of the county court in January, 1773, and in March of that year he was sworn in as a justice of the peace.¹

The justices of the peace in colonial Virginia were important individuals. Responsible only to the governor who appointed them, they ran the county government. Collectively they made up the county court. Their functions were both administrative and judicial but not legislative. Laws were

made in Williamsburg. Even the meeting places and dates of the county courts were set by the colonial legislature— and it took a special act to change them. No division of powers was recognized between the two functions of the county courts. While in session the courts often dealt first with administrative matters, then heard a case, and then returned to their previous function. However, they did not try all cases. High crimes had to be tried by the General Court in Williamsburg, and cases involving less than twenty shillings could be tried by only one justice. Because of the importance of the job of justice of the peace, the leading citizens of the counties were often eager to acquire such a position.2

Serving on the Fincastle County court with William Russell were William Preston, William Christian, Stephen Trigg, Walter Crockett, Anthony Bledsoe, Arthur Campbell, Benjamin Estill, William Inglis, John Montgomery, Robert Doach, James McGavock, James Thompson, Samuel Crockett, and Alexander McKee.3

In the summer of 1773, the frontier remained quiet. Although the settlers feared an attack by Indians in July,

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3Lewis Preston Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, pp. 130-131.
none developed, and the residents in Castle's Woods continued to bring the wild frontier under their control. In March and again in May, the county court appointed several men to view the highest way and best from the Town House on Holston to Castlewood on Clinch. Roads were needed in the area and apparently some were built; for in July, two men were appointed to care for the road from Castle's Woods to Elk Garden.

In these quiet months, the first mill was built in Castle's Woods. As mentioned above Patrick Porter built a mill in 1773 near the present site of Dungannon in Scott County; however, in 1774 a mill site was surveyed in Castle's Woods for William Lynch. Land was often settled and used many years before it was surveyed; therefore the mill may have been in existence before 1774. Local residents have attributed the building of the mill to Charles Bickley who later owned it, but the records indicate the mill was built by Lynch, apparently sold to Henry Hamlin, and then acquired

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5 Summers, Annals, pp. 599, 605.

6 Ibid., p. 607.

7 Daniel Smith to William Preston, February 22, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ15. The letter was written from Castle's Woods.
by Bickley. Bickley's mill was located on a corner of his land which he purchased from David Cowan in 1778. The Cowan land was first surveyed in 1774, and the creek which runs through the property was then called Mill Creek. When Bickley bought the tract of land, the stream was again referred to as Mill Creek. In 1777, the year before Bickley acquired the land, Henry Hamlin supplied the militia with a large quantity of flour, and as late as 1783 Daniel Smith stated he came through Castle's Woods just after the Indians had been at the Fort at Hamlin's mill. Quite possibly Charles Bickley, who was but seventeen years old when he went to Castle's Woods, worked at the mill to learn the trade and then in 1778, at the age of twenty-five, was able to buy it.

The area developed rapidly; but Castle's Woods was "the point nighest out to Kentucky that was settled," and the call of Kentucky lured men on. For the restless, Castle's Woods was often only a stopping place.

8 Montgomery Record of Plotts A, p. 72.
10 Receipt of Henry Hamlin, August 13, 1777, Campbell-Preston Papers, Vol. I.
12 Statement of John Gass, circa 1850, Draper MS 11CC11.
The most famous name connected with Kentucky is that of Daniel Boone. He first tried to move there in 1773. Boone spent the years from 1769 to 1771 with friends on one of his long hunts. Quite possibly he met William Russell as he returned to North Carolina. At any rate, Boone sold his farm and most of his household goods on the Yadkin River and departed for Kentucky on the 25th of September 1773. With the Boones were five other families from the Yadkin settlement.13

This move was characteristic of the Boones, for Squire Boone, the father of Daniel, was born in England. As a Quaker, he had first moved his family to Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania; later, in 1750, the family moved to North Carolina. Daniel, who had been born in Pennsylvania in 1734, was married to Rebecca Bryan whose family lived near the Boone settlement on the Yadkin.14 A year after the marriage,


a son, James, was born; and by the time the family had moved from North Carolina, Israel, Susannah, Jemima, Levina, Rebecca, Daniel Morgan, and Jessee Bryan, had all been born. Jessee, at the time of their departure, was not quite four months of age.\textsuperscript{15} Such large families made travel slow.

Among the people whom Boone had persuaded to go along were several members of the Bryan family and Benjamin Cutbirth.\textsuperscript{16} The Bryan men left their wives and children at home.\textsuperscript{17} The route the travelers took after they reached Abingdon, then Black's Fort, is disputed. Boone's biographers state that the group traveled westward from Abingdon, but they possibly continued to Castle's Woods before heading west. Since Castle's Woods was then the most western settlement and since several members of the community joined the group, perhaps Castle's Woods was their last stop.

Daniel Boone, because he became famous, has been credited with the leadership of the group which was moving to Kentucky; however, contemporary records state that William Russell was the leader.\textsuperscript{18} As an important citizen, and as

\textsuperscript{15}Spraker, Boone Family, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{16}Draper MS 9B93. The "B" manuscript is an unpublished biography of Daniel Boone.

\textsuperscript{17}Draper MS 9B94.

\textsuperscript{18}Arthur Campbell to Lord Dunmore, December 14, 1773, Haldimand Papers, Vol. B 14, pp. 206-207; the Haldimand
one who already had a claim to land in Kentucky, Russell was probably the actual commander of the caravan with Boone acting as a guide. At any rate the party was divided into three detachments: in front was the main body with the women, the children, the baggage, and the cattle; in the center were William Russell's oldest son, Henry, Daniel Boone's oldest son, James, James and Richard Mendenhall, Isaac Crabtree, a man named Drake, and two slaves named Charles and Adams; bringing up the rear were William Russell and David Gass. Some others in the group were Edmund Jennings, William Bush and Michael Stoner; they, like Russell, were from Castle's Woods.

The middle group under young Boone and Russell carried provisions of flour, farming tools, and various other articles including some books which belonged to the Russells. They also drove a small number of cattle. On the night of the ninth of October, the first two groups pitched camp only a few miles from each other near Walden's Ridge in present Lee County, Virginia.

Papers are kept in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa; Virginia Gazette, December 23, 1773.

19 Ibid.; Draper MS 9B95.
20 Draper MS 9B94.
Contemporary accounts vividly describe the incidents which followed. During the night, the howls of wolves (or perhaps Indians) frightened the Mendenhall boys who were unfamiliar with life on the frontier. Crabtree teased them saying that what they heard then was nothing compared with what they would hear in Kentucky where the buffaloes bellowed from the treetops. Near daybreak Indians attacked the middle group. Henry Russell was shot through the hips and could not escape. He died slowly because the Indians ran up to him and stabbed him with their knives. As they did so, he grabbed the knives with his bare hands until the steel had severely sliced his hands. James Boone received the same treatment: a shot through the hips and a slow agonizing death. The Indians made his pain more unbearable by pulling out his toe and finger nails. One Indian, Big Jim, he recognized and he begged for his life -- finally he begged for his death. Both the Mendenhall boys and the Drake youth were killed instantly. Adam, a slave belonging to the Russell family, was able to escape and hide under a pile of driftwood on the bank of Wallen's Creek. From that position, he watched the torture. After being lost for several days in the forest, he returned to Castle's Woods; but the other slave, Charles, was led
into the forest where he was killed. Isaac Crabtree, the other white man, although wounded, was able to escape.²²

Soon after the incident occurred, William Russell and David Gass found the multilated bodies. Arrows were still in Russell's son, and a war club lay beside him.²³

Both Russell and Gass had planned to establish homes in Kentucky, start crops, and later return for their families.²⁴ These dreams were destroyed; they had to bury the dead. Rebecca Boone, when she learned of the death of her son, sent sheets to the scene to be used in burying him. The two eldest sons of two frontier families were wrapped together and buried in a single grave.²⁵

After the burial, the group held a meeting. Boone, who had sold his farm and most of his personal belongings in North Carolina, wanted to go on, but the others refused. He therefore accepted the invitation of David Gass to live in a cabin on his property in Castle's Woods. Most of the

²²Draper MS 9B96-98; Virginia Gazette, December 23, 1773. Lord Dunmore to Lord Dartmouth, Draper MS 6C16, said that Russell was "the son of a gentleman of some distinction" and "a very promising young man." None of the records gave the names of any of the Boones.


²⁴Draper MS 9B95.

²⁵Ibid., 9B101.
others returned to their homes - in Castile's Woods and others communities in Virginia and North Carolina. Except for Daniel Boone, the enthusiasm for Kentucky died on the far frontiers of Virginia. Later he was to succeed.

At first, Virginia officials thought that the Indians who attacked the caravan were Cherokee. Later, however, they were proven to be Shawnee. Upon hearing of the attack, Governor Dunmore wrote to the Indian agent telling him to inquire about the murders and to deliver the murderers to justice. After a time two Shawnee chiefs were put to death for their actions. Some of the goods, such as the farming equipment and the books, were returned; but the horses that had been stolen had been sold to some traders in Pennsylvania.

26 Ibid., 9B101.
28 Dunmore to John Stuart, December 20, 1773, Draper MS 6C15.
The white man in 1773-1774 was not only advancing on the Indian's lands in the Clinch Valley; he was also moving from the north into the Ohio Valley. The situation became tense and then exploded when in April, 1774, some white troublemakers killed the family of Chief John Logan on the Mingo junction of the Ohio River. War then came to the Clinch.

With the coming of war, the Fincastle County militia, which was composed of all men and boys able to fight, was under the command of Colonel William Preston. His assistant was Major Arthur Campbell. In turn, William Russell of Castle's Woods was a captain with the Clinch Valley being his area of responsibility.30

As early as February, 1774, some of the settlers fled from their homes in Castle's Woods because of the fear of Indian attacks. When they returned to pick up some of their household goods, Daniel Smith, a captain in the militia and a surveyor for Fincastle County, convinced them to remain at their homes. These timid souls soon saw a great deal more action.31

31Daniel Smith to William Preston, February 22, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ15.
When William Russell returned from a conference in Williamsburg with Governor Dunmore in May, he found that the settlements farther up the Clinch River had been evacuated. Immediately he sent out four scouts so they could report any activities of the Indians. The scouts, if they saw Indians, were not to fight. Instead they were to hurry back and report to the settlement so preparations could be made. This helped to placate the residents, especially when the scouts returned in a few weeks and reported no contacts with Indians.

By May, hostilities had begun on the Ohio River, particularly around Pittsburg. Colonel Preston ordered his commanders in the Southwest, Captains Russell, Smith, and Shelby, to send out scouts. This method was again used to assure the people and to keep them from deserting their homes. Governor Dunmore already had determined that if the war spread he would "carry it to the Enemy's country, so as to prevent their ravaging the country." The hostilities in the north had spread so much by early June that Dunmore

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32 Russell to Preston, May 7, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ23.
33 Draper MS 10E121.
34 Letter of William Preston, May 24, 1774, Campbell-Preston Papers, Vol. I.
recommended the construction of forts in the frontier communities.  

Not only were the Indians of the north incensed by the killing of Logan's family, but the Indians of the south were irritated by the killing of an Indian at the Watauga settlement. Isaac Crabtree, who was one of the survivors of the attack on the party led by young Russell and Boone, developed a strong hatred for the red men. In June, 1774, he went to Watauga to attend a horse race. The Cherokee Indians in the area were friendly and several were in attendance at the race. Without any apparent cause, Crabtree killed one of the Indians, Cherokee Billey. Unfortunately, Cherokee Billey was a relative of one of the chiefs. If the settlers were frightened before, this event nearly panicked them. Arthur Campbell immediately requested that the Indian agent, Alexander Cameron, send a peace mission to the Overhill Cherokee to express the disgust of the frontiersmen over the actions of Crabtree. When two men arrived in early July at the Overhill towns, the Cherokee almost took their revenge on them, but eventually the Indians were calmed.  

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35 Dunmore to Preston, June 10, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ39.  
36 Campbell to Preston, June, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ40.  
37 Campbell to Preston, June 22, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ41; Williams, *Dawn of Tennessee*, p. 388-389.
for Crabtree but no one seemed to be interested in collecting the money; perhaps they approved of his actions.  

In 1774, Kentucky was still unsettled, but surveyors were swarming into the future state staking out claims. The surveyors were in danger. Because of the growing disturbances, Preston advised Russell to send two men to Kentucky to warn the surveyors. Russell, who had "lately suffered by the inhuman, blood-thirsty devils," agreed that the surveyors should be notified. Therefore he said he "engaged to start immediately, on the occasion, two of the best hands I could think of, Daniel Boone and Michael Stoner." The task of the two men was to traverse Kentucky as far as the Falls (Louisville) and to return through Gasper's Lick and Cumberland Gap. Boone and Stoner went first to Harrodsburg where James Harrod was laying off the first town in Kentucky. From there they went on to the mouth of Kentucky River and then to the Falls of the Ohio. Many surveyors were warned and, perhaps, saved. After about two months, the two woodsmen returned to Castle's Woods.

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38 Robert M. Addington, History of Scott County, Virginia (1932), p. 16.
39 Russell to Preston, June 26, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ46.
40 Thwaites, Daniel Boone, pp. 106-107.
41 Boone in his autobiography said the trip took sixty-two days, that he left on the 6th of June and was
When Boone and Stoner returned, they found that most of the men of the settlement had already gone to war. Even before the two men departed for Kentucky, militia officers of the county met at the Lead Mines, the county seat of Fincastle County. There they decided that Lieutenant Colonel William Christian should call up several companies of militia, go to Castle's Woods, and from there proceed toward Kentucky to repulse the Indians on their approach to the settlements.42

When Christian reached Castle's Woods on the twelfth of July, he wrote to Preston suggesting that an expedition should be sent to the Shawnee towns on the Ohio River.43 Governor Dunmore also reached the same conclusion in July and he ordered Colonel Andrew Lewis to assemble men from Botetourt, Fincastle, and other counties. The stage was set for what has become known as Dunmore's War.44

*solicited by Governor Dunmore.* He and Stoner, however, were paid for only fifty-nine days. See Dunmore's War Records, a collection of documents in the Virginia State Archives, pp. 226 and 228. Russell in a letter to Preston on June 26, 1774, indicated that he chose Boone and Stoner and that they departed on the 26th of June.

42 Preston to Christian, June 27, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ47.
43 Christian to Preston, July 12, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ63.
44 Dunmore to Lewis, July 24, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ141; Dartmouth to Dunmore, November 2, 1774, CO5/1352, Public Record Office, London.
Meanwhile at Castle's Woods, the forts were readied for war. Captain Russell was in charge of four forts: Russell's Fort with ten men; Moore's Fort with Captain Thompson and ten men; Blackmore's Fort with ten men; and Smith's Fort with ten men. Russell named one of the forts for Preston, another for Byrd, and a third for Christian. He also made a point of complaining about his having only a captain's commission and said, "I am assured against such powerful connections as are upon Holston and New River waters, it would be useless for me to mention one word about it." Russell was trying for a promotion and was not above pointing out that the militia officers above him were related by blood and marriage. He had reasons to complain for Colonel Andrew Lewis and Colonel Charles Lewis were brothers and two of their nephews were captains. Colonel William Fleming, Colonel William Christian, and Captain William Campbell were all married to sisters of Patrick Henry. Russell knew that these family ties made it difficult for him to advance.

45 Christian to Preston, July 12, 1774, Draper MS 3Q763.
46 Russell to Preston, July 13, 1774, Draper MS 3Q764.
On August 13th, Preston urged his officers to get their men moving to the north for the expedition against the Indians, but Russell was not anxious to start. He wanted to remain and protect the local forts. His concern was genuine. Once his company left Castle's Woods, there would be no protection if an attack occurred while they were gone; however, Major Arthur Campbell, with Captains Thompson and Daniel Smith assisting him, was placed in charge of the frontiers. This arrangement apparently satisfied Russell because he departed for the Ohio late in August. His company included one lieutenant, one ensign, two sergeants, one drummer, and other men making a total of forty-two. The men of Castle's Woods not only supplied their bodies but also goods. For their service and for their supplies, they were paid in cash, a rare item on the frontier. The campaign was entered into with enthusiasm by the backwoodsmen of Castle's Woods because it gave them a chance to protect their homes, to make some much needed money, and to take their vengeance on the Indians.

48 Preston to Campbell, August 13, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ76.

49 Russell to Preston, August 16, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ78.

50 Preston to Campbell, August 13, 1774; Draper MS 3QQ147; Preston to Campbell, August 25, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ83.

51 Christian to Preston, September 7, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ92.
Just after the departure of Russell's Company, Boone and Stoner returned from Kentucky. They hurried forward to catch up with the militia, but Russell ordered them back to help protect the homes in the settlement since most of the men of the community were on the expedition. The decision to leave such men as Boone to protect the settlement was a wise one because, while Governor Dunmore took the war to the Indians, the Indians brought the war to the Clinch Valley area. Suddenly in September, Chief John Logan and a band of Mingoes struck. They spent several days in killing and robbing the settlers in Southwest Virginia.

First, they attacked Fort Blackmore on Friday the twenty-third of September. Two Negro slaves were captured and several cows and horses were stolen. The next day the Indians attacked a family on Reedy Creek, a branch of the Holston River. Help became necessary on the Clinch but no help came. The men on the Holston refused to assist. They did not want to neglect their families for the protection of others. The citizens of Castle's Woods became so afraid they refused to leave the forts to care for their crops. They did send, however, small ranging

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52 Russell to Preston, August 28, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ84.
parties under the command of Boone, and Boone was "very
diligent at Castle's Woods and kept things in good order." 53

Major Campbell, after the initial attacks on the
frontiers, expressed the desire that Russell should return
as quickly as possible because he was needed at home. 54 To
fill the void at Castle's Woods, Captain Daniel Smith gathered
men from the "upper stations" on the Clinch and hurried to
the community. At the time, Smith was afraid that if more
men were not sent to assist him the "most timorous will
remove to a place of safety." 55 Regardless of Captain
Smith's statement, the forts were fairly well staffed.
Blackmore's Fort, twenty miles down the Clinch River had
sixteen men, Moore's Fort in Castle's Woods had twenty men
with Boone in command; Russell's Fort, also in Castle's
Woods, had twenty men with William Poage in charge; Glade
Hollow, had fifteen men; Elk Garden had eighteen men; Maiden
Springs had five men; and Crab Orchard had three men. 56

53 Campbell to Preston, September 26, 1774, Draper MS
3QQ104; Letter of Colonel William Preston, September 28,
Campbell to Preston, September 29, 1774, Draper MS
3QQ106-107.

54 Draper MS 3QQ104.

55 Smith to Preston, October 4, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ114.

56 Campbell to Preston, October 6, 1774, Draper MS
3QQ116.
The third Indian attack occurred September 29th at Moore's Fort. On a quiet Thursday about twilight three men left the fort to check a pigeon trap. About three hundred yards from the fort, they were fired upon and one of the men, John Duncan, was killed. The Indians took his scalp. The other two escaped when a party of men ran from the fort to assist, but the night covered the retreat of the tribesmen. The men, under the leadership of Boone, were unable to follow them. As they often did, the Indians left a war club beside the body of Duncan. Boone at the time thought the Indians to be Cherokee.57

When Logan attacked Shelby's Fort (Bristol), the frontiersmen realized that their attackers were not Cherokee because at Shelby's the Indians seized a Negro girl and questioned her about the conditions in the fort. The "wench" was tied to a tree when the Indians saw a boy they wanted to capture. She escaped and reported that "one was a large man whiter than the rest, and talked good English."58 Thus they realized their attacker was Logan because his father was a Frenchman who had been captured and reared by the Indians.

57 Campbell to Preston, October 1, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ109; John Gass to Draper, November 14, 1845, Draper MS 24C74.

58 Campbell to Preston, October 9, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ117.
The half-breed chief could use the English language with great skill. Later, when he explained his actions, Logan made a statement which demonstrates his facility in the use of English:

Colonel Creasap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance.

On the same day Logan attacked Shelby's Fort; his band also "glutted their vengeance" on Fort Blackmore and killed a man named Dale Carter. Help for Blackmore's came from Castle's Woods; thirty men led by Daniel Smith and Daniel Boone arrived with seven horses which they left for the night just outside the fort. The Indians stole six of them. The next day the troops began scouring the woods for Logan and his band but were unable to find them.

Even if Boone had his horses stolen, the people at Blackmore's Fort wanted him to be made a captain in the militia. They drew up a petition. The militia leaders

59William C. Pendleton, History of Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia, p. 321.

60Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia; Written in 1781, Somewhat Corrected and Enlarged in the Winter of 1782, for the Use of A Foreigner of Distinction (1782), pp. 116-117.

61Campbell to Preston, October 12, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ118.
were in favor of Boone's appointment and the only objection they could think of was that William Russell, who had already proven a little touchy on the subject, might object. Whether Russell would object was not long considered, for Boone was made a captain with the responsibility of protecting Moore's Fort, Russell's Fort, and Blackmore's Fort until the men returned from the expedition in the north.62

Meanwhile the majority of the men from the Castle's Woods settlement were journeying north under the leadership of William Russell. They composed one of the companies of the Fincastle County Battalion which was led by Colonel William Christian. Other companies in this battalion were led by Joseph Crockett, William Campbell, Anthony Bledsoe, Evan Shelby, William Helbert, and John Floyd. They marched eastward to the New River and then followed it northward to the Kanawha; then they followed that river until it emptied into the Ohio. There they quietly waited with other members of the southern wing of the army. The commander of this group was Colonel Andrew Lewis, and he had been ordered to remain there until the northern wing of the army, which was commanded by Governor Dunmore, could join them.63

62 Campbell to Preston, October 13, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ123; Smith to Preston, October 13, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ119; Addington, History of Scott County, p. 36.

63 Lewis, Battle of Point Pleasant, pp. 26, 27; Pendleton, History of Tazewell County, p. 381; James
The army was a group of irregulars; only a few of the officers wore regular military uniforms. Most of the men wore the clothing they normally would use while out on a hunt. They were dressed in home-made trousers, hunting shirts, leather leggings, and caps which were made from animal skins or wool. With him, the individual soldier carried a flintlock rifle or, perhaps, a musket. Their bullets were carried in a pouch while the powder was contained in a powder-horn. A butcher knife, used for scalping Indians and skinning animals, completed the outfit. 64

Sunday, October 9, 1774, was a quiet day. A preacher delivered a sermon to the troops, 65 and when night fell, the men slept soundly. After all, the scouts had reported there was not an Indian within fifteen miles. But while the troops slept, the Indians under Chief Cornstalk crept closer and closer. Throughout the night they crossed the Ohio River on rafts that had been previously prepared, and by morning all of them had crossed and were within three miles of the


64 Lewis, Battle of Point Pleasant, p. 29.

65 Major William Ingles to Preston, October 14, 1774, Draper MS 3QQ121.
camp at Point Pleasant. They were ready to attack and defeat the southern wing of Dunmore's army before the two could be joined.\textsuperscript{66}

Suddenly the stillness on the Ohio was shattered. About half an hour before sunrise on the morning of October 10, 1774, exactly a year since Russell's and Boone's sons were killed, two men while hunting ran upon a large party of Indians about a mile from their camp. One of the men, James Mooney, was a member of Russell's company; he was a former neighbor to Boone in North Carolina and had been to Kentucky with him in 1769. Mooney was killed. The other escaped and reported the presence of the Indians. He claimed to have seen about five acres of land covered with Indians. The Battle of Point Pleasant, the only battle in Dunmore's War, had begun.

Colonel Andrew Lewis arranged his troops in two columns. The right column was commanded by Colonel Charles Lewis while the left column was commanded by Colonel William Fleming. The men from Castle's Woods fought in the left column. About sunrise the Indians made a vigorous frontal attack on their position. The right column was attacked first and Charles Lewis received a fatal wound. The onslaught was terrific and several other men also fell.

\textsuperscript{66}Lewis, \textit{Battle of Point Pleasant}, p. 41.
A strike was made about the same time on the forces of Fleming. He too was knocked out of action with two rifle balls in his left arm and one in his left breast. The men were forced to quit their ranks and fight from behind trees. The situation became desperate.

Then reinforcements came up from the rear; the Indians retreated. Both sides eventually formed a line about one and a quarter miles long. Throughout the battle, the voice of Cornstalk could be heard telling his men to "lie close and shoot well and fight and be strong."  

At sunset the fighting slowed and with the fall of night it ceased. The Indians had been defeated, but before they left they shouted that they would be back the next day and in the words of Colonel Christian "they damned our people for sons of bitches." But they did not return.

Butchery and savagery were not always on the side of the red men. After the battle, the whites boasted over the

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scalps they were able to claim; they lamented because the Indians scalped many of their own dead to keep the whites from getting their trophies.69

After the fighting the battlefield was not a pleasant sight. There was confusion and filth and almost no military order or discipline. The screams of the wounded cut the cold air; the doctors were bad and medicines were scarce; there was little to eat or drink.70 But a vain hope existed that the frontiers would thereafter be safe from attack.

Their hopes were not entirely useless for peace on the frontiers of Virginia did last for a while. This peace allowed the men in the militia to be discharged and return to their farming and hunting.71 Things were so quiet by January, 1775, that Daniel Boone was able to make another of his long hunts in Kentucky. He was happy to be free of his duties which had tied him down for a while.72

Boone still wanted to move to Kentucky, and with the help of Judge Richard Henderson of North Carolina, his wishes...
began to come true. Although Governor Dunmore eliminated all Shawnee claims to lands on the east side of the Ohio at the Treaty of Camp Charlotte at the end of Dunmore's War, the Cherokee Indians still had a claim to Kentucky. Individuals could not legally buy land from them, but this did not bother Henderson and Boone. In 1774, Henderson and other speculators organized the Louisa Company for the purpose of purchasing the "territory lying on the west side of the mountains on the waters of the Mississippi from the Indian Tribes now in possession thereof." Later the company changed its name to the Transylvania Company and a treaty was signed with the Cherokee at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga River. The Indians were eager to deal with the Transylvania Company and eventually between five hundred and a thousand of them gathered for the festivities. For a few wagon loads of goods the Cherokee tribe gave up nearly twenty million acres of land in one of the largest land transactions ever made by a private company.

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74 *Williams, Dawn of Tennessee Valley*, p. 401.
Because Kentucky was then a part of Virginia, Governor Dunmore was greatly disturbed by these illegal actions. As early as January, 1775, he had been warned of the intentions of Henderson and in March when he heard of the treaty being concluded, he issued a proclamation and sent copies to such men as Preston and Russell -- and to the Cherokee. This proclamation denounced the illegal designs of Henderson and demanded that every officer do his utmost to defeat the plan. Dunmore's active opposition eventually doomed the Henderson venture, but meanwhile the Transylvania Company proceeded without regard for these official actions.

Even before the treaty had been completed, Henderson contracted with Boone to cut a road to Kentucky. Therefore in March, 1775, Daniel Boone left Castle's Woods for Kentucky. Altogether he gathered about thirty men to help cut the now famous Wilderness Road. Of those chosen, the following appear to have been living in Castle's Woods at the time: Squire Boone, William Bush, David Gass, Edmund Jennings, John Kennedy, William Moore, and Michael Stoner.

77 Preston to Dunmore, January, 1775, Draper MS 4Qq1.
79 Conclusion based on land records, traditions, and records of Dunmore's War.
One of those helping to cut the road to Kentucky was Edmund Jennings who started to Kentucky with Boone at the time the Indians killed his son in 1773. Apparently he lived in Castle's Woods with Boone until 1775. According to legend he was a boy at the time, and he loved to talk of Kentucky and the "bars" that were to be encountered there. Jennings was six feet tall, had large bones, and had sharp gray eyes which looked out on the world from under shaggy brows. Most of his life was spent on the frontiers and when he finally moved to Tennessee, he was often seen with a scalp hanging from his belt. Although a God-fearing man who prayed every night, he was still cautious enough to keep a knife always at his side and to peep out of every door before he made his exit. The story is told that he only once in his prayers asked God for a favor. That was when he ate a whole roasted possum and the resulting indigestion made him believe he was going to die. He asked God to spare him and he would never ask another favor. He survived and was 85 when he died in Tennessee.80

In the fall of 1775, Daniel Boone returned to Castle's Woods and removed his family from the Clinch to Boonesborough. Traveling back east with him was his brother, Squire, who was

80 Harriett Simpson Arnow, Seedtime on the Cumberland, pp. 190, 230; Dunmore War Records, p. 203.
on the way to North Carolina to get his family. Early in September, Daniel Boone and his family made it to Boonesborough along with twenty young men. Squire Boone soon arrived, and the Boones became leaders in Kentucky.  

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81 John Reed, “Reminiscenses of Western Virginia, 1770-1790,” Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, VI (April, 1899), p. 343; Ibid., VII (October, 1899), pp. 113-128; Thwaites, Boone, p. 125; Boone, “Autobiography,” p. 60. Boone was apparently back in Castle’s Woods later because John Snoddy and James Wharton both proved in 1781 they had each sent a preemption of 1000 acres of land in Kentucky with Boone but the preemptions were lost. See Washington County Minute Book I, pp. 102-106. Legislation for preemptions was not passed until 1799. Also in 1787, Boone and several others wrote to Governor Randolph regarding protection of the frontiers of Washington, Montgomery, and Russell Counties. See Calendar of State Papers, IV, pp. 375-376. One summer, probably in 1774 or 1775, while Boone was away from Moore’s Fort, Rebecca Boone and some of her children were staying in the fort and were involved in an interesting incident. The men who were in charge of the fort had gotten careless; and when the guards were away, the men would go out of the fort, play ball, or lie in the grass without their guns. On one such occasion only “Old Daddy Thompson” was left in the fort. Rebecca Boone, her two daughters, and Hannah Carr and a few others decided to teach the men a lesson. They loaded their guns with a light amount of wadding as the Indians did, and then about six of them went on the other side of the fort from the men and fired the guns as rapidly as they could. They then ran into the fort and slammed the gates so no one could get in. This so frightened the men that some of them ran through the nearby pond. Only one of them, Ben Smith, was able to get over the walls of the fort. When the rest of the men found what had happened, they were extremely angry. Some of them wanted to have the women whipped. The men eventually got into three fights over the matter. “This quarrel did not grow out of whiskey for they had none.” The frontier people had time for fun even in the worst of times; they also had their problems, whiskey evidently being one of them. See Statement of Mrs. Samuel Scott, circa 1850, Draper MS 11CC225.
In the years 1773-1775, an attempt to settle Kentucky resulted in disaster for Russell and Boone. After the Indians were defeated in 1774, the frontiers became safe for a time, and Kentucky was settled by Boone and other adventurers from both North and South. A letter of the time shows the intense interest which others showed in the new settlement. It reads:

What a buzzel is amongst people about Kentuck? To hear people speak of it one would think it was a new found paradise; and I doubt not if it be such a place as represented but ministers will have thin congregations, but why need I fear that? Ministers are moveable goods as well as others and stand in need of good land as any do, for they are bad farmers.  

After the settlement of Kentucky, Castle's Woods was no longer on the outer fringes of the frontier, but the community remained a frontier fortress for a long time to come.

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82Rev. John Brown to Preston, May 5, 1775, Draper MS 4QQ15.
CHAPTER III

THE WAR YEARS

During the years of the American Revolution, the residents of Castle's Woods were in constant danger of Indian attacks. The Indians generally favored the British; the frontiersmen had to protect their homes, and few of them served in the continental army.

When the men from Fincastle County returned from the Battle of Point Pleasant, the last important battle before the Revolution, their leaders met at the Lead Mines and sent a message to Lord Dunmore thanking him for his leadership. The conclusion read:

That your Lordship may enjoy every domestick blessing; that you may long govern the brave and free people of Virginia, and that the present disturbances may be amicably settled is the ardent wish of the inhabitants of Fincastle.¹

Dunmore, however, did not long govern the colony of Virginia; political differences between the governor and the House of Burgesses, in May, 1774, resulted in the dissolution of the assembly. When the Burgesses

began meeting in a tavern in Williamsburg as an independent body, the political revolution had begun in Virginia.\textsuperscript{2} To support the cause of the radical leaders, local Committees of Safety were formed in each county.\textsuperscript{3} The Fincastle County Committee of Safety met on January 20, 1775. William Russell of Castle's Woods was able to attend the meeting although he was at that time in command of the fort at Point Pleasant. At this meeting the group wrote the Fincastle Declaration which has often been cited as the first declaration of independence in America. While the committee expressed its "love" to George III, it also stated that the leaders of Fincastle would not think of submitting their "liberty or property to the power of a venal British Parliament, or to the will of a corrupt ministry." In conclusion the committee stated that they were "deliberately and resolutely determined never to surrender" their privileges to any power on earth except at the expense of their lives.\textsuperscript{4} While the Fincastle Declaration is not really a declaration of independence, it is a strong statement of the position of the residents of Fincastle. It showed that the leaders


\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 111.

\textsuperscript{4}Summers, \textit{History of Southwest Virginia}, pp. 201-203.
on the frontier were willing to fight for their freedom, if this became necessary.

After the meeting at the Lead Mines, William Russell returned to Fort Blair. While there he received the news of the fighting at Lexington and Concord. Writing to Colonel William Fleming he stated:

I had some Days before the Receipt of yours, been favour'd with the shocking Acct of three Battles Being fought near the city of Boston, between the British Troops, and Americans; tho' must acknowledge my great Joy in our victories obtained over the Enemies Tyranic Pride.5

William Russell then closed down the fort at Point Pleasant and returned once again to his home in Castle's Woods; and although he had hoped to go to Kentucky to see his yet unseen land, he chose instead to enlist in the revolutionary army.6

At the outset of the war, the Indians once again became active. Possibly stirred up by the Indian agents, the Cherokee began a series of attacks aimed at destroying the frontier settlements.7 As a result, the citizens of Castle's Woods once again braced for Indian troubles.

5Russell to Fleming, June 12, 1775, Draper MS 4Q19.
7Russell to Preston, July 7, 1776, Draper MS 4Q53.
The name of a small state park between Abingdon and Castlewood may be traced to an event that occurred early in July, 1776. Because several attacks had been made in southwest Virginia, the people of Black's Fort sent two men to warn Castle's Woods to expect an attack. One of the men was John Douglass. When they reached Little Moccasin Gap in Clinch Mountain, Douglass was killed by Indians. According to tradition the two volunteered to take the news to Castle's Woods although their relatives protested because of the danger. When they reached Little Moccasin Gap, they stopped to eat lunch beside a large rock. Suddenly a rifle shot sounded; smoke arose from a nearby log; and John Douglass fell. Believing that his wound was fatal, Douglass told his friend, a man named Benham, to slip into the underbrush and continue the mission. Benham reached Castle's Woods and warned the people. A day or so later when Benham returned with others, they found Douglass's body where he had fallen. His scalp had been taken and there was evidence that he had killed one of his attackers. It was thus that Douglass Wayside Park got its name.

The community received no warning of an attack that came soon after Douglass was killed. According to recollections

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8 Russell to Preston, July 7, 1776, Draper MS 4QQ53.
9 Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, pp. 428-429.
of residents of Castle's Woods at the time, Ann Cowan and her brother Samuel Walker were crossing through a rye field on their way from Russell's Fort to Moore's Fort. A band of Cherokee attacked them. Walker was killed and Ann Cowan was taken prisoner. She was later sold to northern Indians and was taken to Detroit where she was kept by them for seven years. After the raid, Samuel Cowan hurried up the river to Houston's Fort to tell the people there. He planned to return to Castle's Woods the following morning, but when Captain Daniel Smith arrived and told him that the Cherokee were all around the fort at Castle's Woods and that there was a great deal of screaming from the women, Cowan left immediately. He had not even been there long enough to eat. The men in Houston's Fort advised him to stay, but he persisted, saying he "would go, if there was an Indian behind every tree."

Cowan had not gone far from the fort when gunfire was heard. When he was found, he had been scalped. After he was carried into the fort, he died. The Indians who made the attack stayed around the forts a few days and then departed when relief came from the Holston settlements.

\textsuperscript{10}Statement of John Carr, \textit{circa} 1854, Draper MS 6XX99.

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid; Statement of Mrs. Samuel Scott, \textit{circa} 1850, Draper MS 11CC224-226; Thomas W. Carter to Draper, Draper MS 4C26; Florence Houston, Laura Cowan, and Ella Bunn Melette,
Because such attacks as those on Castle's Woods had been expected, the Committee of Safety of Virginia, which had replaced the governor as the executive of Virginia, ordered that six companies of militia be called up to protect the frontier settlements. William Russell was placed in command of this force and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel. One of the first things Russell did was to send a lieutenant and thirty men to the lead mines to protect them. This group, aided by a company of militia from Bedford County, built a fort there and left some men to protect the mines while they performed their duties.\(^\text{12}\)

Once the Committee of Safety believed that Fincastle County was ready to defend itself, it decided to take the war to the Indians. Whereas two years before the Shawnee had been the enemy, on this occasion they hoped to defeat the Cherokee. Colonel William Christian was appointed the commander of the expedition and William Russell was placed in charge of one of the units. Christian was ordered to defeat the Cherokee and to arrest and bring in all those

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\(^{12}\)President Edmund Pendleton to Fleming, June 20, 1776, in Thwaites and Kellogg (eds.), Revolution on the Upper Ohio, p. 167; Preston to Committee of Safety, August 2, 1776, Draper MS 4QQ64.
who were responsible for the Indian attacks. The forces were to meet at Long Island (Kingsport) on the Holston River.13

On July 19, when Russell's battalion reached Long Island ahead of the others, his scouts reported sighting Indians. The next day the unit marched in two groups with the scouts in front. The Cherokee attacked, first from the front and later from the rear. But they were defeated and a great deal of "plunder and guns" were taken from them.14

At Long Island, Russell had a fort constructed; still politically minded, he named this one Fort Patrick Henry. At this fort Christian gathered his army, and in October he swept down on the Cherokee towns destroying crops, burning homes, and killing Indians. Victorious, he returned to Long Island and then marched homeward before Christmas. His forces were disbanded; his mission was accomplished.15

At about the same time that the trouble began with the Cherokee, the Virginia Committee of Safety called for a


15Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, pp. 242-246; Pension statement of Isaac Crabtree, September 27, 1832, Draper MS 3DD40-43; Kegley, Virginia Frontiers, p. 631.
constitutional convention. The two men elected to represent Fincastle County were William Russell and Arthur Campbell. The convention finished its work by the end of June. The new constitution, which was the first for Virginia, provided for a governor and council to govern the state. The Committee of Safety ceased to exist and Patrick Henry was chosen as governor. As required by the constitution, the counties held elections during the summer of 1776. Elected to the House of Delegates from Fincastle County were William Russell and Arthur Campbell. As their senator, the people chose William Christian. 16

When the first session of the General Assembly met, petitions from the residents of Kentucky, Clinch Valley, and Holston Valley were received. These requested that new western counties be formed from Fincastle. In October, 1776, the legislature passed an act abolishing Fincastle County. It was replaced by Montgomery, Washington, and Kentucky counties. The residents of Castle's Woods became citizens of Washington County. Since Black's Fort was the county seat, local government was much more accessible. 17


The first meeting of the Washington County Court was held on January 28, 1777, at Black's Fort. For two days the leaders of the area worked at setting up the county government. Governor Patrick Henry appointed Arthur Campbell, Evan Shelby, James Dysart, John Anderson, John Coulter, William Campbell, Daniel Smith, William Edmiston, Joseph Martin, John Campbell, Alexander Buchana, John Kinkead, James Montgomery, John Snoddy, George Blackburn, and Thomas Mastin as justices of the peace. Noticeably absent from this group was William Russell who was serving in the army having gone on active duty in December, 1776.¹⁸

One of the biggest problems facing county courts was the construction and upkeep of roads. During early 1777, the Washington County Court selected a number of men to choose the best route for a road from the North Fork of the Holston River through Little Moccasin Gap to Castle's Woods. This was the most traveled route into the settlement, and it was in need of improvement.¹⁹

A second benefit from having county government closer home was better protection. In 1777, Evan Shelby, who was a colonel in the county militia, sent Captain Joseph Martin


¹⁹Washington County Minute Book I, p. 20.
with nineteen men to protect Moore’s Fort. The troops stayed there about two months.20

The soldiers were needed in Castle’s Woods because some of the men in the community were then serving with other militia units in Kentucky County. These men were able to get discharges when they learned "that the Indians had massacred seven or eight families around Castlewood."21

20 Payroll of Captain Joseph Martin’s Company Under Command of Colonel Evan Shelby, May 1—June 30, 1777, Draper MS 1XX20.

21 Pension statement of James Kincaid, November 5, 1833, in J. T. McAllister, Virginia Militia in the Revolutionary War (Hot Springs, Virginia: McAllister Publishing Company, 1913), pp. 151-152. According to local tradition and an area historian another incident occurred in 1777. As the story is told, a group of Indians led by a white renegade named Hargus made a raid on the Clinch settlements. They first attacked some forts below Castle's Woods on the Clinch River. The people at one of the forts decided to send a volunteer to Castle's Woods so that community might make preparations. Matthew Gray offered to make the trip. When Gray reached the fort at Castle’s Woods he noticed the Indians were around the fort waiting for someone to emerge. He made a quick dash through the Indians surprising them enough they were not able to attack him. The Indians had with them two young girls they had captured. They were Jane Whitaker who lived near Castle's Woods and Polly Alley who lived at Osborn's Ford. When the Indians found they could not take the fort at Castle's Woods, they traveled northward taking the girls with them. They went through the Breaks of the Cumberland, down the Big Sandy River, and eventually reached the Ohio River which they crossed on log rafts. Then they traveled to Sandusky which was the final destination of the Indians. At first the two women were closely watched but eventually the Indians grew lax and allowed them the freedom of the village. One day the two wandered off into the forest and escaped. They traveled all night and hid in a hollow log to conceal themselves during the day. Sometime later Hargus and a band of Indians caught up with them and sat down on the log in which the two women were hiding. They were very angry
John Logan, the Indian chief, again was active in the Castle's Woods area in 1778, but the local militia under the command of Captain John Snoddy was unable to catch him. Arthur Campbell, who could be quite vindictive, ordered one member of Snoddy's company, Alexander Ritchie, to be court-martialed for not pursuing Logan; however, the militia at Castle's Woods could be excused for some neglect because the men stationed in the community were residents there. They had no outside help that year. To chase Logan into the wilderness would leave their own homes vulnerable.22

About all the militia at Moore's Fort did was send out scouts who would go in groups of "twos and fours." These groups wandered far from the fort. Their job was to provide a warning of any impending attack. Each group had a particular area allotted to it. These sections extended along the Indian war paths. If no signs of Indians were seen, the

at losing the girls. In disgust, Hargus struck the log with his tomahawk. Hearing the hollow sound, he ordered one of the Indians to look in it. The Indian went to the end of the log and seeing a spider had built a web across the opening, he did not look any further. The girls were saved. After much difficulty the two were finally able to return to their homes. This story can not be validated but there is possibly an element of truth to it. See Coale, Wilburn Waters, pp. 171-176.

scouts often stayed out for a month. For this they received "5 shillings per day and spying was a good business as the state paid their spies in good money." Their food consisted of bear and venison.

During August and September the Indians were usually the most troublesome. Normally they made their last attack on the whites before the onset of winter. In good weather the settlers had to live in the forts. When the snows of winter came, the Indians would stay in their towns and the frontiersmen could return to their homes. Most of the work was done then: crops were harvested, homes repaired, land cleared, and preparations made for the next year. But when the weather turned warm in late fall and a smoky haze settled on the countryside, the frontiersmen feared for their lives. This was Indian Summer; the Indians would probably make further attacks. Such warm weather was not a happy omen.

Early in June, 1780, the Indians made an attack in the area under the supervision of Captain Snoddy. They stole several horses. Then in July, they killed a man named Dorten.

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23 Pension statement of James Fraley, June 23, 1834, National Archives, Washington.

and captured two girls named Ann and Mary Bush. They headed north toward Canada with the girls. Snoddy and the men of Moore's Fort pursued them and overtook them in what is now Floyd County, Kentucky, where the Indians were skinning a buffalo. The militia fired on the Indians who retreated to their camp where the girls were held. They tomahawked Ann Bush, but she survived. Mary was able to jump over a bank and escape. In the running battle that ensued, the Indians wounded one man from the company, James Coil. An Indian fired on him from behind a tree. The two Bush girls and Coil returned with the others to Moore's Fort where Frederick Fraley extracted the bullet from Coil, but he died anyway.25

During that same summer near Russell's Fort, Indians made an attack on Solomon Kindrick when they found him working in an open field. They pursued him into the Clinch River and shot him. The men from the fort ran out, chased the Indians away, recovered the body of Kendrick, and buried him within the walls of the fort.26

In 1780, the attention of the frontier settlers momentarily turned to the east when the militia helped to defeat the Tories in North Carolina. The lead mines in

25 Pension Statement of James Fraley; Washington County Will Book I, p. 11; Russell County Will Book B, p. 166.
26 Pension Statement of James Fraley; Washington County Will Book I, p. 38.
Montgomery County was in danger; and, in order to protect them, the militia of Washington County, along with the forces from other counties, marched southward. Several of the volunteers lived in Castle's Woods. Most of these volunteers carried Deckard rifles which were accurate at long ranges. They took with them only a few supplies such as a blanket, a cup, and some parched corn which was mixed with maple syrup. For the most part they traveled by horse.\textsuperscript{27}

This campaign ended with the famous Battle of King's Mountain which took place on Saturday, October 7, 1780. The men of Castle's Woods served under Colonel William Campbell. They reached King's Mountain after a forced march of forty-five miles in one day. The Tory forces under Major Patrick Ferguson were encamped on the mountain. Without alerting the Tories, the militia forces formed so they could attack the enemy from all sides. Regiments from Sullivan and Washington counties attacked from two sides and units from North and South Carolina completed the encirclement. The attack lasted for about an hour. During that time the Washington regiment attempted to ascend the mountain but were met by fixed bayonets. Forced to retreat, they regathered at the foot of the mountain.

of the mountain; and then with assistance from the Sullivan regiment, they drove the British back until the summit of the mountain was reached. The Tories then began to surrender. In a short time, a decisive battle was fought with only a few casualties on the patriot side. The Battle of King's Mountain eliminated the Tory threat in the Southwest and may have been a turning point in the war in the South.28

Although many of the men of Castle's Woods fought in the Battle of King's Mountain, some did not. Indeed, some favored the British rather than the American cause; not all the Tories were in the Carolinas. Those with pro-British sentiments, however, were not outspoken in Washington County because William Campbell attempted to stamp out such feelings with ruthless energy. According to tradition, he once met a man whom he suspected of being a Tory and promptly hanged him on the spot. On the other hand, William Preston had much trouble in Montgomery County where, according to his estimate, about half of the people were against independence.29

As the war dragged on, disinterest and disaffection increased. In 1778, a force of volunteers had marched from

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the Clinch and Holston Rivers to help George Rogers Clark in his campaign in Kentucky. But when they reached the Falls of the Ohio, they would go no farther and returned to their homes. By 1781, Arthur Campbell found it almost impossible to raise recruits in Washington County. This, however, partly resulted from the fact he could supply no clothing and provisions, and because the Continental money was worthless, when any pay was received. In 1780, the soldiers had not been paid. In addition to all this, the government of Virginia had not yet validated many of the land claims of the frontiersmen, and they were not interested in fighting for lands they could not claim.30

The residents had ample reason not to be interested in the fight. The British were far away and posed no threat to them, the government of Virginia had never paid much attention to them. They were quite willing to fight against the Indians for their families' lives and for their lands, but apparently they cared little for the political battles of the time.

Two citizens of Castle's Woods who were accused of not being loyal to the revolutionary cause were Samuel Porter and Henry Hamlin. According to stories handed down through

the years, Porter refused to join his neighbors when they marched to King's Mountain. In 1783 William Russell intervened in behalf of Porter by writing the governor of Virginia. He asked that Colonel Campbell be ordered to stop harrasing Porter whom Campbell charged with "adhering to the enemy" while he "was a prisoner in Detroit."31 Porter's neighbor, Henry Hamlin, another early settler in Castle's Woods, was accused of being "much attached to the Crown of Brittain during the contest."32

Both these men had suffered at the hands of the Indians who were in league with the British. Porter's home had been attacked once and Hamlin's house had twice been assaulted. The first attack on Hamlin's family came in 1781 when only his wife, Mary, and his children were home. Mary was able to bar the door and defend the house with an old musket, but the following year the Indians returned. Mary Hamlin and all except one of her children were killed.33

31 G. A. Wilson, "Oldest House in Russell County Once Sheltered Daniel Boone," MS in Russell County Library; Russell to the Governor of Virginia, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. III, p. 532.


33 Pension Statement of James Fraley; Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, pp. 365, 367. Hamlin later moved to Fort Blackmore where his second wife, also named Mary, was killed by Indians.
Hamlin evidently did not blame the British because the attackers were northern and not southern Indians.

Perhaps James Russell, the schoolteacher in Castle's Woods, could be included in the group with Porter and Hamlin. During the 1770's, Russell acted as the school master and taught the children of William Moore, Alexander Montgomery, William Kincaid, and several other men in the area. He continued in his job until Colonel Arthur Campbell accused him of being a deserter from the militia. Russell was able to clear himself of the charges, but he joined up for service with Captain John Logan in Kentucky in order to save his name. He departed in 1778. 34

To counter the many attacks on the frontier, Arthur Campbell received little help from the state government. He curtly told Colonel Davies, the commander of the Virginia military forces:

The want of money is a bad thing: but good advice from wise heads was at least expected. It is not the fault of the people our being at war with the neighbouring Savages. They have struck the first blow, and are not going to desist until the terms of war are carried to their own country. 35

34 John Snoddy to William Campbell, June 3, 1778, Moore's Fort, Deposition of William Trimble, June 4, 1778, Campbell-Preston Papers, Vol. I.

Later Campbell again wrote Davies regarding the difficult problem of protecting the frontiers since there was danger from both the Cherokee and the Shawnee tribes. A joint meeting of the militia officers from Washington and Montgomery counties, he felt, would help to solve the problem. Finally the advice of Colonel Campbell was heeded and a conference was held at the direction of Governor Harrison in late June 1782. For protection of the long frontiers of the two counties which ran for a distance of 164 miles, 200 men were allotted. Castle's Woods was given thirty men for its defense. 36

It was uncommon for Indians to attack in the middle of winter, but on Christmas Day, 1782, the home of John English, which was located on a hill near present St. Paul, was attacked. A young man named Cox was assaulted, scalped, and seriously wounded in a field near the home. The situation in Castle's Woods, especially because of the timing of the attack, so discouraged the whole settlement that the people had "generally come to a resolution to abandon the river early in Spring" unless some fort was built on the Sandy River to protect them from the invasions from the north. 37

36 Campbell to Davies, June 5, 1782; Preston to Governor Harrison, July 6, 1782, Ibid., pp. 187-188, 207-209.

As threatened, some of the people in Castle's Woods did move in 1783. They had not received the protection needed, a point well made in the spring when a group of seventeen Indians attacked Russell's Fort. All the men were out of the fort at the time and the women and children were left without defense. While approaching the fort, the Indians first found Ann Bush Neece, who had previously been captured and scalped. Again she was tomahawked. When the Indians came closer to the fort, they were discovered by Simon Oscher, Henry Dickenson, and Charles Bickley who were working at the mill which was nearby. Catching sight of each other about the same time, the two groups raced for the fort. According to tradition Bickley said, 'Boys, follow me" and ran at top speed. When the Indians stopped to fire at them, the three men were able to get into the fort through a hail of fire. Only two guns were found in the fort, but with these Dickenson and Oscher each killed an Indian. Not knowing the weakness of the fort, the Indians picked up their dead and disappeared into the woods. A Negro man, who was looking for some sheep at the time, was apparently captured by the Indians because he never was heard of again. A few hours after the attack, Ann Neece, with blood streaming from her head, was seen approaching the fort. She survived the second attack.38

38 Daniel Smith to Arthur Campbell, May 19, 1783, Arthur Campbell to Governor Harrison, April 1, 1783,
A group of men under Colonel Daniel Smith hurried to Castle's Woods when they heard of the invasion, however, they found that some local residents had already taken to the trail so they did not follow. As happened so often, the Indians were able to slip away into the forests without being seen again.39

In 1783, the American Revolution finally ended and William Russell, the leading citizen of Castle's Woods, was able to return home from the Continental army. He had enlisted in 1776 and had served first at Fort Pitt. General Washington however did not believe that Russell was an effective officer and relieved him of his command. Later Russell proved to be a better soldier. He served with Anthony Wayne in 1779 and helped capture Stony Point on the Hudson River. He spent that winter in Pennsylvania, and in 1780, he served in the South under General Lincoln. At Charleston, he was taken prisoner and held until an exchange was made. From that time until the end of the war he served as the commander of the 5th and 11th Virginia regiments. He was present at Yorktown when Cornwallis surrendered. Upon

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39 Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, p. 368.
retirement he was promoted to brigadier general, a title that he used for the rest of his life.\footnote{40}

When Russell returned to Castle's Woods, he found the community greatly changed. During the seven preceding years, he had been home but once. His wife had died in 1776 and was buried near their home. Little time passed before Russell was again taking an active role in local politics.\footnote{41}

Except for William Russell, the men of Castle's Woods did not spend the years of the Revolutionary War fighting the British regulars. Instead their enemy was the Indians, the Cherokee and Shawnee. Even then they were reluctant to fight. When they were sent to Kentucky, they quickly returned home because their homes needed protection. Their service was only short periods of time except for the Battle of King's Mountain. Not all shared the enthusiasm for the defeat of the British, and for those who served in the militia, the motive for enlisting was often a mercenary desire for "good money." Altogether the revolutionary years were a period of continued fear on the frontier - a fear that would last as long as the Indian threat.

\footnote{40}Thorp, "William Russell," pp. 36-39; Calendar of Virginia State Papers, I, p. 412; William Russell to Preston, February 25, 1780, Draper MS 5QQ19.

CHAPTER IV

THE FORMATION OF RUSSELL COUNTY

If Arthur Campbell had been able to fulfill his dreams in the 1780's, Castle's Woods would have become a part of a new western state. Campbell was unsuccessful, but William Russell was able to create a new county in Southwest Virginia and Castle's Woods became the county seat. From Castle's Woods the magistrates administered the large area and controlled the lives of the citizens.

The movement for a new county and a new state in Southwest Virginia were attempts to bring government closer to the people there. Politically the Revolution in Virginia was not far-reaching. While the royal governor had been removed and the ideal of equality had been proclaimed, the government of Virginia still rested in the hands of the aristocratic elements. Life went on largely as before.¹

The westerners chafed under this control.

Russell opposed the actions of Campbell and as early as 1783, he warned the governor that Campbell neglected his militia duties and paid "too much attention to affect a new State in this part of the country."²

¹Porter, County Government in Virginia, pp. 100, 107, 152.

²Russell to Governor Harrison, September 24, 1783, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. III, p. 532.
in this venture date back to 1781 when the Virginia assembly passed a resolution giving up its claims north of the Ohio River. Although this did not include Southwest Virginia, Arthur Campbell began to dream of a separate state composed of the five counties in Southwest Virginia and Washington and Sullivan counties in what was then North Carolina, now Tennessee. In early 1782 he called for an election of delegates to meet in Abingdon to consider the plan. Whether the proposed assembly of 1782 ever met remains a mystery, but there was such a meeting in 1783 in Abingdon. The members of that gathering petitioned the Continental Congress for a new state to be created in the West. Campbell then took his case to the people of Washington County by showing how much they paid out in taxation and yet how little they received in return from their "eastern neighbors."3

In 1784 the Congress, following a suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, adopted a resolution providing for the creation of new western states. With this development, Campbell's movement grew stronger. Then North Carolina ceded her western territory to Congress and almost instantly the

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3Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. III, pp. 414-415; Abernethy, Western Lands and the American Revolution, p. 244; Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, pp. 391, 397. Will Book I of Washington County, Virginia, has preserved in it what appears to be the rough draft of the petition which was sent to the Congress. Apparently written by Campbell, it is entitled "The Memorial of the Freemen Inhabiting the Country Westward of the Allegheny Mountains."
residents of Washington and Sullivan counties in North Carolina held a meeting and began forming the state of Franklin. Behind the scenes was Campbell who hoped to join Southwest Virginia to this new state. The leaders of Franklin asked for admission to the Confederation but no action was taken on the request.4

Unsuccessful in his early efforts, Campbell grew more adamant in his demands for admission of the new state and the separation of Southwest Virginia. He began to condemn the laws of Virginia; he attacked the governor and the council. Finally Governor Patrick Henry took action. Campbell and the other members of the Washington County Court who favored secession were removed from office, and William Russell assumed the duties of Campbell with the militia. When Russell appeared at the county court to be sworn in, Campbell was presiding. He refused to let Russell take the necessary oath. The meeting adjourned without action. Although Campbell and his followers were reinstated by an act of the General Assembly, charges and counter charges continued to be made for several years. By this time, however, Campbell had found he was unable to separate Southwest Virginia from the state and his interest in the

4Abernethy, Western Lands, pp. 203, 290, 292.
venture waned. Undoubtedly many people favored Campbell's plan because in 1787 he was again elected to the House of Delegates.5

Through the entire movement for secession, Arthur Campbell had been opposed by William Russell. Probably this difference in opinion resulted from personal animosity as much as genuine political opposition. When Russell returned from the Revolution, he soon met Elizabeth Henry Campbell, the sister of Patrick Henry and the widow of General William Campbell. William Campbell was the brother of Arthur Campbell. In 1783, Russell married Elizabeth Campbell. Russell immediately began to interest himself in the widow's financial matters. He also was a strict disciplinarian. Inter-family conflicts resulted, until eventually Arthur Campbell was able to obtain the guardianship of one of his nieces, taking her from her mother and Russell.6


In 1785, Russell and Andrew Kincannon were elected to
the House of Delegates as the representatives of Washington
County. Russell's career at the capital was not spectacular.
He proposed little and voted conservatively. His one accom­
plishment was a bill providing for a new county, a county to
be named after himself. Thus in early January, 1786, a bill
was passed which created Russell County. Undoubtedly Russell
received help from his brother-in-law Patrick Henry, and his
opposition to Arthur Campbell did not harm his cause.7

Russell County, at the time of its formation, was
quite large. It included all of extreme Southwest Virginia
excluding Washington County. Parts of all of Lee, Tazewell,
Scott, Wise, Buchanan, and Dickenson counties were later
carved from it. The county proved difficult to administer.8

As provided in the act creating the county, the first
meeting of the county court was held at the home of William
Robinson on May 9, 1786. Castle's Woods had become the
county seat of Russell County. The members of the court,
as appointed by Governor Patrick Henry, were Alexander
Barnett, Henry Smith, David Ward, Andrew Cowan, Samuel
Ritchie, Thomas Carter, Henry Dickenson, and John Thompson.

7Journal of the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth
XII, pp. 110-111; Summers, History of Southwest Virginia,

8Hening, Statutes, Vol. XII, pp. 110-111.
Within the first year others were added. They were Charles Bickley, Richard Price, William Martin, Christopher Cooper, James Wharton, John Frazer, Charles Cocke, John Tate, and John Bowen.\(^9\)

The major county offices were filled by appointees of the governor. David Ward became sheriff; Henry Dickenson assumed the duties of county clerk; Alexander Barnett was county lieutenant; and Henry Smith became county surveyor. The constable appointed for Castle's Woods was James Alley. Many of these people appointed to county jobs were from Castle's Woods.\(^10\)

According to present standards, the governing of Russell County was not highly democratic. Only male citizens, over twenty-one years of age, who owned at least twenty-five acres of land could vote. Voting was required by law. Since almost all the men of the farming community owned land, there was not much concern about the property qualification. But the only officials they could elect were the members of the General Assembly. All other positions were filled by appointment.\(^11\) However, if democracy means rule by the common man, then Russell County was democratic.

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\(^9\)Ibid.; Russell County Law Order Book I.

\(^10\)Law Order Book I, pp. 1, 2, 8.

The office holders were farmers or craftsmen, none of whom possessed great wealth or aristocratic positions in the community.

The county court of Russell met on the third Tuesday of each month. On the meeting days in April, June, September, and November the justices sat as a Court of the Quarterly Sessions. On those occasions they heard cases which required a jury. The members of the court served without pay and held office during good behavior. Although they were appointed by the governor, the appointment was usually made on the recommendation of the court itself. The title of the members of the court was officially "justice of the peace" but by the time Russell County came into existence, the title was gradually changing to "magistrate" and eventually this term was more commonly used.12

Assisting the county court in the performance of its duties were the sheriff, the county clerk and the county lieutenant.

The county lieutenant was responsible for the maintenance of the militia and conducting war against the Indians. Control of the militia was divided between the county and the state with the state exercising a

greater amount of control. The county lieutenant received a salary.\textsuperscript{13}

The duties of the sheriff were largely those of a sheriff of the twentieth century. He executed orders of the court; he arrested criminals; he collected fines and performed other similar duties. His income came entirely from fees that he charged including those for keeping prisoners in jail.\textsuperscript{14}

The clerk of the court held the most important position in the county. He kept his position indefinitely and the court had, in this case, the full power of appointment. In addition to keeping the proceedings of the meetings of the court, he maintained records of wills and deeds, issued marriage licenses, and was usually the local authority on law. The clerk was often retained in office for many years; for example, Henry Dickenson served from 1786 to 1818. The clerk was required to maintain an office at the court house and was paid in fees.\textsuperscript{15}

The first year of operation of Russell County was a busy one. It is typical of the years that followed. The


\textsuperscript{14}Porter, County Government, pp. 62, 68, 122, 185.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., pp. 186, 187, 188, 122, 123.
court concerned itself with problems of the county and handled them effectively.

Bastardy, considering the sparse population, was a frequent problem. Frances Kind was the first to be tried on a charge of murder in the county; she was accused of killing her "base born child," but the charges against her were dismissed. The bastard child of Prudence Peppers was taken from her and placed in the home of a local family while Mary Culverson, Prudence Osbourn, and Abigail Beavers were all charged with bearing illegitimate children. For her transgression, Mary Culverson was fined one pound Virginia money and 180 pounds of tobacco. No charges were made against the men involved.16

Other criminal cases heard by the court during the first year of operation indicate the frontier was not only lustly but rough and active. Patrick Porter, in a number of cases, was accused of trespassing, assault, battery, harboring horse thieves, profanity, drinking on the Sabbath, breaking the Sabbath, and false swearing. On most of these charges he was declared innocent but was found guilty and fined for gouging out the eye of a man named Macintosh. Porter, however, had no monopoly on rowdiness. Others were charged with such misdeeds as

16 Law Order Book I, pp. 10, 15, 16, 34.
stealing horses, playing cards, "breaking open a letter," trading on the Sabbath, selling liquor on Sunday, and selling bad corn liquor. 17

The selling of whiskey was regulated by the county court. Licenses had to be obtained and prices were strictly regulated by the magistrates. Rum was sold for one pound per gallon, a gallon of whiskey cost only ten shillings, while the same amount of cider could be purchased for two shillings and sixpence. A warm meal for the traveler was one shilling and threepence, while he could sleep in a bed (not necessarily alone) with clean sheets on it for only sixpence. He could pasture his horse for the same fee. Business practices, and individual behavior, were governed quite strictly. 18

The court also helped individuals. Occasionally pensions were provided for those injured in military service. The court took care of orphaned and illegitimate children by placing them in homes. On a number of occasions, individuals were exempted from paying taxes because of their age or health. In addition, bounties were paid for the killing of wolves, and many wolves were killed. The bounty

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17 Ibid., pp. 10, 18, 22, 23, 24, 33, 44.
18 Ibid., p. 64.
for a wolf was either 100 pounds of tobacco or twelve shillings and sixpence.19

Taxation raised the money necessary for the operation of the county government. The most common tax was the tithe, a head tax, which varied each year depending on the action of the General Assembly. The tax on each tithable in 1786 was three shillings and for 1787 it was two shillings. In the following years, the amount remained about the same.20

William Robinson's cabin was never intended to be more than a temporary meeting place for the county officials. After a short time the magistrates looked for a more proper building in which to meet. The first time the subject was discussed, David Calhoun's house was suggested, but some members would not accept that place. Later William Robinson offered to build a court house and to give the fifty acres of land which was required by the state, but the county court preferred to accept a similar offer by Henry Dickenson. On a sixty-two acre tract of land, Henry Dickenson proceeded to build a court house "20 feet wide and 24 feet long, floored above and below."21 The last session was held at Robinson's

19Ibid., Vol. I, II, III.

20Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 4, 85; Porter, County Government, p. 80, 125.

21Law Order Book I, pp. 21, 39, 64; Russell County Deed Book I, p. 120.
house on September 28, 1787 and the following day the new courthouse was used for the first time.

The courthouse was located adjacent to Henry Dickenson's cabin in what is now Dickensonville. The decision to place the courthouse there was probably influenced by the fact that, as clerk of the court, Dickenson had to be present at all times. To supplement his income, Dickenson was allowed to keep a retail store in the building and by 1790 he was operating a tavern there. For sweeping out the building, Dickenson received about one pound per year.22

Before many months had passed, a jail was constructed near the courthouse. The lower room of the building was lined with two inch planks which were "all around nailed on with half crown nails in diamonds not above eight inches apart." Three strong padlocks on the door secured the prisoners inside. Outside the jail were the stocks in which the prisoners were placed for public punishment.23

The county magistrates had hopes that the area around the courthouse would develop into a town. Impressive plans were laid out and the area was divided into lots of half acre size. Development, however, never materialized.24

22Law Order Book I, pp. 96, 216, 251; Deed Book I, p. 120.

23Law Order Book I, pp. 102, 198, 215, 217, 218; 220.

24Ibid., p. 123; Deed Book I, p. 217.
Although Castle's Woods became the county seat of a new county in the 1780's, the citizens were still not safe from attack by the Indians. The first attack after the Revolution occurred far out on the frontier in what is now Lee County; as a result, one of the most extraordinary individual adventures on the Southwest Virginia frontier took place. The incident involved Fanny Dickenson, the sister of Henry Dickenson, who had married Archibald Scott and had moved with him to his land. The event was reported in the newspapers of the time.

The incident began on the night of June 29, 1785. The Scott family, because there were many travelers in the area, relaxed and did not concern themselves about an Indian attack and left their cabin door open. As the family was preparing for bed, a group of Indians bounded through the door. Scott jumped from his bed and ran for the door. He was shot. A few paces outside the door he died. One of the Indians seized Fanny while others stabbed and cut the throats of the three youngest children. Then they smashed them on the floor in front of their mother. The oldest child, a girl about eight years of age, ran to her mother for protection, but the Indians beat her and stabbed her to death while her mother still clung to her.

Next door to the Scott home lived the Balls. They were attacked at the same time, but they were able to bar the door and only one person, a young boy, was killed.
The Indians took what they could find of value in the Scott home and disappeared into the night taking with them Mrs. Scott. Since no one expected her to return, the household goods of the family were soon sold at a public auction, including "sundry women's clothes."\(^\text{25}\)

But Fanny Dickenson, as she is still called in Castle's Woods, was not dead as the officials supposed. Fanny was taken north at a fast pace. She barely was able to keep up with the Indians who ridiculed her when she panted for breath. Her condition was aggravated by the sight of her husband's and children's scalps that dangled from the back of the brave who preceded her on the trail.

After traveling for eleven days, the Indians stopped to kill some deer. Fanny was guarded by an old man. While he was dressing a deer skin, she escaped.

Although Fanny Dickenson knew nothing about finding her way through the woods, she headed in what she thought was the direction of the Clinch settlements. Fortunately she was correct. Contemporary accounts tell of her following various rivers until she eventually reached the Breaks of the Cumberland. Apparently the Indians did not pursue her except for the first day but she remained alert lest they recapture her. At the Breaks of the Cumberland she climbed the walls.

\(^{25}\) Washington County Will Book I, p. 111.
of the river valley until she reached a spot where she could go no farther because the sheer precipice dropped for fifteen or twenty feet. She jumped. And though she landed on rough broken rocks, she was only stunned. After that she continued by traveling in the water of the river. Later Fanny left the river and reached a place where the valley which she was following parted. According to the story which she told, she did not know which way to go until a bird lit at her feet and fluttered along one of the footpaths. Taking this as an omen she headed in the direction the bird had gone; and two days later she reached the settlement of New Garden.

For one month Fanny Dickenson had been traveling with no food except berries, leaves, and the juice of cane stalks. She was nursed back to health by the George Musick family in New Garden. They returned her to her home, Castle's Woods, where she lived with her brother. Later she married a man named Thomas Johnson, for whom Johnson County, Tennessee, is named; but her health was poor and she died in Castle's Wood: in 1796.26

26 Arthur Campbell to Governor Henry, July 5, 1785, Calendar of State Papers, Vol. IV, p. 40; The Freeman's Journal: or, The North-American Intelligencer, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, December 14, 1785; New Haven (Connecticut) Gazette, December 29, 1785; Arthur Bradman, A Narrative of the Extraordinary Sufferings of Mr. Robert Forbes, his Wife, and Five Children; During an Unfortunate Journey through the Wilderness, from Canada to Kennebeck River, in the Year 1785
The next Indian attack occurred in Castle's Woods. On March 8, 1787, Indians suddenly burst into the home of John English who lived on a lonely hill above the Clinch River. The English family had survived a previous attack, but this time the Indians killed Molly English and her two little boys.

Some officials blamed the Cherokee for the attack while others thought the Shawnee were responsible. Alexander Barnett, the county lieutenant, found that he had a difficult job. Russell County was large, and the Indians were impossible to control. Several pleas were made to the governor for more adequate protection, but the government of Virginia never did enough to please the settlers on the frontier.27


While the Indians were one reminder that the citizens of Castle's Woods still lived on the frontier, the people only had to look at the meager furnishings of their log cabins and their clothing to realize how far they were from the genteel cities of the East.

When Humphrey Dickenson was killed, his household goods included a loom, two bedsteads, a linenwheel, wooden dishes, a tea kettle, and a trunk. Samuel Cowan was even poorer; he owned, according to an inventory of his property, only "one quantity puter, two razors, one candle stick, and one pot." When Jonathan Prater could not pay his debts to Henry Smith, Smith seized his goods. They included "2 old pots, 1 Dutch oven, 2 noggins [small mugs], 1 buckett, 1 feather bed, 3 baggs of meal, and 2 chairs." Most of the settlers, except for the few people like the Russells, owned little more.28

The food of the settlers was as sparse and plain as the furnishings of their cabins. For the most part, they ate "hog and hominy" with corn pone. For supper, milk and mush was sometimes served but because milk was often scarce, the frontiersmen frequently substituted hominy for the night meal. Sometimes the mush was eaten with sweetened water,

molasses, bear's oil, or gravy. In season, their diet was supplemented with the vegetables they raised such as pumpkins, squash, beans, and potatoes. Meat was never much of a problem, and they enjoyed venison and bear meat as well as pork. To a large extent, their food was that which they could raise or kill.  

The clothing of the people of Castle's Woods reflected the environment in which they lived. At first the hunting shirt was the usual attire for the men. This was a loose outfit which reached half way down the thighs. It had large sleeves and was fringed with ravelled pieces of cloth of a different color from the shirt for contrast. On the bottom of the shirt was a large pouch-like pocket. The shirt was made of linsey, linen, or deer skin. A belt was used to carry mittens, a bullet bag, a tomahawk, and a scalping knife. A shirt, jacket, trousers, and leggings completed the frontiersman's dress. Usually the men wore moccasins even though they were of little comfort in wet weather since they tended to soak up the water. In later years the men began to wear overalls which indicated the changing conditions.

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29 Doddridge, Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars, p. 218. Doddridge once served as a Methodist preacher in Southwest Virginia.

30 Ibid., pp. 220-222. When Solomon Kindrick was killed by the Indians, he owned the following: "2 coats,
The women dressed quite simply also. A linsey gown, spun, dyed, and designed by the wearer, was topped off by a sun bonnet. On their feet the women wore moccasins or coarse shoes. In the summer they normally went barefooted.

The hunting shirts, dresses, nightshirts, and other articles of clothing were unashamedly hung on pegs around the walls of the cabins to announce the wealth of the family. Of what little they had, the frontiersmen were immensely proud.31

Work was hard on the frontier, and besides the large families which were common, many of the men of Castle's Woods had slaves or indentured servants. Some of those with slaves were the Russells, Bickleys, and Dickenson, but there was never a large number of slaves in the community.32 Slaves were costly. On the other hand, indentured servants cost nothing. Few, if any, of the servants of Castle's Woods came from Europe. Instead they were the sons and daughters of men and women who

4 pair drawers, a hunting shirt, 3 shirts, and silver buckles.” See Washington County Will Book I, p. 38. In 1797, Spencer Breeding was accused of stealing four shirts, one pair of overalls and one small apron. See Law Order Book I, p. 411.

31Doddridge, Notes, pp. 220-222; Coale, Wilburn Waters, pp. 169-170.

32The census of 1790 lists only 190 slaves in Russell County.
who died or were killed on the frontier -- or they were the illegitimate offsprings of local women. The court took such people under its care and placed them in a home. The child remained apprenticed to his master until the age of twenty-one. He was expected to serve faithfully and "not commit fornication nor contract matrimony during the said term, he shall not play at cards, dice or any unlawful game." In return for this, the master had to supply "sufficient meat, drink, washing, lodging, and apparel during the term" and upon completion of the apprenticeship, the master had to give him "freedom dues" similar to those of indentured servants from Europe. The arrangement was very satisfactory to the master; he got extra hands which he provided for as he would a child. He was assured the assistance of the servant until the servant reached twenty-one, which was something the master could not always expect from his own children. Some of those apprenticed in this fashion were Baugh Smith, a mulatto, to Samuel Porter; Jeffrey Hughes to Frederick Fraley, Mary Morgan Jones to James Dickenson; Luke Burk to William Robinson. The popularity of this system can be demonstrated by the fact that some families had several such servants.

33Washington County Will Book I, pp. 88-89.
34Ibid., p. 105.
During the 1780's, Castle's Woods almost became a part of another state; it did become the seat of the newly formed Russell County, and although William Russell departed from the community, other important residents worked at making the county a success. The officials carefully regulated the personal lives of the citizens whose existences, as a result of the frontier conditions, were plain and unromantic, but they worked at overcoming their environment and slowly they achieved a more comfortable life.
CHAPTER V

THE END OF THE CENTURY

During the last decade of the eighteenth century Castle's Woods changed a great deal. The Indians ceased to attack; preachers brought religion to the community; a group of Frenchmen started a settlement; and the frontier moved westward. When the century ended, Castle's Woods was a quiet community of farmers.

At the beginning of the 1790's, Russell County had a population of only 3338 persons. Of this number 1703 were free white males and 1440 were free white females. Five other free persons, evidently Negroes, and 190 slaves completed the total. For the most part the people resided in clusters scattered through the county at such places as Rye Cove, Blackmore's Fort, and Castle's Woods.¹

Because the number of citizens was still small the Indians continued their attacks throughout the early part of the decade. The citizens of Castle's Woods became fearful of attacks in 1790 when Henry Smith, the county

lieutenant, advised them that a woman who had just returned from captivity reported that the Indians planned to bring four hundred warriors to attack the Clinch settlements. As a result the men of the county refused to serve in the militia. Rather than expose their families, they preferred to submit to a fine. They remembered that in the fall of 1789 a man near the county line was killed while hunting his horses. According to Smith, the "Indians cut him into small pieces; cut out his guts and strung them on the bushes; cut out his heart & flung it against the ground with such violence that it covered itself in the soil." Such incidents caused great anxiety among the frontiersmen over the safety of their families.

In 1790, the dreaded attack fell on Castle's Woods. According to recollections of whose who lived through the attack and the tradition which has been handed down, a group of Shawnee Indians attacked the home of Thomas Osborne on a foggy morning. Finding some of his cattle missing, Osborne sent a servant to look for them. When the servant reached a nearby hill, the fog lifted and he was able to see a group of Indians approaching the house. It was too late to warn the family, so he dropped to the ground and observed what

happened. When Thomas Osborne heard the Indians approaching, he went to the door where he was instantly shot. Lucretia Osborne, a niece of Thomas, ran from the house toward her own home. She was captured in a cornfield. The Shawnee then forced Lucretia, Minnie Osborne, the wife of Thomas, and Betsy Walls, another servant, to accompany them. After traveling a short distance, they found that Minnie was slightly crippled. They tomahawked her on the spot. After taking her scalp they hurried on their way northward.

When the Shawnee had departed, the neighbors buried Thomas and Minnie Osborne in the same coffin. They did not expect to see the two captured girls again; but four years later Lucretia Osborne returned. She told the residents of the community that the Indians killed Betsey Walls by beating her on the head. The Shawnee took Lucretia to Canada where she remained until she was exchanged for Indian prisoners. She then went to Detroit where she met and married a man by the name of Armstrong who brought her back to Castle's Woods.3

Such atrocities greatly disturbed the citizens of Castle's Woods. Demands for protection were made on the governor who shifted the responsibility to the federal

3Pension Statement of James Fraley; interview with Mrs. Russell Harmon, October, 1965. Mrs Harmon lives where the Osbornes lived. Both stories are essentially the same.
government. The national government had been supplying scouts for the counties of Kentucky. In 1790, this service was extended to Russell County as a temporary measure; the Secretary of War wrote the governor that the state legislature should take appropriate action to provide permanent protection. The same year, Simon Cockrell suggested to the governor that twenty men should be stationed at Castle's Woods but the governor did not take action until 1791. Then the militia officers were told to employ volunteers to help guard the counties of Russell, and Montgomery. The needed men, however, were difficult to recruit. Eventually they were enticed with one month's advance pay. The number of men supplied in this manner was insufficient to satisfy the frontiersmen. The residents of Russell County wished to "have men at every House, and there is not a House in it [the county] that is not a Frontier." In 1792, the militia officers in Southwest Virginia prepared for a visit from the governor, but there is no evidence that the proposed inspection trip was ever made. The lack of concern on the part of the state executive caused Andrew Lewis to write to him in 1793:

<ref>
Andrew Lewis to the Governor, April 27, 1792, Secretary of War Knox to Governor Randolph, June 10, 1790, Simon Cockrell to the Executive of Virginia, 1791, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. V, pp. 509, 167. 418.
</ref>
For God's sake put us in a situation not only to defend ourselves, but to act in any other capacity that your Excellency may require otherwise the country will be left inhabited only by your few soldiers that are compelled by honor & duty to stand their ground.⁵

Although the people of the county complained about the lack of protection, they stated in a petition in 1795 that the volunteers had helped greatly. They asked for reinstatement of the system which had been discontinued in 1794. This, however, was their last request for assistance. The Indian problems were over by that date.⁶

Meanwhile the magistrates continued to be concerned with other problems of the county. Roads, retail rates, county buildings, and especially law breakers were their major concerns. The meetings of the court were busy and spirited. On several occasions, members of the audience were sent to the jail for ten minutes for disturbing the meetings.

By 1792, the court began to use dollars instead of pounds in quoting prices and values. Thus, in 1795, a warm dinner in an "ordinary," or tavern, cost 25 cents,


breakfast was 18 cents, a half pint of whiskey was 9 cents, quart of cider was also 9 cents, and one could lodge overnight "between clean sheets" for the same price. The cost of leaving a horse in the stable was 18 cents. If the guest preferred rum to whiskey, he had to pay 27 cents for a half pint.7

The job of governing Russell County was made somewhat easier in 1792 when Lee County was formed from much of the extreme portion of Southwest Virginia. The new county included present Lee County and parts of present Scott and Wise counties. The first meeting of the justices of the new county was held in early 1793 at the home of Isaac Crisman. Russell County, as a result, was much smaller and no longer the westernmost county in Virginia.8

The county jail in Russell County, although well built needed repairs by 1792. Henry Dickenson and Christopher Cooper, two of the justices, investigated the jail and reported that it was "not sufficient in neither room."9 Therefore the court ordered that new locks be obtained, the logs "fixed in as good a condition as when the building was erected," and the inside paneling torn off and replaced.

9 Law Order Book II, p. 22.
When the jail was again inspected, Dickenson and Cooper were not satisfied with the job. Richard Price was given the job of completing the work, but by 1794, Charles Bickley, who became sheriff that year, reported that the jail was still "not sufficient." Nevertheless, no further changes were made.  

The justices also made repairs to the court house in 1793. They believed the structure should be "better and more convenient than the courthouse of Washington was at the time that county was divided." They ordered Henry Dickenson to make a "good and convenient bar" for the lawyers, seats for the jurors, boxes for the sheriffs, windows on each side, a "substantial upper floor and a good pair of stairs."  

The county officials refused to establish a system of public schools in 1797. The General Assembly passed in 1796 an act providing for public education; the statute, largely the result of efforts of Thomas Jefferson, called for each county court to set a date for the election of aldermen. The county court of Russell, like the courts in every county except Norfolk, nullified the measure by never naming a year for such an election. They simply

10Ibid., pp. 25, 59, 73, 172, 173.
11Ibid., p. 82.
12Ibid.
dismissed it by saying they were "of opinion that it is not expected that an election for aldermen should be held in the present year."\textsuperscript{13} The matter was not broached again in the eighteenth century and public education did not come until the Reconstruction era.

Criminal cases heard before the court in 1790's took on more of a moralistic tone than they had earlier. Charges in one session, June 10, 1794, are revealing. Individuals were charged with selling liquor without a license, retailing beer without a license, fishing on Sunday, trading on Sunday, Sabbath breaking, and gambling.\textsuperscript{14}

Perhaps the increased interest in the regulation of personal behavior by the county court resulted from the religious revolution that was then beginning on the frontier. As the frontier progressed westward, the established church lagged further and further behind. Normally a parish was formed when a county was established, but by the time counties were created in Southwest Virginia, the church no longer kept pace. Many areas were churchless. Into this void came the Presbyterians, the Baptists, and then


\textsuperscript{14}Law Order Book II, pp. 148-149.
the Methodists, the group that ultimately influenced the Southwest Virginia frontier the most.  

The Presbyterian ministers generally went only where they were called. Communities with strong Scotch-Irish elements, such as Abingdon, had Presbyterian ministers; however, the Presbyterians were not a strong factor in Castle's Woods.

The Baptists came to Castle's Woods quite early. "Brick Church," which is today a union church of Baptists and Methodists, sprang from the original Baptist church in the community. It was apparently started in 1774 or 1775 by Squire Boone who occasionally preached in the Baptist church. Squire Boone lived at Castle's Woods during the same period that Daniel Boone, his brother, lived there. Some present residents attribute the founding of the church to Daniel Boone but there is no evidence that he ever did any preaching, or for that matter, was very religious. The church apparently was called the Clinch River Church. When trouble with the Indians began, possibly during the

Revolution, the church was disbanded temporarily and later reorganized; but when a church was formed at Glade Hollow in 1788, the Castle’s Woods church again ceased to exist. In 1806, the church was again formed through the efforts of Edward Kelley and W. Wilson. The fifty-one members were ministered to by D. Jessee. The church has continued since.¹⁶

With no Anglican, Presbyterian, or regular Baptist ministers, the community was a good target for the Methodists who sent their circuit riders into the area. These men of zeal had a great effect on Castle’s Woods and other frontier settlements. Their ability to move with the frontier, their freedom from ritual, their emotional preaching and their large meetings were peculiarly suited to the rugged people of the frontier. Regular circuit work began in Southwest Virginia in 1783 with the formation of Holston Circuit.

¹⁶Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptist in Virginia, revised and extended by G. W. Peale (Richmond: Pitt and Dickinson, Publishers, 1894), pp. 358, 361, 363. This book was originally published in 1810. See also: Johnson, A History of the Middle New River Settlements, p. 40; Spraker, The Boone Family, p. 76; Mrs. W. S. Banner, “The History of the Brick Church,” MS in Russell County Library; Vera Duff Gilmer, “Squire Boone and Castlewood Baptist Church,” MS in Russell County Library. The minutes from October, 1823, through June, 1858, were copied by E. J. Sutherland and are preserved in the state library in Richmond. The church throughout the 1800’s admitted both Negro and white members.
Progress in the first few years was slow; then in 1788 a dramatic event at the first Methodist Conference in the Holston Circuit gave great impetus to the cause. Until that time Methodism had appealed largely to the poor and the illiterate. The meeting was held at Keywood which was near the salt works where General Russell and his second wife lived. At the conclusion of a sermon preached by John Tunnell, Mrs. Russell approached the minister exclaiming that she was "the veriest sinner upon earth." She then invited the preacher to her home. After a number of hours of praying with the preachers and her husband, Elizabeth Russell was converted. Eventually the general was also "saved," and, as a result, many others were brought into the Methodist church. Their actions made Methodism respectable in Southwest Virginia.

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18 Thomas Ware, Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware, Who Has Been an Itinerant Methodist Preacher for More than Fifty Years (New York: T. Mason and G. Land, 1839), p. 152.

19 Ibid., pp. 151-153; Price, Holston Methodism, Vol. I, pp. 130-132. General Russell lived at the salt works, now Saltville until 1792 when he traveled east to visit one of his sons. He died near Front Royal where he was buried. In 1943 he was reburied in Arlington National Cemetery. See: Elizabeth Y. Russell, "Brigadier General William Russell of Virginia, Revolutionary Soldier," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography LII (October, 1944), pp. 267-272.
The first Methodist society was formed in Castle's Woods in 1786 by Mark Whitaker, a preacher appointed by the Holston Circuit. He lived in the community. Whitaker traveled all over Southwest Virginia and parts of East Tennessee. The historian of the Holston Conference of the Methodist Church said Whitaker was one of the "most substantial and practical preachers of his time." In 1791, he was appointed elder of a district which stretched from Tennessee to the Atlantic Ocean. Eventually he "wore himself out in his work" and died at his home in Castle's Woods.\(^{20}\)

In 1790, Francis Asbury and Richard Whatcoat, two of the most famous Methodist leaders, visited the community. These two men traveled throughout the United States spreading the Methodist faith. They reached Castle's Woods on Wednesday, the 28th of April, 1790, after traveling over 2600 miles in eighteen weeks. They stayed at Charles Bickley's tavern where Bishop Asbury preached to about seventy people; and although they were told that nothing could be sold in Castle's Woods but whiskey, they were able to sell two magazines and several hymn book. The next day they moved on westward stopping at James 'and's (or Osborne's)

where another sermon was preached to about the same number of people. At that meeting, John Alley and Mary Porter were married. Bishop Whatcoat was amazed that although the people lived in jeopardy every day, they seemed to have "no more religion than the savages."  

On a brief visit to Castle's Woods in April, 1795, Bishop Asbury spent a night at the home of Mark Whitaker, the local minister. Revealing his opposition to the marriage of Methodist preachers, Asbury wrote of Whitaker in his journal: "I wish his wife may not love him to death."  

The next time Asbury visited Castle's Woods was in May, 1796. Fleeing from Presbyterian Abingdon, he reported that he felt as if he were escaping from a prison. When the bishop reached the Russell County courthouse, a congregation of about two hundred people were waiting, witnesses to the success of the Methodist mission. Although he had a headache and a fever he preached to them that day and again on the next day, Sunday, May 8th. At the Sunday service he offered a prayer for Fanny Dickenson who had just died. The next day Asbury went on to Charles Bickley's where he preached to 

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22 Asbury, Journals, II, p. 48
a few insensible people." The following Saturday he passed by the county courthouse on his way to Bickley's again but because of a violent thunderstorm had to find shelter in a cabin along the road. He did not continue his trip.

Bishop Asbury's final visit to Castle's Woods was made in 1801. He remarked:

We rode to Castle's Woods. I was amazed at the goodness of the Lord to this western country generally; and was surprised and gratified to observe the improvements made in Russell County particularly.

In the years since he had made his first trip, Asbury noted a physical change in the countryside; but, no doubt, his opinion was colored by the influence of his Methodist movement in the community.

By 1800 the residents of Castle's Woods, as well as Bishop Asbury, had noticed many changes. Many of these changes resulted from their work at bringing the frontier under their control; some of the changes resulted from the great movements of the nation such as the Revolution; but perhaps the greatest change in the community was the arrival of a group of French immigrants who established the settlement of Saint Marie on the Clinch.

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23 Ibid., pp. 84-85.
24 Ibid., p. 87.
25 Ibid., p. 306.
The leader of the settlement was François Pierre De Tubeuf, a nobleman who fled his homeland because of the French Revolution. De Tubeuf originally lived in Arcens, in Normandy. When the French peasants revolted and threatened to destroy the property and lives of the nobles, De Tubeuf sought refuge in America. He communicated with Richard Smith, a London speculator who had obtained grants of land in Russell County amounting to 343,000 acres through his agent Henry Smith, a county surveyor. Richard Smith went to Paris where a transaction was made in 1790. De Tubeuf purchased from Smith, 55,000 acres for the price of nine livres tournois per acre.26

Having secured land in America De Tubeuf obtained a safe conduct from Louis XVI. He left France in May, 1791, on the ship La Petite Nanette which was headed for Virginia. The safe conduct, or passport, issued to De Tubeuf was also good for his sons, his niece, and five

26 Deposition of Victoria Laporte, September 3, 1859, Interstate Coal and Iron Company v. Clintwood Coal and Timber Company, et al., heard in the Supreme Court of Virginia at Wytheville, June, 1905. Several depositions in this case were taken from previous cases involving land titles. The persons making the depositions lived in Castle's Woods in the 1790's. See also: Elihu Jasper Sutherland, Some Sandy Basin Characters (Clintwood, Virginia: 1962), pp. 190-191; Russell County Law Order Book II, p. 174. Some writers refer to the Frenchman as a count while others say he was a baron.
servants; however, according to Captain Pitalugo who commanded the ship, only four servants accompanied him on the voyage.27

When De Tubeuf reached Virginia, he persuaded the Virginia legislature in December, 1791, to agree to build a road from the courthouse to his settlement at the expense of the state. He also secured a loan of 600 pounds from the state in order to complete the settlement of his land.28

By January, De Tubeuf and several immigrants reached Castle's Woods. At the courthouse, they executed a bond for the 600 pounds. Others held responsible for the repayment were Louisa Duchesne, Charles De Spada, Cesar Lefebre, Eusebe Delaplanche, and Simon Perchet. Not too confident in its own money, the Virginia legislature required repayment in two thousand Spanish milled dollars or the same value in gold or silver coin. Payment was required by January 1, 1799.29

De Tubeuf settled in the home of John English. English, who had suffered two Indian attacks, the last of

27 The safe conduct is recorded in French and English in Washington County Will Book II, p. 62.
which resulted in the deaths of his wife and children, apparently deserted his home or gave it up to De Tubeuf with the understanding that he would be paid in the future. The huge tract of land which De Tubeuf had purchased joined the English property.30

Baron De Tubeuf was warmly appreciative of the aid given him by the state of Virginia. He had reason to be. By the fall of 1792, he had received his 600 pound loan, the road from the courthouse to his home had been finished at state expense, and a group of six soldiers had been stationed near his home protecting him from the Indians. Not all the Frenchmen, however, liked the frontier as well as De Tubeuf and the "greatest part" of his companions abandoned him, but still he was optimistic. The soil and climate were good, his claims were valid, and his settlement had not been molested by the Indians. He expected more immigrants to join his group. In writing to the governor and council he stated:

Frenchmen informed of what you have done for us since our arrival here, and of the last precautions which I hope you will take, will know that they will find here another native country--that to a Frenchman, an American is a brother, a friend, and that in a free county

30 Depositions of Johathan Osburn and John Bickley, October, 1859, Interstate Coal v. Clintwood Coal; Deed Book III, pp. 34-35, 38.
a foreigner is not distinguished by a greater kindness and regard for him. As for me, Gentlemen, my respect and respectful attachment will last as long as my life.31

By August, 1793, De Tubeuf became more optimistic. He was still safe from the savages, and his youngest son and two French families had joined him at his settlement which he named Saint Marie on the Clinch. In addition, many other, mostly friends and relations, were expected. He also hoped to encourage migration of many Frenchmen who were then political refugees in Norfolk.32

Despite the fact that none of the Frenchmen "could speak plain English."33 the French families seemed to get along with the other people living in Castle's Woods. The only local squabble in which De Tubeuf was involved was a minor argument over a heifer which was detained by a neighbor in 1795.34

De Tubeuf had great dreams of a large French settlement on his lands, but the dreams of Saint Marie on the Clinch suddenly ended with his murder. On election day in

31 De Tubeuf to Governor and Council, October 29, 1792, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. VI, p. 112.
32 De Tubeuf to the Governor, August 16, 1793, Ibid., p. 484.
33 Deposition of David Osbourn, Interstate Coal v. Clintwood Coal.
34 Law Order Book II, p. 198.
the spring of 1795, two men by the names of Richard Barrow and John Brown visited De Tubeuf. They were invited to dinner. After the meal was finished, they lingered about in no hurry to leave. Suddenly Brown struck De Tubeuf on the back of his head with his gun barrel. The old man fell to the floor where he soon died. Then the men attacked Louisa Duchesne, the niece of the baron, and Alexander De Tubeuf, one of his sons. Both were seriously wounded. A maid hurried from the house to secure help from the neighbors, but she was drowned trying to cross the Clinch River. The murderers then robbed the house and took many valuable goods.35

Brown and Barrow escaped but three others, James Best, Aaron Roberts, and Obediah Paine were arrested as accomplices. They were taken to the district jail in Abingdon to await trial. They escaped but were recaptured and were eventually brought to trial.36

The people of the community were very much interested in the punishment of Brown and Barrow who had escaped to the


Illinois territory. Subsequently a reward of five hundred dollars was offered for their arrest, and James McFarlane and James Ward were appointed by Governor Brooke to seek the murderers. These two were able to apprehend Brown and Barrow at New Design in Illinois in May, 1796, but they escaped again never to be brought to justice.37

Slowly the settlement of Saint Marie on the Clinch disintegrated. De Tubeuf’s sons sought to carry on their father’s work but were too much in debt. A relative, James Campbell, who was a lawyer in Petersburg, was given power of attorney by them and they moved to Norfolk. Despite two acts of the legislature putting off the payment of the debt, they were unable to repay the loan which had been made to their father. They believed that the land, which was worth many times the value of the loan, should be adequate as security and that it should not be foreclosed. Finally the two sons of De Tubeuf gave up their claim and returned to Europe in 1803. About fifty years later the lands were sold by the state.38


With the immense lands left vacant and the debt left unpaid, legal difficulties were sure to occur. Eventually accurate surveys revealed that the "French Lands," as they are still called, actually covered about 150,000 acres. Because of conflicting claims and the fact that the estate lay on substantial deposits of coal, more lawsuits have been fought over the claim than any other property in Southwest Virginia.  

The 1790's were a decade of change in Castle's Woods. The Indians stopped their raids. As a result, the citizens of the community were able to establish a more stable society. Methodism flourished. But the murder of De Tubeuf revealed that violence had not disappeared with the Indians. The magistrates, however, wanted and got another change, a new courthouse. It was a good building. Constructed of stone, the courthouse had two floors. Each floor had two rooms. The court room was complete with a gallery, a bench, a bar, boxes for the sheriff, and seats for the jurors. The cost of the building was $2188.97, and it was first used in October, 1799, just before the end of the century. Considering the time and place it was an impressive structure. It still stands today.

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39 Sutherland, Some Sandy Basin Characters, pp. 192, 220-224.

40 Law Order Book II, p. 434; Affidavit of E. F. Hargis, Clerk of Circuit Court, January 3, 1938, a copy of affidavit in Russell County Library; Vera Duff Gilmer, "Early Court Houses in Russell County," MS in Russell County Library.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

With the passing of the frontier period, Castle's Woods ceased to be of great importance. When the courthouse was moved to Lebanon in 1818, the settlement became an insignificant agricultural community.

Castle's Woods, to a large extent, fits the ideal of a typical frontier community as seen by Frederick Jackson Turner, one of the most famous interpreters of American history. Turner first became well known in 1893 when he wrote a paper entitled "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." In that essay, and in a number of others that followed, he attempted to explain the effect of the frontier on American history. Turner's sweeping generalizations left him open to criticism, and there have been many critics. But his thesis on the impact of the frontier remains a challenging insight into American history.

Turner's thesis, if it can be distilled, was that the frontier explains American development. American institutions can be explained by the ever retreating frontier where social institutions reverted to primitive conditions and then developed anew into a more formal society.

as the frontier withdrew. This continual process made America unique. As years passed Americans differed more and more from their European ancestors; they became Americanized. Perhaps the two most disputed ideas of Turner were that democracy came out of the forest and the frontier acted as a safety valve for draining off excess workers in periods of depression thus slowing the development of radical ideas in the East. Each of these ideas can be tested in the experience of Castle's Woods.

Of course, the term frontier is difficult to define. As this writer sees it, two definitions are needed. First, the frontier was, as Turner once defined it, "the meeting ground between savagery and civilization."\(^2\) The Indians had to be conquered regardless of how far settlers or hunters had penetrated westward. Second, the frontier was a condition. This condition was largely a matter of environment. On the frontier a man had opportunities as an individual to better himself economically and socially without external aid. This environment was harsh and life was plain. When there were fewer opportunities and life became more pleasant, the frontier had passed away.

The story of Castle's Woods both supports and questions the Turner thesis. The people of Castle's Woods

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 3.
moved into a harsh environment. They were hardy people who often were subjected to Indian attacks. They were there because an opportunity existed to acquire cheap land, and when there was difficulty in gaining permanent possession because the Loyal Land Company claimed it, they moved to Kentucky where there were greater prospects for bettering themselves. Cheap land, to a large extent, pulled them westward.

But the picture of the frontiersmen as a hardy and individualistic hero is not completely true. These pioneers often weathered the Indian attacks; but they also threatened to abandon the settlement on numerous occasions. Their accomplishments were not always without external aid. Constantly they demanded protection from the Indians. The state supplied militiamen but never enough to satisfy them. The state also came to their aid when the land claims needed to be settled. In addition, the French settlement of Saint Marie on the Clinch received direct aid from the state. The truth is that there is evidence of both individualism and cooperation.

Turner believed that the frontier promoted a common spirit among Americans. The Virginia frontier, as evidenced in Castle's Woods, was far more heterogeneous than the settlements of eastern Virginia. The community was composed of Englishmen, Germans, Irish, Scotch-Irish, and Frenchmen.
All worked together. They sat with each other on juries; they fought together in the militia; they served on the county court without regard to their national origin.

Many groups helped to develop the settlement. The hunter, the farmer, the mill operator, the store keeper, the slave, the servant, the school teacher, and the preacher all shared in the work. Land speculators also played a role. At first, they retarded growth but De Tubeuf and his emigrees came to Castle's Woods as a direct result of the action of Richard Smith, a speculator. The community was a mixture of many occupational groups as well as national groups.

The Americanization process can be seen in the names of Virginia counties as they progress westward. From old English names such as Norfolk and Suffolk, they changed to the names of royal governors such as Botetourt and Dunmore. By the time Southwest Virginia was reached, the names became Washington, Russell, and Lee.

Not only names but people became more Americanized. The early residents of Castle's Woods adapted to the Indians and their environment. Eastern customs were largely replaced by more primitive ways of life. This could be seen in their foods, their homes, and their dress. Many practices of the Indians such as scalping were used by the whites. Then as conditions improved, the settlers reacquired some of the eastern refinements, including religion.
The residents of Southwest Virginia realized there were many differences between them and eastern Virginians. They frequently demanded new counties to bring government closer to them, and a strong separatist movement developed under the leadership of Arthur Campbell. Indeed, the movement is not yet entirely dead.

If democracy did not have its origins in the forests of America, as Turner believed, it was perhaps practiced there earlier and to a larger degree. The frontier settlement of Castle's Woods was composed almost entirely of farmers and craftsmen. The members of the county court were all from these groups. The rich did not rule early Russell County; there were no rich.

The idea that the frontier acted as a safety valve allowing the workers of the East to escape quiescent social structures and oppressive working conditions also has some validity when applied to Castle's Woods. While industrialization was not an important factor in America during the eighteenth century, the society of the East would have been less flexible without the frontier as an outlet. There was less opportunity for the individual in the East. Many of the settlers of Castle's Woods were discontented in their old homes. Michael Stoner would not be tied to a cobbler's bench. He fled to the frontier. William Russell apparently was unable to cope with the academic life at William and Mary.
He moved west. The wandering Daniel Boone would have fit in no static society. The lawlessness of Patrick Porter would not have been tolerated in a more eastern settlement as in Castle's Woods. The frontier thus provided a means of success for these individuals. It also provided an avenue of success for many children and servants. Though the safety valve did not operate as Turner envisioned it, the frontier did provide an outlet for the discontented.

As a case study of a frontier settlement, Castle's Woods is interesting and has some significance. In some respects Turner's ideas are substantiated; in others they are violated by the history of this community. At any rate, the community stands today as a monument to an era which long ago passed away.
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APPENDIX A

The following is a list of persons who were paid as members of Captain William Russell's Company for the first pay period during Dunmore's War. Since the number paid is larger than the number in Russell's Company, some were apparently from other areas and attached to Russell's unit.

William Russell
Henry Moore
James Noole
John Snoddy
William Moore
Henry Hamlin
Samuel Ritchie
Nathan Brown
John Duncan
Andrew King
Henry Dickenson
Samuel Porter
John Crank
David Cowan
Michael Osco
William Russell, Jr.
Thomas Johnson
Humphrey Dickenson
James Bush
James Burks
Benjamin Nichols
John Anderson
David Burney
George Ocser
Obediah Terrill
Joseph Kinkaid
Thomas Pitman
William Cowan
William Bush
David Gass
Joseph Moore
Samuel Kirkam
George Campbell
James Black
John English
William Hays
Ruo Z Duncan

William Blackmore
John Blackmore
Andrew Davis
John Blackmore, Jr.
Richard Stanton
John Carter
William Carr
Alexander Ritchie
Joseph Blackmore
Edward Blackmore
Samuel Butcher
James Campbell
Henry Campbell
Patrick Porter
James Green
William Hill
John McCorkle
Samuel Cowan
William Burney
Edmund Smith
Matthias Mountz
John Mountz
Phillip Phillips
Hanley Duncan
James Overture
Abraham McClaland
James Campbell, Jr.
Charles Kilgore
John Smith
Samuel Porter, Jr.
Archelaus Dickenson
James Warton
Samuel Lewis
Richard Hinds
Dail Carter
John Duncan, Jr.

APPENDIX B

Payroll of Captain Joseph Martin's Company under command of Colonel Evan Shelby, May 1 through June 30, 1777, at Moore's Fort.

Patrick Porter
Lewis Green, Jr.
Robert Killgore
James Alley
Charles Killgore
Samuel Alley
John Montgomery
Samuel Porter
Zechariah Green
John Alley
Alexander Montgomery, Sr.
Alexander Montgomery, Jr.
Andrew Cowan
Frederick Fraley
John Kinkhaid
John Barksdale
James Ozburn
Thomas Ozburn
Nehemiah Noel

¹Draper MS 1XX20.