Appalachia received its first attention as a barrier to settlers attempting to move westward in the late seventeenth century to early eighteenth. The area called Appalachia is approximately 1,300 miles long, from Vermont to Alabama, and includes steep, rugged mountains. The highest of the mountains in this area, Mt. Mitchell, is only 6,700 feet tall, but "as a whole the mountain slopes occupy 90 percent of the total area and 85 percent of the land has a steeper slope than one foot in five."\(^1\) The easternmost edge of the Southern Appalachian Mountains is made by the Blue Ridge Mountains; the Great Smokies and the Black Mountains contain the highest peaks and together cover a width of 100 miles. The Great Valley runs down the middle of the Appalachian and consists primarily of four valleys: the Central, Southern, East Tennessee, and Southwest Virginia Valleys. The western boundary of the area is the Cumberland Plateau.

As of 1979, "approximately thirteen million people living were born in Appalachia."\(^2\) Nine million were living in the region, and four million born there had migrated, "mostly to northern industrial cities where they tended to gather in ghettos of poverty but, according to observer's who live along the highways
leading out of Appalachia, try to get back "down home" every weekend."³ "Of the thirteen million Appalachians, approximately 94 percent of them are descended from ancestors who were living along the border at the time of the American Revolution. It has been estimated that not more than 30 million of our country's total population of approximately 220 million (in 1979) are descended through all lines from pre-Revolutionary American ancestors. Of these, 43 percent are natives of Appalachia."⁴

The ruggedness of the mountaineer way of life and the fact that these people settled into the mountains immediately upon arriving in America, are major contributing factors to the characteristics of the Appalachian mountaineer. The fact that they settled in the mountains shows that they probably had lived similarly in Europe. Also a way of life can most assuredly be molded by the environment. These two major factors have brought about a type of people who on the whole, look, act, and think alike, regardless of which state they live in. "The North Carolina mountaineer is more like a West Virginian or Eastern Kentuckian than he is like a North Carolinian from east of Greensboro."⁵

The Appalachian has many sound and strong characteristics. He is independent and self-reliant,
loyal, honorable, and fearless. Obviously a person must be exceedingly independent and self-reliant to go into the mountains in heavy Indian country, and build a log cabin. Especially when the closest neighbor is five miles away, which was more often than not the case. The two qualities Appalachians are perhaps best known for are their sense of loyalty and their sense of honor. Just one of the many stories of mountaineer's honor occurred in the Kentucky mountains to "A sheriff who was taking a group of prisoners to Frankfort, the capital, for incarceration in the state penitentiary." Apparently he had more prisoners than his car could hold, so "he permitted "Long Joe" a killer to ride in a car with his brothers without any officer, for Long Joe gave his word of honor that he would not try to escape. Long Joe arrived on time at Frankfort." Similarly, clan loyalty gained attention during the feuds in the nineteenth century, especially during the famous Hatfield and McCoy feud.

In terms of physical characteristics, "the average mountain man is taller than the average American. Appalachian people more often are blond and fair of complexion, have blue or grey eyes, balanced facial features and body proportions, than natives of other sections of the states in which they live."
In order to better understand the Appalachian people, their noble qualities and physical characteristics, we must turn to their ancestors. The two major groups of immigrants which settled in Appalachia were the "Scotch-Irish" and the German. The largest group being the "Scotch-Irish" and other smaller groups consisting of Swiss, Hugenots, Welsh, and English. The most dominant group of immigrants was the "Scotch-Irish" for, "In the process of acculturation, others surrendered their own language for the old-fashioned Northern English dialect spoken by the "Scotch-Irish" as they married into the large Scotch-Irish families and accepted their ways."¹⁹

A better name for the "Scotch-Irish" would have been Anglo-Celts, since the people were not Irish or Scots. "Only a few had Irish names. Regardless of the name, one who came from Northern Ireland was called Scotch-Irish, but he identified himself as "Irish" as many mountain folk continue to do."¹⁰

At any rate, the Scotch-Irish who immigrated to Appalachia came from the Scots who moved to Ireland after it was decided that Northern Ireland "would be cleared of its Catholic population and resettled by the Borderers (Scottish) and those of similar religious stance, who could be depended upon not to com-
promise with the Catholic Irish."\textsuperscript{11} The Scots brought with them their old-fashioned Northern English dialect along with the skills necessary to excel in agriculture, raising livestock, wood working, metal working, textiles, etc. "They developed the finest textile industries in Europe."\textsuperscript{12} They were allowed to have their own Presbyterian Churches and they formed schools which would later become an example for American public schools after the Scotch-Irish arrived in the colonies.

"Accustomed to hilly country and lovers of animals, they followed the open settlement pattern of the Scotch-Irish Border and built homes within clusters of outbuildings settled comfortably in dales and valleys, as they had done in Great Britain. The architecture of homes was essentially the same as that along the Border, including oblong rooms with fireplaces at the end."\textsuperscript{13}

The Scotch-Irish finally left for America after high taxes were imposed on the textile industries, killing the industries and creating poverty. They arrived in America only to find the coastal land already being settled. Most of them had to meet the terms of their indentures, as they did not have enough money to pay for their passage. For the most part these well educated people earned money by tutoring the children of wealthy families. The Scotch-Irish "appear to have
been the best educated large mass of migrants ever to come to America; they moved in search of land to the western border, sometimes carrying with them into the wilderness, copies of Greek and Roman classics in the original language and the English poets in leather bindings."¹⁴ Largely these migrants had entered America through the ports in the Middle Atlantic States and "because treaties with the Indians restricted white settlement to the lands east of the Appalachian Mountains and the French were continuing to hold the Ohio Valley the so-called Scotch-Irish began in the 1730's to move southward in a steady stream into Virginia, the Carolina's and Georgia."¹⁵

The Scotch-Irish ran into problems in Virginia because the Germans had arrived ahead of them and settled the "good land" in the Valley of Virginia. The German immigrants had left Germany for many of the same reasons the Scotch-Irish had left Ireland. They were being overly taxed, persecuted religiously and involved in wars. The first group of German immigrants left Palatine (in southwestern Germany) in 1708 "under their minister Joshua Von Kocherthal. The group numbered ten men, ten women, and twenty-one children whose ages ranged from six months to fifteen years."¹⁶ This first group of Palatines met with great success and founded Newburgh after having been given fifty acres each by
Governor Francis Lovelace, in New York.

Word of the Palatine's success reached back to Germany and caused a mass migration. However, many got no further than London and had to eventually turn back. The Palatine Protestants though, "were transported to New York, whose governor, Colonel Robert Hunter, proposed to employ them in the production of naval stores."¹⁷ These experimental work sites were an immediate failure and left the Palatines on their own. The Palatines bought land from the Indians and farmed as the Indians had shown them. Then again they ran into bad luck being ejected from their land by the government. A majority of them picked up and left for Pennsylvania and settled down near the Swatara and Tulpehocken Creek, upstream from the Susquehanna, "on the rolling countryside so reminiscent of their native Palatine."¹⁸ Gradually, many of those who had settled in Pennsylvania moved south. "The first Palatine to settle in the Valley of Virginia was Adam Müller, who changed his name to Miller."¹⁹ After first seeing the Blue Ridge and building a cabin near Elkton, Miller brought his family and friends. "Within a few years nine plantations containing fifty-one persons, young and old, were flourishing along the Shenandoah River near Massanutten Mountain."²⁰
At about this same time, "another Palatine, Justus Hite - or Joist or Yost Heid, as he variously spelled his name - built in 1731, a cabin destined to become the center of German migration that eventually helped to fill the back country of Virginia."\textsuperscript{21}

In the mean time, the Scotch-Irish "either settled in mountain coves and high meadows along the valley or pushed on through to the Dark Hollow (near Mt. Airy, North Carolina) toward Salisbury, from whence they moved into the hilly country east of the Blue Ridge to claim land and build homes."\textsuperscript{22}

Many of these settlements were looked upon as "welcome buffers between the older English settlements along the coast and the Indians in the mountains."\textsuperscript{23} The mountain settlers still despised taxes, probably partially as a carry over from their former lands, and yearned to live freely on their own. They learned a great deal from the Indians, "how to farm and how to fight."When the American Revolution came", the mountain people "joined the colonial armies in great numbers, and dressed in their coonskin caps, fringed shirts and buckskin pants, did for the patriot cause near the end of the Revolutionary War what the Minute Men had done at Lexington and Concord at its beginning."\textsuperscript{24}
After the war, these German and Scotch-Irish settlers reclaimed their land and set the tone for the characteristics of mountain men throughout Appalachia.
ENDNOTES


2 Cratis Williams, "The Appalachian Experience", p. 4.

3 Ibid., p. 4.

4 Ibid., p. 4.

5 Ibid., p. 4.


7 Ibid., p. 10.

8 Cratis Williams, "The Appalachian Experience," p. 4.

9 Ibid., p. 4.

10 Ibid., p. 5.

11 Ibid., p. 6.

12 Ibid., p. 7.

13 Ibid., p. 7.

14 Ibid., p. 7.

15 Ibid., p. 7.


17 Ibid., p. 27.

18 Ibid., p. 28.

19 Ibid., p. 30.

20 Ibid., p. 30.

21 Ibid., p. 30.

22 Cratis Williams, "The Appalachian Experience", p. 8.

23 Ibid., p. 8.

24 Ibid., p. 8.
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