

**384. Jacobus Van Westervelt**, born September 07, 1712 in Hackensack, Bergen County, New Jersey; died Abt. December 1743 in Tappan, Bergen County, New Jersey. He was the son of **768. Jan Lubbert Van Westervelt** and **769. Dirckje Huybertse Blaeuvelt**. He married **385. Deborah Van Schuyven** December 28, 1733 in Schraalenburg, New Jersey.

**385. Deborah Van Schuyven**, born Abt. 1717 in Bergen County, NJ; died Abt. 1747 in Burlington County, NJ. She was the daughter of **770. Jan Wouterse Van Schuyven** and **771. Geertje Maris**.

Children of Jacobus Van Westervelt and Deborah Van Schuyven are:

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- i. Jacobus Westervelt, born July 01, 1737 in Tappan, New Jersey; died Abt. 1785 in Bullitt County, KY; married Maria Demaree November 05, 1754 in Schraalenburg, New Jersey.
- ii. Jan Westervelt, born Abt. 1735 in Bergen County, NJ; married Antie Dey.
- iii. Isaac Westervelt, born January 26, 1739/40 in Bergen County, NJ; died Abt. 1775 in NJ; married Vrouwtie Adrianse Abt. 1765.
- iv. Dirckje Westervelt, born January 16, 1741/42 in Tappan, Bergen County, New Jersey.

### **Death of Jacobus Westerfield**

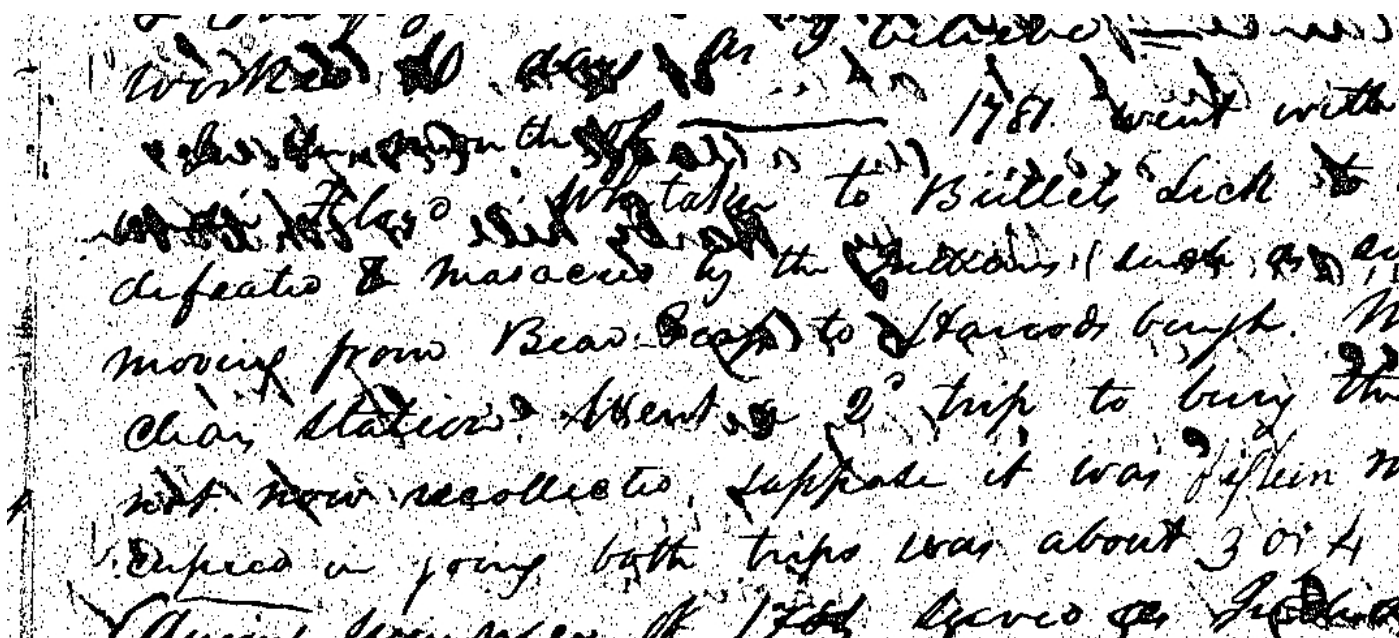
**The Westervelt Massacre** (also known as the **Westerfield Massacre**) was an indigenous attack on a caravan of Dutch frontier settlers that occurred during the American Revolutionary War around 3:00 am on June 27, 1780 in Kentucky County, Virginia. The settlers were traveling southeast from Low Dutch Station to Harrod's Town. The settler relocation was in part a reaction to British Captain Henry Bird's invasion of Kentucky. The area immediately east of Low Dutch Station had been overrun with British allied Indians. Harrod's Town was fortified and a move south would lead the settlers away from Captain Bird's invading army from the north. The caravan was ambushed in a surprise attack, during the night, after a day's travel of twelve miles. The exact location of the massacre is not definitively known. However, it is likely to have occurred at Floyd's Fork and Broad Run. The caravan was formed by Jacobus Westervelt and consisted of forty-one settlers from ten different families. Ten of the seventeen settlers killed were members of the Westervelt family. The victims included men, women, and children. The Indians responsible for the massacre were allied to the British and received £5 for each victim's scalp cut off and returned to the British authorities. The Indians were thus awarded £85 by the British for massacring the Dutch settlers. The Westervelt Massacre had a chilling effect on the region. A number of settlers from Low Dutch Station joined Colonel George Rogers Clark's militia after the massacre.

## Westerfield Massacre

A recent inquiry led us to research the facts of an Indian attack on a group in 1781 who were going from Floyd's Station on Beargrass Creek to Harrodsburg by way of the Wilderness Road.

There are conflicting reports on exactly where the attack took place. John Ryker, in his 1834 Revolutionary War pension application, made the following statement:

"In the month of \_\_\_ 1781 went with a party of men under Floyd Whittaker to Bullets Lick to bring back families defeated and massacred by the Indians (such as survived) while moving from Beargrass to Harrodsburgh, massacre was at Clear Station. Went on 2nd trip to bury the dead. Distance not now recollected, suppose it was fifteen miles. Time occupied in going both trips was about 3 or 4 days."



Ryker's account would lead us to conclude that the attack took place at Clear's Station, and that the survivors fled to Bullitt's Lick for shelter. However, other accounts raise questions about that location.

James Moore has posted an extensive description of this event on the Dutch Cousins in Kentucky pages on Facebook, and we have quoted excerpts from it below.

From *The Draper Manuscript*, Series CC Vol. 13, pp 11-12 is testimony of Mrs. Strong about her father John Thickston (the Westervelt's guide).

In it she identifies many of the victims, including the John Westervelt (Westerfield) family, and states that John Thickston escaped and "ran, till he came to Clear Station, near Bullit's Lick, guided by the crowing of the roosters."

This suggests that the campsite was near enough to Clear's Station that Thickston could locate it from the sound of roosters crowing the dawn, but not at the station itself.

In the testimony of Hiram Stafford, son of Leah Westerfield who escaped during the attack (*The Draper Manuscript*, Lyman C. Draper, Boone Papers, Series C, Vol. 24, pp 145, 145-1, 145-2, 28 March 1865), he stated that "about 30 persons started from Louisville to the station, camped for the night on the waters of bargrass about 12 miles out and sometime in the night was attacked by a party of indians while asleep, and but few escaped death."

Clearly Mr. Stafford was mistaken about the name of the creek since Beargrass Creek is too far from Clear's Station for Thickston to have reached it in time to hear the roosters crowing. It is more likely that they were near one of the small streams that pass through north-central Bullitt County today.

Later Mr. Stafford gave an additional statement (*The Draper Manuscripts*, Boone Papers, Series C, Vol. 2, pp 148, 148-1, 148-2, 16 May 1865) in which he said, "My Father was born in Amelia Co., Vir. in 1753. (He) came to Ky when Col. Boon moved his family out on his second trip. My father resided in Ky until his death June 1820- 67 years old. Married Leah Westerfield, 16 years old, near Dicks River (in) 1783. I have no record by which I can give (a) positive date. It is from information received mostly from others... So far as recollected, my grand father, James Westerfield, (Sr.) emigrated to Ky (in) 1780 from Berkeley Co. Virginia. (He) landed at Louisville, Ky in the spring with others... by way of Pittsburgh down the Ohio. Left Louisville for Harrod's Station. (They) camped about 12 miles out, (and were) attacked by a party of indians while in camp. All the movers (were) massacred, except

my grand mother, Leah, Deborah, Isaac, Rebecca, Catharine - My Mother, Leah late Westerfield---Deborah and Polly Westerfield, daughter of John Westerfield, her distant cousin was taken to Detroit, hence to Montreal. (They) remained in captivity (for) two years. (They) got released and returned by way of Philadelphia, PA."

For more details about the event and the people involved, you are encouraged to visit the Facebook site mentioned above.

We cannot say with certainty where this attack took place. If they were camped on a stream, it might have been Clear Run, a tributary of Floyd's Fork. Or it could have been near Brooks Run which is another creek crossed by the Wilderness Road before you get to Clear's Station.

Wherever it occurred, it seems likely that it was in what was to become Bullitt County.

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If you, the reader, have an interest in any particular part of our county history, and wish to contribute to this effort, use the form on our [Contact Us](#) page to send us your comments about this, or any Bullitt County History page. We welcome your comments and suggestions. If you feel that we have misspoken at any point, please feel free to point this out to us.

## **Long Run Massacre**

In September 1781, settlers at Squire Boone's Station, in present-day Shelby County, alarmed by indications of an impending Indian attack, decided to retreat to the safety of the stations along Beargrass Creek closer to Louisville. On September 15, 1781, as the settlers and their militia escort approached the Long Run tributary to Floyds Fork, they were ambushed by Indians under the command of British Captain Alexander McKee.



Seven settlers were killed, including some women, before the Indians were driven off. The incident became known as the Long Run Massacre. The next day [John Floyd](#) gathered together 26 militia and volunteers to return to the site of the massacre, bury the dead and pursue the Indians. Their pursuit led them to a place near present-day Eastwood where a few Indians, acting as decoys, led Floyd and his party into an ambush. Seventeen of Floyd's men were killed.

1780 June 27 [Westervelt Massacre](#)

Seventeen Dutch settlers killed and two taken captive out of a caravan of 41. The settler caravan was traveling between Low Dutch Station, Kentucky and Harrod's Town, Kentucky. The victims were all scalped and sold to the British for a bounty.

Spring of 1780, Falls of the Ohio (now Louisville)

Our brave DUTCH families had made it across the Appalachians, down the wild untamed river. They had escaped the Indians and had avoided the Falls, but the danger was not over for them when they climbed out of their boats onto dry land.

In 1780 the Revolutionary War was still going on, and Kentucky would not reach statehood for twelve more years. It was a dangerous place.

Jacobus Westervelt, born 1735 NJ, father of the Rev. War Vet James Westerfield who married Phoebe Cozine, led an expedition of family and friends in the spring of 1780 to Kentucky, still a territory of Virginia. The first part of their journey from Fort Pitt down the Ohio was uneventful; however, the Revolutionary War was still going on, and Kentucky would not reach statehood for twelve more years. This was a dangerous frontier and the natives did not welcome intruders. At that time there was nothing where Louisville now stands, except a few log cabins. The settlement at the Falls of the Ohio consisted of a blockhouse, eighteen cabins on Corn Island, a small fort, a large fort, and a few cabins scattered through the woods, all occupied by about 100 inhabitants. The District of Kentucky at that time was a county of the colony of Virginia.(4)

Samuel Demaree, Sr, was probably the oldest man in the 1780 Dutch migration to Kentucky. Born in 1707, he would have been 73 at the time. He was the father-in-law of "Father" Henry Banta, who led the Conewago migration down the Ohio. He was also father-in-law of Jacobus Westerfield/velt. Demaree's large family apparently established the first Low Dutch connections with Squire Boone.(1)

The elder Westervelt, a giant of a man said to weigh more than 300 lbs, planned to take his family overland to Harrod's Fort, now Harrodsburg, on the Salt River.

The group stopped for the night to camp at Bullitt's Station (probably now Shepherdsville, a suburb south of Louisville). During the night when the Dutch group fell asleep, the Indians attacked.

Two of Westervelt's daughters were killed, as well as several other members of his group. His daughter Deborah and niece Polly were taken captive to Canada and sold to the French as servants for a time. His wife, Maria Demaree, was captured sometime later while on horseback. She was taken to Detroit by the Indians as well, and later returned.

The huge Dutchman, however, was killed outright. The story is told that three of the natives buttoned themselves up in Westervelt's enormous coat and danced in celebration. (Draper's Manuscript\*)

A group of settlers nearby heard of the raid and came the next day and buried all twenty victims in a mass grave. That exact burial place, now unknown, would probably be in a suburb of Louisville.