

Kentucky's Patriotism during 1812 to 1815



The River Raisin in Raisinville, Michigan

When America declared War on Great Britain on June 18, 1812, a call for volunteers was issued to aid the regular army. Kentucky was given a quota of 5,500 men. Yet when 1,500 men were required to join General Hull in his expedition into the Northwest, 2,000 answered the call. However, after crossing the Ohio River, they learned that Hull had cowardly surrendered his army and the whole of Michigan territory to the British, although his army numbered nearly double the enemy.

But this did not deter the Kentuckian. During January of the succeeding year, Colonel Lewis with his 700 to 1000 Kentuckians, marched against a combined force of British and Indians to Frenchtown on the river Raisin and drove them from the village.

Three days later, General Winchester was told that a large force of the enemy was en route to attack the victors.

As the night was bitter cold, the precaution of stationing pickets was neglected, and they were attacked by 2,000 British and Indians under General Proctor the next morning. The Kentucky riflemen stood their ground, fighting even as ammunition was low, and when summoned to surrender they said that they preferred death and only laid down their arms after being promised that their wounded would be safely guarded and

treated humanely.

But the British had already proven during the Revolutionary War to be brutal, so the promise was not kept, and the drunken Indians burned and tomahawked the helpless men and officers.

Thus, afterwards the rallying cry of the Kentuckians was "Remember the river Raisin: Raisin and Revenge."

They got their revenge at Fort Stephenson when 160 men under Colonel Croghan of Kentucky repulsed Proctor and his 4,000 troops. When General Isaac Shelby went at the head of the Kentuckians, all were confident that he would lead them to victory.

It is said that after the victory of Commodore Perry at Lake Erie, he wrote, "We have met the enemy and they are ours," 1812 Records on this website Remember the River Raisin