John Filson's *Kentucke*: Internet Search Uncovers "Hidden" Manuscripts

In 2010 the University Library System (ULS) at the University of Pittsburgh embarked on an ambitious mission: to digitize the content of the Darlington Memorial Library. Presented to the university via two separate gifts, in 1918 and 1925, the Darlington library has become the anchor of the Archives and Special Collections Department within the university library. Comprised of thousands of rare books, manuscripts, maps, broadsides, atlases, lithographs, and artwork, the library showcased the collecting passions of the Darlington family who lived in Pittsburgh during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The patriarch, William M. Darlington (1815-1889), was born in Pittsburgh and practiced law in Allegheny County.

A passionate collector, William M. Darlington found his equal in Mary Carson O'Hara (1824-1915), whom he married in 1845.¹ They subsequently moved into a newly-constructed Italianate home just a few miles up the Allegheny River from Downtown Pittsburgh. Here, they raised three children, O'Hara, Mary, and Edith, all recipients of their parents' love of history and bibliophiles to the core. Having married into a wealthy family, Mr. Darlington retired from his law career in 1856 to manage the estate of his wife's grandfather, James O'Hara, whose land holdings encompassed a major portion of Pittsburgh.² He would devote most of his adult life to collecting works of Americana, especially that which documented western Pennsylvania. Even the land upon which he built his estate, passed down to his wife, dripped with history having been the last home of Guyasuta, a Seneca chief.³ The Darlingtons eventually amassed the "largest private library west of the Alleghenies" containing nearly 14,000 volumes. Mr. Darlington not only bought thousands of books, he also acquired maps, newspapers, and ephemera.⁴ He even acquired a complete set of John James Audubon's *Birds of America* in 1852 for \$400. His own portrait was completed by James R. Lambdin, who achieved fame as a portrait artist whose clientele included U.S. presidents.

After Mr. Darlington's death, his widow and children continued to collect printed material and sundry works. His son, O'Hara, for example, accumulated a wonderful collection of British literature, focusing his efforts on Charles Dickens. An author in her own right, Mrs. Darlington devoted herself to finishing a volume started by her late husband. **Christopher Gist's Journals**, published posthumously in 1893, provided the first authoritative work on the extensive travels of Gist in the "Ohio Country" from 1751 to 1753, based upon original manuscripts acquired by Mr. Darlington. **

Following the death of their mother in 1915, and their brother O'Hara in 1916, daughters Mary and Edith had to go up against the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad over a prime section of their property. The railroad claimed that it needed land for new rail lines to facilitate the transportation of military equipment being manufactured in Pittsburgh. After a protracted legal battle whose roots date prior to World War I, and with the federal government siding with the railroad, the property fell under eminent domain. The land they were forced to sell, unfortunately, included Guyasuta, which sat directly on a proposed new railroad line. With their childhood home slated for demolition, Mary and Edith had to decide what to do with their family's possessions—especially their cherished library. As their father at one time served on the university's board of trustees, and, as their late brother O'Hara had attended the university, it was only natural that they resolved to donate the entire family library to the University of Pittsburgh, a decision that was readily accepted by the university. That portion of the family land not acquired by the railroad was given to the Boy Scouts of America to serve as a campground for the fledging organization. To this day Scouts benefit by the generosity of Mary and Edith.⁷

At the time, Chancellor John G. Bowman envisioned a skyscraper to house the burgeoning educational needs of the university, which had moved to the Oakland neighborhood in the early 1900s. His "Cathedral of Learning" eventually reached 42 stories with the exterior completed in 1934. In

addition to containing classrooms, faculty offices, administrative spaces, a gymnasium, and meeting rooms, the extraordinary building would hold the books and other precious materials accumulated by the Darlington family, recognized as the Darlington Memorial Library. Occupying a significant part of the 6th floor, the space also included furniture and artwork, all to remind the visitor of what an incredible library lay before them. Even the iron gates that one passed through to gain entry left visitors with the impression of importance, with the Darlington coat of arms emblazoned on the exterior.⁸

As the decades passed, the Darlington Memorial Library received less and less use. That many of the books were never cataloged and therefore not part of a larger information sharing network, had a big impact. By the mid-1960s, the campus boasted a new library for the university across the street from the Cathedral of Learning, but the Darlington Memorial Library stayed put. It was not until the turn of the twenty-first century that library administrators saw an opportunity to address several inadequacies of the space. That all public elevators did not stop on the 6th floor certainly was an inconvenience. More important, insofar as the collection was concerned, the rooms required substantial security upgrades. Also, maintaining proper temperature and humidity levels was very challenging. Moving the collection addressed preservation and security concerns, but more needed to be done. How could the collection become more widely known and with increased access?

Major university libraries across the country were embracing digital technology in exciting new ways. Indeed, several years earlier, the ULS had created the Digital Research Library (DRL), which was scanning ULS research materials and making them available online, resulting in a dramatic increase in use. Library administration charged the DRL with determining the best cost-efficient methods to digitize the contents of the Darlington Memorial Library and make them available online, resulting in a major initiative.⁹

The DRL took a two-pronged approach to digitizing the library, after taking into account the variety and formats of materials. After investigating available equipment, the DRL settled on the purchase of two scanners manufactured by i2S that enabled the department's personnel to digitize a variety of items, including books, oversize flat items, manuscripts, and journals.

After several months of scanning books in 2010, the DRL realized that it required an enormous amount of labor. While the i2S scanners could handle the books, experience showed that they were not ideal for tightly bound books; their strength lay more with manuscripts, broadsides, newspapers, and prints, and books that could open to 120 degrees—with pages relatively flat. The staff were also challenged by text running into the gutter of the books, not to mention foldouts and other peculiarities. At the same time, the Google Books Project was barnstorming across the country, demonstrating a voracious appetite for scanning books. While the Google Books Project was scanning millions of books from major libraries, one significant downside of the project, which was being administered by a for-profit company, was the lack of free access to all. Thus, the fledgling Internet Archive (IA) became a realistic alternative. Championed by Brewster Kahle, who had earlier started archiving the websites of Internet sites all over the world, IA was making inroads to scanning books and other formats of materials. ¹⁰

The IA offered a cost-efficient alternative for scanning books. At roughly ten cents per page, the IA would bear all the responsibility for not just digitizing books but also hosting the images—with access by anyone free of charge. The ULS eventually became one of the IA's clients. This freed the DRL to concentrate its efforts on scanning manuscripts, maps, artwork, and other items conducive to the i2S scanners, while the majority of bound books would be handled by the Internet Archive. By leaving books to IA, the DRL scanned the most valuable set of materials that Mr. Darlington acquired—Audubon's *Birds of America* (1827-1838), a set of 435 prints. In addition, Audubon's five-volume *Ornithological Biography* (1831) was scanned and a separate website was developed to bring the two sets of materials together online in a way that had not been done by any other institution.¹¹

As for the books being scanned by Internet Archive, recall that many of the volumes had not been cataloged before, or if they had been, it was only a very minimal record. Prior to books being shipped, simple spreadsheets that listed each book's title, author, and publication date were created. This was enough to track the books sent to Fort Wayne, Indiana, for scanning by one of the Internet Archive's mass digitization scanning hubs. Following this protocol, hundreds and eventually thousands of books left the

ULS destined for scanning by IA technicians. Within weeks of digitizing the books, the IA also mounted them online as part of the Internet Archive website. After scanning for nearly a year, the IA had accumulated and offered free online access to over 5,000 books contributed by the University of Pittsburgh's Library System that originated from the Darlington Memorial Library. It was into this world that a lawyer and lay historian living in St. Louis made a remarkable discovery.

In January 2014, Mr. Gregory Hancks sent an email to the DRL after examining one of the thousands of books the ULS had contributed to the Internet Archive. The book in question was published in 1784 by John Filson, namely, *The Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucke*. Mr. Hancks explained that his interest in the book was connected to his research associated with several figures active in the American frontier in the late 1700s and early 1800s. He found it odd, yet intriguing, that the book appeared to have several original handwritten manuscripts tipped into it, and he was curious to know if they were unique to this book, or, were similar manuscripts found in other copies. In his words, "I am contacting you because the book in your library appears to have inserted into it (and scanned) a number of other original documents that originated with various historically significant people, including Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clark, and the colonial governor of Virginia. I believe that it is warranted to at least take a look and see what is actually there." He goes on to say, "The documents appear to be originals because of the color, including a red wax seal on one of them. If they are, I would hope that they would be removed and indexed so that they would be available to researchers whether or not the university retains them."

Totally unaware of the situation, imagine our surprise when this was brought to our attention! Having been scanned and returned to its secure stack location, the book was retrieved and thoroughly examined. Sure enough, the book contains several original manuscripts. As the book was not thoroughly reviewed before or after it was digitized, and, as the catalog record did not indicate the presence of these manuscripts, their existence was unknown to library personnel. The imprints in the Darlington Memorial Library were not frequently used so this discovery, perhaps, should not have been a surprise after all. But were original manuscripts found in other copies of the same title?

To answer this question, the DRL searched OCLC WorldCat and learned that the University of Virginia's Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library held the same title and publication date. The curator, David Whitesell, graciously examined their copy of *Kentucke*. He reported that it contained no such manuscripts, or copies of them, or even a note that they were ever present. In his reply, he said, "It sounds as though Pitt is fortunate to own an extra-illustrated copy of this book, in which a later owner has inserted various related manuscript items. We are not so fortunate, as our copy consists simply of the printed text and map." ¹⁴

So it appeared that the copy of *Kentucke* held by the University of Pittsburgh was unique. When the DRL follow-up with this news to Mr. Hancks, he wrote:

I had been concerned that the Daniel Boone survey, in particular, might have been taken since it is so "collectible." That document was listed in John Bakeless's 1939 book, *Daniel Boone: Master of the Wilderness*, as being in your library, although misdescribed as a "warrant" instead of a survey. So someone had been aware of it at that time.

I had noted that the manuscripts had been placed in the book near text that referred to the persons involved--in effect, a collection of historical signatures or autographs. It makes it all the more interesting that this was done in the 1800s by someone who was assembling such a large historical collection. It's too bad he wasn't able to obtain the map published with the book and had to settle for what apparently is the French edition published a year later. ¹⁵

As the ULS considered this, was William Darlington responsible for creating this unique version of a treasured book? While the family recorded sketchy information about their books, almost all of Mr. Darlington's correspondence, where details about his purchases might be found, is gone, likely discarded by Mary and Edith when they were forced to abandon their home on relatively short notice. As *Kentucke*

was published in 1784, and Mr. Darlington was not even born until 1815, who knows how many others may have owned the book. The book is not in its original binding, but was rebound at a later date, which presented another clue to the mystery. Upon closer examination, the inside front cover contains evidence on the binding: Bound by F. Bedford. That could very well be Francis Bedford (1799-1883), the noted bookbinder in London. He was skilled at his craft having received several prize medals for his work. In fact, one prominent reference book states: "The work of Bedford is not excelled by that of any English bookbinder of his time." It is not unreasonable to imagine that, with his wealth and contacts in the book trade, Mr. Darlington (or even a previous owner) could have placed a special order with Mr. Bedford to tip-in manuscripts into Filson's history. Mr. Darlington had developed other contacts with British tradesmen. For example, he had established a working relationship with James A. Burke, who meticulously hand-copied manuscript maps from the 1700s located at the Public Record Office in London and then sent them on to Mr. Darlington in Pittsburgh.

From what is known about Mr. Darlington and his collecting interests, it is no surprise that he would possess these manuscripts. He collected early Americana and has many books associated with the American Revolution. He also collected books associated with Westward expansion. Several of the tipped in manuscripts in *Kentucke* are associated with figures who fought at the Battle of Blue Licks (Kentucky) on August 19, 1782. That encounter, which included British troops, Canadians, Native Americans, and Kentucky settlers and militia, was one of the last battles of the Revolutionary War, occurring ten months after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. The Kentuckians were routed at Blue Licks and many of them died. Several of the authors of the tipped in manuscripts were present on that fateful day, including Daniel Boone and his son Israel, who was killed. *Kentucke* includes "The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boon (sic), Containing a Narrative of the Wars of Kentucke," attributed to Boone who writes about the encounter at Blue Licks as well as other engagements and conflicts. It is not hard to imagine Mr. Darlington sitting in his library and examining the book, especially the manuscripts therein, with the feeling that must come with actually owning it.

Had *Kentucke* never been digitized, who knows how much longer it would be before the manuscripts were re-discovered? The catalog record for *Kentucke* has been substantially revised, and it now includes key information about each manuscript. Based upon statistics maintained by Internet Archive, the Filson's history has been viewed nearly 1,100 times since it first became accessible online. It is a tribute to the power of the Internet. In fact, Mr. Hancks said, "Apart from the Filson book, I have accessed material digitized and presented online by Pitt and am greatly appreciative of those resources. The fact that many libraries and archives have put document indexes or finding aids online where they are accessible to general search engines like Google has revolutionized what I am able to do." ¹⁷

Perhaps it's fitting to close this article with a few words from Mr. Hancks as he was the one who "discovered" the tipped-in manuscripts, followed by images of the "hidden" manuscripts.

The more one considers your copy of the Filson book, the more remarkable it seems. It would almost make for an exhibition all by itself. Darlington apparently took pleasure in obtaining documents that were signed by – and written by – historical figures, just as collectors would today.¹⁸

About the Author

Edward A. Galloway is associate university librarian for archives and special collections for the University Library System of the University of Pittsburgh, an institutional member of The Manuscript Society. He has worked for the university since 2000. Previously, he was archivist at Carnegie Mellon University where he was responsible for the management of the papers of the late U.S. Senator H.J. Heinz III. He would like to thank Mr. Hancks for his keen eye and willingness to share his discovery with the University of Pittsburgh Library System.

Endnotes

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¹ Mary Carson O'Hara, the granddaughter of James O'Hara who served in the Revolutionary Army as quarter master general, inherited a great deal of land and wealth upon her grandfather's passing. Well educated, she could speak and read Spanish, German, French, and Italian).

² Two theses shed a great deal of light on James O'Hara. They are: Eulalia Catherine Schramm's "General James O'Hara: Pittsburgh's First Captain of Industry" (University of Pittsburgh, M.A. thesis, 1932), available online at http://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A31735020876177/viewer and Charles William Shetler's "The Evolution of the O'Hara-Schenley Properties in Allegheny County to 1880" (University of Pittsburgh, M.A. thesis, 1949), also available online at http://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A31735037051145/viewer. A year before Mr. Darlington's death, the *New York Times* ran a story on the wealthiest citizens of Pittsburg (as it was then spelled). Mr. Darlington, who was described in the article as a "retired gentleman," was thought then to be worth \$1,000,000. "Pittsburg's Millionaires," *New York Times*, October 20, 1888.

³ Guyasuta (ca. 1720-1798) played important roles along the frontier. For example, in 1753 he helped guide the young British officer George Washington and his men when they were dispatched to Western Pennsylvania to warn the French to withdraw from the region.

⁴ A useful early publication on the breadth of materials found in the collection is Agnes Starrett's *The Darlington Memorial Library* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1938). Available online at: http://documenting.pitt.edu/islandora/object/pitt%3A00adg0067m/viewer. For insight about family members written by a friend see Anne Hemphill Herbert's *Personal Memories of the Darlington Family at Guyasuta* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1949). Available online at: http://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A00add0707m/viewer

⁵ Mary C. Darlington, Fort Pitt and Letters from the Frontier (Pittsburgh: J.R. Weldin & Co.,1892), and History of Colonel Henry Bouquet and the Western Frontier of Pennsylvania, 1747-1764 (Pittsburgh: Privately Printed, 1920). ⁶ William M. Darlington, Christopher Gist's Journals: with historical, geographical and ethnological notes and biographies of his contemporaries (Pittsburgh: J.R. Weldin & Co., 1893). Christopher Gist (1706-1759) was one of the earliest European explorers of the Ohio Country, what is now Ohio, western Pennsylvania, eastern Indiana, and West Virginia. Gist accompanied George Washington on missions to suppress the French from gaining a foothold in western Pennsylvania. The resulting military engagements contributed to the French and Indian War.

⁷ Edward A. Galloway, "Guyasuta: Warrior, Estate, and Home to Boy Scouts," *Western Pennsylvania History* 94, no. 4 (2011): 18-31.

⁸ Samuel Yellin (1885-1940) designed the wrought iron gates. Born in Poland, in 1906 Yellin arrived in Philadelphia where he became recognized for the quality of his craftsmanship.

⁹ The website for the Darlington Digital Library is available at http://darlington.library.pitt.edu.

¹⁰ The Internet Archive (https://archive.org) began in 1996 but it was not until 2005 that it began to digitize books. It now hosts over 16 million books and texts, in addition to other content, all of which is *freely available online*.

¹¹ The website for Audubon's *Birds of America* at the University of Pittsburgh is available at http://audubon.pitt.edu.

¹² John Filson, *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke* (Wilmington: James Adams, 1784). The Internet Archives (IA) copy of the book is accessible via this link: https://archive.org/details/discoverysettlem00fils. According to IA statistics, the online copy, as of June 11, 2018, was viewed 1,086 times.

¹³ Gregory Hancks to Edward A. Galloway, email on January 22, 2014.

¹⁴ David Whitesell to Edward Galloway, email on January 28, 2014.

¹⁵ Hancks to Galloway, email on January 29, 2014, 11:04 a.m.

¹⁶ Sidney Lee, ed., *Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplement, Vol. 1 (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1901): 163. ¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Hancks to Galloway, email on January 29, 2014, 2:18 p.m.

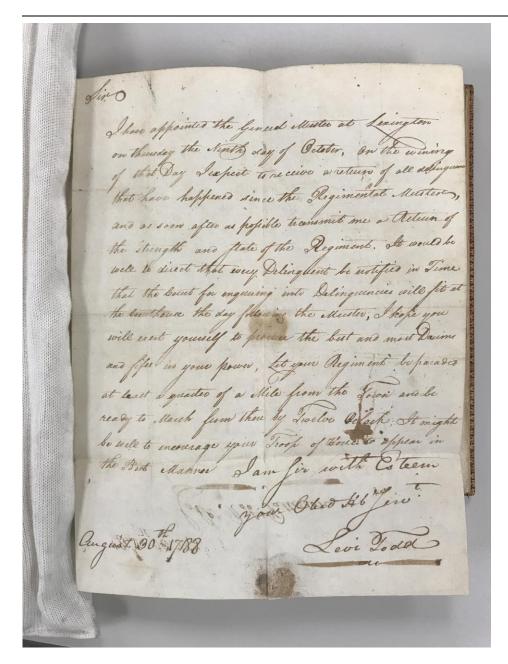


Figure 1. Levi Todd (1756-1807) to unknown person, August 30, 1788. Todd, born in Virginia, is identified as one of the subscribers to Filson's history. He was an early Kentucky pioneer, Revolutionary War veteran, and helped to found Lexington. He was present at the Battle of Blue Licks, later writing an account of that engagement that became part of the official record. And, he is the grandfather of Mary Todd Lincoln. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.

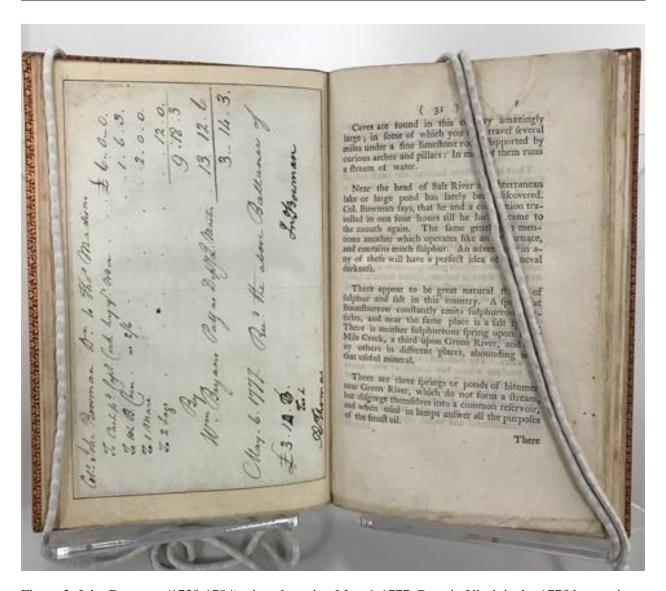


Figure 2. John Bowman (1738-1784), signed receipt, May 6, 1777. Born in Virginia, by 1775 he was in Kentucky where he became a colonel in the militia. He later served under George Rogers Clark during the Illinois Campaign. The text opposite the image of the receipt, on page 31, notes that deep caves in Kentucky sometimes include water. "Near the head of the Salt River a subterranean lake or large pond has lately been discovered. Col. Bowman says, that he and a companion travelled one four hours till he luckily came to the mouth again." *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.

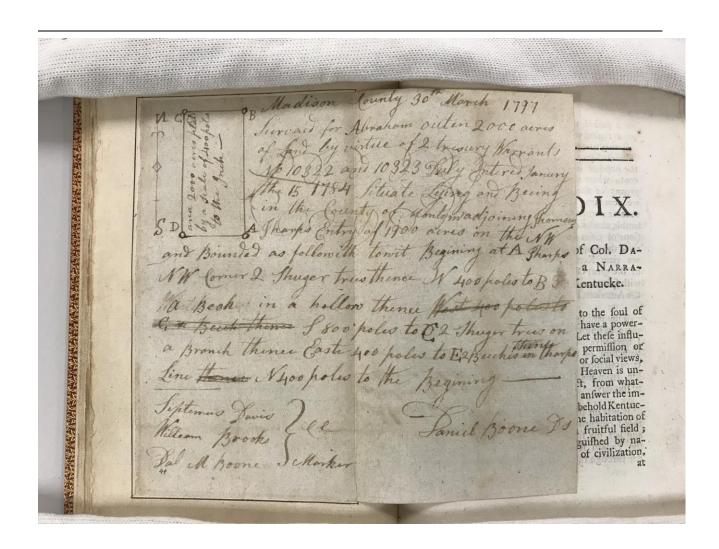


Figure 3. Daniel Boone (1734-1820) survey for Abraham Outen, March 30, 1797. The initials DS stand for deputy surveyor. The manuscript is located right before Boone's narrative "The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boon[e]; containing a Narrative of the Wars of Kentucke." Born in Pennsylvania, Boone became a legend in his own time due, in part, to Filson's history for which Boone is listed as a subscriber. He was present at the Battle of Blue Licks, as was his son Israel who was killed in the engagement. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System.*

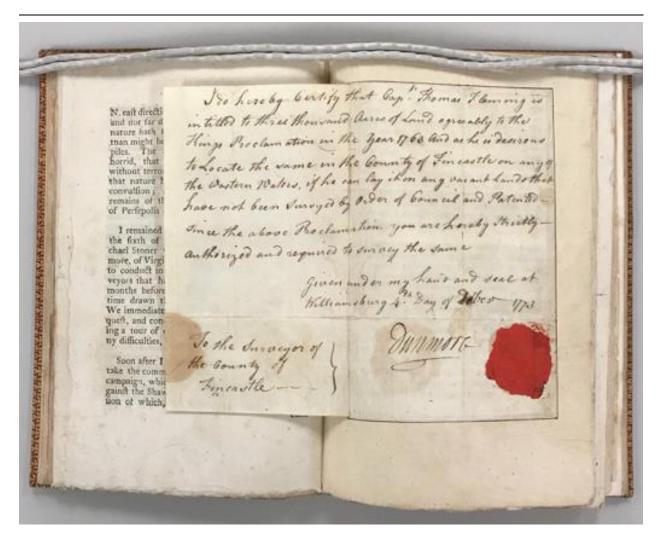


Figure 4. John Murray (ca. 1730-1809), fourth earl of Dunmore. Land warrant to Thomas Fleming, December 4, 1773. Born in Scotland, Lord Dunmore rose through family and political connections. Intent upon advancing himself, he secured the appointment as governor of New York, arriving there in 1770. After political disputes, he was made governor of Virginia in early 1771. Although not a participant, Lord Dunmore took credit when Virginia volunteers won an encounter with Native Americans at Point Pleasant in 1774, which became known as "Dunmore's War." His popularity waned shortly thereafter when his attempts to rouse Loyalist supporters to the Crown met with stiff resistance. He was back in England by the end of 1776. The manuscript, granting 3,000 acres of land to Captain Thomas Fleming, is tipped in between pages 58 and 59. Dunmore is noted on page 58. A Thomas Fleming, from Virginia, fought in the American Revolution and received a land warrant for his service. See W.T.R. Saffell's *Records of the Revolutionary War* (Philadelphia: G.G. Evans, 1860): 498. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers*, *Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.

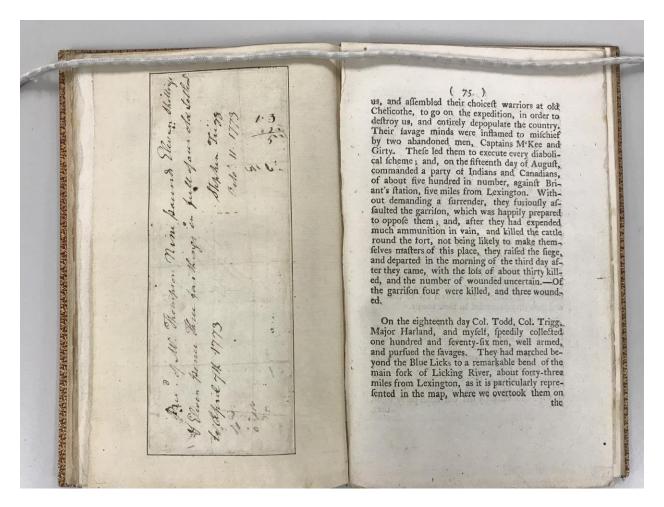


Figure 5. Stephen Trigg (ca. 1744-1782), signed receipt dated October 11, 1773. Trigg was a pioneer and soldier from Virginia, where he was a public servant and militia officer. Upon settling in Kentucky he continued in public service. Trigg's grandson, Stephen Trigg Logan, practiced law with Abraham Lincoln from 1841 to 1843. The manuscript is opposite page 75 in *Kentucke* wherein Daniel Boone writes about the initial action at the Battle of Blue Licks, when Trigg was killed. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.



Figure 6. John Todd (1750-1782) to Captain Robert Patterson (1753-1827), November 20, 1780. John Todd, born in Pennsylvania, was active with frontier militia and fought at the Battle of Point Pleasant (1774), before serving in the Virginia legislature in 1776. He participated in the expedition led by George Rogers Clark to secure the western frontier against Native Americans and the British. The brother of Levi and Robert Todd, and great-uncle of Mary Todd Lincoln. John Todd Stuart, his grandson, practiced law with Abraham Lincoln from 1837 to 1841. The directive by Todd to Patterson is located opposite page 76 in *Kentucke*, where Daniel Boone writes: "The brave and much lamented Colonels Todd and Trigg, Major Harland and my second son, were among the dead." Patterson, also a native of Pennsylvania, went to Kentucky in 1775 where he served in the militia. Like Todd, he participated in Clark's campaign in 1778. He served as captain of the Fayette County militia at the Battle of Blue Licks. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.

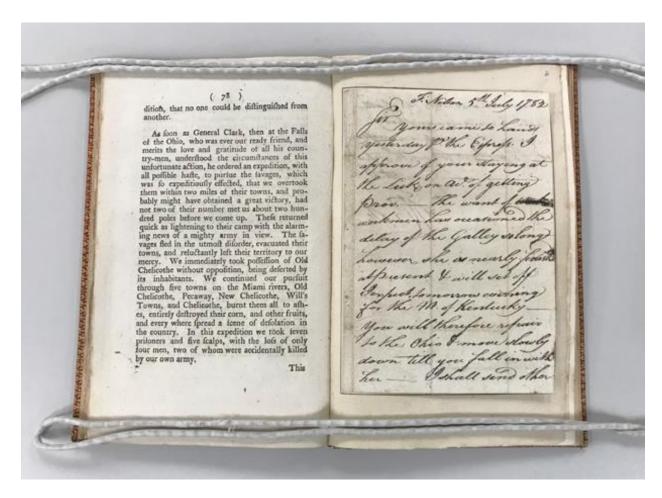


Figure 7. George Rogers Clark (1752-1818) to Captain Robert Patterson, July 5, 1782, writing from Ft. Nelson, built in what today is the heart of Louisville, Kentucky (left and right images). Born in Virginia, much has been written about Clark, especially as he was the highest ranked military officer on the northwestern frontier during the American Revolution. Although he was not at the Battle of Blue Licks, as the senior military officer he was severely criticized for the outcome. His brother, William, achieved fame as co-commander of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The manuscript is opposite page 78 in *Kentucke* where Daniel Boone writes that Clark, who, upon receiving news about the Battle of Blue Licks, ordered an expedition to pursue the enemy. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.



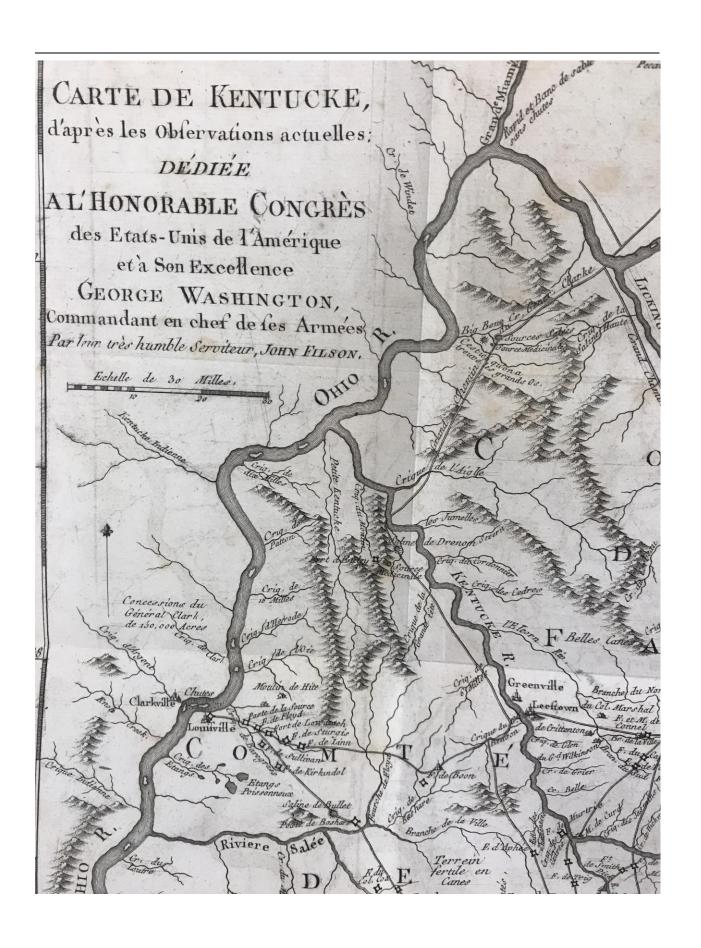


Figure 8. Upper left-hand portion of the map that appears in the book. The map is in French, indicating that it came from a later edition of Filson's history. *Courtesy of Darlington Family Papers, Archives & Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh Library System*.