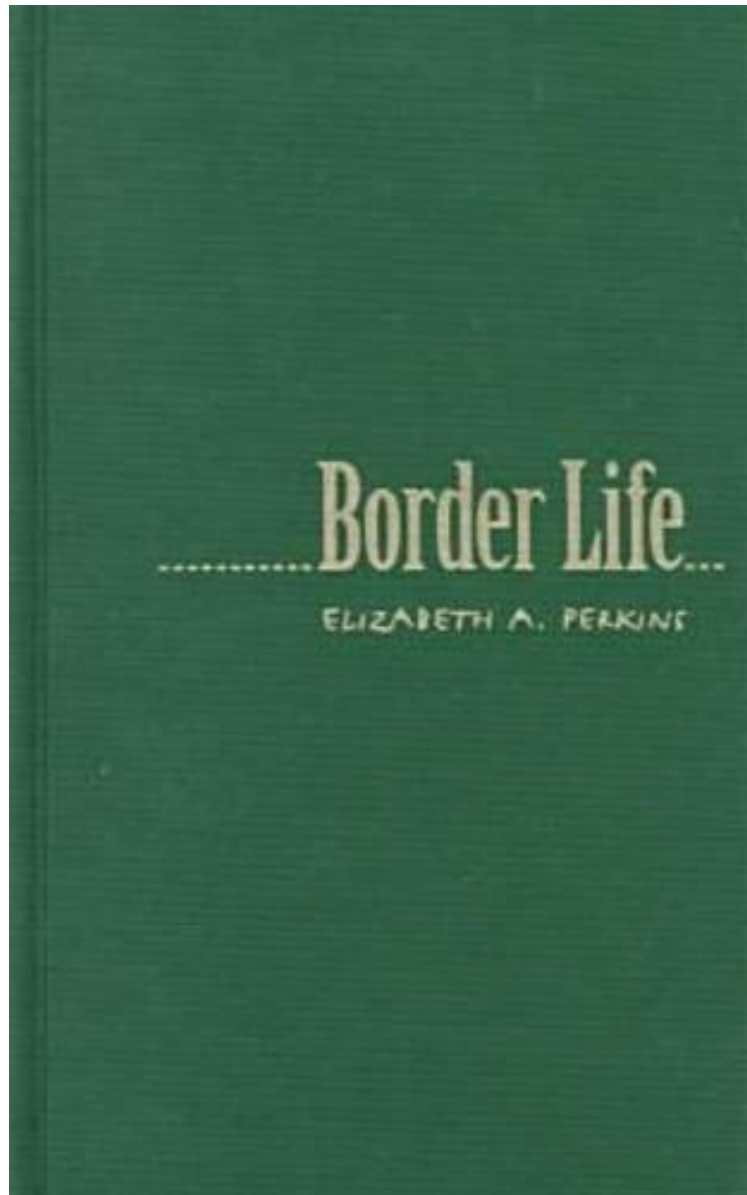


(Download pdf ebook) Border Life: Experience and Memory in the Revolutionary Ohio Valley

Border Life: Experience and Memory in the Revolutionary Ohio Valley

Elizabeth A. Perkins

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In this original and sensitive ethnography of frontier life, Elizabeth Perkins recovers the rhythms of warfare, subsistence, and cultural encounter that governed existence on the margins of British America. Richly detailed, *Border Life* captures the intimate perceptive universe of the men and women who colonized Kentucky and southern Ohio during the Revolutionary era. In reconstructing the mental world of border inhabitants, Perkins draws on a pioneering source in oral history. In the 1840s, the Reverend John Dabney Shane conducted hundreds of interviews with surviving western settlers, gathering their recollections on topics ranging from food preparation to encounters with Native Americans. Although Shane's interviews have long been hailed as a rich, if complicated, source for western history, Perkins is the first scholar to consider them critically, as texts for cultural analysis. *Border Life* also deepens our understanding of how ordinary people struggled to make sense of their own lives within the stream of history. Discovering a significant disjuncture between recorded memory and written history in accounts of the early frontier, Perkins shows how historians and popular authors reshaped the messy complexities of remembered experience into heroic--and radically simplified--conquest narratives.

Marks the emergence of a new generation of frontier studies."Ohio History""An important book, felicitous in its prose, lucid in its analysis, and wide-ranging in its observations. "William and Mary Quarterly""Perkins had given us a wonderful tool through which to teach the social history of the Revolutionary period."Journal of Southern History"A study of ambiguity that utilizes the voices of ordinary people to understand how they coped with frontier life."Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography"An important book, felicitous in its prose, lucid in its analysis, and wide-ranging in its observations. "William and Mary Quarterly"A rich and thought-provoking exploration of important source material from a new perspective."AB Bookman's Weekly" An important book, felicitous in its prose, lucid in its analysis, and wide-ranging in its observations. An extended meditation on the texture and meaning of western settlement in the Revolutionary generation, it is required reading for anyone interested in the origins of American 'border life'.--William and Mary QuarterlyMarks the emergence of a new generation of frontier studies. . . . A superb study.--Ohio History*Border Life* deserves a wide readership. By exposing and analyzing the world of common settlers in the backcountry South, Perkins had given us a wonderful tool through which to teach the social history of the Revolutionary period.--Journal of Southern HistoryThis is one of the only works I know that seriously reconstructs the 'collective memory' of American pioneers. Traditional frontier history told a story of progress. But Perkins provides striking evidence that the settlers knew too much to be seduced by triumphalist tales. She reveals their ambiguous feelings about their life work.--John Mack Faragher, Yale UniversityA study of ambiguity that utilizes the voices of ordinary people to understand how they coped with frontier life.--Pennsylvania Magazine of History and BiographyA rich and thought-provoking exploration of important source material from a new perspective.--AB Bookman's WeeklyFrom the Inside FlapUses interviews from the 1840s to describe pioneer life among the colonists of Kentucky and southern Ohio during the Revolutionary era. Shows how historians and authors can change remembered experience into conquest narratives.