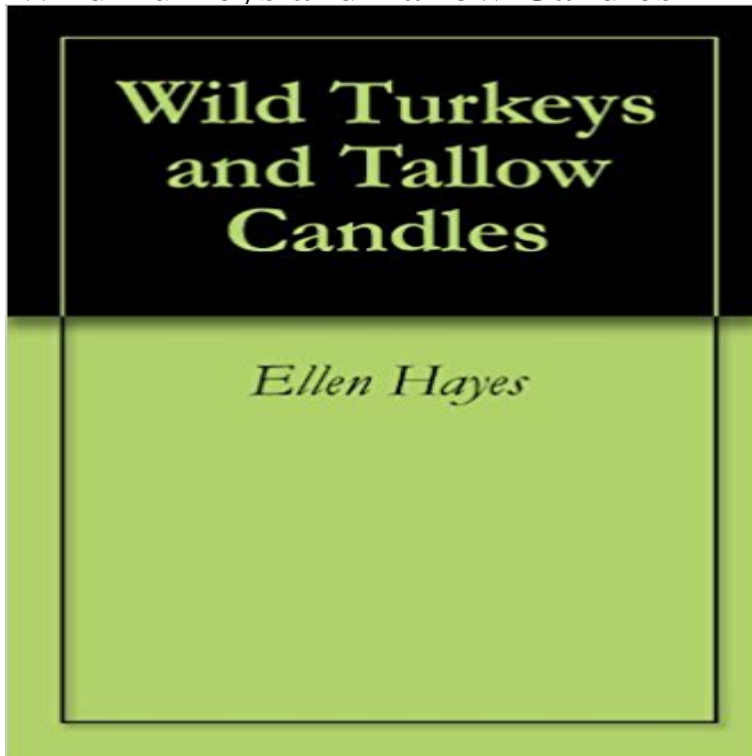


Wild Turkeys and Tallow Candles



This volume of pioneer and frontier life in the Midwest was published in 1920. Excerpts from the book: The early history of Ohio would be somewhat simplified if there were any records of the precolonial settlers. But hardly more is known of the individual squatters than of the ever-roving trappers and hunters. These frontiersmen recognized no law or land-title except what was termed the tomahawk-right, registered with a tomahawk on a forest tree. They made small clearings, built cabins, raised crops for a few years and then perhaps moved on to some other point. As a rule they antagonized the Indians who shrewdly perceived the nature and consequences of the coming of this white-faced foe. Historical justice—the only kind now possible will never be done the Indians of the Ohio Valley until it is frankly admitted that the white man was an invader, opening his invasion by doing wanton injury and provoking violence in return. The story of the devoted but ill-fated Moravians affords the chief if not the only record of honor on the part of the coming people in those years preceding 1787. The Moravians must be regarded as forming the first company settlement; they were also the first whites to discover a way of justice and humanity for dealing with the Indians; but they, in common with their Indian friends, fell victims to savage white men. It should not surprise us that the Indians fought desperately and in their own fashion for the lands of their fathers. It was a defence that would have been honored as nobly patriotic if made by any European people. But in a racial struggle so unequal there could be only one outcome. In their defeat at the battle of Fallen Timbers, 1794, the Indians recognized their fate. The treaty made the following summer was signed by ninety chiefs and delegates from twelve tribes, including the two famous chiefs, Little Turtle of the Miamis and Blue Jacket of the Shawanees; while their

conqueror, General Wayne, signed for the white mans govern- ment. Perpetual peace and amity were declared; the tribes placed themselves under the protection of the United States, trading territory for sums of money agreed upon and the prescribed protection. The settlement of the Indian troubles, added to the formation of the Northwestern Territory, led naturally and promptly to a distinct movement for colonization. Indeed, various companies of colon- ists were already on Ohio soil prior to the Treaty of 1795. The Ohio Land Company, formed in Massachusetts, purchased a large tract of land in 1787, the same year, it will be observed, that the Ordinance was passed. The actual group of pioneers representing this Ohio Land Company, un- der the leadership of Rufus Putnam, established a settlement on the banks of the Muskingum in 1788. Later in 1788 John Symmes with a company of thirty colonists having for their destination the val- ley of the Big Miami started from New Jersey, crossed the mountains and struck out for the Miami country, a region that had been described to them as the fairest meadows that ever can be. During the next fifteen years settlers either as single families or in groups made their way into the region north of the Ohio, usually coming down the river by boat to the mouths of the northern tribu- taries and then ascending these streams. Thus settlements were made on the Muskingum, the Scioto, the Big Miami and the Little Miami. These streams were natural thoroughfares and gave access to the interior before anything that could be called a road was yet in existence through the dense for- ests. These pioneers came from Massachusetts and Connecticut, from New Jersey and Pennsyl- vania, from Maryland and Virginia and Kentucky. The population of the new Territory was thus composite from the start.

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