

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN KENTUCKY

1781

**“The Long Run Massacre (Boone’s Defeat)
and Floyd’s Defeat”**

by

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NOTE

This is a copy of a working manuscript draft intended for publication at some later date. The author welcomes any additional information or suggestions.

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THE LONG RUN MASSACRE (BOONE'S DEFEAT) AND FLOYD'S DEFEAT

The American Revolution in Kentucky 1781

The countless Kentucky settlers who risked their lives on an everyday basis in the 1770's and early 1780's played a critical role in America's revolutionary struggle. By maintaining America's presence in the west, they assured the expansion of this nation beyond the Alleghenies. The foundation for America's claim to the west was laid by George Rogers Clark's conquest of the Illinois country for 1778-79. The prize so daringly won by Clark's small force was held throughout the Revolution and for years after in the face of a savage British policy designed to drive the American pioneer from the west. From their post at Detroit the British directed the full brunt of Indian hostility against the Kentucky settlements. Raiding parties and war parties swept across the Ohio superbly equipped with British guns and supplies and staffed with British officers. No one was immune from the bloody work of the savages. By stealth they attacked the farmer tending his fields or woman or child who strayed too far from the protective station. From ambush they attacked the militia units hastily formed for retaliation. The incidents are countless. The Long Run Massacre and Floyd's Defeat are only two such incidents, but they are very representative of the type of warfare which took place in this state 200 years ago.

George Rogers Clark realized that the way to break the British influence in the west was through the reduction of the post at Detroit. He came close to attempting it in 1779 after his spectacular capture of Vincennes, but the

undertaking was postponed “for want of a few men”.¹ The events of 1779 and 1780 only reinforced Clark’s conviction that Detroit held the solution to Kentucky’s problem. By late 1780 Governor Thomas Jefferson of Virginia was convinced as well.

On Christmas Day 1780, Governor Jefferson penned a long letter of instructions to Clark. A force of 2000 men was to rendezvous at the Falls of the Ohio on March 15, 1781 under Clark’s command for the long-awaited Detroit expedition. Well over half the men were to be provided by the Eastern frontier counties of Virginia. The expedition was also to be generously supplied from the East. One thousand pounds of rifle powder and 1500 pounds of lead were to be taken on 300 pack horses overland to the Falls. Another 1000 pounds of rifle powder, four tons of cannon powder, 400 camp kettles, 200,000 rations of beef and flour, medicine, tents and clothing together with cannon and other artillery from Fort Pitt were to be floated down the Ohio on 100 light barges.²

If it had materialized, the expedition would have been the largest yet undertaken west of the Alleghenies by Americans or British. Unfortunately the 1781 Detroit campaign was not to be. Preparations for the campaign triggered a chain of events which culminated in three American defeats - Lochry’s, Boone’s and Floyd’s. But the long-term effects of not taking Detroit in 1781 were even more disastrous to the frontier. It was not until Anthony Wayne’s victory at Fallen

¹ Clark to George Mason, November 19, 1779, James Alton James, ed., George Rogers Clark Papers, 1771-1784, 2 volumes. (Springfield, Illinois, 1912, 1926). 1: 146

² Jefferson to Clark, December 25, 1780, *ibid.*, 485-490. Ohio and Monongalia Counties were to furnish one-fourth of their militia while Hampshire was to furnish 255 men; Berkeley, 275; Frederick, 285; and Greenbriar, 137. The Kentucky counties - Fayette, Lincoln and Jefferson - were to supply 500 men, nearly half their militia. The remainder of the 2000 men would come from the Illinois Battalion, Crockett’s Battalion and Slaughter’s Corps.

Timbers in August 1794 that the frontier was to enjoy the kind of Indian peace which might have come thirteen years earlier had the campaign been successfully carried out.

Preparations for the 1781 campaign were beset with serious problems from the very beginning. Rendezvous dates were repeatedly postponed because of delays and difficulties in accumulating the necessary supplies for the expedition. But in the end, provisions, ammunition, artillery and boats for an army of 2000 were collected and taken to Kentucky.³ The inability to collect the necessary men was the ultimate cause of failure for the 1781 campaign. The Eastern frontier of Virginia was unwilling to comply with a draft for service in the West. The draft was replaced with an ineffective call for volunteers. Clark was denied a significant portion of 200 regulars which he had been led to believe would partially offset the lift of the draft. By mid-May Clark began to concentrate recruiting efforts in the Pennsylvania counties of the Pittsburgh region where settlers had the most to gain from a successful Detroit campaign. He was materially assisted by the efforts of Westmoreland County Lieutenant Archibald Lochry. But drafts and calls for volunteers were little more successful in this region than in the Virginia counties. A long-standing rivalry between Virginia and Pennsylvania did much to inhibit cooperation in the area.⁴

³ William Croghan to Colonel Davies, August 18, 1781, *ibid.*, 588-9.

⁴ There is no adequate substitute for the original correspondence in understanding the problems Clark contended with in trying to supply and man this campaign. Chapters XII and XIII of James, ed., *Clark Papers*, 1: 485-608, contain the principal Virginia correspondence relative to the campaign. The Pennsylvania side of the rivalry issue is succinctly given by Edgar W. Hassler, *Old Westmoreland: A History of Western Pennsylvania During the Revolution* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1900), Chapter XX, "General Clark's Draft", 131-8. Hassler's reliance was primarily on the Pennsylvania Archives.

Clark at last realized the futility of his efforts. From Wheeling on August 4, he penned letters of frustration to the governors of Virginia and Pennsylvania. To Jefferson he wrote that the plans for Detroit had been abandoned. He would drop down the Ohio with what men he had - some 400. Provisions were still "Enough to do something clever." If he could gather sufficient additional forces in Kentucky a stroke might yet be made against the Indians before the close of the season. Otherwise, he would "dispose of the publick stores to the greatest advantage and quit all farther thoughts of enterprise in this Quarter."⁵

Clark waited several days near Wheeling hoping to be joined by a contingent of Westmoreland militia being raised by Col. Archibald Lochry. Finally supposing that Lochry's recruitment efforts had been unsuccessful and finding his own militia volunteers deserting, Clark started down river for the Falls.⁶ The timing was a fateful accident of history. On August 8, 1781 over eighty men under Archibald Lochry arrived at Wheeling after an overland march of six days. One of Lochry's men recorded in his diary that Clark had left Wheeling only 12 hours before their arrival. The narrow failure to make the connection with Clark would prove fatal for Lochry and his men.⁷

⁵ Clark to Jefferson and Clark to Joseph Reed, August 4, 1781, James, ed., *Clark Papers*, 1: 577-580. Clark was apparently unaware that Thomas Nelson had been governor of Virginia since June 12th, and that the General Assembly on June 21st had authorized the governor to put a stop to the Detroit expedition, *ibid.*, 569.

⁶ Clark to Lochry, August 9, 1781, *ibid.*, 583. On August 5th, apparently to deter desertions, Clark moved his headquarters from Fort Henry (Wheeling) to McMahon's Island about two miles below Wheeling, "Clark's Orderly Book," Draper Mss. 30J61-4. The Orderly Book makes numerous references to desertions.

⁷ Diary of Isaac Anderson, published in Charles Martindale, *Loughery's Defeat...*, Indiana Historical Society Pamphlet No. 4 (Indianapolis, 1888), 13. Clark's Orderly Book indicates departure from McMahon's Island in the evening of August 6th which could be as much as two days before Lochry's arrival, Draper Mss. 30J63. However Anderson's twelve hours seems to be confirmed, or nearly so, by Clark's letter to Lochry in which he wrote that he "...set out but a day

Lochry immediately sent his quartermaster, Richard Wallace, and his horsemaster after Clark. The two men overtook Clark on August 9, at Middle Island, about 70 miles below Wheeling. Clark was encouraged by the prospect of having Lochry's men, but alarmed at the situation. His militia continued to desert and consequently he could not wait for Lochry at Middle Island. Wallace's command was increased to eight men and sent back with fifteen days provisions for Lochry's troops. A large horse boat and additional smaller boats would be left for Lochry at the point of the third island below Middle Island. Clark would keep moving in order to minimize desertions but would proceed slowly in hopes that Lochry would catch up.⁸

Lochry started down river with his troops on seven boats and their horses following by land.⁹ On August 14, a company of sixteen men under Lieutenant Malachi Baker were taken prisoner by Lochry. These men had deserted two

before your arrival...”, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1: 583. Also Colonel Joseph Crockett's letter to Governor Benjamin Harrison, October 24, 1782, indicates Lochry arrived the next day after Clark's departure, Draper Mss. 60J81-2.

The account of Lochry's Defeat which follows is, for the most part, based on three primary accounts all of which were published in Charles Martindale's pamphlet. In addition to Anderson's diary, the accounts include the depositions of James Kean (August 25, 1843) and Ezekiel Lewis (March 11, 1844), both taken from the House of Representatives Report on the claim for bounty land by Lochry's heirs. All three men, Anderson, Kean, and Lewis, were taken prisoner at Lochry's Defeat. Anderson's diary begins August 1, 1781 and ends July 16, 1782 with his return from captivity. Being the most contemporary account, it must be considered the most reliable. Anderson's diary was originally published in James McBride's Pioneer Biography, Sketches of the Lives of Some of the Early Settlers of Butler County, Ohio (Cincinnati, 1869) 278-85. The diary was also published twice in the Pennsylvania Archives, William H. Engle, ed., and Thomas L. Montgomery, ed., Second Series, Vol. 14, (Harrisburg, PA 1888), 278-85; Thomas L. Montgomery, ed., Sixth Series, Vol. 2, (1906), 405-10.

⁸ Clark to Lochry, August 9, 1781, and Clark to Major Cracraft, August 10, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1: 583-584; Anderson and Kean accounts, Martindale, Loughery's Defeat, 13, 20.

⁹ Anderson account. *Ibid.*, 13. Lochry's departure from the Wheeling area was apparently about August 12th.

days before from Clark's army. The deserters were disarmed and forced to accompany Lochry's troops.¹⁰

On August 15, Lochry's men reached the Three Islands where they found Major Charles Cracraft waiting with the horse boat. Cracraft with his guard of six men pushed on that night to catch up with Clark. Lochry proceeded the next day with all his men and horses now on boats. Captain Samuel Shannon with seven men was sent ahead with a message to deliver to Clark. On the 17th two men who went out to hunt never returned. Otherwise things were quiet until the 20th.¹¹

On August 20, Lochry's troops were hailed from the shore by two of Captain Shannon's men. The two explained that Shannon had landed below the mouth of the Scioto River to cook a meal. These two along with a sergeant were sent out to hunt. They had gone about a half mile into the woods when they heard shots from a number of guns. Supposing that Indians had attacked the rest of

¹⁰ The Anderson, Kean, and Lewis accounts all mention Lochry's capture of the deserters, *ibid.*, 13, 20, 24-25. The deserters were from Captain Michael Catt's Company of Volunteers who joined Clark's army on June 28, 1781. Twenty of the twenty-two men in the company deserted on August 12th. Only Captain Catt and Sergeant William Murphy did not desert. Catt was discharged the next day. Murphy joined another company and went on with Clark. Four of the deserters somehow evaded Lochry and made good their escape. Of the sixteen taken by Lochry, six were to die at his defeat. The very informative payroll of Michael Catt's company lists for each man, where applicable, the dates when deserted, taken by Lochry, restored to arms, taken prisoner in battle, killed, and returned from captivity. The payroll and several related documents are preserved in the Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, red-bound, Volume 1, 153- , 200-4, 208-11. Relating also to Baker's company of deserters are documents on 272-9.

The Thruston Collection consists of photocopies of payrolls, muster rolls, accounts, vouchers, claims, letters, journals, etc., relating to Virginia's military affairs in the West. The original documents are at the Virginia State Library, Richmond. This extraordinary collection was made in the 1920's for R.C. Ballard Thruston of the Filson Club, Louisville. The Virginia State Library and the Filson Club both have bound sets of the photocopies. Both sets use the same numbering for the over 10,000 large photocopy pages.

¹¹ Anderson's account, Martindale, *Loughery's Defeat*, 13. The Three Islands are the Three Brothers, Islands Nos. 31, 32, and 33, which lie in a string a few miles below Middle Island, No. 30, and about 75 miles below Wheeling.

Shannon's party, they immediately started up river to meet Lochry. Their sergeant was the victim of an unfortunate accident as they moved along. His knife dropped to the ground and ran directly through his foot. The sergeant died from the wound in a matter of minutes.¹²

The possibility of Shannon's capture or murder was alarming news to Lochry. Rumors were rampant that a large body of Indians were prepared to cut Clark off as he moved down the Ohio.¹³ If Indian Scouts were not already aware of Lochry's approach, the letter Shannon carried would fully inform them. Lochry realized that his party was a far easier target for the Indians than Clark's larger army ahead of him. Knowing every marksman might prove useful, he fully pardoned Malachi Baker's company of deserters and restored their arms.¹⁴ The boats were kept sailing all night.

In the evening of August 23, a buffalo was killed, but time was not taken to cook and eat the meat. The boats were again kept sailing all night. The mouth of the Miami River was passed safely on the morning of August 24. About ten o'clock that morning Lochry ordered a landing on the north shore of the river at what appeared to be a favorable spot to cook their buffalo meat breakfast and cut grass for their horses. The water was low and a sandbar reached into the river from the South Shore. As the men kindled their fires, Indians suddenly attacked from the upper bank. Lochry ordered his troops into the boats to pass over the

¹² Ibid., 13-14.

¹³ "From Every Account we have the Indians Are preparing to receive him (Clark) And if they should attack him in his present Situation, either by land or water, I dread the Consequences", William Croghan to Colonel Davies, Fort Pitt, August 18, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1:589.

¹⁴ Captain Catt's payroll, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, red-bound Volume 1, 153, 200, 208.

river to the sandbar. As soon as some had embarked and commenced moving over, they were attacked by other Indians in canoes and a large body of Indians which rushed out from the woods on the sandbar. Prevented from making a landing or escaping, Colonel Lochry ordered a surrender. It was a total defeat. Not a single man of Lochry's party escaped. About thirty were killed in the fight and all the rest were taken prisoner. More were to die following the surrender.¹⁵

The Indian party responsible for this stunning defeat numbered about 100, only slightly larger than Lochry's force.¹⁶ It was led by the celebrated Mohawk chief Thayendanegea, popularly known as "Captain" Joseph Brant. Born in 1742, Brant's career as a warrior began at age thirteen when he served under Sir William Johnson in the French and Indian War. Brant's older sister Molly was mistress, and wife in the Indian fashion, to Johnson. In 1761, Sir William sent Brant to Eleazar Wheelock's Indian School in Lebanon, Connecticut, forerunner of Dartmouth College. Here Brant not only became expert in the use of the English language, but also acquired some knowledge of general literature and history. In 1775 Brant visited England and returned prepared to devote his energies to the British cause in the Revolution. He was commissioned a colonel

¹⁵ Anderson, Kean, and Lewis accounts, Martindale, Loughery's Defeat, 14, 20, 25. Although the accounts do not mention a creek, tradition places the defeat at the mouth of Laughery (or Loughery) Creek which separates Dearborn and Ohio Counties, Indiana. Laughery Creek is about seven and a half miles below the mouth of the Miami River (The Indiana / Ohio State Line runs north from the mouth of the Miami). The great sandbar opposite Laughery Creek and the channel close to the right shore physically correspond with the description given by James Kean.

¹⁶ The Indian numbers are given by Mr. Macomb to Colonel Claus, Detroit, September 14, 1781 and General Haldimand to Lord George Germain, Quebec, October 23, 1781, "Haldimand Papers," *Michigan Pioneer Collections*, Volume X (Lansing, 1886 and 1908), 512, 530. Ezekiel Lewis of Lochry's party also gave the Indian numbers as 100, Draper Mss. 30J80. As usual, the Indian figures are also exaggerated in some American accounts; see for example Draper Mss. 30J35, 6NN169,177. Lochry's numbers are discussed on ____.

by the British and served them so well that his very name eventually awoke terror from the St. Lawrence to the Susquehanna and especially in the Mohawk Valley of New York. Early in life Brant converted to Christianity and thus as a devout educated Episcopalian was combined, in curious contrast, with his attributes as a fierce Indian warrior.¹⁷

At least two white men were with the Indians at Lochry's Defeat. George Girty, one of the infamous two of Girty brothers, accompanied the Shawnee in his capacity as interpreter employed by the British.¹⁸ Cage Callaway, captive turned renegade, accompanied a small party from his adopted tribe and showed himself to be "the most savage amongst them."¹⁹

Joseph Brant's Indians were far in advance of a much larger Indian and British force slowly being collected to take the offensive against Clark. Brant had been in the immediate area of Lochry's Defeat for more than a week planning originally himself to head off General Clark. He arrived on the Ohio several days

¹⁷ Background on Brant can be found in most general biographical encyclopedias. Unfortunately, William L. Stone's two volume Life of Joseph Brant (1838 and 1864) makes no reference to Brant's activities on the Ohio in 1781.

¹⁸ The activities of the Girtys were so exaggerated by American pioneers and early historians that accurate identification of their participation in specific incidents is often risky business. In this case, George Girty, and apparently only George, is clearly recorded as present in a contemporary British report, Alexander McKee to Major DePeyster, August 29, 1781, "Haldimand Papers", British Museum Add. Mss. 21845, page ____.

¹⁹ Ezekiel Lewis, Draper Mss. 30J80-1. Lewis and four other prisoners taken at Lochry's Defeat had the misfortune of being claimed by Callaway's party. They were marched five days without food. Upon reaching an Indian town, Callaway told the prisoners they must eat everything given them or they would be put to death. The prisoners stuffed and overloaded their stomachs until that night they thought they would die of their distress. This Callaway is most likely Micajah Callaway who was captured February 7, 1778 at Blue Licks with the Boonesborough salt markers. He was held five years and later became an interpreter and spy for Anthony Wayne. A. Goff Bedford, Land of Our Fathers: History of Clark County, Kentucky, 143. The Boonesborough salt markers can be identified in a list of persons killed and then taken 1775-1779 from Boonesborough attached to a petition to the Virginia Assembly, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, J:7-12. Callaway's name on this list is Eager Callaway.

ahead of Clark's passage and through his scouts gained intelligence of Clark's whereabouts and motions. Brant's Indians were inspired with the notion of attacking and repelling the famed George Rogers Clark as his much larger force passed them on its journey down river. What is now Laughery Island, No. 54, about ten miles below the mouth of the Miami, was selected as a suitable location for the attack. The Indians seemed ready and willing for action as they busied themselves making bark canoes and other preparations. The expectation of large reinforcements at any time perhaps contributed to the enthusiasm. Brant's plan was to attack from both sides of the river and from the island. While Clark's boats floated slowly along with the current, the Indians could easily keep up the attack from land and by water in their canoes until the unprotected whites were forced to surrender.

Brant's plans fell victim to Clark's mystique. The Indians held a special awe for the twenty-eight year old Clark and his military character. As preparations turned to waiting, this awe began to plan on their imagination. Clark occasionally fired his artillery as he moved down the river. The noise echoing up and down the Ohio. The Indians heard Clark coming for some distance. Their runners continually brought notice of his approach. There was too much time to talk and consult about the attack. The closer Clark approached, the more discouraged the Indians became. The firing of his cannon and the beating of the drum and fife struck such a terror to the Indians that in the end they utterly refused to commence the attack. All the persuading and the threatening Brant could do

could not force the Indians to make an attack on Clark. Thus they let him pass in silence during the night of August 17-18 without firing a single gun.

Clark's free ticket past the Indians was officially attributed to his superior numbers. Unofficially, Brant was exasperated with the Indians' cowardice. But he soon found the opportunity to test his Indians against more favorable odds. On August 21, he captured Major Cracraft's party and learned of the approach of Colonel Lochry. Brant immediately dispatched a letter to the British officers slowly collecting the Indian forces in the Miami country. He described the passage of Clark three days earlier and the information gained with the capture of Cracraft. Brant urged that more Indians be brought to his aid before Lochry and Clark could combine forces. But he made it clear that even without more Indian reinforcements, his party was determined to attack Lochry.

Captain Shannon's party was apparently brought in to Brant as prisoners soon after Cracraft's capture. Brant showed the prisoners the canoes and other preparations made originally for Clark but available now for use against Lochry. Brant proposed that if Lochry could be induced to surrender there would be no deaths. The prisoners concluded after seeing the preparations and number of Indians that Lochry's men would be an easy prey. Shannon agreed to be tied to a tree at the shore of the river above the Indian encampment. Shannon was to call out to Lochry Brant's proposition for surrender. If Lochry surrendered none of his men would be killed; if not, they would be cut to pieces. But Lochry's fate was unfortunately not to be settled so easily. The ploy became unnecessary when in the morning of August 24, the Indian runners informed Brant that on his

own initiative Lochry had landed just up river. Lochry had inadvertently landed at a most convenient time and place for an attack and the Indians made it without waiting to see if he might surrender peaceably.

Lochry's surrender was inevitable and thus the attack was unfortunate. The Indians had the advantage of the high wooded bank above the grassy shore where Lochry's men were exposed to their fire without any shelter. Having little or no ammunition, Lochry's men could make only a slight resistance. One account claimed not a single shot was fired by the whites. Nevertheless, Lochry's men showed no signs of surrendering until their efforts to escape proved futile and the Indians had fired their second round and some their third.

Without a single loss on the Indian side, about thirty of Lochry's men had been killed and all the rest captured. The prisoners were taken up onto the bank and seated, some on the ground, some on logs. Having made no promises to obtain Lochry's surrender, the Indians felt no obligation toward their captives. A council was formed to determine their fate. A very strong disposition prevailed among the Indians to murder all the prisoners in revenge for past and future wrongs against the Indians.

An hour or two after the defeat, while the council still met, a Delaware chief approached the prisoners and demanded to know who the commanding officers were. Colonel Lochry and Captain Jack Guthrie were pointed out. The chief motioned for the two to follow and he sat them on a log not far from the other prisoners. Suddenly from behind the chief smashed his tomahawk into Lochry's skull. Lochry fell forward but rose again on his hands and knees. The chief

sprang over the log, lifted the colonel's arm and stabbed him in the chest with a knife. The colonel sank down immediately. The chief then pulled up Lochry's head by the hair and cut off the scalp. Guthrie jumped up from the log when Lochry was tomahawked and sat down among the other prisoners. Nothing more was said or done to him.

Soon after this, Joseph Brant left the council and inquired among the prisoners for Colonel Lochry. When they informed him Lochry had just been killed Brant became very angry and swore that it would never have been done if he had been present. Captain Thomas Stokely asked Brant if they were all to be murdered. Brant said that he had interceded in their behalf, pleading hard to save them. He was doing all he could, but the council was still undecided and he must return to it.

In about a half hour Brant returned to the prisoners and ordered all the officers to follow him. As Brant passed the prisoners, William Allison called to him that the fine horse he rode was his. Brant immediately wheeled around and cut Allison down with his sword, killing him on the spot.

The officers were placed upon the same log on which Lochry was killed. They fully expected to meet the same fate. Instead Brant gave them the uncomfortable news that his pleas had been partly successful - some would be saved, not all would be killed.

The Indians busied themselves throughout the afternoon dividing the prisoners and spoils in proportion to each nation's members. Several nations or tribes were represented, each with a chief as their immediate commander.

Captain Joseph Brant was commander-in-chief of all the Indians on the expedition. Brant had fourteen of his own Mohawk warriors with him. The different nations all spoke a different language. This made communication difficult even with the use of interpreters.

Before leaving the battle ground, twelve to fifteen of the wounded prisoners were sorted out and isolated from the others. These wounded men were examined and tested by the Indians. Those thought too severely wounded to travel were killed.

The Indians moved from the battle ground that evening. As they commenced the march, Captain William Campbell was shot from behind by an Indian. The only reason for the killing was that the Indians were afraid of him. He was a very large stout man and the Indians were afraid of him getting loose and killing some of them. (Lewis shot, or tomahawked)

In all, 101 men were killed or captured. Thirty-seven were killed, including Lochry, six other officers and thirty privates. Sixty-four were taken, including twelve officers and fifty-two privates. These figures include Shannon's party of five and Cracraft's party of seven captured before the defeat and Shannon's sergeant who died accidentally. Therefore, a total of eighty-eight whites were killed or taken in the actual defeat.

In the evening after Lochry's Defeat, Brant moved his Indians and prisoners eight miles up the Ohio. On August 25, they moved eight miles up the Miami River where they set up camp and were joined on August 27 by 100 white men (Butler's Rangers) commanded by Captain Andrew Thompson and 300 Indians

under the direction of Captain Alexander McKee.²⁰ Substantial numbers of Indians had begun to fall away from McKee's command as soon as the news of Brant's great success was heard by express. The Indians held Clark in such awe that they were unwilling to move directly against him unless absolutely necessary to protect their villages from his own advance. They seemed satisfied that Brant's success had disabled Clark enough to prevent a campaign against their villages for the remainder of the year. The British argued that now was the time to decide Clark's fate with a "noble coup" which would "recover their Hunting Grounds" and for which their descendants would "bless their memory". Otherwise, Clark's next army would "make them repent their folly." This argument was unimpressive to the Indian mind. But fear was a little better motivator than glory. McKee was able to keep what Indians he could for awhile by convincing them that Clark might move to avenge Lochry's Defeat as soon as he could get reinforcements from Kentucky. It would be prudent while so many were yet collected to move closer to the Falls where they could watch Clark's movements awhile longer and send scouts to gain some intelligence of his intentions. To this the Indians reluctantly agreed.²¹ On August 28th, nearly 500 Indians and British proceeded toward the Ohio. Only a sergeant and eighteen men were left behind on the Miami to take care of some of the prisoners and stores.

²⁰ "Haldimand Papers," Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10: 512, 516, 534. Macomb wrote that Thompson and McKee were pushing forward with 700 men to join Brant when news of his victory arrived. If Macomb's figure is reliable, it means approximately 300 Indians left McKee's command on August 26th. McKee's description of the Indian actions, although no numbers are given, tends to support this.

²¹ Anderson's diary, Martindale, Loughery's Defeat, 14.

As the British and Indians moved down the Ohio, one of the whites - the infamous Simon Girty - was eliminated from any further action that season. Simon's brother George was with Brant at Lochry's Defeat, but Simon arrived on the scene with the savages under McKee. Joseph Brant was elated by his victory over Lochry and boasted "in his cups" of his personal prowess. The envious Simon Girty bluntly accused Brant of lying. The drunken Brant silenced Girty with a blow to the head with his sword. Girty eventually recovered from the severe wound, but afterwards carried a deep scar on his forehead.²²

Clark's arrival at the Falls in late August was a welcome relief to Kentucky. The militia's ammunition was entirely exhausted. Scarcity of food and clothing had reduced the regular troops to a starving, naked condition. There was no money and people had lost all faith in the state's credit. Fort Jefferson, near the mouth of the Ohio, had been abandoned on June 8, 1781 because of inability to supply it. And everywhere were signs of a coming Indian invasion.²³

Without the aid of the Kentucky militia, Clark's army was wholly inadequate to mount an expedition against the Indians. Desertions had greatly reduced the force of 400 started with from Wheeling. Indeed, he had been fortunate that Thompson and McKee had not arrived on the Ohio in time to cut him off.

To discover the willingness of the country to support an expedition, Clark summoned the field officers of the three Kentucky counties to Louisville on September 6, 1781. An address prepared the day before was read to the

²² Consul Wilshire Butterfield, History of the Girtys (Cincinnati, 1890) 130-1.

²³ John Floyd to Clark and John Montgomery to Thomas Nelson, August 10, 1781; George Slaughter to Nelson, August 17, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1:584-7.

council. Clark told them: "I wait as a Spectator to see what a Country is determined to do for itself when reduced to a State of Desperation; I am ready to lead you on to any Action that has the most distant prospect of Advantage, however daring it may appear to be--". He argued against an expedition up the Miami saying "it would probably be productive of nothing great." It would be too late to destroy the corn in the fields. Grain and other property would be hidden away. The only service from that route would be the few Indians they could kill. Clark urged instead an expedition to the head of the Wabash. Here the greatest body of Indians would be encountered and they would either fight or join with the Virginians. Either way, the success would be greater than a Miami expedition.²⁴

The Wabash route was of no interest to the Kentucky officers. They doubted anything considerable could be effected by it. The route would be completely disagreeable to the Kentucky militia in general and was also objectionable to the volunteers brought down the Ohio by Clark. Colonels John Todd and Benjamin Logan, county lieutenants of Fayette and Lincoln, thought it "best to decline an Expedition this season Altogether." They urged a fort be erected at the mouth of the Kentucky River from which small raiding parties could be sent against the Indians during the winter. Colonel John Floyd, county lieutenant of Jefferson, and the three other officers at the council were in favor of

²⁴ Clark to the Kentucky officers, September 5, 1781, *Ibid.*, 596-8. The Wabash route had been designated by Jefferson in his original instructions for the 1781 Detroit campaign. The Wabash tribes had been relatively peaceful, or at least neutral, since the Illinois campaign of 1778-79. Clark believed a show of force in that region was now long overdue and necessary to maintain that uneasy peace. Otherwise, the Indian war would soon be general on every front. The Kentuckians and the Eastern frontiersmen favored retaliation over strategy. They did not appreciate the need to march against the more distant Indians, ostensibly at peace, while the Indians already at war - the Indians who had raided their homes and killed friends and relatives - were just across the Ohio. Debate over the route was a factor which hurt Clark's efforts to raise volunteers for the 1781 campaign. *Ibid.*, 486, 488, 527, 540, 548, 549, 553, 559-60.

attempting a Miami expedition against “the Shawnees, an old and inveterate enemy.” It was concluded to offer Clark 500 men, a draft of two-thirds of the militia, “trusting to his Experience and Proved attachment to the Kentucky interest to manage them to the best advantage.”²⁵

The next day, September 7, Clark called a council of his own officers. It appeared that not more than 700 men (including the Kentucky militia) could be depended upon for an expedition. Nine officers were for no expedition. Six favored a Wabash expedition . There was no interest in the Miami route. Instead of an expedition, the council adopted Todd and Logan’s recommendation to erect a strong fort at the mouth of the Kentucky River.²⁶

It was an ironic conclusion, for as the councils met at the Falls, the Indians and British under Brant, McKee and Thompson waited and listened at the very spot the councils proposed to fortify. They had arrived at the mouth of the Kentucky River on September 5, the day Clark prepared his address to the Kentucky officers. While Clark held council to ascertain the Kentuckian’s intentions, the British held a council to determine the Indians intentions. The majority favored a strike against Squire Boone’s Station. The leaders dissuaded them from that notion by convincing them they had nothing to fear from that

²⁵ Proceedings of a council of Kentucky field officers, September 6, 1781, *Ibid.*, 599-600.

²⁶ Proceedings of a council of Clark’s officers, September 7, 1781, *Ibid.*, 601-603. Also informative is Clark to Thomas Nelson, October 1, 1781, *Ibid.*, 605-608. Even though 700 men were considered insufficient to defeat the Shawnees, Clark thought them “too trifling... in the balance of Indian affairs” to bother with. This is surprising since Clark had arranged with Colonel John Gibson* to make a short excursion against the Wyandots in early September while Clark drew the attention of the greater part of the Indians with a march up the Miami against the Shawnees, Gibson to George Washington, August 25, 1781, *Ibid.*, 591. It is also interesting that nowhere in the proceedings of September 6-7 is there mention of Lochry’s recent defeat, much less suggestion it be avenged. Lochry’s Defeat was also generally ignored by early Kentucky historians. *(before he left Fort Pitt)

quarter. Rather, the leaders argued, they should keep in a body and move further down the river toward the Falls. If Clark did not meet their advance, then they would draw him into action in the neighborhood of the Falls and destroy his designs for carrying an expedition into the Indian country. The Indians agreed to await the return of their scouts who joined them the next day with two officers' scalps but no intelligence.²⁷

Still not knowing Clark's intentions, the reluctant warriors were prevailed upon to move on toward the Falls keeping more scouts out before them. They left the Kentucky River on September 7th, and proceeded until within twenty-five or thirty miles of the Falls where they stopped on the ninth and waited for news. Their scouts soon returned with two prisoners who informed them that Clark had held a large council of all the principal officers. While the result had not been made public, it was the general opinion of the country that no expedition was to be carried on that season against the Indians.

The already indifferent Indians now "got entirely out of the notion of going any further". They quickly broke off into small parties, some going home, others fanning out to plunder isolated cabins and steal horses. The Shawnees in particular gave up the enterprise. The British Rangers, under Thompson, having already gone four days without provisions, also decided to return home. They had nothing to subsist on during their return journey except two bears which

²⁷ Thompson to DePeyster and McKee to DePeyster, September 26, 1781, "Haldimand Papers," Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10: 515-7. The two officers were killed September 2nd going from Louisville to the Spring Station. They were Captains John Chapman and Abraham Tipton of Colonel Joseph Crockett's Battalion. Receipts for a quart of rum for their coffin makers and linen for their "winding sheets" are preserved in the Clark papers. Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, D:370-1; E:453-4; Draper Mss. 8J179 (1). These deaths are incorrectly given in the published histories as occurring in April 1781.

luckily fell their way. McKee too was ready to return, but decided first to follow Captain Joseph Brant and his Mingoes who had moved a little further down river toward the Falls to see what number might be willing for some action. Arriving within fifteen miles of the Falls, McKee was pleasantly surprised to find the Indian force numbering 200. It was too small to attack Clark at the Falls, but entirely adequate “to cross the country and attack some of their small forts, or infest the Roads.” Squire Boone’s Station presented the easiest target - isolated and in their path.²⁸

PAINTED STONE

No station could be considered more exposed to Indian attack in 1781 than Squire Boone’s Painted Stone Station. The station was located on a small ridge on the north side of Clear Creek, two and a half miles north of present-day Shelbyville.²⁹ In 1780 and ‘81 the station occupied a central position in an otherwise unoccupied region. It was over twenty miles due east of the Beargrass stations, its closest neighbors. It was about the same distance west of Leestown (near Frankfort), a deserted landing on the Kentucky River. North of Painted Stone stretched a vast triangle of uninhabited Jefferson County land - now

²⁸ Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10: 515-7.

²⁹ The location on the north side of the creek is given by Squire Boone’s sons, Moses and Isaiah Boone, in their interviews with Lyman C. Draper in the Fall of 1846, Draper Mss. 19C27,87. The station is also shown on the north side of Clear Creek in the survey plats of two Shelby County court cases. Breckinridge vs. Shackelford, Bundle 1b, No. 4 and Troutman vs. Cline, Bundle 21, No. 8, Shelby County Circuit Court Records. Charles Lynch bought the Painted Stone tract in 1786 (Draper Mss. 19C42) and sometime later built his station above the cliffs on the south side of the creek where it is shown on the 1882 atlas, D.J. Lake & Company, publishers, An Atlas of Henry and Shelby Counties, Kentucky (Philadelphia, PA, 1882), 44. The location of Lynch’s Station and statements by C.T. Wilcox (Draper Mss. 19C185) have given rise to the current local belief that Boone’s original station was built on the south side of Clear Creek. *(Circuit Court)

Oldham, Trimble, Henry, parts of Carroll, Franklin and Shelby Counties. The northern point of the triangle was the mouth of the Kentucky River. The Ohio River formed the southwest line of the triangle with the Falls at its western point. The Kentucky River formed the southeast line with Leestown its eastern point. Painted Stone lay along the base of the triangle. North of the Ohio was admittedly enemy territory. Rather than serving as a barrier to protect Jefferson County from attack, the Ohio offered the savages a convenient entry and escape route for their raids. North and west of the Kentucky River lay Fayette County, but being mostly uninhabited between Lexington and the Ohio, it too represented no real buffer from attack. South of Painted Stone was another uninhabited region, less dangerous only because beyond it lay strong Kentucky settlements rather than enemy territory.³⁰

The central position of Painted Stone made it a favorite camp for hunters and improvers before a station was built. Squire Boone made an improvement there in the summer of 1775.³¹ He returned in the spring of 1776 and erected

³⁰ Humphrey Marshall observed that after 1780 Kentucky began to have its own frontier, Marshall, The History of Kentucky (Frankfort, 1812), 129. The thesis is borne out by contemporary correspondence. John Todd, Jr., Fayette County Lieutenant, complained in the spring of 1781 that over 100 of Fayette's militia had fled south of the Kentucky River to the relatively safer confines of Lincoln County, leaving Fayette County with a militia strength of only 156, Todd to Clark, April 13, 1781 and Todd to Jefferson, April 15, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1: 520,527. John Floyd, Jefferson County Lieutenant, told of a similar flight from his county. He said Beargrass in the spring of 1781 could hardly turn out half the men it could in 1780, Floyd to Clark, April 16 and 26, 1781, *Ibid.*, 533, 544.

³¹ Depositions of Squire Boone, November 28, 1796, Shelby County Deed Book B-1, 294, and April 30, 1798, Swan vs. Mills, Bundle 105, No. 13, Shelby County Circuit Court Records. The 1400 acre settlement and preemption right for Painted Stone was claimed by Boone in behalf of his brother-in-law, Benjamin Vancleave, for improving and raising a crop of corn in 1776, "Certificate Book of the Virginia Land Commission," Register, Volume 21, No. 61, (January 1923), 56. Moses Boone also said corn was raised on the tract in 1776, Draper Mss. 19C26.

perhaps his most famous handiwork in stone.³² He took a stone from Clear Creek about an inch thick and eighteen inches square. On this he chipped his name and the year with a mill pick and painted the letters and numbers in red. The stone was carried off by someone before Boone's Station was built, but in the three years it stood as a marker the place became noted as "The Painted Stone Tract".³³

Boone's Station was settled in the spring of 1780. Squire Boone and Evan Hinton had gone out to Painted Stone in the fall of 1779 to make preparations and got stranded there by the legendary "hard winter" of 1779-80. From this sprang the unshakable notion that Boone's Station was settled in 1779.³⁴ It was mid-April 1780 when Boone led his own and thirteen other families along with several single young men to Painted Stone. They built a large station with cabins

³² A huge stone bearing his name and dated 1770 was described by Collins, History of Kentucky (1874 edition), 524-5. It is now in the courthouse at Richmond, Kentucky. Several intricate carvings by Boone are also exhibited in his restored grist mill at Squire Boone Caverns near Corydon, Indiana.

³³ Deposition of Squire Boone, November 28, 1796, Shelby County Deed Book B-1, 294.

³⁴ Kentucky highway markers 28 and 848 both give the founding date as 1779. Squire Boone himself promoted the 1779 settlement date. Collins, apparently based on a deposition of Squire Boone's, wrote that the station was established in the summer or fall of 1779, Collins, History of Kentucky (1874 edition), 709-10. Boone testified in a Shelby County lawsuit that the station was first settled in the fall of 1779, deposition (1802?), Brooker vs. Whitaker, Bundle 117, No. 15, Shelby County Court Records. Other testimony in the same suit revealed that only Boone and Hinton were at the site in 1779 and families were not brought out until the spring of 1780, depositions of Robert Tyler and Josiah Boone, June 11, 1802, Ibid. Moses and Isaiah Boone, in their interviews with Draper, clarified the matter. Their family fully intended to settle his Painted Stone tract in 1779, but the Indians were troublesome and so he postponed settlement that year. Instead, he purchased some town lots in Louisville and erected a cabin in high ground near the mouth of Beargrass Creek. In the fall of 1779, Boone and Hinton went out to make preparations for settlement the next spring and were stranded by the weather. Boone's family had a difficult time getting by that winter on Beargrass. Families were brought out and the station built the next spring. Draper Mss. 19C25-27, 87. Moses Boone also stated in a lawsuit that his father's family first moved from the Falls to Boone's Station early in the spring of 1780, deposition, January 3, 1805, Hall vs. Whitaker, Bundle 46, No. 1, Shelby County Circuit Court Records. The Court of Appeals in its opinion on this suit concluded that Boone's Station was erected sometime in April 1780.

picketed in nearly a square about an acre in size. The settlers dug a covered way down to Clear Creek to resort to for water in case of siege.³⁵

The inhabitants of the new station were almost immediately reminded of the Indian menace by the killing of one of their young men. Otherwise the Indians were fairly quiet around Painted Stone for the remainder of 1780.³⁶ The station felt confident enough to allow four-fifths of its able-bodied men to go for a month in the summer of 1780 on Clark's Chillicothe campaign.³⁷ The remote station further aided the cause of defense by serving as a base for hunters engaged in the winter of 1780-81 to procure meat for the army Clark intended to raise for his 1781 offensive.

Evan Hinton had the contract to lay in and cure the meat for the public service. His hunters succeeded in taking in nearly 150,000 pounds of buffalo meat. Late in the winter, Hinton along with Richard Rue and George Holeman went to Louisville for salt and barrels needed to cure the meat. They returned through Linn's Station with a four horse team and wagon. On February 6, 1781 when camped within three miles of Painted Stone, they were surprised and captured by a party of Indians led by Simon Girty. The Indians destroyed the salt

³⁵ Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C27, 87.

³⁶ Two men, Eastwood and Legget, were making clapboards some distance from the station in the spring of 1780 when they were surprised and attacked by Indians. Legget was killed and Eastwood was wounded in the back but escaped and recovered. Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C27.

³⁷ After the destruction of Ruddle's and Martin's Station in June 1780, Clark sent out a call for four out of every five men in Kentucky to meet him at the mouth of Licking for a retaliatory campaign against the Shawnee towns north of the Ohio. The men at Boone's Station cast lots to decide who would go. Boone was unanimously chosen as captain of the small company which joined Clark at the mouth of the Kentucky River. Letter of John McCaddon, Newark, Ohio to Lyman C. Draper, May 5, 1845, Draper Mss. 8J142. The payroll of Boone's Company is printed in James, ed., Clark Papers, 1: 454.

and as a consequence only 16,000 pounds of meat at Painted Stone was ever cured for use. Over 100,000 pounds spoiled, rotted and was thrown into Clear Creek below the station. The loss of those provisions was a serious blow to Clark's war efforts.³⁸

The same day Hinton, Rue and Holeman were taken, two other men were captured near Painted Stone by another Indian party. John Demaree and his father, Peter, were serving as Indian spies in Captain Hardy Hill's Company based at the Low Dutch Station on Beargrass. On February 6th, they were fired upon by a band of Ottawas near Boone's Station. John's left arm was broken and he and his father were both captured.³⁹

One morning in April 1781, Indians surprised three young men clearing ground outside the station. One was killed and another captured. The shots drew several more men out of the station. The Indians had screened themselves behind brush and logs skirting the path. They were successful in killing two more

³⁸ The details of this incident are from Moses Boone. Draper Mss. 19C28. The participation of Simon Girty in the affair is verified by British records. At an Indian council in Detroit on April 5, 1781, Chief Wry Neck of the Shawnee delivered Richard Rue to the British as a prisoner captured by Simon Girty with a party of Hurons and Shawnee, "Haldimand Papers," Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10:463. Hinton was either drowned or killed in trying to escape by the Lakes. He left a widow and four children. Draper Mss. 19C28. Holeman and Rue were held captive for three and a half years, depositions of George Holeman and Richard Rue, August 16, 1804, Haff vs. Roberts, Bundle 32, No. 19, Shelby County Circuit Court Records. See also the Plaintiff's bill in Holeman vs. Boone, Bundle 81. Kentucky was to supply 100,000 rations for the 1781 Detroit expedition, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1:488. The shortage of meat seems to have been the most serious setback to the preparations in Kentucky. The Hinton incident is directly mentioned in at least seven separate letters in the spring of 1781, *Ibid.*, 528, 531, 532, 542, 543, 558; Draper Mss. 17CC 135-7. Squire Boone gave a deposition before a court of inquiry regarding the incident in January 1783. Draper Mss. 60J 340.

³⁹ Revolutionary War pension application of John Demaree (W7004) affidavit dated August 9, 1832, Mercer County, Kentucky. The Demarees escaped after a captivity of twelve months.

whites and wounding two. Squire Boone was so severely wounded that it was initially thought he would not recover⁴⁰

The Indians surprised and killed another man the next month as he was driving his hogs into the woods to range.⁴¹ Such continual harassment made anything approaching a normal routine next to impossible. Hunters had to steal out at night, hunt by day and return by night with their meat. Hunters were supporting not only their own families but also a growing number of widows and fatherless children. Squire Boone was confined all spring and summer by his wounds. Some of the most influential men of the station had been lost.⁴²

Indians and Indian signs were increasingly seen about the station in the late summer of 1781. In August, Phillip Nichols was killed near the station spring.⁴³ The people were aware of a growing concentration of Indians in the area and realized the precarious position in which it placed their isolated station. Serious discussion of abandoning the station began about the end of August.

⁴⁰ Killed outright were Thomas Hansbury and a young brother of Philip Nichols. Abraham Vanmeter was wounded in the hip and died three days later. John Underwood was taken prisoner. Simon Girty again commanded the Indians and supposedly boasted to his prisoner how he had made Boone's shirt tail fly. Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C28-30, 88-89. Boone's being badly wounded was mentioned in a letter of John Floyd to Clark, May 22, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1:557. The incident was also described by Bland W. Ballard in his interview with Lyman C. Draper, (1845?), Draper Mss. 8J 160 (1). Ballard identified the other wounded man as Ben Taylor. Ballard thought incorrectly, that this incident led to the decision to abandon Boone's Station. This might be the source of Marshall's confusion with the April date (see footnote 48).

⁴¹ The victim was Abram Holt. He was able to run some distance toward the fort after being wounded. His faithful dog covered his retreat and thereby saved his master's scalp. The Indians scampered off after being fired at by a small iron swivel loaded with grape shot. Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C 30-31, 88.

⁴² Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C 32-33. The situation at Painted Stone was very much as John Floyd vividly described it for Jefferson County as a whole in his letters to Thomas Jefferson in April 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1: 530-1, 541-2.

⁴³ Nichols was shot down as he turned to run. The ball entered his back and came out his breast carrying out a part of his liver which was thrown out onto his breast. His scalp was taken. Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C32.

The Halls, Tylers, Younts, and Klines were all intermarried. These families had been among the original settlers of Painted Stone. They decided they had enough of the place and were determined to leave for the relatively safer Beargrass stations. The prospect of this loss of manpower led to the general decision to abandon the station.⁴⁴

Squire Boone sent a request to the Beargrass stations for a militia guard to aid and escort the evacuation of his station.⁴⁵ Colonel John Floyd ordered out eight men, mainly from Captain Hardy Hill's old company, under Lieutenant James Welsh (or Welch). This company of Jefferson County militia consisted mostly of men from the Low Dutch Station. There was probably another small company of Jefferson militia also ordered out. General Clark ordered out twenty-four light horsemen or "dragoons" under Lieutenant Thomas Ravenscraft. These

⁴⁴ Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C 33,89. There is a persistent published, but totally unfounded, legend about Painted Stone being "flushed" by Bland Ballard's late night warning of Indian uprisings. According to the legend, Ballard went to Brashear's Station near the mouth of Floyd's Fork to get a minister to marry two couples at Linn's Station. Discovering a large trail of Indians on his way, he rushed back to Linn's and spread the alarm among the Beargrass stations. Then, like a "Paul Revere" he "rode through the night to warn the Boone Station settlers of the near approach of Indians." The earliest mention of this absurd story is in a letter written November 27, 1782 by John W. Williamson and published in George L. Willis, Sr.'s History of Shelby County, Kentucky (Louisville, 1929), 181-2. The more frequently seen account is in a letter from G.T. Wilcox to Thos. W. Bullitt dated July 23, 1880. It was originally published in an article titled "Floyd's Defeat," Courier-Journal, July 28, 1880, and was reprinted in Pilgrimage to the Sites of Floyd's Station ...April 17, 1921 (Filson Club Pamphlet, 1921), and again in Willis, History of Shelby County, 177-180. Willis drew the Paul Revere analogy quoted above, *ibid.*, 46-7. Since Brashear's Station is south of Linn's, either Ballard or the Indians were on a very circuitous route. Suffice it to say that Draper's extensive notes on his interview with Bland Ballard make no mention of Ballard's "Paul Revere" role, Draper Mss. 8J 150-181. Also Collins' account under Ballard County, obviously based on an interview with Ballard, omits mention of these heroics, Collins, History of Kentucky (1847 edition), 172; (1874 edition), 2:41.

⁴⁵ Bland Ballard said simply that the request went down to Beargrass, Draper Mss. 8J160 (1). James Galloway, a resident of the Low Dutch Station said Boone's call went directly to that station, "James Galloway's Narrative," taken at his residence, Green County, Ohio, October 1832, by his grandson, Albert Galloway, Draper Mss. 8J271. The claim may have some merit. Boone moved to the Dutch Station after Long Run, Draper Mss. 19C38, 96. There are many ties between Boone and the Low Dutch who erected this station, see Vince Akers', "The Low Dutch Company: A History of the Holland Dutch Settlements on the Kentucky Frontier," de Halve Maen (quarterly magazine of the Holland Society of New York), series beginning Summer 1980.

were some of the volunteers Clark had brought down the Ohio in August.⁴⁶
About forty men in all answered Squire Boone's call for an escort.⁴⁷

Lieutenant Welsh persuaded Frank Campbell to join his small company as second in command even though it was not Campbell's turn to go out on duty. The militia took the opportunity to scout and hunt about Painted Stone for a few days while the inhabitants packed up their belongings. Lieutenant Welsh took sick while at Painted Stone and induced Frank Campbell to take his place on one of these scouts. The scout was nearly completed and Campbell had come to a turn in the lane which led to the station when he saw Indians. He yelled for the men with him to get down and fight. Campbell was shot while in the act of dismounting. He ran 150 yards but was brought down by a tomahawk blow to the forehead. Lieutenant Welsh went out from the station to bring in the body but was forced back by the Indians.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Lieutenants Welsh and Ravenscraft signed receipts at "Boons Station" on September 13, 1781 for corn supplied by Morias Hansbury (or Hansborough), Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, G-567. Welsh's receipt was for six and a half bushels which was supply for "Eight horses ten Days." Ravenscraft's receipt was for nineteen and a half bushels. Welsh was a lieutenant in Hill's company on the 1780 Chillicothe campaign, Captain Hardy Hill's payroll, *Ibid.*, K-85,96. Ravenscraft was a lieutenant in Captain Benjamin Field's Company. The payroll for that company indicates five horses were lost at Long Run, *Ibid.*, red-bound volume 1, 157-8. If Ravenscraft's command consisted of twenty-four men, as the number of bushels in his receipt seems to indicate, then he must have had additional men from other companies since there were only ten privates in Field's Company and some of those are known not to have been at Long Run.

⁴⁷ Bland Ballard, one of the escort, gave the number of forty. He said about half of them belonged to a regular troop of horsemen billeted at the Beargrass stations. The horsemen were ordered out by Clark. Draper Mss. 8J160 (1). This would be consistent with Ravenscraft's receipt. James Galloway gave a higher figure saying the Dutch Station sent thirty-one men while as many more went from other Beargrass stations, Draper Mss. 8J271. Galloway was not along and he made a gross error in stating that most of this escort was killed. Ballard's figure is therefore accepted.

⁴⁸ (John D. Shane) interview with (Miss Campbell?), no date, Draper Mss. 13CC 84-85. Frank Campbell was this lady's brother. Her interview is confused in several places and she makes some obvious errors, such as saying both Welsh and Campbell were captains. However, several of her stories are corroborated by others and her interview contains some rich details which cannot be ignored. In his Revolutionary War pension application, James Welsh briefly mentions

It became imperative to get the families evacuated before a general siege of the station developed. All of the families were ready to leave except Squire Boone's and the widow Hinton's. They remained behind only because there were not enough pack horses to carry their belongings. The militia agreed to return for them the next day. Squire Boone gave permission for his son Isaiah to ride along with the fleeing families on one of the pack horses.⁴⁹

The evacuation caravan left Painted Stone early in the morning of September 13th.⁵⁰ The march would be agonizingly slow. Pack horses, loaded down with household goods, were ridden by the women and children. The men led the horses and drove the cattle along the road. There were twenty-one miles

being employed as an Indian spy from March to November 1781, but says nothing about the Long Run incident, S14819, affidavit dated September 1, 1832, Jefferson County, Kentucky.

⁴⁹ Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C33,89.

⁵⁰ All sorts of dates are given for these events. Specific dates are usually September 13th, 14th, or 15th for Long Run with Floyd's Defeat always the day after the massacre. The contemporary British reports are not specific on the date. They would place the massacre on any day from the 12th to the 15th with Floyd's Defeat definitely the next day. Thompson and McKee to DePeyster, September 26, 1781, "Haldimand Papers," *Michigan Pioneer Collections*, 10: 515-8. September 14 is from Moses Boone who told Draper in 1846 that the massacre occurred on the 14th and Floyd's Defeat on the 15th, Draper Mss. 19C37. Bland Ballard, although far off from the exact date, confirmed that Floyd's Defeat occurred the day after the massacre. Draper Mss. 8J161 (2). September 15th is based on John Floyd's letter of September 30, 1781 to William Preston in which he states, "I was defeated the sixteenth..." , Draper Mss. 17CC137-8. This would place the massacre on the 15th. However, if Floyd is to be taken as the source in this matter, his letter of "Friday 14th 1/2 past 10 o'clock" must be considered most authoritative. He had just returned moments before from his own defeat. He indicates the massacre of women and children occurred the day before. The letter is given in its entirety later in this article. It seems certain that Floyd was mistaken in later confusing Sunday with Friday. The date of September 14th for Floyd's Defeat (and therefore the 13th for Long Run) is confirmed by another participant. General Samuel Wells, in passing over the site of Floyd's Defeat in 1814, told his companion that defeat occurred September 14, 1781. Alfred Tischendorf and E. Taylor Parks, editors, *The Diary and Journal of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr. 1814-1826* (Duke University Press, Durham, NC: 1964), 12. Moreover, the dates of September 13th for Long Run and September 14th for Floyd's Defeat are confirmed in numerous financial claims filed with the Western Commissioners, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, D-433, 607, 752, 755; E-264; F-52, 350, 442; red-bound Volume 1, 157-8, 196; Draper Mss. 60J 115-6. Marshall placed these events in the month of April, *History of Kentucky* (1812), 140. He was corrected by most other early historians, but the error nevertheless was occasionally followed. The most notable example is Perrin, who even includes a silly footnote explaining his preference of April over September, W.H. Perrin, J.H. Battle and G.C. Kniffin, *Kentucky: A History of the State*, 8th ed. (Louisville and Chicago, 1888), 176.

to travel that day to reach Linn's Station, the eastern-most of the Beargrass stations. Boone's Wagon Road was the escape route. Only the year before had the trees been cut and the trace widened enough to bring a "wheel carriage" into Painted Stone from Beargrass. Along this dark wooded trail the families fled.⁵¹

The possibility of an Indian attack on the exposed group was well appreciated and planned for in advance. The fleeing families had agreed that in case of attack, the women and children were to dismount and shelter themselves behind trees while the men defended them. Unfortunately, the families became much scattered along the trail as they proceeded. The pack horses moved one behind the other along the narrow trail making a long string. It was impossible to concentrate the families or their protective escort at any one spot.⁵²

Their feeble force was further weakened by the loss of a large part of the militia escort after they had proceeded only nine miles. At the ford of the first branch of Long Run, later known as Nine-Mile Run, Lieutenant James Welsh was taken ill with the chills and had to turn off the trail until the sickness passed. Some ten to twenty of the militia guard remained behind to provide him protection. They would try to overtake the main group as soon as their captain was able to move.⁵³

⁵¹ Moses Boone described how the way was cut in late 1780 for the first wagon, deposition, January 3, 1805, Hall vs. Whitaker, Bundle 46, No. 1, Shelby County Circuit Court Records.

⁵² Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C89-90. Bland Ballard also mentioned the scattering along the trail, Draper Mss. 8J161 (1).

⁵³ The militia guard falling behind is mentioned in four separate interviews - Miss Campbell, Bland Ballard, Moses Boone, and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 13CC86, 8J160 (2), 161 (1), 19C35, 90, 95. Miss Campbell named Welsh as the sick man. Ballard indicated the sick man was the officer of the troop of horsemen and that some 18 or 20 men fell behind with him at Nine Mile Run. Isaiah Boone said it was some ten men who remained behind. Nine Mile Run is the branch of Long Run which heads northwest of Simpsonville. Boones Road crossed two forks of the run

The fleeing families and their remaining escort proceeded on a little more than three miles. It was now just after midday and the scattered group had completed more than half their trek. Those in front were approaching the main ford of Long Run. Suddenly the dreaded Indian attack commenced.⁵⁴

Robert Tyler, his family and a few other men were in the forefront with their cattle. At first fire Tyler at once dismounted. But John Kline and one or two others in front along with Tyler's family ignored the agreement to shelter themselves behind trees and make a fight. They cut loose their pack loads and darted off without making a stand. The remaining men might have handled the Indians had they not been weakened by this loss and the loss of their guard in the rear.

just above their junction. The crossings, about thirty yards apart, were called the Upper Ford of Long Run. The run later derived its name from the nine-mile marker tree which stood on its west bank. The run was also called McLawlin's Run after Hugh McLawlin who was killed near the nine-mile tree on January 18, 1783. Deposition of George Pomeray, March 17, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives.

⁵⁴ Isaiah Boone gave the time and Bland Ballard gave the location, Draper Mss. 19C95, 8J160 (2). Moses Boone told Draper that the ambush commenced at the thirteen-mile tree and continued for a mile with Long Run midway between the thirteen and fourteen-mile trees, Draper Mss. 19C34. This has frequently found its way into print, but it is nevertheless in error. The ford of Long Run was between the twelve and thirteen-mile trees, not the thirteen and fourteen-mile trees. There were no mile trees at the time of the massacre. Boones Road was not measured and the mile trees marked until October or November of 1782, depositions of George Pomeray, March 17 and August 25, 1809, and Robert Tiler, September 11, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch. The nine-mile tree was still standing as late as 1818. It was marked with a "9M" and nine horizontal slashes. It is shown on plats in the case of Taylor vs. McCampbell, Bundle 157, No. 23, Shelby Circuit Court Records. These plats show about twelve miles of Boones Road east from Floyd's battle ground almost to Boone's Station. The plats show several creek crossings and other interesting features. Another important plat is in the case of Finley's heirs vs. Lynch and Blanton, Bundles 63 and 64, Shelby Circuit Court Records. It shows about five and a half miles of Boones Road from Floyd's battle ground to the eight-mile tree. The extensive plat in Vanarsdale vs. Lynch is also informative. These plats prove the twenty-one miles from Boone's to Linn's Stations to have been marked off quite accurately. Present-day U.S. 60 from about two miles east of Long Run follows the same course as the old Boone's Wagon Road to the ford of Long Run, known in 1781 as the Lower Ford.

The other women and children dismounted as ordered and took shelter. The men acted bravely in their defense. George Yount, William Hall, Bland Ballard, and Thomas McCarty were particularly gallant. But seeing that the horses were getting very alarmed and realizing that the Indians were too numerous, they concluded that they had better remount the women and children and make a run for Linn's Station some eight or nine miles west.⁵⁵

It was only a few minutes after the attack began before the group started their run. As the retreat got underway, the Hansbury's old Negro woman pulled up her coats for a good run and bawled out, "Every man for himself and God for us all." She made it safely to Linn's Station.⁵⁶

Many others were not as fortunate. With the retreat, the massacre began. The men were able to keep the Indians somewhat in check just long enough to get the retreat moving. Packs were cut and families were remounted as they moved along. But many of those killed were shot as the retreat commenced and they ran along exposed to the enemy fire. This soon turned the retreat into a hopeless rout. The large number of women and children made for a truly desperate situation. Confusion and panic reigned as people began being shot down. The heaviest casualties fell upon the women and children. There was

⁵⁵ Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C90-91. Collins corroborates Boone's detail, stating, "Some few of the men ran at the first fire, of the others, some succeeded in saving part of their families, or died with them after a brave resistance." Collins, History of Kentucky (1847 edition), 172, (1874 edition), 2:41.

⁵⁶ Isaiah Boone and Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 19C92,94-95, J8161 (2). Boone and Ballard gave almost identical quotes for the woman. Ballard said her exclamation was made after he hollered out for her to hurry along or she would be killed.

simply no way to adequately protect them under the circumstances. “Many widows and orphans were made” that day.⁵⁷

One small girl remembered running by a man standing behind a tree. He reached out his hand and pulled her behind the tree with the soothing words, “Stand here, honey.” He then fired and ran with her following.⁵⁸

McCarty and Ballard were particularly active in cutting off the packs and getting the women and children onto the horses. One cowardly young man was caught in the act of driving a woman off her horse so that he might ride it. Ballard and McCarty cursed him, one of them shouting, “Touch another woman and I’ll blow a hole through you!” The young man was next seen trying to ride a wild colt without either a bridle or saddle. The colt threw him into the air heels over head. The young fellow was frantic with fright.⁵⁹

Most of the men put up a brave resistance. Some engaged in single-handed combats with Indians who had fired their guns and then rushed on the families with their tomahawks. Thomas McCarty fought bravely and was severely cut by three enemy shots. Two of his wounds were in the face, but he was able to make his escape. Bland Ballard succeeded in getting outside the Indian lines where he used his rifle with some effect. He killed one Indian

⁵⁷ Ibid., also Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C34. The quote is from Ballard.

⁵⁸ “Extracts from Ashby family letters: Account of the attack on Squire Boone’s Station, written in 1901 by Thompson Van Meter Ashby, as told to him by his grandmother, Letitia Van Meter,” Register, Volume 47, No. 160 (July 1949), 241-2.

⁵⁹ Ibid., Letitia Van Meter said it was “a man by the name of Blain Ballard” who shouted the threat. Isaiah Boone told of the same incident but said it was McCarty who made the threat, Draper Mss. 19C91.

certainly and thought more as he was able to get off three good shots. Good shots because the Indians were so thick.⁶⁰

The attack continued for a mile and the packs were scattered along the trail most of that distance up to the ford. To some extent this aided the families in effecting their escape as many of the Indians lingered behind cutting open packs to get at the plunder rather than pursuing their prey. A few were nevertheless persistent in their desire for scalps.⁶¹

The running families had to cross Long Run as they were still pursued by some of the Indians. The water was knee deep or more, swollen by recent rains. Young Letitia Van Meter was nearly drowned in crossing Long Run. Her mother heard her strangling and thought it was an Indian. She wheeled around just in time to see Lettie's head pop out of the water. She reached in and caught the girl by the hair and drew her out. They made it safely to Linn's Station that evening.⁶²

Young Isaiah Boone, running along on foot, was one of the last to cross Long Run. He stumbled and fell or pretty much plunged into the water getting himself and his gun quite wet. As he scrambled up the other bank he looked across the creek and saw an Indian on the opposite bank. The nine year old instantly drew up his wet gun and pointed it at the Indian. The Indian dodged

⁶⁰ This information is either directly or indirectly, through Collins, from Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 8J161 (1), Collins, History of Kentucky (1847 edition), 172, (1874 edition), 2:41.

⁶¹ Moses Boone told of the scattered packs and Ballard told of the Indians lingering behind, Draper Mss. 19C34, 8J161 (2).

⁶² Letitia Van Meter, Register (July 1949), 241-2.

behind a small bank. George Yount looked back and asked young Boone what his delay was.

“I’m pointing at an Indian that has been trying to kill me.”

“Why don’t you shoot him?” asked Yount.

“My gun is wet and won’t go,” replied Boone.

At that moment the Indian peeped up his head from behind the clay bank and Yount shot him through the neck. The dead Indian rolled into the water. Yount then shouted to Boone, “Now you, boy, throw away your gun and clear yourself!”

Young Boone did not want to lose his gun and so he continued to cling to it for a little distance. Finally realizing it was retarding his progress, he threw it away. Running along he also took off his fine shot pouch and held it by the strap in his teeth while pulling off his coat to throw it away. He dropped the pouch but picked it up. After a while he threw it away too. Before reaching Floyd’s Fork he was placed on a horse behind a woman and her child. The horse stumbled and threw the three off and they had to remount. Boone took off his three cornered hat to whip along the horse, but it flew out of his grasp and he lost it. The hat had been sent to him by his brother Johnathan from Kaskaskia. Boone never recovered his gun, pouch, or hat. One of the men in the fight the next day with Floyd’s party picked the hat up and put it inside his shirt saying it was little Boone’s and he would take it to him if he lived. Unfortunately the man was killed in Floyd’s Defeat.⁶³

⁶³ Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C34-35, 92-94. The brothers tell basically the same story of Isaiah’s troubles. The quotations are partly from each account.

Floyd's Fork also had to be crossed by the fleeing families a little over two miles west of Long Run. It too was swollen from the recent rains and its waters were quite deep. Benjamin and Aaron Vancleave, ten and twelve year old sons of John Vancleave, had been running along on foot following the people on horses. When they reached Floyd's Fork they each seized hold of a horse's tail and held on until safely across the fork. The crossing completely watersoaked the boys' buckskin garments. Their wet pants soon grew heavy and began to drag under foot retarding their progress. One of the boys stopped and cut the bottom off his pant legs; the other boy simply rolled his pant legs up. When the boys got in and their pants dried out, the boy who had cut his off found they were too short and had to throw them away.⁶⁴

Bland Ballard hid in the bushes at the ford of Floyd's Fork until he saw an Indian on horseback ride into the creek pursuing the fugitives. As the Indian ascended the bank near where he hid, Ballard shot him and caught his horse with which he made his escape to Linn's.⁶⁵

The militia guard with Lieutenant Welsh were so far behind on the trail that they did not hear the firing of the guns and were unaware that the attack had

⁶⁴ Edward S. Harvey, "The John Vancleave Family," *Indiana Magazine of History*, Volume 34, No. 4 (December 1938), 494. Harvey's stories of the Long Run Massacre were based on Vancleave family traditions. Moses and Isaiah Boone also related the story of their cousin Benjamin Vancleave crossing Floyd's Fork by grabbing hold of a horse's tail, Draper Mss. 19C35, 94. They made no mention of Aaron.

⁶⁵ Collins, *History of Kentucky*, (1847 edition), 172, (1874 edition), 2:41. Collins is not a particularly reliable source for the truth. This incident can certainly be questioned since the notes on Draper's interview with Ballard make no mention of it. However, in his account of Long Run and Floyd's Defeat, Collins undoubtedly had Ballard as his direct source. Furthermore, this particular incident seems to be corroborated by a man who heard Ballard one night relate the story of Floyd's Defeat, (John D. Shane) interview with D.C. Humphreys, (1854), Draper Mss. 16CC292. Humphreys said Ballard hid in a hollow tree which had fallen over the creek. Two pursuing Indians came to cross the creek and as they approached he fired away at them.

taken place. They had prepared a litter for their sick commander and renewed their march after his fever had passed. They soon caught a horse running back toward Boone's Station. Their worst fears were confirmed when they saw cattle running scared the same direction and discovered one with a horn shot off. They had just turned off the trail a few hundred yards when they came upon some Indians holding eighteen year old Rachel Vancleave and her infant sister Sally prisoners. The Indians fled away without their captives. Miss Vancleave was overjoyed at the rescue. Her sister had begun to cry and fret. The Indians were ready to kill the child when the guard rode up. Rachel begged the men not to pursue the Indians as proposed. She described the massacre that had just taken place and explained that the woods were full of Indians. Rachel was put on a horse while Allen Campbell carried the infant. The militia made a long circuit to avoid Boone's Wagon Road and the Indians. They got in safely to Linn's Station that night.⁶⁶

Most of the massacre's survivors straggled into Linn's station by nightfall. Old Mr. Eastwood and his wife had both fled into the woods during the attack. Somehow they found each other during the afternoon and dodged about in the bushes until dark without making any progress toward getting away. They hid during the night in a sink hole. As morning approached, they discovered an

⁶⁶ Interviews of Miss Campbell, Bland Ballard, Moses Boone and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 13CC86, 8J161 (1), 19C36,95. All four interviews give practically an identical account of the rescue of the young woman and the infant. Miss Campbell is the source for Welsh and Campbell's names. Harvey's brief account from the Vancleave family traditions gives Rachel and Sally's names. The Boones also gave Rachel's name. Harvey, Indiana Magazine of History, (December 1938), 493-4.

Indian camp very nearby and quietly stole away. They finally reached Linn's that day.⁶⁷

Fourteen year old John Vancleave, Jr. also hid away during the night of the massacre. He had tried to escape on foot with his two younger brothers, Aaron and Benjamin, but he was a fleshy boy and could not keep up the pace of his brothers. Realizing he was falling dangerously behind, he looked for a hiding place. He luckily found a hollow log into which he crawled and hid until the next day when he made his escape.⁶⁸

The ambush of the fleeing settlers was generally referred to as "Boone's Defeat".⁶⁹ Although Squire Boone was not present, it was obviously a defeat of his station. The more descriptive "Long Run Massacre" seems to be a fairly modern title for the incident.⁷⁰ Massacre is a fitting part of the title for the word conjures up all the instant feelings of dreaded surprise, panic hopelessness and wanton slaughter which were part and parcel of the unfortunate affair.⁷¹ It was

⁶⁷ Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C95-96.

⁶⁸ Harvey, "The John Vancleave Family," Indiana Magazine of History (December 1938), 494. Family tradition says John came out from hiding the next morning when he heard scouts who were looking for the dead. There are, however, no other accounts of Floyd's men finding or returning with any survivors from the massacre.

⁶⁹ Ballard specifically told Draper, "This was called Boone's defeat". James Galloway and Moses Boone also termed it "Boone's defeat". Draper Mss. 8J161 (2), 271, 19C37-38. The early accounts almost unanimously describe the incident as a "defeat".

⁷⁰ Although the title "Long Run Massacre" had been published occasionally before, Willis seems to have ensured its common usage. He used it in the title of the chapter in which he reproduced Williamson's 1872 account, Willis, History of Shelby County (1929), 181-3. Interestingly, Williamson in that account stated, "This battle was called Boone's Defeat, and I don't know from what cause, for Boone was not there..."

⁷¹ Long Run Massacre is particularly appropriate since the location has ever since been connected with the massacre. Nearly all the early accounts refer to the creek. It was summed up by one early deponent: "The crossing of long run was also a place of Notoriety on account of the Women and Children being Killed Near the Sd ford..." Deposition of Daniel Sparks, September 11, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives.

one of the largest and certainly one of the bloodiest massacres in Kentucky history. A fairly complete list of the victims can be pieced together: Joseph Eastwood's wife, a daughter of Mr. Hansbury, was horribly killed. Mrs. Eastwood was pregnant and her body was ripped open and mangled.⁷² A Miss Hansbury, sister of Mrs. Eastwood was killed.⁷³ Sarah Vancleave, a grown young lady, oldest daughter of William Vancleave, was killed.⁷⁴ Mrs. John Vancleave (nee Mary Shepherd) and two small children were killed. One of these children, Nancy Vancleave, was a twin sister of Sally, who was rescued by the militia.⁷⁵ When the bodies of the massacre victims were buried, Mrs. Vancleave's severed hand was identified by the rings on it.⁷⁶ Two or three of Widow Holt's children were killed.⁷⁷ A Mr. McCarty may have been killed. The man was supposedly a brother of Mrs. Richard Chenoweth and may have been a brother of Thomas

⁷² Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C92.

⁷³ Ballard said two of Thomas Hansbury's sisters were killed. Thomas had been killed in April (see Footnote 40). Thus, Ballard observed, the old Hansbury couple had lost three of their children, Draper Mss. 8J161 (1). Wilcox and Williamson also said "two Misses Hansboros" were killed, Willis, History of Shelby County, 178, 182. Moses Boone said "a grown daughter (perhaps young widow) of old Mr. Hansbury" was killed, Draper Mss. 19C34. He could be referring to either of the sisters.

⁷⁴ Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C92.

⁷⁵ Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C34,92; Harvey, "The John Vancleave Family," Indiana Magazine of History (December 1938), 494-5. Both Boones said two children were killed. The Vancleave family tradition holds that Nancy was carried away by the Indians and was never seen again. Family tradition does not mention any of the Vancleave children being killed. It seems unlikely that the Indians would bother to save an infant girl.

⁷⁶ Low Catherine Clore, "Monument Near Louisville to Victims in Floyd's Defeat," Register, Volume 10, No. 28 (January 1912), 76. It must be questioned why the Indians never severed a few fingers to take the rings. For the most part, Clore's account is based on Wilcox, but Wilcox did not mention the severed hand.

⁷⁷ Moses and Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C34,92.

McCarty who took such an active part in the defense of Long Run.⁷⁸ A William Mitchell was supposedly killed. Since his mother and father were living at the Dutch Station on Beargrass, there is a possibility he may have been at the massacre as a member of the militia guard. If so, he was apparently the only militia victim.⁷⁹ A Mrs. Demaree and some Demaree children may also have been victims.⁸⁰ This Mrs. Demaree was possibly the mother of Rachel (Demaree) Riker whose husband Gerardus Riker was killed the next day at Floyd's Defeat. The widow Riker later married John Vancleave who lost his wife and two children at the massacre. It was John Vancleave's daughters Rachel and Sally who were temporarily held captives by the Indians. Moses Boone recalled no others being taken prisoner with a possible exception of one man.⁸¹

There were no more than 15 killed in the massacre, possibly as few as eleven.⁸² Collins' statement that over 100 men, women and children were killed

⁷⁸ G.T. Wilcox's 1880 account, Willis, History of Shelby County, 178. The name is given as McCarty, but this is an error since Mrs. Chenoweth was a daughter of Thomas McCarty. Wilcox's account is most untrustworthy.

⁷⁹ Shane's interview with Miss Campbell, Draper Mss. 13CC87. Miss Campbell was living at the Low Dutch Station at that time.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* Miss Campbell said the husband, a son and two daughters with an infant came to live at the Dutch Station after the massacre. "The mother and several children were killed." The Demarees were among the Holland Dutch and French Huguenot families who built the Dutch Station on the Beargrass in the spring of 1780, Akers, "The Low Dutch Company".

⁸¹ Draper Mss. 19C36. According to his wife's family history, Riker died September 15, 1781 "killed at Bullskin, Kentucky in Boone's and Tyler's defeat", Voorhis D. Demarest, The Demarest Family (Hackensack, NJ, 1964). 1:5-202; also (1938 edition), 111. The date may indicate he died later of wounds; however, the date is probably no more reliable than the creek and defeat names which are, of course, errors. The killing is confirmed by Enoch M. Boone, a son of Squire, who stated, "Riker was Killed and John Vancleave married his widow," Draper's interview (August 1858), Draper Mss. 19C140.

⁸² Moses Boone told Draper there were "perhaps only 7 killed in all," Draper Mss. 19C34. He, however, missed a few of the definite victims. Isaiah Boone told Draper the "Precise number altogether not recollected," but he did not dispute his brother's small number, Draper Mss. 19C92. Captain John Dial in an interview with John Shane gave a figure of nine to eleven victims - three men, three or four women, and three or four children, Draper Mss. 13CC227.

or taken prisoner during the massacre and Floyd's Defeat is pure exaggeration.⁸³ Willis' statement that there was a "loss of some forty or fifty men, women and children slaughtered" at Long Run is also ridiculous.⁸⁴ These two grossly inflated statements may have been the source for Kentucky Historical Marker No. 991 near Eastwood. That marker perpetuates in bronze for the passing motorist that the Indians "killed over 60 pioneers."

The Indians responsible for the Long Run Massacre were a party of over 50 Miamis who had separated two days earlier from the main body of Indians under Joseph Brant and Alexander McKee. Several small parties were constantly breaking away to plunder isolated cabins and steal horses. It was the misfortune of the Painted Stone settlers to cross the path of so large a party of such plunderers.

The main body of Indians had started across county at the same time the Miamis broke away. Brant and McKee had determined their dwindling force was too small to handle Clark at the Falls. They decided to strike at Squire Boone's Station. On their way they fell in again at Boone's Wagon Road with the jubilant Miamis who only a few hours before had fallen upon the fleeing families of Painted Stone. The united Indian force now numbered 200. The news of the Miamis' success induced Brant and McKee to delay the intended attack on Painted Stone and "to take possession of the Ground they had drove the enemy

⁸³ Collins, History of Kentucky, (1874 edition), 2:710.

⁸⁴ Willis, History of Shelby County, 46.

from and to wait their coming to bury their dead.”⁸⁵ They camped that night near the site of the day’s massacre, on the east bank of Long Run beside a large spring.⁸⁶

The Indians did not have long to wait. As soon as the first survivors of Long Run straggled into Linn’s Station, runners were sent out to spread the shocking news to the other Beargrass stations. Colonel John Floyd was particularly distressed by the report. No doubt he was chagrined upon hearing of the ineffective part played by the militia guard which had been sent to Painted Stone specifically to escort its inhabitants to safety.⁸⁷ As county lieutenant, Floyd was charged with the defense of Jefferson County and the overall command of its

⁸⁵ The movements of the Indians are detailed in Thompson and McKee’s reports to Major DePeyster, September 26, 1781, “Haldimand Papers,” *Michigan Pioneer Collections*, 10: 515-8. McKee was noncommittal in his report as to the Indian strength saying, “we were never able to ascertain our numbers being constantly left by small parties who’s view was only to plunder.” He fortunately was more informative with Captain Thompson who wrote in his report that the Indians numbered 200 when they “fell in with” Colonel Floyd. Thompson himself was not along, having started back while the Indians were still on the Ohio. However, his figure is confirmed by a most reliable contemporary American source - Colonel Floyd himself. He wrote to his mentor two weeks later that he had been defeated “by a party of upwards of two hundred,” Floyd to Preston, September 30, 1781, Draper Mss. 17CC 137-8. The size of the Miami party responsible for the Long Run Massacre is derived from Isaiah Boone, Draper Mss. 19C96. Boone said that after the massacre this Indian party was joined by a much larger party, two or three times its size. The second party was destined to attack Boone’s Station, but the combined parties concluded instead to waylay the trail and ambush the burial party. This sequence of events is exactly as McKee reported it. Other American accounts exaggerate the Indian strength. Ballard said a force of 300 was responsible for Long Run as well as Floyd’s Defeat, Draper Mss. 8J160 (2). John Dyal said the Indians numbered 470 from reports of the returned prisoners, Draper Mss. 13CC227. As usual, John Williamson’s 1872 account contains the most ridiculous figure. He said the Indians were “about seven hundred in number,” Willis, *History of Shelby County*, 182.

⁸⁶ Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C38.

⁸⁷ According to one lady who lived at Floyd’s Station, Floyd flew into a rage at the appearance of the first militiaman to return: “Floyd asked him where all the rest were. He couldn’t tell. Had they all been Killed? He didn’t know. Floyd swore that he had run off, was what had put him foremost, and that he would have him hung.” (John Shane) interview with a daughter of John Thickston, no date, Draper Mss. 13CC14. It must be noted that the lady, as Shane himself put it, had a “lively” imagination.

militia. He was in no mood to add to the disgraceful conduct of the militia by any further inaction.⁸⁸

Floyd hurriedly collected what men he could muster at his station and the nearby Low Dutch and Hogland's Stations. The number of available men was already limited because so many had been sent earlier to escort the Painted Stone families. Added to this, Floyd had to contend with a shortage of horses. Earlier that same day, twenty-five horses had been stolen from the Dutch Station by the Indians.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Colonel William Christian was originally named county lieutenant upon formation of Jefferson County in 1780. Christian was not then in Kentucky (did not come out until 1785) and thus resigned the commission. Clark heard of the resignation and wrote Governor Jefferson: "I would beg leave to recommend to you Colo Jno Floyd and Inhabitant of the County, as a Gentlman that I an convinced will do Honour to the appointment and Known to be the most capable in the County. A Soldier, Gentleman, and a Scholar whom the Inhabitants, from his actions have the greatest confidence in." James, ed., *Clark Papers*, 1:500. Floyd was already acting in the capacity and was given the commission early in 1781, Floyd to Jefferson, January 15, 1781, Palmer, ed., *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 1:437; April 16, 1781, *Clark Papers*, 1:529.

⁸⁹ James Galloway's Narrative, Draper Mss. 8J272. Galloway's horse was among those stolen and so he was unable to accompany Floyd. He nevertheless lent his gun for the cause and promised to meet Floyd later that night at Linn's if he could find a horse to borrow. He procured a horse about sundown and started for Linn's. Less than a mile from the Dutch Station he found himself in the midst of Indians. Although shot through the arm and in the shoulder, he escaped back to the Dutch Station. Galloway claimed the Indians numbered sixteen and were led by Simon Girty who gave Galloway his shoulder wound. Galloway's imagination shows its colors here for, as we know, Girty was laid up at the time with the wound he had received from Brant. The basic incident, however, is confirmed by two other sources, Shane's interviews with the daughter of John Thickston and Miss Campbell, Draper Mss. 13CC16, 85-6. Both indicate Galloway was shot just outside the station. Thickston confirmed that two shots were received in the arm. Miss Campbell added her own colorful detail. She said Galloway borrowed a horse from her Uncle Smith. Before leaving, Galloway came in to sympathize with her father whose son Frank had been killed at Painted Stone. Not understanding Galloway's situation, her father said, "Jimmy Galloway, if it had been you that was killed, my son wouldn't be here." The remark so cut Galloway to the quick that he mounted his borrowed horse and galloped out of the station. Scarcely had he gotten through the lane when guns were heard. The old men and women of the fort flocked to the gates ready to run to his aid. But old Mr. Campbell thrust them in and barred the gate. Miss Campbell know if Galloway's horse was not shot he would run around to the back gate. She was the first to get to it and found Galloway laying there weltering in blood. Dr. Samuel Culbertson dressed the wounds and Galloway lived to be an old man.

Somehow Floyd managed to quickly mount a small force which he rushed to Linn's Station, fearful that it might be under attack.⁹⁰ Linn's was in a dangerous position, being about three miles east of the other Beargrass Stations and therefore relatively isolated. His small party arrived at Linn's after sundown and found it free from attack but in an extreme state of alarm. The full particulars of that afternoon's carnage at Long Run were now absorbed first hand from its terrified survivors. Floyd was determined to consolidate his small force and take the offensive. Squire Boone and the remaining inhabitants of Painted Stone might at that very moment be withstanding a very unequal siege. If relief were not immediately sent they would certainly be added to the growing list of victims. Furthermore, the dead at Long Run needed decent burial.⁹¹ The remainder of the evening was hurriedly spent preparing for an early march the next day.

It was a small party which rode out of Linn's Station under Colonel John Floyd early Friday morning September 14, 1781.⁹² The party numbered only twenty-seven men, all mounted.⁹³ Many of the militia who had been at Long Run

⁹⁰ Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 8J161 (2).

⁹¹ Marshall said Floyd was "intent upon administering relief to the sufferers, and chastisement to the enemy," History of Kentucky (1812), 140. Primary sources are vague as to Floyd's intention, most not discussing it, a few simply stating he went out to bury the dead, Draper Mss. 8J272, 13CC85, 227. In view of Boone's situation, the objective was undoubtedly more than simply to bury the dead.

⁹² See footnote 50.

⁹³ The number of twenty-seven is given twice by Floyd himself, Floyd to Clark, September 14, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 1:604; Floyd to Preston, September 30, 1781, Draper Mss. 17CC137-8. The number is also given twice by John Dyal, a participant (John D. Shane) interview with Captain John Dial or Dyal, no date, Draper Mss. 13CC226; Revolutionary War pension application of John Dyal, W2082, affidavits dated September 27, 1832 and July 15, 1833, Lewis County, Kentucky. Most nineteenth century historians followed Marshall who gave the number as twenty-five, History of Kentucky (1812), 140. Collins' 1847 edition gave twenty-five in one account, but thirty-seven in its main account; both accounts in the 1874 edition give thirty-seven, Collins, History of Kentucky (1847), 172, 518; (1874), 2:41, 710. Bland Ballard is obviously Collins' source as his interview with Draper gives thirty-seven, Draper Mss. 8J161 (2).

the afternoon before were unable, or at least unwilling, to venture out again. Someone apparently had tried to excuse himself on account of having lost his gun at Long Run. As they rode out now, Floyd raved and swore, "The first man to lose his gun this day will be hung!"⁹⁴

East of Linn's Station the men were divided into three columns. Colonel Floyd commanded the center column which marched in the road. Captain Peter A'Sturgis commanded the right and Lieutenant Thomas Ravenscraft commanded the left column. In this position they cautiously but quickly marched east along the wagon road.⁹⁵ They were headed for Painted Stone with all possible speed fully expecting to find it under siege. Unfortunately scouts were not sent ahead.⁹⁶

Ballard made several errors with dates and numbers; his account must be relied on chiefly for his own adventures. John Williamson's 1872 account again gives the most exaggerated number(sixty), Willis, History of Shelby County, 182.

⁹⁴ Miss Campbell, Draper Mss. 13CC87. There is an entry in the Journal of the Western Commissions, May 22, 1783, for the "Accounts of Sundry persons for Guns, Horses, etc. lost attempting to cover the retreat from Boons Station" settled for sixty-six pounds and fourteen shillings, James, ed., Clark Papers, 2:389.

⁹⁵ Deposition of General Samuel Wells, October 17, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives. A deposition of Robert Tyler taken the same day in the same case refers to the left column commanded by Ravenscraft. Captain John Dyal also recorded that they rode in three lines, that A'Sturgis was in front and that Ravenscraft commanded a company. Draper Mss. 13CC226, 228. Ballard mentioned a left and right wing and said he was under A'Sturgis, but on the left, Draper Mss. 8J162 (1). Most nineteenth century histories incorrectly claim Floyd divided his men into two parties. Williamson, of course, makes the grossest error, saying one of the two companies rode some 300 yards in advance of the other, Willis, History of Shelby County, 182.

⁹⁶ All the nineteenth century histories credit Floyd with some variation of prudence and/or great, greatest, considerable, commendable or unusual caution. The words seem out of place considering the lack of scouts. In an opposite vein, there is a published, but nevertheless absurd, legend which puts Bland Ballard in a role very reminiscent of Daniel Boone the next year at Blue Licks. Supposedly Floyd's party halted west of the ford of Floyd's Fork, held a quick council and designated a rallying point should they be defeated. Here Ballard begged to be permitted to go forward and reconnoiter as he was sure the Indians were in the vicinity. According to the legend, Floyd would not hear of it and Ballard was overruled. Willis, Wilcox, and Williamson are the source for this silly tale. John Williamson first told it in his 1872 letter and George Wilcox repeated it in his 1880 letter. Willis published them both in his History of Shelby County, 178, 182. The Williamson and Wilcox letters are so confused and so completely riddled with the most glaring errors that they can be accepted only as a sheer fiction from beginning to end. Willis' book would make a remarkable study in the number of errors which can be compressed into a

The British and the Indians fully intended to set up an ambush, correctly guessing that the Kentuckians would organize a burial and relief party. They miscalculated, however, the speed with which Floyd would organize and advance. Accordingly Floyd came riding through before the Indians were posted to receive him. The fickle Indians were busy that morning collecting and sifting through the plunder of the prior day's massacre instead of setting their ambush.⁹⁷ This alone saved Floyd from the total defeat which almost certainly would have befallen his small party had 200 Indians been lying ready in wait.

Even so, the whites were unanimous in the conviction that they had fallen into an ambush. Certainly it must have seemed so for the terrain and numbers were grossly in the Indians' favor. Floyd's men were riding fast along a quarter mile stretch of Boone's Wagon Road between Floyds Fork and Long Run, east of present-day Eastwood. The road here lay along a dividing ridge. They did not discover the Indians until they received their fire. Floyd's men forever after assumed the Indians had been lying in wait, had let them ride through, then closed in behind and had them surrounded. Although not so well planned, the effect was similar. The Indians had simply to pull back from the road and the ridge and shoot down as many of the whites as possible.⁹⁸

single local history. To be charitable in this instance, there is a possibility that Ballard himself promoted this legend in his informal story telling sessions. D.C. Humphreys told of hearing Ballard spin the tale of Floyd's Defeat one night at Nathaniel Hart's house saying, "He could not persuade Floyd not to pursue." Draper Mss. 16CC92. But Ballard made no mention of this in his accounts to the historians Draper and Collins.

⁹⁷ McKee to DePeyster, September 26, 1781, "Haldimand Papers," Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10: 517. Ballard confirmed that it was early in the day, Draper Mss. 8J162 (1).

⁹⁸ John Dyal, D.C. Humphreys and Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 13CC227, 16CC292, 8J162 (1). Humphreys claimed that Floyd's men were decoyed onto a ridge in pursuit of some Indians that had shown themselves. His information was supposedly from Ballard, but Ballard made no

The Indians were on both sides of the ridge, their shot crossing up the hill.⁹⁹ Captain Peter A'Sturgis was in front. It was thought the first shot struck him. Although mortally wounded, he plunged his horse through the Indian lines and escaped. Nineteen year old John Dyal's horse was shot from under him. The wounded horse plunged into the Indian line. Dyal jumped up and scrambled away, bullets whizzing all about him.¹⁰⁰ Others also lost their horses or jumped from them to seek a tree behind which they momentarily made a stand. A few Indians were brought down by their fire. But the Indians were on all sides and in much too great numbers. Those of Floyd's men who survived the first fire quickly charged on horse or on foot through the Indian lines, their only means of escape.

mention of a decoy in his interview with Draper, saying simply that two Indians fired on the right wing and in an instant the attack was in general. Collins, whose source was Ballard, said the whites did not discover the Indians until they received their fire, *History of Kentucky* (1847 edition), 172; (1874 edition), 42. There was no need to decoy Floyd onto the ridge since Boone's Wagon Road already followed the ridge. The nearly one mile stretch of old U.S. 60 - the Eastwood "cutoff" - follows that same ridge and nearly identical route of the old wagon road. It was along this stretch of the road at the site of the Eastwood Cemetery that the defeat occurred. Immediately northeast of the cemetery the tunnel of the L&N railroad passes through the ridge under old and new U.S. 60. The location of the defeat is shown on the 1858 Map of Jefferson County published by G.T. Bergmann. The exact location is also determinable from surveys and testimony in two land suits, *Vanarsdale vs. Lynch*, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives; and *Finley's heirs vs. Lynch and Blanton*, Bundles 63 and 64, Shelby County Circuit Court Records. The *Vanarsdale* suit gives the exact distance of the defeat from the ford of Long Run - approximately three-fourths of a mile west of Long Run. A survey in the *Finley heirs'* suit shows the route of Boone's Wagon Road from the battle ground for several miles east past Long Run. The location of the defeat is also given in a May 17, 1814 entry in R.C. Anderson's diary: "Riding in company with Genl. Sam(ue)l Wells on this day about a mile beyond Floyd's fork on the road from Louisville to Shelbyville on the ridge where two hollows one on each side nearly reach the road, he informed me that there was the spot of 'Floyd's defeat.'" Tischendorf and Parks, editors, *Diary of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr.*, 12. It was through this narrow part of the ridge where the hollows nearly meet that the L&N railroad tunnel was dug.

⁹⁹ D.C. Humphreys, Draper Mss. 16CC292. Ballard said Floyd's men were on a ridge when attacked on the front, rear, and every side, Draper Mss. 8J162.

¹⁰⁰ John Dyal, Draper Mss. 13CC226-7. Dyal told Reverend Shane that as he scrambled away the Indians let loose a volley that riddled the skirt of his frock shirt - five bullets shot through it - and cut him about an eighth of an inch deep just across the small of his back. The shot drew blood on each side of his backbone. Shane noted parenthetically, "I said nothing." Dyal, also stated in his Revolutionary War pension application (W2082) that his horse was shot down under him and he made his escape on foot.

The Indians now resorted to the tomahawk.¹⁰¹ Some of the Indians could speak English and yelled, "Stop! and you shan't be hurt!" No one accepted the offer. One man yelled back, "Go to hell!"¹⁰² Thomas Ravenscraft was tomahawked on the head and taken captive along with two or three others.¹⁰³

The whites were pursued by some of the Indians for over a mile to Floyd's Fork. Bland Ballard and others were carrying along the wounded Captain A'Sturgis as they approached the ford. John Hughes, who was already in the stream, looked back, saw the Indians close at hand and called out a warning. Ballard yelled back to him, "Charge the Indians!" Although well in the water and safe, Hughs took up the call joined by the young Samuel Wells, whose father had been killed only minutes before at the defeat. Together Hughes and Wells gallantly rushed at the Indians. At this moment Colonel Floyd came running along on foot, nearly exhausted and closely pursued. Hughes, still keeping the Indians at bay by dashing in and among them, called out to Wells to give his horse to the

¹⁰¹ D.C. Humphreys and Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 16CC292, 8J162 (1). Ballard said that by the time Floyd's men slid off their horses to tree, they were overpowered and defeated. Floyd wrote "they cut us to pieces before I knew of the ambuscade," Floyd to Preston, September 30, 1781, Draper Mss. 17CC 137-8. McKee wrote that Floyd's men "exchanged a few shots with the Indians in front and fled," McKee to DePeyster, September 26, 1781, "Haldimand Papers," Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10: 517. Collins wrote that Floyd's men maintained their ground until overpowered and attacked with tomahawks, History of Kentucky (1847 edition), 172, (1874 edition) 2:42, 710. Collins' slight exaggeration is nothing in comparison with Mrs. Letitia Floyd's statement that the battle lasted for several hours, letter to Ben Rush Floyd, February 22, 1843, Draper Mss. 6J103. Unfortunately, this statement has more than once found its way into print.

¹⁰² John Dyal, Draper Mss. 13CC227.

¹⁰³ Revolutionary War pension application of Thomas Ravenscraft (S1248), affidavit dated August 12, 1818, Harrison County, Kentucky. Ravenscraft said he had never fully recovered from the effects of the tomahawk wound. Shane's interview with a Mrs. Wilson contains the following: "Indians caught Lieutenant Ravenscraft and made him run the gauntlet, and nearly killed him. Mr. Kinney said - if this is a man, a man's a strange looking thing," Draper Mss. 11CC279. Mrs. Wilson was captured in June 1780 at the destruction of Ruddle's and Martin's Stations. Although she was at Detroit when Ravenscraft was brought in by the British and Indians, she was most likely mistaken about his wounds having resulted from running the gauntlet. Ravenscraft's pension application mentions nothing of a gauntlet.

Colonel. Wells at once dismounted and offered his horse to Floyd.¹⁰⁴ In grabbing hold of the horse Floyd was forced to let go of his gun and thereby disobey his first orders of the day.¹⁰⁵

Hughes and Wells, by their conduct, saved Colonel Floyd and gave time for Ballard and his comrades to get Captain A'Sturgis across Floyd's Fork.¹⁰⁶ The action of Wells was to become legendary. He had been on unfriendly terms with Floyd, in fact they had been personal enemies since Floyd had kicked Wells out of his station.¹⁰⁷ Thus, saving Floyd's life was considered doubly noble of Wells.

¹⁰⁴ Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 8J162. No account of Floyd's Defeat is complete without mention of Wells saving Floyd. Indeed, even most of the primary sources mention it. Ballard's interview with Draper is the most detailed account and should be reliable since he was at the scene. Ballard's story is consistent with the location Wells pointed out to the traveling companion in 1814: "Near a hollow on the present road towards the fork Wells gave F(loyd) his horse." Tischendorf and Parks, editors, *Diary of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr.*, 12. The extent to which Wells actually aided Floyd is unclear. Marshall wrote that Wells "mounted him on his own horse, and fled by his side to support him," *History of Kentucky* (1812), 141. Ballard also said Wells aided Floyd onto the horse, but to a specific Draper question he replied, "Wells may have held on to the stirrup, don't recollect about it," Draper Mss. 8J162 (2), 178 (2).

¹⁰⁵ Miss Campbell, Draper Mss. 13CC87. She said Floyd called out to Wells, "Sam Wells, I am a gone man." Wells jumped from his saddle and Floyd had to drop his gun to catch the horse. Floyd "didn't say anything about losing his gun then." The story might be discounted if it were not that two other interviews mention Floyd losing his gun, James Galloway and Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 8J272,19C36. Galloway claimed it was his own gun, loaned to Floyd, which was lost. As Floyd was getting on the horse, the gun was jerked out of his hand by a bush in which it had been caught. A rifle borrowed from Galloway was certainly lost at the defeat for it is listed among the claims with the Western Commissioners, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, P-134. Furthermore, Floyd seems to have had some special interest in the rifle since he sent a request on February 11, 1782 for "Mr. Galloway to get a Gun out of the Magazine," adding that "I will be answerable for the Order & return of the Gun when called for." *Ibid.*, E-257. Floyd sent another request on March 27, 1782 for seven guns "for the use of the militia at New holland who are without any," *Ibid.*, E-325. These guns were also lost at Boone's and Floyd's Defeats.

¹⁰⁶ Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 8J162 (2). Of all the accounts of the Wells-Floyd incident, only Draper's interview with Ballard has preserved the heroic part played by John Hughes. According to Ballard, Hughes was then a resident of Linn's Station.

¹⁰⁷ Miss Campbell, Draper Mss. 13CC87. Nearly every account of the incident mentions the previous hostility between the two men.

The act forever cancelled the two men's animosity and they lived afterwards as friends.¹⁰⁸

Out of the twenty-seven men who rode out from Linn's Station that morning only ten escaped from the defeat. Seventeen were either killed or captured on the spot. Of the ten who escaped, two were wounded, Captain A'Sturgis mortally. A'Sturgis died somewhere between Floyd's Ford and Linn's as they retreated.¹⁰⁹

Again the Beargrass Stations were shocked by the new horror story told by the survivors of Floyd's Defeat as they came in that morning. One woman later recalled Floyd's own words of frustration to her father: "'Worse and worse,' said he to my father. 'Worse and worse, Mr. Campbell.'"¹¹⁰ Colonel Floyd immediately sat down and wrote the following dispatch to General Clark at the Falls:¹¹¹

(Friday September 14, 1781 letter)

¹⁰⁸ Again, the new friendship is mentioned in nearly every account. Bland Ballard said that Floyd presented Wells with a fine tract of 100 acres on which Wells settled and lived some years, Draper Mss. 8J162 (2). Floyd lived less than two years after his defeat. He was mortally wounded in an Indian ambush and died April 10, 1783. Wells went on to distinguish himself thirty years later at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

¹⁰⁹ See footnote 93. Dyal stated in both his interview and pension application that seventeen were killed or taken on the ground. Floyd's September 14th letter seems to indicate the same number. Floyd said two were wounded including A'Sturgis. Dyal said two in his interview, but three in his pension application. He might have counted himself in the application (see footnote 100). Dyal's application said that A'Sturgis died before he got in. Ballard also said A'Sturgis died before reaching Linn's Station, Draper Mss. 8J162 (1). Some more recent published accounts mention Floyd being wounded. The sources for this seem to be either D.C. Humphreys or Letitia Floyd, Draper Mss. 16CC292, 6J103. Humphreys seems to have confused Floyd with Ballard's story of bringing A'Sturgis off. Letitia Floyd said her father-in-law was wounded in the foot, but she was grossly in error in nearly all her "facts." Floyd himself makes no mention of being wounded; nor do any of the other primary sources, even when telling of the Floyd/Wells incident. Miss Campbell stated specifically that Floyd was not wounded, Draper Mss. 13CC87.

¹¹⁰ Miss Campbell, Draper Mss. 13CC87.

¹¹¹ James, ed., Clark Papers, 1: 604.

Friday 14th 1/2 past ten O'clock

Dear General

I have this minute returned from a little Excurtion against the Enemy & my party 27 in number are all dispersed & cut to pieces except 9 who came off the field with Capt Asturgus mortally Wounded and one other slightly wounded. I dont yet know who are killed. Mr. Ravenscraft was taken prisoner by (the side of) me - A party was defeated yesterday near the same place & many Women and Children Wounded.' I want Satisfaction do send me 100 men which number with what I can raise will do. The Militia have no good powder do send some.

I am &e &e &e

Jno Floyd

I cant write guess at the rest

(Addressed:) To Gen' Clarke

It was a humiliating defeat for Colonel John Floyd, but not totally without some benefit.¹¹² Floyd's men succeeded in killing three Hurons and a Miami. Among the Hurons killed was their chief. This man was their principal warrior and had been a great supporter of the British efforts to keep the Indians

¹¹² On December 19, 1782 John Floyd entered 9750 acres in the name of James Kemp to begin at a tree marked SB on Boones Road some 200 poles west of the ford of Long Run. The particular tree was only seven poles from the site of Floyd's Defeat, yet the entry made no mention of that notorious location. General Samuel Wells was later questioned about that omission: "What do you think is the reason that Floyd did not mention the above Battle ground in making the above entry of Kemps, An(swer) Sinc(e) I have reflected on that subject it is my opinion he did not wish to record his own defeat," deposition, October 17, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives.

organized during this campaign. After Floyd had been driven off, the Indians retired to their baggage to consult as to what should be done next. Joseph Brant and Alexander McKee vigorously proposed that they follow up their success by taking Squire Boone's Station on their way back or at least "endeavor to draw them out, destroy their cattle and otherways distress them." The Lake Indians, however, would not even discuss the proposals. They thought they had sufficient prisoners and scalps already and would not even stop to talk. The Hurons were so discouraged by the loss of their chief and the desertion of the Lake Indians that they wanted only to return north of the Ohio as soon as possible. So the Indians turned homeward satisfied that their blows to the enemy were sufficient to save their villages from invasion for at least another season. McKee and the Indians with him arrived at the Upper Shawnee Villages (Chillicothe) on September 25th.¹¹³

Floyd's Defeat can thus be credited with saving the few remaining inhabitants of Painted Stone from almost certain death or captivity. Floyd himself described the effect of his defeat in these words:

...this country was Invaded by a very considerable number of the enemy,
and ... it is my opinion that if the Defeat ... had not taken place, that before
a Sufficient number of Men could have been Embodied to repel the Enemy

¹¹³ Thompson and McKee's reports to Major DePeyster, September 26, 1781. "Haldimand Papers," Michigan Pioneer Collections, 10: 515-8. The quote is from McKee. Marshall gave the Indian losses as nine or ten killed, History of Kentucky (1812), 140. This inflated figure was generally followed in the published American accounts. Letitia Floyd's even greater overstatement of thirteen has occasionally been published. Draper Mss. 6J103.

that Boons Station or some of the stations on Beargrass would have been reduced by them.¹¹⁴

Boone's Station was held only by the families of Squire Boone and the widow Hinton. The only men left to defend it were Boone and his twelve-year old son Moses. Boone was still so weak from the wounds he had received in April that he was barely able to creep about.¹¹⁵ The Indians had passed up the opportunity to crown their shocking foray with the capture of Squire Boone and the actual destruction of an inhabited station, weak as the station was.

All this time Squire Boone was in great suspense. A number of cattle had returned to Painted Stone the same evening of the Long Run Massacre. It was a chilling omen. Unpleasant apprehensions increased when the party never

¹¹⁴ Certification of John Floyd dated February 7, 1783 on the backside of "A Return of Pack Horses, Saddles, Guns, and other artikels" lost September 13th and 14th, 1781, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, F-442. This was the major appraisal listing of lost articles turned into the Western Commissioners appointed to settle Virginia's military claims. The Commissioners concluded that Floyd had "acted prudently" and that the militia losses of Boone's and Floyd's Defeats should "Stand on the same footing with Articles Lost at the Blue Licks in 1782," *Ibid.*, D-433, 534. Lyman C. Draper in his notes on the Western Commissioners' papers extracted the Commissioners' conclusion from the summary voucher on D-433, Draper Mss. 60J375-6. Anna M. Cartlidge in her excellent biography of John Floyd incorrectly inferred from Draper's notes that this was a verdict of a military hearing which cleared Floyd of charges that he had been derelict in his duty, Cartlidge, "Colonel John Floyd: Reluctant Adventurer," *Register*, Volume 66, No. 4, (October 1968), 359-60. No such charges were ever made. The Commissioners were merely documenting the claims for losses were legitimate military expenses.

¹¹⁵ Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C33-34. There is a shopworn old Boone myth which has Squire Boone riding out alone one night some two weeks after Long Run to investigate the status of his abandoned station. Of course, he has a close encounter with Indians. This frequently published story was originally told by Enoch Boone, Draper Mss. 19C140-1. It is truly amazing how some writers have blissfully sandwiched this story in between Boone's being barely able to creep about at the time of Long Run and his impressing the Virginia Assembly the next year with his still unhealed wounds. Enoch Boone, the youngest son of Squire, was interviewed by Lyman Draper in 1858. The notes from that interview reveal a rambling memory of incidents often in direct conflict with the interviews of Enoch's older brothers which were taken by Draper twelve years earlier. Moses and Isaiah lived through the events they described (Moses was born in 1769 and Isaiah in 1772). Enoch Boone had to get his recollections second hand since he was not born until 1777. Yet Enoch's stories fit the Boone legend a bit better and so they seem to find their way into "history". Squire Boone can be credited with many heroic deeds, but occasionally the obvious legend can and should be sifted out. And the same observation fits Daniel as well.

arrived to help the Boones and Hintons remove to Beargrass. But they had not been abandoned. A day or two after Floyd's Defeat a force of perhaps as many as 300 men from the Falls and Beargrass rode out to their rescue.¹¹⁶

Most of the Indians had cleared out, but a few still lurked about watching the whites and looking for opportunity to cause mischief. It was hot weather and the Falls troops had made a long rapid march. Many men were tired and a few lagged behind. One of those in the rear, James Kirkley, was taken captive on September 15, 1781 and thus probably had the dubious distinction of being the final victim of the Indians' month-long foray.¹¹⁷

At the sites of the two defeats, the Falls troops performed the gruesome task of collecting and burying bodies now bloating in the September sun. The two defeats had occurred within a mile of each other. At Floyd's battle ground thirteen or fourteen men were buried in a sink hole near the road.¹¹⁸ Stones and

¹¹⁶ Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C36-7. Boone said the 300 men probably arrived at Linn's the day after the defeat and reached Boone's the next day. John Dyal said it was about three days after Floyd's Defeat that Clark ordered out his regular troops, Revolutionary War pension application (W2082). Miss Campbell said some three or four hundred of Slaughter's troops were brought out, Draper Mss. 13CC87. Draper noted in the margin of this interview that Slaughter had no such numbers. Indeed, he alone did not, but 300 regular troops and militia could easily have been raised. Bland Ballard told Draper that Clark collected three or four hundred men as soon as he learned of Boone's Defeat, reached Linn's just two years after Floyd had left and met Floyd's men on their retreat a few miles outside of Linn's, Draper Mss. 8J163 (1). Floyd's communication with Clark following his defeat proves Ballard definitely in error as to Clark's timing.

¹¹⁷ Bland Ballard described the circumstances of this incident but thought the man was killed, Draper Mss. 8J163 (1). Ballard did not give the man's name and his story would be ignored were it not that Kirkley's (or Kirklin's) capture on September 15th is recorded in Captain Mark Thomas' payroll, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, K-44, 350. Furthermore, two vouchers dated September 18 and 19, 1781 for salt and rum for the use of Thomas' men "ordered on command to Boons Station" under Colonel John Montgomery prove that Kirkley would have been with the Falls troops, *Ibid.*, D-456, 472.

¹¹⁸ Moses Boone and Bland Ballard, Draper Mss. 19C37, 8J163 (1). Samuel Wells twice gave the location of the sink hole and told of watching his father and others buried in it, deposition, October 17, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives; Tischendorf and Parks, editors, *Diary of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr.*, 12.

limbs of trees were placed over the spot and the names of the dead were carved on a nearby beech tree.¹¹⁹

The Falls troops returned with some of the cattle abandoned at Long Run. As much of the property as could be salvaged was also taken back.¹²⁰ Indians had destroyed all they could, ripping beds open and emptying them on the ground, destroying books and valuable papers. At the massacre site a Bible was found near a dead woman with an Indian's bloody footprint on it and a spear hole through it.¹²¹

Clark's council of officers in early September had decided to forego an Indian campaign in 1781. The slaughter at Long Run and Floyd's Defeat did not change that decision. The Kentuckians made no retaliatory expedition into the Indian country. John Floyd wrote to Governor Nelson on October 6, 1781 begging the government to finance an offensive expedition early the next spring. Without it, the destruction of Kentucky seemed inevitable.¹²²

But thoughts of the Eastern government soon turned from war. On October 19, 1781 the British army under Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown surrendered to General Washington and the Revolution in the East ended in triumph. The pleas

¹¹⁹ Letitia Floyd, Draper Mss. 6J103. Mrs. Floyd passed by the battle ground in the spring of 1801 with future Governor Madison as her escort. "He showed me a large beech tree with the names of the fourteen soldiers carved on it, but it had so grown out, that but few of the names could be read."

¹²⁰ Moses Boone, Draper Mss. 19C37.

¹²¹ Letitia Van Meter, Register (July 1949), 242. Before concluding that the Indians were entirely a set of pagan savages, it should be remembered that the principal Indian on this campaign, Joseph Brant, was an ardent Episcopal who translated the Gospel of Mark and the Book of Common Prayer into Mohawk language.

¹²² Floyd to Nelson, October 6, 1781, James, ed., Clark Papers, 2: 1-3. Similar pleas were made by Clark and others.

from Kentucky were considered by the government with an empty treasury. The new governor, Benjamin Harrison, tersely informed Clark that because of “The deranged Situation of the Finances of the State, and the reduced value of the paper currency... an offensive war cannot at this Time be carried on. We must therefore turn our Attention to defensive measures...”¹²³

The lack of a spring offensive did not destroy Kentucky as feared, but it helped make 1782 “The Year of Blood” for Kentucky. In retrospect Floyd’s Defeat became but one of the several small dress rehearsals for Kentucky’s greatest defeat of the Revolution - the August 19, 1782 Battle of Blue Licks.

The bravery of Floyd’s men is commemorated by a monument erected by the State at Eastwood. The dedication ceremonies on July 17, 1880 were the occasion for a large country gathering and speeches. The monument is along old U.S. 60 about 400 yards from the Eastwood Cemetery near where the defeat actually took place. The monument’s inscription reads:

Erected by the
Commonwealth
of Kentucky
To the memory of
Fourteen brave Soldiers
who fell under
Capt. John Floyd
in a contest with the
Indians in 1783.

Floyd was, of course, a colonel (not a captain) and the year was 1781 (not 1783). The correct year was chiseled onto the monument in 1937. The

¹²³ Harrison to Clark, *Ibid.*, 19.

newspaper account of the 1880 dedication reveals an absolutely incredible lack of knowledge about the event which was being commemorated. The wildly inaccurate statements made at the dedication were inexcusable. Most of them could have been avoided by a quick reference to any of the existing histories of the state.¹²⁴

The names of Floyd's men were mostly forgotten over the years. Floyd, Wells, and Ballard survived the test of time. A few other names, some incorrect, are occasionally mentioned. But the majority of the twenty-seven participants of Floyd's Defeat have remained anonymous. The following partial listing raises several participants from obscurity, but unfortunately for the present several of those who lost their lives must remain nameless.

PARTICIPANTS OF FLOYD'S DEFEAT

Ten men who escaped from the battle ground:

Colonel John Floyd
Samuel Wells, Jr.
Bland W. Ballard
Captain Peter A'Sturgis (escaped but died on the retreat
to Linn's Station from wounds received at the defeat)¹²⁵
John Dyal¹²⁶

¹²⁴ The dedication was covered in the Courier-Journal on July 18, 1880. Two days later the paper carried a small article by Reuben T. Durrett correcting several of the most glaring errors. On July 28, 1880 the paper published George T. Wilcox's letter to Thomas W. Bullitt. This letter has generally been accepted as authoritative since Wilcox was a grandson of Squire Boone. It is, however, riddled with errors and almost totally unreliable. The correction of the monument date was covered in The Filson Club History Quarterly, Volume 11, No. 3 (July 1937), 234-5.

¹²⁵ Captain A'Sturgis is mentioned in several accounts. Bland Ballard gave the full name, Draper Mss. 8J161-2, see also 60J184, 392. Floyd's September 14th letter says simply "... came off the field with Captain Asturgus mortally wounded..." The first name of James has been incorrectly inserted in this letter by some authors. James A'Sturgis, Peter's brother, in 1784 married Jemima Lemaster, sister of John Floyd and widow of one of the men slain at Floyd's Defeat. Administration of Peter's estate was granted to James A'Sturgis by the Jefferson County Court on December 3, 1781. Alvin L. Prichard, ed., "Minute Book A, Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1781-1783," The History Quarterly of the Filson Club, Volume 3, No. 2 (January 1929), 72.

John Hughes¹²⁷
Robert Tyler¹²⁸
James Ballard¹²⁹
George Corn¹³⁰
John McCasland¹³¹

Seventeen who were killed or captured:

Thomas Ravenscraft (wounded and captured)
Captain Samuel Wells, Sr. (killed)¹³²

¹²⁶ (Shane) interview with Dyal, no date, Draper Mss. 13CC226-37; Revolutionary War pension application of Dyal, W2082. Dyal is listed on Captain Benjamin Field's payroll as having his horse captured on September 13, 1781, Thruston Collection of Clark manuscripts, red-bound Volume 1, 157-8. Dyal's interview and pension application, however, indicate his horse was taken at Floyd's Defeat (September 14th) and he was never at the massacre the day before. Field's payroll may have the dates of September 13th and 14th "switched" for Dyal and William Connall, whose name follows Dyal's. If Connall was at Floyd's Defeat his name would replace one of the ten in the above list who escaped from the battle ground.

¹²⁷ Ballard interview, Draper Mss. 8J161-2. It was Hughes who made the heroic dash at the Indians at Floyd's Fork. Hughes filed a claim for a nine year old horse "taken by the savages when order(ed) for duty to Assistance of Boons Station," Thruston Collection, D; 534, F-522-3.

¹²⁸ "...Was you not in the left collum in Floyds defeat, An(swer) yes, I was & commanded by Ravenscraft," deposition of Robert Tyler (sic), October 17, 1809, Vanarsdale vs. Lynch, Bundle 235, Franklin District Court, State Archives. Tyler was a great-great-grandfather of President Harry S. Truman.

¹²⁹ Revolutionary War pension application of James Ballard, R463. James was a brother of Bland Ballard.

¹³⁰ Revolutionary War pension application of George Corn, S2143. The next year Corn was in Estill's Defeat and was severely wounded at the Battle of Blue Licks.

¹³¹ The following quotation is from Lyman C. Draper's interview with John McCasland taken in February 1844, Draper Mss. 8J128:

Floyd's Defeat - When defeated & the scattering retreat took place - said McCasland, before being told about the common version of the story about wells giving up his horse to Floyd - "Floyd's horse was killed - and he was not then a very active man, somewhat advanced in years - I was young & very active, could run as fast as any man; & seeing Floyd on foot & in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy, I instantly dismounted, gave him my horse - we both escaped. Wells was along, near by" -- (and may have aided Floyd in effecting it.

It is interesting to note that Floyd was not an old man nor was McCasland particularly young in comparison with other participants; in fact, Floyd and McCasland were both born in the same year (1750). John McCasland's Revolutionary War pension application, S4197, refers to his participation in Clark's 1780 and 1782 Shawnee campaigns, but makes no mention of his 1781 activities and Floyd's Defeat. McCasland was also at Valley Forge in the late winter of 1777-78 and at St. Clair's Defeat in 1791.

¹³² Deposition and statement of Samuel Wells, Jr., (see footnote 118); Ballard and Campbell interviews, Draper Mss. 8J162 (2), 13CC87. Administration of Samuel Wells estate was granted to Samuel Wells, Jr., on December 3, 1781, Pritchard, ed., "Jefferson County Minute Book A," Filson Club Quarterly (January 1929), 72.

Eleazar (Jack) Lemasters (killed)¹³³
Valentine King (captured)¹³⁴
Captain Henry Hoagland (killed)¹³⁵
Robert Ravenscraft (captured?)¹³⁶
Samuel Murphy (wounded and captured; but maybe September 13)
William Mitchell (killed)¹³⁷
Gerardus Riker (killed)¹³⁸
Daniel Whittaker
Nicholas Soap
George Seaburn¹³⁹

¹³³ "... poor Lemaster fell in this action..." Floyd to Preston, September 30, 1781, Draper Mss. 17CC137-8. Jack Lemasters is mentioned as a victim in Shane's interview with the daughter of John Thiskston, Draper Mss. 13CC15. This lady mentioned several other participants, some correct, but several either incorrect or without any reliable corroboration.

¹³⁴ According to two certificates in the papers of the Western Commissioners, Valentine King was ordered out September 13th or 14th on a public detachment under Colonel John Floyd, was taken prisoner on September 14th, 1781 and made his escape from Montreal on September 29, 1782 having been held one year and fourteen days, Draper Mss. 60J115-6; Thruston Collection, F:52.

¹³⁵ Ballard interview, Draper Mss. 8J163 (1), 204. Administration of Henry Hoagland's estate was granted to James Houghland on March 5, 1782, Pritchard ..79. The name is spelled variously, most commonly: Hoagland, Houghland, Hogland, Hoglan. Collins made the worst corruption of the spelling by placing a Captain Holden at Floyd's Defeat, History of Kentucky, (1847 edition), 172; (1874 edition), 2:42. Collins' Captain Holden is undoubtedly Captain Henry Hoagland.

¹³⁶ Captain Benjamin Field's payroll lists Pvt. Robert Ravenscraft and his horse as captured September 14, 1781, Thruston Collection, red-bound Volume 1, 157-8. Robert Ravenscraft's claim for two mares and a gun were entered June 24, 1783 in the Journal of Western Commissioners, James, ed., Clark Papers, 2: 398. Entered with this claim were the horse claims of Robert McAno, Thomas Ravenscraft, John Dyal, and Edmund Rice, all of Field's Company.

¹³⁷ Miss Campbell said that William Mitchell, whose mother and family were living at the Dutch Station, was killed, but she was unclear whether at Long Run or Floyd's Defeat, Draper Mss. 13CC87. Since the list of Long Run victims is fairly complete, it seems most likely Mitchell was a victim of Floyd's Defeat. Mitchell's rifle, saddle and two bridles is listed among the articles lost September 13th and 14th, 1781. Thruston Collection, P: 134; Draper Mss. 30J28. Mitchell is noted as "dead" on Captain Hardy Hill's payroll, Thruston Collection, K: 85, 96.

¹³⁸ Enoch Boone stated, "Riker was killed & John Vancleave married his widow," Draper Mss. 19C140. Enoch Boone's jumbled recollections do not distinguish between Long Run and Floyd's Defeat, but Vancleave and Riker traditions place Gerardus Riker's death at Floyd's Defeat, see Harvey, Franklin Ryker, and Tuttle. According to his wife's family history Riker died September 15, 1781 "Killed at Bullskin Ky. in Boone's and Tyler's defeat," Voorhis D. Demarest, The Demarest Family (Hackensack, NJ, 1964), 1:5-202, also (1938 edition), 111. The date, creek and defeat names are all, of course, errors.

¹³⁹ George Seaburn is listed as "dead" on Captain Hardy Hill's payroll, Thruston Collection, K: 85, 96 and also has a saddle claim making him a strong possibility as a victim of Floyd's Defeat.