

# KENTUCKY'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR HERITAGE GUIDE

## Leestown Franklin County April 1776 **1**

The Indians attacked the village called Leestown killing Willis Lee, a member of the famous family from Stafford, Virginia and wounding Cyrus McCracken. The town was later abandoned, and the survivors fled to Harrodsburg. Willis Lee, shot and found by Daniel Campbell and Robert Edminston, "a pail of water sitting by his head, his hands lying on his breast and blood coming up through his fingers"

## McClelland's Fort at Royal Springs December 1776 **2**

Chief Pluggy and about 50 Indian warriors started down the Ohio River with the intention of raiding settlements in Kentucky. In route they discovered George Rogers Clark and some men taking gunpowder to Kentucky by boat. The Indians attempted to capture this party but they eluded the Indians, hid their gunpowder on an island, and landed their boats at Limestone, and continued toward the Kentucky settlements on foot. Three days later they reached the abandoned Hinkston's Stations where they were met with a large party of men commanded by John Todd. While Clark and two others continued on to Harrodsburg for help, Todd led themen back past the Blue licks to engage the Indians. A battle ensued on Christmas day and Todd, outnumbered, lost four men killed or captured, and together they returned to McClelland's Station. Soon after the Indians attacked this fort, McClelland and Charles White were mortally wounded, and John Todd was wounded. Chief Pluggy was killed during the attack and the other Indians retreated. George Rogers Clark returned with reinforcements, retrieved the gun powder and escorted the widows, orphans and remaining able bodied men to Harrodsburg

## Ft. Harrod Harrodsburg December 31, 1776 **3**

Increased harassment by Indian tribes and indifference towards Kentucky by the Virginia legislature led Clark to call a meeting of representatives from all Kentucky-based forts at Harrodsburg. Clark expressed the vital need of securing for Kentucky a government with both military authority and an organized militia. At the time, the Virginia militia, as well as the rest of the nation, was preparing for war with Britain and left Kentucky, a district in the far reaches of Virginia's Fincastle County, virtually defenseless against not only the Indians, but also British marauders. Clark and the other settlers concluded that either they could pledge alliance with the British, or seek inclusion of Kentucky as a separate Virginia county. In Kentucky's first election, Clark and John Gabriel Jones, were elected as deputies of the people and were sent to negotiate with Virginia's governor, Patrick Henry, for favorable terms of inclusion into Virginia's jurisdiction as a separate entity, and also for government assistance for the protection of the beleaguered forts. On December 31, 1776, Kentucky County of Virginia was created, and five hundred pounds of gunpowder was supplied to defend the settlements against Indian attack. As an added bonus, Clark, only 24 years old, was given command of the Kentucky militia.

Go to [www.graphicenterprises.net](http://www.graphicenterprises.net) for Revolutionary War reenactments and events.

## Ft Harrod Harrodsburg March, 1777 **3**

A party of 70 Indians killed and scalped William Ray on March 6. The settlers hid in a tree top and watched wild orgies over the body. On the following day the Indians attacked Harrodsburg, killed one man and wounded 4, one of whom died a few days later. They attacked Harrodsburg again on March 28 and killed 2 men. The Indians stayed outside the fort at least until April 9. Indians were seen outside the fort on the 1st, 4th and 6th of May

## Boonesboro Madison County 1777 **4**

The total population in Kentucky numbered about 250. Twenty two guns were reported to be defending Boonesboro . It was attacked in March and April. Daniel Boone, John Todd, Michael Stoner and Isaac Hite were wounded during the second attack. Simon Kenton saved Daniel Boone's life by killing the Indian who wounded Daniel, then carried him into the fort. The 40 -100 Indians were heard imitating owls and turkeys. On May 23, the Indians made a third attack. After killing most of the livestock, Black Fish moved his main force, of 52, to Boonesboro. George Rogers Clark reported, "A large party of Indians attacked Boonesboro Forts, kept a warm fire until 11 o'clock at night, began it the next morning and kept a warm fire until midnight. Attempted several times to burn the fort- 3 of our men were wounded, not mortally. The enemy suffered considerably."

## Logan's Fort Stanford May 27, 1777 **5**

After abandoning the attack on Boonesboro, the Indians moved to the southeast, and attacked Logan's Fort, defended by only 15 men, but he defenders were ready for them. The attack continued for several days without any casualties and by May 30, the Indians were no longer seen, so the defenders thought they had left. Several women left the fort to procure milk and walked into A trap where, William Hudson, their protector was killed. The defenders watched the Indians scalp him. Later, Benjamin Logan rescued Burr Harrison by crawling out to him and dragging him into the fort behind a bag of wool. The Indians departed June 1st.

## Harrodsburg June, 1777 **3**

Although Indians were frequently seen around the fort, there were no casualties until Barney Stagner strayed too far looking for his horse and was caught; they cut off his head.

## Near Logan's Station July, 1777 **5**

Near Logan's Fort, Andrew Grayson (spelled Gressom in John Cowan's journal) was killed by Indians and left on his body a proclamation offering good treatment to all who deserted the American cause. Anyone willing to serve the British until the end of the rebellion was promised 200 acres of land.

## Boonesboro July/September, 1778 **4**

Attacks started in July around Logan's Fort , where several were killed by Indians. In September, firing at Boonesboro lasted nine days. A homemade cannon , made by Squire Boone, was put to use but found not too efficient if many Indians were not close together. The Indians dug a 40 foot tunnel which collapsed due to rain. Pompey, the former slave hired by the Shawnee as translator was killed on the third day. Daniel Boone was accused of conspiring with the enemy.

## Licking River Campbell and Kenton Counties October 4, 1779 **6**

David Rogers set off toward Pittsburgh carrying gunpowder. Indians led by Simon Girty and British agent Matthew Elliot ambushed him and killed 42. The Indians lost 2. Girty boasted he took a fine brace of pistols belonging to Rogers

## Ruddles Station Harrison County June 24, 1780 **7**

A force of about 200 British soldiers and 500 Indians under Captain Henry Bird took advantage of the flooding of the Licking River and moved southward by water bringing artillery with them. Arriving at Ruddle's Station , the wooden forts could not withstand the firepower of the British, and surrendered. 60 fighting men and 100 civilians were captured.

## Martin's Station Bourbon County June 25, 1780 **8**

In June, The wood palisades were no match for cannonballs and Martin's fort surrendered also. Captain Henry Bird with a force of about 150-200 British regulars, has captured about 60 fighting men, 100 women and children. During the escort to Detroit many died and some were murdered by the Indians Bird could not restrain.

## Ft Jefferson Ballard County August, 1780 **9**

Indians ambushed some slaves working in a corn field and began firing at the fort, killing 4 and most of the livestock. Lt. John Whitehead, from Florida demanded the defenders surrender.

## Long Run Creek Jefferson County September, 1781 **10**

After the settlers at Squire Boone's Painted Stone station had been continually harassed for several months, their leader and others wounded , they decided to abandon the station and move closer to Louisville, where they assumed they would be safer. In route they were attacked at Long Run of Floyd's Fork, and about a dozen were killed. The following day, September 14, Colonel John Floyd assembled 27 of his "Horse Militia" and rode back to the site where they unexpectedly encountered about 200 Indians. In the ensuing battle, the horse militia was defeated, and their wounded colonel lost 18 of his men.

## Estill's Station and Little Mountain Montgomery and Madison County March, 1782 **11**

When Captain James Estill and his men went looking for Indians known to be in the vicinity, they surrounded his station and killed and scalped a young woman, then thinking the fort was well manned they retreated northeast. They were followed by Captain Estill and his men who caught up with them at Little Mountain creek. The following fight lasted two hours and resulted in nine deaths.

## Holder's defeat at Upper Blue Licks Battle Run Branch Licking River August 12-14, 1782 **12**

A party of Indians captured two boys near Hoy's Station located on Otter Creek in Madison County. Captain John Holder together with Captain William Hoy, the father of one of the captured boys, assembled the militia and went in pursuit, gathering additional militia men along the way. They pursued Indians to the east side of the Upper Blue Lick where they were ambushed and one man was killed and three wounded. Hoy and the remaining men retreated, leaving the wounded men on the field. The initial attack by the Indians failed but they managed to set several buildings on fire. Around 10 AM the relief force arrived and 16 horsemen were able to get into the fort. Those on foot suffered casualties and returned to Lexington in order to recruit a larger force. The Indians continued their attack on the fort until nightfall, suffering five or six casualties. They then demanded that the fort be surrendered. The leaders refused, knowing more reinforcements were on the way. The Indians feasted on the settlers livestock and vegetables and then headed for home. The day after the attack only a few reinforcement arrived , but on the second day a large party of militia arrived from Lincoln County and with the Fayette County men, the force numbered 182. The Ranking officer was Colonel John Todd, the same man who had been defeated by the Indians near Blue Lick in 1776. By coincidence, Captain Caldwell and most of his Indians used the same trail to the Lower Blue Lick as Todd used in 1776 and with the same result.

## Bryan's Station Fayette County August 15-16, 1782 **13**

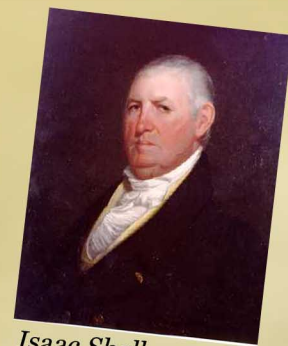
In August , British agents Captain William Caldwell, Alexander McKee, along with Simon Girty and his brother collected a large number of Indians with the intention of attacking Louisville. However, the Indians decided the fort at Louisville was too strong and instead they would attack Bryan Station near Lexington, which was the largest fort in Fayette County, manned by 44 guns. They hoped to surprise the fort but this was not successful as two horsemen were able to escape from the fort and seek help at nearby Lexington.

## Battle of Blue Licks Nicholas/ Robertson Counties August 19 1782 **14**

On the morning of August 19, the militia under Todd crossed the Licking River at the Lower Blue Lick, proceeded up the hill on the other side to do battle, in spite of being outnumbered. They were outflanked and defeated, and lost about 75 men , killed and captured. A big problem for the Kentuckians is they lost a large number of their ranking officers in the first volley, including Colonel John Todd. Lt Col. Daniel Boone and Major Hugh McGary were the only ranking officers to survive. Another problem in retreat was the fact that the only good way to escape was to cross the river at a narrow ford, under fire.

## Kincheloe Station Nelson County September 2, 1782 **15**

On 2 September 1782, about two weeks after the defeat at Blue Licks, another attack occurred, a large party of 150 Indians made a night attack on Kincheloe Station, killing or capturing 37 people residing there. Only a few managed to escape in the darkness to nearby Cox Station. On their way back to Ohio with their captives, they camped near the present Shelbyville and invited the Jefferson County militia under Colonel John Floyd to attack them, but Floyd, who had only 65 militia fit for duty, remembering his past defeat at Long Run Creek, refused to attack them.



Isaac Shelby

## Veterans of American Revolution Elected Governor of Kentucky

( Marker Number 1372)  
County: Franklin  
Location: Old State Capitol, Frankfort

Isaac Shelby	1792-96	Col. Va. Militia
James Garrard	1796-1800	Col. Va. Militia
Christopher Greenup	1804-8	Col. Va. Militia
Charles Scott	1808-12	Brevet Maj. Gen. Cont. Army
George Madison	1816- died	Capt. Carolina Militia, Va.
John Adair	1820-24	brig. Gen. S.C. Line

## First Ferry in Kentucky

( Marker Number 1578)  
County: Madison  
Location: 500 ft. N of Main Entrance  
Boonesborough State Park KY 388

License for first ferry established in state, Oct. 1779, was granted to Col. Richard Calloway by Virginia legislature. The fare for man or horse was three shillings ( 50 cents) Col. Richard Calloway was a colonel in the Revolutionary War. He was killed in the process of building this ferry by Indians March 8, 1780

## Clark's Land

(Marker Number 1352)  
County: McCracken  
Location: Entrance to roadside park, adjacent to Jct. of US 60 & 68

George Rogers Clark was original patentee of land on which Paducah is now located. Clark's Army of 200 faithful followers, camped on June 27, 1778 on nearby Owen's island, just 4 days after starting from Corn Island Falls of Ohio. A small hunting party appeared soon afterwards, giving valuable information about Kaskaskia. Clark recruited the m and proceeded under severe hardship to defeat the British and save Illinois country for US .



George Rogers Clark

With the ammunition supplied by Virginia, Kentucky County was still unable to protect itself from Indian attacks. In 1777, Clark returned to Virginia to gain support for an expedition against British posts in Illinois. Clark hoped that the gaining of this territory would create a buffer zone around Kentucky, decreasing settler vulnerability to both British and Indian forces. Virginia promoted him to lieutenant colonel in the militia and gave him secret written orders to attack. With only 175 men and a few settlers, Clark set up a fort near the Falls of the Ohio, Corn Island, which would later become Louisville. There the small fleet of Clark's men, disguised as Indians and with faces smeared with dark mud, embarked upon the journey to Illinois in canoes and shot the falls. Unfortunately, during the ordeal, a total eclipse of the sun caused many of the superstitious men to desert, leaving Clark with about 150 men. Clark was able to persuade a few to return, citing the eclipse as a good omen, but most did not. Clark was successful at capturing Kaskaskia and Cahokia; Kaskaskia was captured without the loss of a single life. British forces at Vincennes, on hearing the news, voluntarily changed allegiance to the United States. Clark was also able to win the support of the French inhabitants. British, in an effort to block the patriots access to Fort Detroit, sent Lt. Gov. Henry Hamilton to Vincennes to counter Clark's move to Kaskaskia. Hamilton, known as "The Hair Buyer," not only commanded British troops, but also a group of Indian bounty hunters who received their wages based on the number of American scalps and prisoners they provided to Hamilton. Hamilton's forces counterattacked in 1778, and temporarily regained the territory. However, Clark and his force of 130 men, which included 60 Frenchmen, marched overland through partially frozen and flooded Illinois prairies to surprise British forces at Fort Sackville in Vincennes. Although Clark's men had suffered greatly from exposure to the elements and from the lack of food, Clark did not wait to attack. After a short siege, the fort surrendered, and the United States was able to claim territory spanning Kentucky to Detroit.

Using intelligence, daring, persuasion, and psychology, Clark had siezed the Illinois Territory and became known as the "Conqueror of the Northwest." Many of his military strategies were based solely on inspired fear and bluff, which saved many lives on both sides. Letters and diaries of members of his detachments show that he enjoyed an unusual rapport with his men, inspiring them to believe that they, even in small numbers, were unbeatable. Clark continued to lead military actions in the Northwest until the end of the War in 1783.

# SITES TO VISIT!

Visit the Historical Marker Database [Kentucky.gov/hyhs/MarkerSearch](http://Kentucky.gov/hyhs/MarkerSearch)  
Over 100 markers name related Revolutionary War places and people.  
Here are just a few of the notable places to visit!



## Sportsman's Hill

(Marker Number: 982)  
County: Lincoln  
Location: At William Whitley House, US 150

Site of one of earliest circular racetracks. Crowd gathered within the half-mile track, able to see entire race. Built about 1780 by Col. Wm. Whitley, owner of estate. A fervent patriot, he built track to contrast with the British ones, using clay instead of turf and running races counter-clockwise instead of clockwise. Racing here ended with the Civil War. Whitley House-1785 - Located on the Wilderness Road, it was the first brick house in Ky. Situated so that racetrack was visible from it. Meetings held in fall, bringing elite of region here. After races, which started at dawn, lavish breakfast was served. Whitley, born Va., 1749. Famed Indian fighter; killed, Battle of the Thames, Canada, 1813. Whitley County, Ky., named for him.

## The Point

( Marker Number 1472)  
County: Kenton  
Location: George Rogers Clark Park, Riverside Dr., Covington

Confluence of Ohio and Licking rivers. Christopher Gist, Agent of the Ohio Company, was the first white man known to have set foot on Point, 1751. The Lieutenant of Kentucky Co. Va., Col. Bowman, led expedition from here against Shawnee Indians in Ohio, 1777, Gov. Isaac Shelby rendezvoused 4,000 Ky troops here before his victory at Thames, 1813. Many other pioneer leaders made the Point a base for military operations, among them, Benjamin Logan, Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton and George Rogers Clark and his regiments met here before crossing the Ohio to attack the Shawnees. Second expedition was to avenge the battle of Blue Licks; 5 Indian towns were destroyed.

## Revolutionary War Widow

(Marker Number: 1314)  
County: Logan  
Location: 2 mi. SE of Russellville, KY 100

Description: Abigail, wife of General Daniel Morgan, died in 1816 and was buried in family cemetery 1/2 mi. south. Her husband, one of

*War Widow continued....*

Washington's chief strategists during the Amer. Revolution, campaigned from Boston and Quebec, 1775, to the Carolinas, 1781. After Morgan's death and burial in Va., 1802, Mrs. Morgan came here and lived in this area about 10 years.

## Boone's Station

(Marker Number: 2230)  
County: Fayette  
Location: 240 Gentry Road, Athens

Description: Daniel Boone surveyed this site in 1774 for a 4,000-acre land grant to James Hickman. In Dec.1779, Boone and other families lived here in crude shelters; in 1780, built cabins & stockade. By 1783, the station included 15-20 families. Among these, Boone's brother Edward, son Israel, and nephew Thomas were killed in final stages of Rev. War. Boone occupied the station until 1784 and his sister's family was there until 1814. Robert Frank bought it in 1795 and built a stone mansion which survived into the 1800s. In 1991, Robert C. Strader willed some 47 acres, including the site of the station, to the state. Boone's Station State Park opened in 1992.

## Capt. John Craig's Fort

(Marker Number: 1624)  
County: Woodford  
Location: At church, near Jct. KY 33 & 169

Description: John Craig, who was Commander during siege at Bryan's Station in August, 1782, and one of the first trustees of Transylvania Seminary, built a fort and settled near here on Clear Creek in early 1783. He gave land inducements in exchange for assistance in building the fort and blockhouse. Many descendants of these settlers still live in the area. Clear Creek Baptist Church - Land for this church was deeded to the trustees of Clear Creek by John Craig, whose fort was nearby. Church was established in April, 1785; John Taylor was the first pastor. During Great Revival its membership grew to about 500. Outgrowths of this congregation have been Hillsborough, Griens Creek and Versailles Baptist churches.

*"I carry in my right hand war, and peace in my left... Here is a bloody belt and a white one. Take which you please." - Clark, Speech to the Indian Chiefs at Cahokia (1778)*

*"Great things have been affected by a few men well conducted." - Clark, to Patrick Henry, then Governor of Virginia (1779)*

The fact both Kentucky and Virginia entrusted Clark with such great responsibility at such a young age, when most government officials and military leaders were much older, was indicative of Clark's personal charisma, leadership ability, and mental acumen. Even in the face of loss, Clark's men, and even his enemies, retained a great respect for him.