

An excerpt from the book

**INCIDENTS OF THE INSURRECTION**

**IN THE WESTERN PARTS OF PENNSYLVANIA IN THE YEAR 1794**

by Hugh Henry Brackenridge

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*This is the account of William Miller to Hugh Henry Brackenridge of the events which led to the outbreak of the Whiskey Rebellion. This meeting took place on their return to Peter's Creek following a meeting in Fredericktown.*

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In our company that night, of the four Allegheny members that were along, was one of the name of Miller. When he first joined us I was suspicious of him, knowing that he had been a principal in the two attacks upon the house of the Inspector, and commanding a company upon Peter's Creek, in a settlement through which we had to pass. I did not know but he might have been dispatched with orders to arrest me, as I went through. I communicated this to some of the other members in the company and we took care to ride fast enough not to put it in his power to be much ahead of us. He lodged with us, where we halted a few hours, and slept on the planks at the house of a German.

In the morning when we set out, which was early, on our way, I kept close to him and fell in conversation. He had been in the American service during the war with Great Britain; had been chiefly employed in the western country in the war against the Indians. Had distinguished himself for fidelity, activity, and bravery on every occasion. I led him to talk of his services, and he gave the history of a variety of incidents. Sliding gradually from thence, I touched upon the present affairs of the country; the coming of the Marshall, the opposition to him, the attack upon the house of the Inspector, etc. I knew he had been one of the delinquent distillers, and that it was on leaving his house after having served a writ, that the Marshall had been fired upon; which was the first opposition he had met with in the service of process. Miller gave me, with frankness, a relation of the whole circumstance.

"The Federal sheriff was reading the writ, and General Neville was on horseback in the lane, when he called to the sheriff to make haste. I looked up, and saw a party of men running across the field, as it were to head the sheriff. He set off with Neville, and when they got to the head of the lane, the people fired upon them."

Do you think, said I they fired with balls and meant to hit them? Said he, I believe they meant to hit them; they pursued them and would have killed them.

"That night," continued Miller, "it was concluded that we would go to Neville's and take him and the Marshall. I felt myself mad with passion. I thought 250 dollars would ruin me; and to have to go to federal court at Philadelphia would keep me from going to Kentucky this fall, after I had sold my plantation and was getting ready. I felt my blood boil at seeing General Neville along, to pilot the sheriff to my very door. He had been against the excise law as much as anybody. When old Graham, the excise man was caught and had his hair cut off, I heard General Neville himself say, they ought to have cut off the ears of the old rascal; and when the distillers were sued, some years ago, for fines, he talked as much against it as anybody. But he wanted to keep the assembly then. But whenever he got an offer of the office himself, he took it.

"I am a relation of Kirkpatrick, his mother and my mother were sisters; I was always for General Neville, in his elections; and it put me mad to see him coming to ruin me."

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