

## IN OHIO A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

IT was in the latter days of February, 1790, that Mr. John May, a planter residing on the Appomattox, a few miles above Petersburg in Virginia, set out with his clerk, Mr. Charles Johnston, for what was then called "the Western country," to procure depositions from certain witnesses in a controversy with Judge Mercer concerning the title to a body of wild land in Kentucky.

Their intention was to travel by land to a small station on the Kanawha, and then to descend that river and the Ohio. They reached Greenbrier Court-House without adventure, and thence rode to Kelly's Station, "passing," says Mr. Johnston in his narrative, "through a country utterly desolate, for about eighty miles." On their way, however, they overtook a party of eight or ten travellers on their way to the Kanawha. Among these was Mr. Jacob Skyles, a mercantile adventurer with a stock of dry-goods which he intended to carry down the river to Kentucky.

When, after toiling through a dreary and uninhabited country for three days, they reached Kelly's Station, they contracted for one of those heavy, clumsy, slow-moving structures then employed on the Ohio for the conveyance of travellers and their property to the Western settlements.

They passed some days with a Colonel Clendenin, whose plantation was on the site of the present capital of West Virginia, and, as soon as their rude ark could be got ready, proceeded down the Kanawha to Point Pleasant, where they were to enter the Ohio River.

Here they received an addition to their party,—a frontiersman named Flynn, and two girls, Dolly and Peggy Fleming, residents of Pittsburg, who were to travel under Flynn's protection down the Ohio.

At Point Pleasant they were disquieted by a rumor that Indians were lurking on the banks of the Ohio, who, after decoying a boat to land, had murdered all on board of her; and they were earnestly advised, if they persisted in their journey, by no means to touch the shore until they reached Limestone.

Resolving that nothing should induce them to neglect this precaution, they continued their journey. No one on board the ark had any experience in navigation, but the river was high, and they floated down it with great facility, keeping out of musket-shot from either shore. Mr. Skyles had "a neat rifle;" the other men of the party had only fowling-pieces.

The boat was steered by an oar at the stern, and one of the male passengers performed this service in turn. They had descended the river nearly to its junction with the Scioto, when, about dawn on the 20th of March, they were called up by Flynn, who was at the steering-oar. He pointed out to them smoke rising above the tree-tops on the right bank, and presently they perceived two white men on the same side of the river, who were making signals to them. These men piteously implored the travellers to take them on board, declaring that