

## Remember the Raisin



When American commerce was almost destroyed and American sailors were taken and forced to serve in the British navy, war was declared against Great Britain on June 18, 1812. When the call came for volunteers came to aid the regular army, the quota for Kentucky was 5,500 men, yet 7,000 strong turned out from the mountains and glens, field and farm, from every walk of life, to answer the cause of their country.

When 1,500 men were required to join General Hull in his expedition against the savages in the Northwest, 2,000 answered the call, only to learn, after crossing the Ohio, that Hull had cowardly surrendered his army and the whole of Michigan territory to the British, despite the fact that his army numbered nearly double the enemy. For several months, at various times and places, the Kentucky troops did special and efficient service.

In January of the succeeding year, Colonel Lewis with from 700 to 1,000 Kentuckians, marched against a combined force of British and Indians at 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. During a bitter cold night when the precaution of stationing pickets was neglected, early the next morning, 2,000 British and Indians under General Proctor suddenly attacked the

camp. The Kentucky riflemen fought stubbornly for hours.

Their ammunition ran low, but still they fought. Even when summoned to surrender they refused to lay down their guns until promised that their wounded would be safely guarded and humanely treated. History records how this promise on the part of Proctor was not kept, how the drunken Indians burned and tomahawked the helpless men and officers, until long afterward the rallying cry of the Kentuckians was, "Remember the river Raisin; Raisin and Revenge.

"At Fort Stephenson, 160 men under Colonel Croghan of Kentucky repulsed Proctor with nearly 4000. When General Isaac Shelby went at the head of the Kentuckians, all felt that he would lead them to victory.

It is said that when Commodore Perry wrote, "We have met the enemy and they are ours," after his memorable victory on Lake Erie, that one hundred sharpshooters from Kentucky had aided in the capture. At the battle of the Thames nearly all the American troops were Kentuckians, and that gallant soldier, Colonel Richard M. Johnson, did noble service in the killing of the noted Tecumseh.

When Jackson, barricaded behind cotton bales at New Orleans, defeated Pakenham with his veteran forces, more than one fifth of the American soldiers were Kentucky riflemen.