

and his wife, Kate, their two small children, William Gahagan, Benjamin and Mary Van Cleve, the Widow McClure and her four sons and daughters. Thirteen in all, a large passenger list for their small flat-bottomed boat. A crowd of townspeople and other settlers was present to see them off from the foot of Sycamore Street in Cincinnati. [*Crowd voices. Wood creaking.*]

THOMPSON: Easy with that hogshead, boys. [*Wood creaking, men grunting.*] That flour's got to last us a mighty long time. That's it. Hold her steady on the planks. [*More creaking followed by heavy rumble.*] There she is, safe aboard. That's about all of it, except for those few boxes.

KATE: Sam, here comes George Newcom.

THOMPSON: Knew he couldn't stay away, Kate.

NEWCOM: Think she'll float, Sam?

THOMPSON: She's floating, ain't she? And she's riding good and high, even when we've got her loaded. We'll have it a lot easier going by water than you will dragging your wagons and stock through sixty miles of forest. By the time you get there we'll probably have our cabins built and I'll have my out-lot cleared for farming.

NEWCOM: Sam Thompson, you always was a fool for work. Clearin' an' stumpin' virgin forest, an' tryin' to git on at farmin'. Me, I'm going to have me a tavern. Newcom's Tavern, it'll be called. I'll trade with the Indians an' the rest of the settlers. I won't have to do no real work. The trade an' the money an' all will jest come in to me where I'm settin' in my tavern.

KATE: Mr. Newcom, you always talk as if you never worked, but I know you do. I know you'll work hardest of all on your over-land trip.

NEWCOM: Well, now, Mrs. Thompson, I *can* work if I got to. Fact is, I come down here this morning jest to help out.

THOMPSON: Then you'd better stop talking and help Ben Van Cleve lay these planks to the rail so we can get aboard. Kate, you and the Widow McClure get the children together.

BEN: [*Sound of falling planks.*] All right, Sam, the planks are set.

THOMPSON: Widow McClure, you'd better go first with your four. Ben, you get up there on the rail and help them as they come.

WIDOW MCCLURE: All right, Mr. Thompson. Jim, John, Katherine, Anne, come on, all of you. And watch out, you don't fall in. [*Sound of footsteps on planks.*]

BEN: I'll catch them, Widow McClure.

THOMPSON: Now, Kate, you take Mary and Sarah, and I'll carry Matt.

KATE: Mary, where are you? Come here. And I'll carry Sarah. Now be careful, Mary.

THOMPSON: All right, Matt, right up here on my shoulder. Here we go.

BEN: Come on, Bill. Get aboard and we'll pull in these planks.

BILL: Here I come arunnin'. [*Footsteps and scraping of planks.*]

THOMPSON: We all aboard?

VOICES [*Ad lib.*] Yes, Sam. Guess so. I'm here, Ma. I was on first. We're all here. Etc.

NEWCOM: [*Off.*] Well, Sam, jokin' aside, she looks like a good boat. You ought to make it safe and sound. An' don't worry none. My wagon'll be startin' in an hour, so I'll be there long ahead o' you. Probably have my tavern built.

THOMPSON: You talk big, George Newcom, but we're the ones who'll be waiting for you. [*Both laugh.*] Now, boys, set your poles and start pushing. [*Footsteps on rails and rippling water.*] That's it. She's moving. Keep her close to shore.

VOICES [*Off, ashore.*] Goodbye! Good luck! See you in Dayton! Etc. [*Mingled cheering.*]

KATE: Oh, Sam. Dear, I can hardly believe we've started for our new home. And we *will* be safe, won't we?

THOMPSON: Don't worry, Kate. We'll be all right, all of us. Keep

those poles pushing, boys. That's it. Listen, Kate, you can still hear them cheering us. [*Faint cheering off.*] [*Music.*]

NARRATOR: It took our party of adventurers three days to pole their boat up the Miami to Fort Hamilton. They rested there for a whole day. Sam Thompson visited the fort and talked with the officers and scouts to get advice about the rest of the journey. [*Music.*]

THOMPSON: You say the river's worse from here on, Captain?

CAPTAIN: A lot worse, Mr. Thompson. You'll find some shallow rapids. You may have to unload, carry your stuff up along the bank and work your boat up with lines as well as poles. Your women-folks used to that? [*Thunder off.*]

THOMPSON: You don't know my wife, Kate. It's when there's trouble ahead that she's her real self. She'll answer for the women-folks. (PAUSE) How about Indians up where we're going?

CAPTAIN: Well . . . there's always some danger, but not so much since General Wayne made the treaty. [*Thunder closer.*]

THOMPSON: I reckon that's all, Captain, and thank you kindly. I'll get back to the boat. There's a storm coming up.

CAPTAIN: I'll send an orderly with you. Orderly!

ORDERLY: Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN: Orderly, you'll guide Mr. Thompson to his boat.

ORDERLY: Yes, sir. Follow me, Mr. Thompson.

THOMPSON: Good night, Captain.

CAPTAIN: Good night, Mr. Thompson. [*Door opens and closes. Wind. Thunder.*]

ORDERLY: Stick close. It's mighty dark and this path to the river is narrow and rough. [*Footsteps. Thunder. A panther's scream.*]

THOMPSON: Panther! It makes a man's blood run cold.

ORDERLY: They're after our horses in the stockade. We killed two of them last month. [*Pause. More footsteps.*] We ought to be near where you tied up now.

THOMPSON: [*Shouting.*] Ben Van Cleve! Hello, Ben Van Cleve!

BEN: [*Off.*] Hello, Sam.

THOMPSON: Show a light, Ben. (PAUSE) There it is, down the bank. I'll be all right, now. And thank you, soldier. [*Thunder.*]

ORDERLY: Good night.

THOMPSON: Now, Ben, steady that plank so I can come aboard. It's too cold for a wetting.

BEN: All right, Sam. I've got her. Come ahead. [*Swift footsteps on plank.*]

THOMPSON: Kate, are you all right? And the children?

KATE: All right, Sam. And the children are sound asleep, even little Mary.

MARY: [*Sleepily.*] No, I'm not.

KATE: Well, you should be, Mary Van Cleve. Sam, did you get any more news at the fort? Is it all right?

THOMPSON: It's all right, Kate. We'll be all right. [*Thunder much closer.*] Ben, you and Bill get a cover over the shelter there at the stern, so the women and children can keep dry. We're in for an awful storm. I'll get the plank in. Hurry!

BEN: Haul her tight on your side, Bill.

BILL: All right, Ben, I've got her. [*Heavy thunder on.*]





THOMPSON: That's it, boys. And now let's turn in. We've got to start at sun-up. *[A crack of lightning and thunder on.]* Listen to that! *[Thunder and wind.]* Get inside! Here she comes! *[A terrific crash of thunder, followed by a cloudburst of rain. Full sound of storm holds for a long moment and fades out slowly.]* *[Music]*

NARRATOR: Slowly the Thompson party made its way up the river. Some times they toiled over rapids foot by foot. Some times they were swept out into deep water and carried downstream. But finally, ten days after they left Cincinnati, they noticed a significant change in the river. *[Wood creaking]* - - *[Footsteps along the rails.]*

BEN: Sam, we're sure getting somewhere. Look over there near the other bank. The water's a lot muddier than it is here.

KATE: I've noticed that, too, Sam. Do you think we could be near to Dayton?

THOMPSON: Well, now, I don't know. We've seen mud before, coming in from creeks. We can tell more when we get around this sharp bend just ahead. Let's keep right on poling.

BEN: *[Excitedly.]* Sam, I think we're about there. From up here at the bow you can see clear around the bend. I think I can see the mouth of another river. *[Swift footsteps along rail.]*

THOMPSON: Ben, you're right. That's no creek. It's the Mad River. Folks, we're almost there. All this ground south of the river here is Dayton.

KATE: Oh, Sam, it's beautiful, isn't it? The hills all around the valley seem to protect it, don't they? I can hardly wait for our cabin to be built. I'm going to have a garden for flowers and vegetables, and we'll raise chickens. Sam, I know I'm just going to love our Dayton.

THOMPSON: I'm sure glad you like it, Kate, because it's going to be our home as long as we live. *(PAUSE)* All right, now, boys, work her in toward shore. That's it. Now, let's drive her in as hard as we can, so she'll get beached good and high. All together, now. *Pole!* *[Loud creaking of wood, excited voices.]*

THOMPSON: *[Solemnly.]* Folks, we've reached our new home. In a minute we'll go ashore. But there's something else first. It's taken a lot of courage and a lot of mighty hard work, but it's the grace of Almighty God that's really brought us to this beautiful spot. Let's give thanks. *[Music]*

ALL: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. *[Music.]*

THOMPSON: All right, boys, we'll get the heavy stuff out first. *[Excited voices of children.]* Kate, keep those children quiet and out of the way 'til we get some of this stuff ashore.

KATE: Children, children, stay right here with me. Mary Van Cleve, Mary, where are you? Why, she's slipped off. She's running up the bank. *[Her voice suddenly rises to a scream.]* Sam! Look! Indians! Mary's running right toward them! Sam!

THOMPSON: *[Shouts.]* Mary! Mary! Ben, hand me my gun!

KATE: No, Sam, wait! Don't shoot! Mary's trying to talk to the Indians. They haven't touched her.

THOMPSON: We'd better get to her right away, just the same. Come on, Kate. You, too, Ben.

KATE: Mary! Mary! Stay right where you are! We're coming!

THOMPSON: Wait, Kate. See, the Indians are going into the woods. *[PAUSE]* Now we can go to her.

KATE: *[Coming on.]* Oh, Mary, Mary darling, I was so frightened! You mustn't ever run away like that again!

MARY: It's all right, Mama, only . . . Mama, I was a little scared . . . *[Begins to cry.]* Oh, Mama!

KATE: There, there, Mary darling!

THOMPSON: Kate, look here. Here's one of the trees Dan Cooper marked. See, it says "St. Clair." We'll find others marked "Jefferson" and "Wilkinson" and "Ludlow." Just think, Kate, some day we'll be able to stand right here and look down that way where there's nothing but forest now, and we'll see a wide street all cleared of trees and brush, and maybe there'll be twenty houses along it. And, Kate, the thing that makes me feel good inside is that all those houses, warm and lighted up at night, will be filled with families that have come to live in Dayton and to help us make a mighty fine town! *[Music]*

KATE: Yes, Sam, it's wonderful to think that. It's . . . it's beautiful and . . . and sort of sacred. Oh, Sam, I just can't help crying. *[Sobs softly.]* Hold me in your arms, Sam.

THOMPSON: There, there, Kate darling. Don't cry. We're home now. *[Music.]*

NARRATOR: And that is how the first settlers came to Dayton one hundred and forty-four years ago. A handful of heroic souls come to make their home in the trackless forest. They were the founders of our city. Their day was the first of the Great Days in Dayton! *[Music.]*

ANNOUNCER: "Great Days in Dayton" will be presented to you each Sunday at this time by The Dayton Power and Light Company. It is a thrilling story—a story of heroism and struggle against dangers and privations—of a growing community and its people—of unselfish labor and achievement—of dauntless courage in the face of crisis and tragedy—of eventual triumph. It is the story of the never-failing spirit of a people, a spirit which has carried that people through a century and a half of history and progress, a spirit which has brought Dayton upward from a tiny settlement in the wilderness to its present day position as a world-famous city. *[PAUSE]* The Dayton Power and Light Company takes a special satisfaction in presenting this story because it feels that it has had a definite part in the history of Dayton. From its own early beginnings it has served the homes, businesses and industries of the community. Through the expansion and improvement of its gas, electric and city-steam service, it has helped to build a bigger and better Dayton, a modern and progressive city. It is the hope of The Dayton Power and Light Company that through these broadcasts every citizen of Dayton will gain a better knowledge of Dayton history, a richer understanding of Dayton's achievements, a finer pride in Dayton itself. *[PAUSE]* And now for next week. Today we followed Dayton's first settlers on their perilous journey into the wilderness, sensed their courage and determination, shared with them the thrill of establishing new homes in a community that would thenceforth be their very own. Next week we shall again visit the Dayton of early days, see the first stirrings of community life, face with Dayton's pioneer citizens the adventures which confronted them. Don't miss this second chapter in the thrilling history of Dayton . . . next Sunday at this same hour on Station WHIO. But just a moment! Perhaps you'd like to see as well as hear a "Great Days in Dayton" broadcast. If so, The Dayton Power and Light Company invites you to be its guest. Simply go to the "Great Days in Dayton" box office on the main floor of the Gas and Electric Building, 25 North Main Street. You'll find some tickets there . . . for yourself, your family, your friends. They're free! Just ask for them. *[PAUSE]* These programs originate in the auditorium of the Dayton Art Institute. All dramatic parts are played by the Dayton Civic Theatre professional company. This entire series of broadcasts is presented to you by The Dayton Power and Light Company with the firm conviction that the future, like the past, will see "Great Days in Dayton." *[Music.]* *[Theme for "Great Days in Dayton."]*