

Bend incident with confrontations between the Klan and its opponents in Ohio, Illinois, and elsewhere would have been useful, although mention is made of the 1923 clash in Carnegie, Pennsylvania, that left one Klansman dead. Yet the book has appeal as a personal quest to probe the meaning of an intriguing part of Indiana history.

ALLEN SAFIANOW is professor of history at Indiana University Kokomo. He has written several articles concerning the Klan in Indiana, including "You Can't Burn History": Getting Right with the Ku Klux Klan in Noblesville, Indiana," published by the *Indiana Magazine of History* in June 2004.



### *Running Mad for Kentucky*

#### *Frontier Travel Accounts*

Edited by Ellen Eslinger

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004. Pp. xiii, 288. Map, illustrations, notes, sources, index. \$35.00.)

By mid-eighteenth century, private hunters and traders were tentatively probing the Kentucky country, and speculative land companies were seeking royal charters for acreage to induce settlement. In 1750, Virginian Thomas Walker's scouting expedition found a long-used wild animal and Indian trail, a natural V-shaped passage through the Cumberland Mountains near the juncture of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The Wilderness Road, blazed by Daniel Boone through this Cumberland Gap, and the Ohio River became the principal trans-Appalachian gateways to the conquest and settlement of Kentucky. Together they provided the setting for one of the great migratory epics in the annals of frontier American history that opened up successive Wests across the continent.

Incorporating "Mad" into the title for this volume is perhaps metaphor-

ically overdrawn. To be sure, the movement was at times frenzied, even irrational, motivated by the need and desire of hundreds of families seeking to establish themselves on farms in this new West. This possibility became even more desirable as news trickled back east about the rich soil of Kentucky's bluegrass region.

The volume's lengthy introduction, approximately one-fourth of the text, is a review sketch of the early settlement of Kentucky, including the routes the settlers took and the dangers and obstacles they confronted on their journies. The body of the book consists of excerpts from thirteen travel accounts, dating from 1775 to 1796. Anyone who has used early travel accounts as primary source materials for historical research, or has read them in their edited and published forms, knows that they are often rich lodes of descriptions, observations,

and opinions that vicariously inform the reader of experiences in a way otherwise unattainable.

Of the travelers represented in these accounts, three used the Wilderness Road gateway to Kentucky; nine traveled by way of the Ohio River; and one escorted relatives down the Ohio and returned to Virginia by way of the Wilderness Road. As settlement in Kentucky is proclaimed to be the theme of this book, it should be noted that five of these travelers were motivated by other reasons and had other destinations. Another among them, a slaveholding Virginia plantation owner, expected to relocate to Kentucky but later decided to settle in slave-free territory north of the Ohio.

Of the thirteen accounts, ten have been previously published in full, two are excerpted from the original manuscripts, and the source of the thirteenth is not listed. Only four of the accounts come with any editorial doc-

umentation to help the reader better understand the travel experiences described. Their role here seems to be as appendixes rather than as "edited" centerpieces of the volume.

The "numerous letters and oral histories" and secondary accounts the dust jacket says were used to support the book's introductory essay are cited in the inconveniently located endnotes. A formal bibliography would have been most helpful as a survey to the available literature. With the aid and suggestions of the publisher's editors, this volume might have become a welcome addition to the shelf of books on this important aspect of westering American history.

DWIGHT L. SMITH is professor emeritus of history at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. He has published several travel journals, particularly of early pioneers to the Ohio Valley country.



### *Front Line of Freedom*

*African Americans and the Forging of the Underground Railroad in the Ohio Valley*

By Keith P. Griffler

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004. Pp. xvi, 169. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00.)

### *Fleeing for Freedom*

*Stories of the Underground Railroad As Told By Levi Coffin and William Still*

Edited by George and Willene Hendrick

(Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004. Pp. xi, 209. Map, illustrations, notes. Paperbound, \$14.95.)