

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY NOVEMBER 22



Anne Bailey, frontier heroine of the Kanawha Valley, died on November 22, 1825.

CSO: SS.8.20, SS.8.21, ELA.8.1, ELA.8.7

Investigate the Document: (RB 917.3 R888s)

1. Ann Bailey, legendary heroine and frontier scout, would aid General (Andrew) Lewis' army by shouldering "her shot over her shoulder, and lead a horse laden with ammunition to the army, two hundred miles distant, when a man could not be found to undertake the perilous task." At what significant military engagement during Dunmore's War was General (Andrew) Lewis the commanding officer?
2. Describe Ann Bailey's disposition. Did she fear death? Use a quotation from the document to support your answer.
3. When asked how she navigated the "water courses," the document states, "some she *forded*, and some she swam, on others she made a raft." What do you suppose "forded" means?
4. "A gentleman informed, that while the army was stationed near the mouth of the Elk (River,) he walked down the river to where it intersects with the *Kenehawa* (River,) for the purpose of fishing." Where would this intersection be located today?

Think Critically: Why are the stories of heroines throughout American history not shared as often as stories of heroic men? What qualities did Ann Bailey possess that would qualify her as a heroine? Do Ann Bailey, Betty Zane, and Mary Draper Ingles possess any similar intrepid characteristics?

may justly be compared to diamonds shining in the dark.

As this famous county is to be a link in the chain which is to connect that part of Virginia east of the mountains with the whole of the western country, I have been at some pains to pick up every thing respecting it. As curiosity leads me to trace things to their origin, such as the history of countries, and remarkable events, I have traced this part of Virginia as far back as the year seventeen hundred and seventy-four, to the memorable battle of the Point, fought between the whites and the Indians, at the mouth of this river. I have seen several men who were in that bloody and hard fought battle, and have just returned from viewing the ground on which it was fought. I have seen that part occupied by the "Augusta militia," commanded by Gen. Lewis, and that by the Indians. I have seen the bones of the latter sticking in the bank of the Ohio river; part of the bank having fallen in where the battle was fought discloses their bones sticking out in a horizontal position: the engagement lasted from sunrise till dark; the victory was claimed by the whites. From this bank, which is a hundred feet, or thereabouts, in height, I had a view of the beautiful river Ohio: at this place it is said to be five hundred yards wide.

This river, which is justly celebrated for its beauty and utility, flows in a smooth current as silent as night; not the least noise can be heard from it; not the smallest ripple is seen. This, and its limpid appearance, the rich foliage which decorates its banks and looks as though it were growing in the water, by reason of its luxuriance, completely conceals the earth, and constitutes its beauty. If the reader can imagine a vast mirror of endless dimension, he will have an idea of this beautiful river. It is so transparent that you may see pebbles at the bottom; not a rock or stone of any size, has a place in the Ohio. Kenhawa is a very handsome river, being generally as smooth as the Ohio, but by no means so limpid; it has a greenish appearance; you cannot see the bottom, except at the shoals. And more than all this, I have seen the celebrated heroine, Ann Bailey, who

richly deserves more of her country, than a name in its history.

This female is a Welch woman, and is now very old. At the time Gen. Lewis's army lay at the Point, a station on Kenhawa river, Ann would shoulder her rifle, hang her shot pouch over her shoulder, and lead a horse laden with ammunition to the army, two hundred miles distant, when not a man could be found to undertake the perilous task—the way thither being a perfect wilderness, and infested with Indians. I asked her if she was not afraid—she replied, "No, she was not; she trusted in the Almighty—she knew she could only be killed, and she had to die some time." I asked her if she never met with the Indians in her various journies, (for she went several times.) "Yes, she once met with two, and one of them said to the other let us kill her, (as she supposed, from the answer of the other,) no, said his companion, God dam, too good a soger, and let her pass:" but how, said I, did you find the way,—"Steered by the trace of Lewis's army, and I had a pocket compass too." "Well, but how did you get over the water courses?"—Some she forded, and some she swam, on others she made a raft: she "halways carried a hax and a hauger, and she could chop as well has hany man;" such was her dialect. This is a fact that hundreds can attest. A gentleman informed, that while the army was stationed near the mouth of Elk, he walked down that river to where it intersects with Kenhawa, for the purpose of fishing; he had not remained long there before he heard a plunge in the water, and upon looking up, he discovered Ann on horseback swimming toward him; when the horse gained the landing, she observed, "cod, I'd like to a swum." She was quite a low woman in height, but very strongly made, and had the most pleasing countenance I ever saw, and for her, very affable. "And what would the General say to you, when you used to get safe to camp with your ammunition." "Why he'd say, you're a brave soldier, Ann, and tell some of the men to give me a dram." She was fond of a dram. When I saw the poor creature, she was almost naked; she begged a dram, which I gave to

her, and also some other trifle. I never shall forget Ann Bailey. The people here repeat many sayings of hers, such as "the howl upon the helm on the bank of the helk"²—that is, an owl on an elm upon the bank of Elk river.

History.—Kenhawa county consists of two strings of inhabitants, upon Kenhawa and Elk rivers. It was reclaimed from the Indians and the buffaloes, by degrees, with the loss of many lives by the former, until Gen. Wayne subdued them. The buffaloes were so numerous on this river, that they made large roads through the bottoms. Elks, deer and bears were likewise numerous. None of the buffaloes are to be seen now, but bear and deer are still numerous, and elks are often seen on the head of Elk river, which empties into Kenhawa river at a little town called Charleston, the seat of justice for this county.* It is navigable its whole length, two hundred miles. In this town are four stores, two taverns, a court-house, a jail, and an academy; the three last are of brick; and a post-office, a printing press, and some very handsome buildings. The first permanent settlement was made in 1788, though they had to defend themselves with forts, or at least one, which was built near where a Mr. Jones now lives, called Jones's ferry. Mr. Maurice, a Mr. Cox, this Jones, and Col. Donnelly, the hero of Donnelly's fort, were the first; others soon followed, but M. was the head man; he had a boat-yard, built boats, and sold them to people who emigrated to the west. He had money at interest, and was the successful rival of Col. D. They never agreed; M. carried every point, he was looked up to by the people, and what he said was the law, let that be what it might. Courts of justice were established, magistrates appointed, and all as this head of the land dictated. Some person, however, who had a bond on M., had the audacity to sue him. The court sat in an old house, or cabin rather, as the story goes. Some

* I saw one which was caught when it was young on Elk river. It was quite graceful, and went at large, though nearly grown; it belonged to Col. Ruffner.

suits were disposed of, before M.'s suit was called. At length the suit was called, and one of the magistrates came down, or rather got up, went out behind the house, and awaked a leather chap, who was lying on the ground drunk, saying "get up! M.'s suit is coming on." Another magistrate was lying drunk on the floor; he was roused by the sheriff; at length they have a court, and proceed to business. The case was argued on both sides by their respective attorneys, and the jury was sent out to a blacksmith's shop. You have seen these shops; they generally have a log cut out of some length, on the opposite side from the door; at least they have in the western country, but what the use of it is, I never learned, unless it be to hang their work on; or, perhaps, let in the air in warm weather; but to the purpose. After the Jury were fastened in, M. gets a three gallon keg full of whisky, and thrusts it in through this window, saying to the Jury, "now do your best." They were not long, we may suppose, in agreeing; when they came into the court, their verdict was, "we, the jury, find for the defendant!" The lawyer for the plaintiff was thunderstruck; nothing was clearer, a plain load! He grated his teeth, and cursed them all to himself; returned the plaintiff (which was equally extraordinary,) his fee, jumped on his horse, and was never seen there afterwards. Thus was Kenhawa settled, and thus was justice administered, and with little variation continues the same. Many suits have been eight, ten, and some fifteen years on the docket. The new modelling of the judiciary, has, however, of late, measureably relieved the people.

Climate.—The climate on Kenhawa river is very hot in summer; the thermometer rising from ninety to a hundred; not a breeze relieves you from suffocating heat; when it does, it uniformly blows up the river from the north west; these breezes, however, seldom prevail except in the fall and winter months. This great difference between the climate and that of Greenbrier and Monroe, of which it is several miles north, must be attributed to that of its being much lower, and bounded in