

For the next few months Kentuckians kept their rifles close because they expected many warriors to pass through Kentucky on their way to Ohio. Thankfully, no major incidents occurred.

The earthquake of 1811 became an event that people would talk about the rest of their lives. For a time it brought them all together.

Chapter 43: April 1812

(1)

Five years after Isaac, Charles, and Samuel's exploration meeting, the caves were producing a little over 1,000 pounds of potassium nitrate per month. Samuel chuckled as he told Harm, "The caves will produce more saltpeter – especially if the payment per pound continues to increase."

"Well Samuel, the payment has gone up," replied Harm. "With your next wagon load, your payment will be \$1.00 per pound."

"Is it because of the coming war?" smiled Samuel.

"There is a tremendous demand for gunpowder now. Have you not followed what happened in Indiana territory with the Indians?"

"Jacob told me there were some volunteers that went north with a Major Wells to maybe fight Indians. That's all." Samuel said.

"Well, they did fight – at a place called Tippecanoe. Wells' Kentuckians went under the command of William Henry Harrison, who oversaw all military personnel in the Northwest," Harm said.

Samuel was listening, so Harm continued. "Tecumseh has been and is the main culprit stirring up Indians. That Tecumseh had been trying to forge an Indian confederation to take back the land he believed belonged to the Indians. While Tecumseh was down towards the Gulf working on this alliance, Harrison was provoked by Tecumseh's brother and Harrison chose to attack. I was told each side has lost 100 to 200 men."

Samuel asked, "Then, are the Indian troubles over there like they have been here in Kentucky?"

"No, I'm afraid they are just starting – but not here in Kentucky, up in Ohio and Indiana territory. Many people are mad at the British because they are the ones arming the Indians. Tecumseh will be back in

Indiana territory soon, if he is not there already. He will be upset because his rebellion was to begin on his orders, not on anything concerning his brother. There is a belief that the Governor will call up the Kentucky militia if and when more Indian trouble arises.”

Samuel had never been in conflict. He was of age now, old enough to fight. He knew how to shoot well. He knew of his father’s war history and something itched in him to think about joining the militia.

“Samuel, I’ve seen that look before in young men. Your place is not with the militia. It’s here in Kentucky doing just what you are doing. The nitrate you are mining is helping to save lives. Just continue – please...just continue to do what you are doing.”

Samuel nodded his head. He had banking business in Lexington to see to... and then the trip home with an overnight stay in Farmers!

(2)

Families were still moving into the valley, but, still, not as many as Charles had hoped. Robert Henderson’s brother George built a home followed by Gabe and James Henderson. Others were trickling in. The saw mill was operating at minimum capacity and the grist mill was growing proportional to the number of new farming families.

Over the last fifteen months Samuel had made four trips to the gunpowder mill with a full load of potassium nitrate. Isaac had been repaid for the initial funds a while back and the Reed bank account in Lexington was growing substantially. Valley settlers were always surprised and pleased when Brayden distributed the profits.

Charles had gone with Samuel on three of those trips. Samuel was certainly old enough and smart enough to see that his father and Kallie had developed a relationship. Charles had not spoken to Samuel about this relationship. He didn’t have anything to share except that the two of them were still at odds on how they could ever get together. Charles was certainly not going to move to Lexington with Isaac and Samuel still in the valley. If there was any hope of the two of them together - it would have to be Kallie coming east.

Isaac was still needed at the mill for his knowledge. The original water wheel was ten years old and after the last harvest much of it needed to

be rebuilt or repaired. Slavery was growing in the valley as two tobacco farmers had started to take root above the caves and were using slaves to maintain and harvest their crops. Peter, Elizabeth, William, Alice, Robert, Anna, and Martin were still safe at the Reed settlement. Elizabeth had been a tremendous help in organizing the food operation at the caves.

Sometimes Charles went with Samuel to Lexington to deliver the saltpeter. The two of them spent three nights together traveling to Lexington and three nights together traveling back to the valley. In Lexington Charles stayed with Kallie and Samuel still spent quality time with Jacob and the Buell's.

The only time Samuel wished his father were not with him on these travel days was the two nights they spent with Noah and Victoria Carson. Each trip to the gunpowder mill deepened his relationship with Victoria, and Samuel began to desire these evenings without Charles' company.

Samuel had expressed to his father his desire to go with the Kentucky militia if they were called again. Charles knew the horror of war. He said nothing, but knew he would do everything he could to discourage Samuel from fighting Indians in Ohio or Indiana territory.

(3)

Even Charles could not help but notice how stunning Victoria Carson had become. His memories of Victoria were the same as Samuel's memories –those of just a small, quiet child following her parents on a new adventure. And like Samuel, he did not think about what she would be like at nineteen.

Samuel had no conversations alone with Victoria the first few overnights. Noah and/or Charles were always present, especially during dinner. Victoria rarely looked at Samuel and didn't smile. The evenings ended quietly and Samuel, or Samuel and Charles were on their way out early the next morning. During their time with Charles and Samuel, Noah and Victoria learned much about how well the Reed family had done in Kentucky. Likewise, Charles and Samuel learned much about Noah and Victoria.

During this time, Moses Vickers had asked the Carson party to begin their church work in southern Kentucky near the Tennessee border. One of

the Kentucky Baptist associations was having some member discord, and he hoped Noah could help resolve some issues. It was a long and arduous trip for the Carson party of seven families to travel that far south.

Cabins were built and finally a church was started near Drakes Creek. The Baptist Association conflicts were not resolved and eventually a new association was formed. Then, in 1806 the Kentucky churches split from the Tennessee churches and formed another association. The continuing discord ignited Noah Carson's desire to move elsewhere and start another church.

The fire was the final straw. It was about 3 a.m. when the Carson cabin was immersed in flames. Noah was circuit riding and away for a few nights. Hannah Carson was consumed by fire, her ashes remaining in her bed. Fortunately, Victoria was not in the cabin, but sleeping at the church, supposedly with a friend. For reasons unknown to anyone else, she had started doing that a couple nights a month about three months prior to the fire. No one ever found out the cause of the fire.

Noah was devastated and made the decision that he and Victoria would leave southern Kentucky and start a new church elsewhere. He communicated with both the Elkhorn and Tates Creek Associations and chose Farmers to establish himself. Most of the original Carson party came with Noah to Farmers. Victoria had been ready to go elsewhere for a long time.

The love game was amusing to Victoria. She had learned long ago how her sexuality could help her gain what she wanted. It was Samuel's fourth visit that Victoria invited him to go for a walk after supper. There was no hand holding, just pleasant conversation.

Victoria had a lot of questions about the mill and cave operations. The walks continued with each visit, and eventually Samuel began helping her with her chores. One evening they shared a picnic. Eventually, Victoria squeezed Samuel's hand. This gradually progressed to a kiss. And eventually, she would give herself to Samuel – but not just yet.

When she did, she believed it might be Samuel's first sexual experience. But...it wouldn't be hers.