

Chapter 3 (11-01-11)

**"I regard Col. John Floyd as next to
George Rogers Clark, the greatest man
known in Kentucky in the early times."
Col. Reuben T. Durrett, 1824-1913,
founder of the Filson Historical Society**

Is any part of Davis Floyd's ancestry substantiated?

The timeline in this story moves from the 1500's through the intervening years to the 1700's. The Floyd family is entrenched in various parts of the British colonies including Virginia. They were not gentry but they were hardworking, upper middle-class people whose contributions would be noticed and felt.

Some Floyd Lineage is Dubious

The first two chapters of this book dealt with issues which were not soundly based in fact. The story about a John Floyd who was born in Wales, fought under Elizabeth I in the battle against the Spanish Armada, and was knighted and married one of her ladies-in-waiting is not supported by any facts. The actuality of this John Floyd being identified as a Jesuit priest and a member of the Society of Jesus further compounds the error of this story. There is credible evidence of a John Floyd who was a Jesuit priest and held membership in the Society of Jesus, but it is unlikely he fathered any Floyds. There is no way that these John Floyds were the same person. There is no believable evidence of the other John Floyd having ever existed.

The story about there being Indian blood in the Floyd lineage is supported by some facts. Thomas Rolfe had an aunt whose name was Cleopatra and he

petitioned the Virginia government at Jamestown and the court to see her. A substantial number of female Floyds were named Nicketti or some variation thereof down through the years. There are no facts linking her to Cleopatra or Powhatan. Many early American male Floyds had Indian features. Davis Floyd was reputedly dark complexioned.

In order to tell the Davis Floyd story fully it is imperative to take a close look at his family. Davis was born in Virginia between 1774 and 1776 and he and his family moved to the Falls of the Ohio in 1779.

William and Abadiah Floyd, Davis Floyd's Grandparents

A good place to start in detail is with William Floyd, who would have been Davis Floyd's paternal grandfather. William Floyd was born in Accomack County, Virginia in 1720 or 1721. He received a basic education and then started working as a surveyor. He supposedly worked in the James River Valley from Richmond to the Blue Ridge Mountains. He patented a parcel of land in Amherst County where he built a home. Amherst County was not organized until 1761 and since it was carved out of part of Albemarle County which was organized in 1744, it is likely that the county that he removed to was Albemarle. At a distance of several miles was the home of another Welshman whose name was Nathaniel Davis. Mr. Davis had a handsome daughter whose name was Abadiah. She was born in 1730. William Floyd fell in love with her and they were married in 1746 or 1747. One of her grandmothers was supposedly the aforementioned Nicketti, which meant "Beautiful Flower." She was also called "Princess Nicketti." Nickette had married a Scotch hunter and fur trader whose last name was Hughes.

William and Abadiah Floyd's Children

William and Abadiah Floyd had twelve children. All of them with the exception of one eventually migrated from Virginia to Jefferson County, Kentucky. (1) The oldest child was Sarah (Sallie) Floyd, born October 15th, 1747 in Albemarle/Amherst County, Virginia, who married Wyatt Powell in 1768 in Amherst County, Virginia. She and her husband did not go to Kentucky but stayed in Virginia along with her parents, William and Abadiah. She died sometime after 1824. (2) The next was Isham Floyd (1748-1790) who was a private in Gen. Clark's small army in 1779. He supposedly accompanied this army from Kaskaskia to Vincennes. He received a land grant in Clark's Grant for his service. He was tortured to death by Indians on the west bank of the Ohio River (the Ohio River runs north and south west of Louisville for several miles before it heads west again). He never married. (3) The next was Elizabeth Floyd (1749-1833) who married Charles Tuley of Fauquier County, Virginia, in 1767 or 1769. They moved to Kentucky in 1783 and settled on Floyd's Fork of Salt River. She was described as very tall and dark complexioned (Indian blood?) and as "a person of rare intelligence and tact." (4) The next was John Floyd (1750-1783) on whom this chapter focuses. (5) The next was Robert Clark Floyd (1752-1807) who married Lilleyan (Lillian) Hampton sometime before 1773 or 1779. Lilleyan was born in 1755 or 1758. (6) The next was Jemima Floyd, born 1753, who married John Lemaster, and later married James A'Sturgus on May 28th, 1784 in Jefferson County, Kentucky. (7) The next was Nancy Floyd, born sometime between 1753 and 1755, who married John Alexander Pryor. (8) The next was Charles Floyd (1760-1828) who married Mary Stewart (1764-1850) on July 3rd, 1786, in Amherst County, Virginia. Charles came to Kentucky in 1780 but returned to Virginia to marry and then they and their family moved to Kentucky in 1787 or 1788. They had fourteen children. Tradition says he served as a spy for Gen. George Rogers Clark in the conquest of the Northwest Territory. (9) The next was James Floyd, born 1763. (10) The next was Nathaniel Floyd, born 1767, who married first Hannah Tuly (Tuley) on July 25th or 26th, 1790, and then second Mary (Mollie) White or Thomas on March 16th, 1793 in Jefferson County,

Kentucky. He fought in the Battle of the Thames in 1813 and then under Gen. Andrew Jackson at the battle of New Orleans in 1815. He died in Louisville, Kentucky in 1842. (11) The next was Abediah or Abagail or Abigail Davis Floyd, (1770-1834) who married Thomas S. Smith on January 21st, 1790 in Jefferson County, Kentucky, and then married James Alexander in 1802. (12) Next was Nicati Floyd who was born in about 1778. Two additional children of William and Abadiah Floyd have been identified as a Mrs. Drake, about whom nothing is known, and a Mrs. Anderson, who married Col. Richard C. Anderson.

Robert Clark and Lillian Floyd, Davis Floyd's Parents

In a letter written on June 25th, 1938 to James B. Brewster, Corydon, Indiana by Clifton F. Davis, an attorney in Shreveport, Louisiana, it was said:

Robert Floyd was born in Virginia about 1752, son of William Floyd and Abadiah Davis. Robert Floyd, with his brothers John, Isham, etc. and some brothers-in-law moved to present Louisville, Ky., in 1778 [or 1779]. Records at Louisville show Robert was a surveyor with his brother [probably John Floyd], that he had some 6000 acres or more of land in Jefferson Co., and sold it in parcels between 1775 and 1802. Some of the deeds gives the name of his wife as Lilian [Lillian], but the last deeds do not name her [perhaps she had died].

Robert Floyd was captain of a military company at Louisville for a number of years, received lands or vouchers for service in Kaskaskia campaign. -In the Minute Book of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, Clark County, Ind., April term, 1801, it was ordered that the "ferry kept across the Ohio by Major Robert Floyd should be taxed seven dollars for the present year." Robert Floyd served as a juror at Vincennes in 1802 in a case of U. S. vs Hurst [Clark County was created in 1801 but Floyd was probably called to Vincennes since Knox County included the Clark County area until separation].

The records at Louisville give marriage of Elizabeth Floyd, daughter of Robert Floyd in 1790 to Thomas M. Winn. This Winn moved to Natchez, Miss., about 1808-9, taking Mary Lee Floyd, then about 14 years old with them, her marriage certificate in 1811, show Winn as her guardian.

It therefore seems Lillian Floyd probably died about 1800, and that Robert Floyd her husband, moved across the Ohio about that time, or a little before, as he's said to be from Knox County, Northwest Territory in some of the deeds in the 1790's. From the fact that Thomas M. Winn was called guardian of Mary Lee Floyd in 1811, it is probable Robert Floyd had died before she came south with her sister....

The mother of my wife was a grand-daughter of Mary Lee Floyd and her husband Parke Walton, and as Mary Lee Floyd did not die until 1875, and the mother of my wife was born in 1846, and they lived together part of the time, we have a good deal of tradition about Mary Lee Floyd.

She is said to have told the above grand-daughter that she played as a child where the big cemetery was later at Louisville, that she had a brother, Davis who went to Florida, that she had a blind brother, but she never wrote anything down of Robert or Lillian [Lillian] Floyd as being her parents, though I have lately found two of the grandchildren were named Robert and Leila....

I have a copy of an affidavit made in Clark County in 1834, which names the children of Davis Floyd as Gabriel, Charles, Elizabeth and Robert....

Letter on file in history section of the Corydon, Indiana Public Library.

This information confirms that Davis Floyd had three children by his first wife, Susanna Johnston Lewis Floyd. They were Charles, born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1798; Elizabeth, probably born in Jeffersonville, Indiana Territory in 1803; and Robert. Some genealogists claim Davis Floyd and Susanna had a child named Benjamin, probably born in Jeffersonville in 1807; it may be that this child died in infancy and his birth may have contributed to his mother's death in 1808. Gabriel was the child of Susanna and her first husband. "Gabriel" was not a name that was seen in early lists of given names in the Floyd family. Floyd raised Gabriel as his own son and gave him the Floyd name. In another letter written by Lawyer Davis on June 21, 1946 to the Secretary of the Pisgah Lodge of the Free & Accepted Masons in Corydon, he said that his wife's great-great grandmother, Lillian, was the wife of Robert Floyd and that they were the parents

of Davis Floyd, who was probably born about 1775. The author shows his birth date as 1774 or 1776 elsewhere in this book but perhaps 1775 is a good compromise.

In another letter dated August 20, 1946 to Frederick P. Griffin, noted Harrison County historian, lawyer Davis said:

I have sent to the Historical Societies of Indiana and Illinois, and the Filson Club [Louisville] the information I have gathered on Robert Floyd the father of Davis Floyd, with the proof that the children of Robert were Elizabeth Winn, Davis, Sergeant Charles of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and Mary Lee, married Winn- Walton, and was the great-grand mother of my wife.

I had my wife to make a statement of the family tradition about DAVIS FLOYD, and another descendant, through a son of Mary Lee Walton, of the family tradition as to Sergeant Charles. The photostats of Warrant No. 5 issued [by the War Department] to the heirs of Sergeant Charles Floyd and endorsed with the names of the four children of Robert, with the marriage record showing Elizabeth Floyd, who married Thoma[s] M. Winn at Louisville in 1790, was a daughter of Robert Floyd, make one perfect case of identification.

Letter on file in history section of Corydon, Indiana Public Library.

John Floyd, Davis Floyd's Blood Uncle

Perhaps the best short biography of John Floyd, whose full name was James John Floyd, is Jeffrey G. Mauck's unpublished monograph entitled, "The Floyd Family of Virginia in the settlement of the Ohio Falls Region and American Westward Migration." It embraces the writings of William Floyd Tuley (1906), Hambleton Tapp (1941), Julian P. Boyd (1952), Anna M. Cartlidge (1966 and 1968), William B. Willcox (1986), George H. Yater (1987), and John M. Faragher (1992).

Author Mauck in a section of his monograph entitled "John Floyd: The Leader West" says as follows:

James John Floyd--usually known as John Floyd-- was born in Albemarle County (in a part of which later became Amherst County), Virginia in 1750. His family was of a “gentry” class. They owned some property and were better off than most Virginians, but were not among the “first” families who possessed great tracts of land, large number of slaves, and dominated political life.

We have only a few facts concerning John Floyd’s early years. In 1769 he married fourteen-year-old Burnell Burford, who died in childbirth within a year. Floyd agreed that his mother-in-law would raise his infant daughter Mourning. Mourning grew up in Virginia and married John Stewart. They moved to Georgia where she spent her adult life and died on December 10, 1847. Whether John Floyd maintained any kind of emotional relationship with his first child is not clear. We do know that when his will was probated in 1783, he left her several thousand acres in Fayette County, Kentucky.

Once again a bachelor and free from family responsibilities, Floyd turned his eyes west. He arranged an interview with William Preston, a Virginian of one of the first families, who was the official surveyor of Botetourt County (a vast area including western Virginia, modern Kentucky, and the future Northwest Territory) and asked to be appointed assistant surveyor. In colonial Kentucky surveying was the only form of manual labor that a “gentleman” could undertake and maintain his social status. Furthermore a surveyor could oftentimes use his position to obtain choice tracts of lands for himself.

In August 1772, Preston made Floyd assistant surveyor for Botetourt County. Four months later Virginia divided Botetourt County. The lands that would become Kentucky and West Virginia were designated Fincastle County. Preston obtained the position as surveyor for Fincastle and appointed Floyd as one of his six assistants. Preston had become a sponsor and father figure to the young Floyd, a relationship that would continue until both died in 1783. Floyd once wrote to him, “I have always looked upon you as more of a father to me from our first acquaintance.”

In 1774 Preston sent Floyd and three parties of men into Fincastle County to survey land tracts awarded to Virginia veterans of the French and Indians War. Floyd’s party of seven men crossed the mountains to the headwaters of the Kanawha River in modern West Virginia and floated down the Ohio. On the way they surveyed a tract of 2000 acres at Coal River for George Washington. At the confluence of the two rivers Floyd’s party joined another group of

Fincastle surveyors led by Hancock Taylor, uncle of future president Zachary Taylor. Floyd and Taylor led their men down river to the Falls. Their arrival was the first step toward white settlement in what is now the Louisville area.

Floyd had come prepared to provide for his own future. Before he left Virginia, he had bought the rights of two 1000 acre tracts from two Virginia French and Indian War officers. He surveyed for himself a 2000-acre tract along the upper reaches of Beargrass Creek watershed in modern Saint Matthews, Jefferson County, Kentucky. The team of surveyors also platted a large tract for Preston that fronted the Ohio River between modern Second Street and I-65 and extended south-south-east from there. On the way back to Virginia, Taylor, who had claimed a large tract on the Ohio just east of Preston's grant, was killed in an Indian ambush.

Floyd returned to Kentucky in 1775. His primary mission was probably to investigate the efforts of Colonel Richard Henderson and a group of North Carolina land speculators who were attempting to establish the so-called Transylvania Colony on lands south of the Kentucky River. Henderson had made a bogus treaty with a group of Cherokee chiefs and hired Daniel Boone to cut the path to a settlement site on the south bank of the Kentucky River. All of this activity threatened Preston and his Virginia land speculating friends. Somehow conflict was avoided, and the parties left the Virginia legislature to sort the matter out. Through his frontier diplomacy Floyd had become acceptable to both sides and found himself working as a surveyor for both Preston and Henderson. By August he was clearing land and developing a farm he called Woodstock eight miles northeast of Boonesborough.

The summer of 1776 found Floyd living in Boonesborough, Henderson's settlement on the south bank of the Kentucky and as a consequence he became involved in one of the legendary episodes of American frontier history. One day Daniel Boone's daughter Jemima and her friends Betsey and Fanny Callaway were sitting in a canoe near the south bank of the river and were kidnapped by Indians. Two parties of settlers went in hot pursuit. Boone and Floyd led the group that caught the raiders a few days later, ambushing them and freeing the girls. James Fenimore Cooper used the incident as the basis for the kidnapping in *The Last of the Mohicans*. The event was captured on canvas in the romantic rendering of several nineteenth century American painters.

Just as Floyd had made a name for himself in the West, he returned to Virginia. Apparently some of William Preston's political enemies had

managed to have his surveyor's license revoked. As a consequence Preston set him up as a leader of a privateering expedition against British shipping in the Caribbean. Privateers were men who obtained a license from their government to arm a ship and seize the merchant ships of any nation with which they were at war. Privateering was a way young men could participate in the war and also get rich---since whatever ships they brought in were sold and they kept the majority of the "prize money."

Despite knowing nothing of the sea, in January of 1777 Floyd left Virginia aboard the *Phoenix*. The privateers managed to capture a British merchant ship; but on the way their way back to the United States were in turn taken by a British warship. Floyd landed in an English prison, managed to escape and somehow made his way across the channel to Paris. There he arranged to meet Benjamin Franklin, who was at that time the leading diplomat in France. Franklin apparently loaned Floyd some money and arranged for his passage home. Floyd family tradition holds that during John Floyd's stay in Paris, Franklin took him to Versailles where the two dined with Queen Marie Antoinette. There is, however, no proof that any such meeting took place.

By the fall of 1778 Floyd was back in Virginia. In November he married Jane Buchanan, who was William Preston's ward. According to family legends, during the ceremony John Floyd wore a brilliant scarlet cloak he had bought in Paris (probably true) and Jane's shoes were ornamented with pretty silver buckles Marie Antoinette had given the young groom for his bride to be. Later that winter George Rogers Clark captured the British post at Vincennes and its commander, General Henry "the hair buyer" Hamilton (so named because the Kentuckians believed he personally purchased the scalps of murdered white settlers from the Indians). Floyd may have thought Clark's conquest would make Kentucky safer for settlers. Sometime in the spring he began planning to return to the Falls area and develop his lands along Beargrass Creek. He had to wait until Jane gave birth to their first son William Preston Floyd, who was born during the summer. In September, Floyd and his immediate family, his slave Bob, his brothers Isham, Robert, Charles, and sister Jemima, took the Wilderness Road to Kentucky. Floyd arrived at his Beargrass Creek tract in November. He found several families of squatters on his land, but allowed them to remain, knowing they might be needed to defend the place. But Indians were not Floyd's immediate concern. The worst winter in memory was already making itself felt. Snow was falling and the ground would remain covered until March. To make matters worse, just as Floyd got to work on his cabin, a tree fell on Bob's foot nearly severing it from the leg. He died

a few weeks later from his wounds. John and Jane Floyd survived the winter as best they could in a ramshackle cabin.

In the spring Floyd, with his brothers and neighbors erected a stockade called Floyd's Station. A few months before William Linn had established a station on a fork of the Bluegrass to the west. Before the end of 1780 there were at least six (some sources say seven) stations forming a community on the branches of Beargrass.

If Floyd had thought that Clark's capture of Vincennes would end Indian attacks he was wrong. The raids only increased, making life in the Beargrass Stations a nightmarish cauldron of total racial warfare. In the spring of 1781 Floyd poured out his rage to Virginia governor Thomas Jefferson:

We are obliged to live in forts in this Country and notwithstanding all the caution we use, forty seven of the Inhabitants have been killed and Taken by the Savages. Besides a number Wounded, since the first of Jany. Last. Amongst the slain is Major William Lyn. Whole families are destroyed without regard to Age or Sex. Infants are torn from their Mothers Arms and their Brains bashed out against Trees...Not a week Passes and some weeks scarcely a day with out some of our distressed Inhabitants feeling the fatal effects of the infernal rage and fury of those Execrable Hellhounds.

In 1780 Floyd recruited militia and participated in George Rogers Clark's raid on the Shawnee village of Piqua in Ohio. Later that year, when Kentucky was split into Jefferson, Fayette, and Lincoln counties, Clark engineered Floyd's appointment as colonel of the Jefferson County militia. Floyd was now in charge of protecting the settlement at the Falls and a large part of Kentucky reaching east toward Lexington. That same year Governor Thomas Jefferson appointed Floyd Justice of the Peace and surveyor of Jefferson County, and asked that he assist in laying out the town of Louisville.

In September 1781 Floyd led a party of 27 men to rescue survivors from a raid on Squire Boone's Station in modern Shelby County. His men walked into an ambush and over half of them were killed. Floyd's horse was shot out from under him, but he jumped on another mount and got away. "Floyd's Defeat," as the fight came to be known, was a major setback for the Beargrass settlements. But Floyd had shown great personal courage and his reputation remained intact. The loss was, however, personally a painful one. Among the dead was his brother-in-law John LeMaster. In November 1782, Floyd got

some degree of revenge when he commanded a division in George Rogers Clark 1000-man army that burned Chillicothe and five other Indian towns in Ohio.

In early 1783 Governor Benjamin Harrison of Virginia appointed Floyd the first judge of the judicial district of Kentucky. Because the new position required extensive travel in the dangerous Kentucky woods, it may have cost Floyd his life. In April, 1783, John Floyd and his younger brothers Robert and Charles left Floyd's Station for some appointments at Bullitt's Lick. Floyd may have been going on legal business. Some other accounts suggest he was going to fight a duel. Whatever the case the men rode into an Indian ambush and John Floyd received a bullet in the back. His brothers took him to a friend's cabin near what were then called the Fishpools, and he died the next day. He was buried at Floyd's Station. Today, his remains probably lie in the Breckinridge Cemetery in St. Matthews. It is so named, for shortly after his death his widow Jane Buchanan Floyd married Alexander Breckinridge.

Less than two weeks after John Floyd's death, his son John was born at Floyd's Station. As an adult John Floyd II made his way to Virginia where he served as governor from 1830 to 1834.

Mauck, *The Floyd Family of Virginia in the Settlement of the Ohio Falls Region and American Westward Migration*, Unpublished Manuscript, New Albany, Indiana, 2002, pp. 3-8.

For some reason author Mauck did not cite the publication of N. J. Floyd who wrote *Biographical Genealogies of the Virginia-Kentucky Floyd Families*. However, much of the information in Author Floyd's genealogy was covered by the authors cited by Mauck. However, one addition from author Floyd's biographical genealogies adds to the story of John Floyd, some insight into his families' "new Kentucky home:"

On arriving at the Falls, which point had become a small trading post for the people passing up and down the Ohio River, the first thing done was to erect a cabin for the shelter of the women and children, while the men, with their colored laborers, were building a stockade fort and comfortable log-cabin homes for the families out on Beargrass Creek, some five miles distant. The place selected for the cabin at the Falls is now a corner at the crossing of Main and Third Streets, Louisville. The stockade fort which George Rogers Clark and Charles Floyd had built at the Falls, the previous year, was in good condition and was for a time utilized for the families. Out on the

creek other settlers lent willing hands, and “log-rolling” went merrily and rapidly on. Soon comfortable double cabins, with substantial puncheon floor and centre halls, were ready for occupancy and the families moved in. ...for a time the settlement, which became known as Floyd Station, was of more consequence than the little group of cabins at the Falls. Charles Floyd made his double log-cabin, with double shed-room, and open home for all missionaries and itinerant preachers, and the only “church” known for a number of years was his “Big-room” which served also as the family parlor and dining room.

Floyd, N. J., *Biographical Genealogies of the Virginia-Kentucky Floyd Families*, Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1912, p. 22.

At one time it was believed that John Floyd’s brother, Charles, was the father of Davis Floyd. However, that error was thoroughly investigated and reported on by James C. Mordy in a monograph entitled “The Paternity of Sgt. Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Children of Robert Clark Floyd and Charles Floyd,” Unpublished Manuscript, Kansas City, Missouri, 2000. He concluded that the evidence overwhelmingly supported Robert Clark Floyd as being the father of Davis Floyd and his younger brother, Charles Floyd, and not their uncle, Charles Floyd. Authors Tuley and Floyd incorporated this error in each of their books, and it should stand corrected. The author of this biography is convinced that Davis Floyd and Charles Floyd were the sons of Robert Floyd and not his brother, Charles Floyd.

Author Cartlidge in her publication entitled *Marriages of People Named Floyd* published by The Maryland Geneological Society, Inc. in Baltimore, Maryland in 1982 claims that John Floyd was born in 1751, not 1750, and confirms that he married Burnell Burford in 1768 in Amherst, Virginia, and that he later married Jane Buchanan on November 2, 1778 (See p. 71). She also confirms that Jane Floyd married Alexander Breckenridge on December 9, 1784, her husband having died in April of the preceding year (See p. 75).

In the *History of the Ohio Falls Cities and their Counties*, the editors said:

Mr. Collins in the invaluable Dictionary of the Stations and Early Settlements in Kentucky, prefixed to the second volume of his History, enumerates the following stations in Jefferson county:

Floyd's station, first located at the mouth of Beargrass creek, in Louisville, near the present foot of Third street; built by Colonel John Floyd.

Another Floyd's station, on the Middle fork of Beargrass six miles from the Falls; planted by Colonel John Floyd in 1775....

Mr. Collins finds six stations on the waters of the Beargrass in 1780, with a population, including Louisville, of six hundred.

Dr. McMurtrie says that in the fall of 1779 and the spring of 1780 seven stations were settled on the Beargrass.

The History of the Ohio Falls Cities, Vol. I, L. A. Williams & Co., Cleveland, Ohio, 1882, pp. 27-28.

Influence of John Floyd on Davis Floyd

Author Mauck does a good job of documenting John Floyd's biography but even if some of these events cannot be authenticated they were the stories that Davis Floyd heard after the death of his uncle repeated many times by his father, Robert Clark Floyd, his mother, Lillian Floyd, his uncle, Charles Floyd, his aunt, Jane Buchanan Floyd Breckinridge, and other close relatives as he grew up on the American frontier. He would have been eight or nine years old when his uncle was shot and killed by Indians. The stories may have been embellished by these family members but Davis Floyd must have grown up with a reverential mind-set toward his deceased uncle. Davis Floyd has been described as an impetuous man, but growing up under the aura of his famous uncle, impetuosity may have been bred into him.

Death was constantly around the settlers in various forms. Indian attacks and counterattacks were ever occurring events. Winters were fiercely cold and

summers brutally hot. While there were many outside duties to perform in order to stay alive, eat, and keep warm, there was much time spent inside preparing food, cooking, eating, and telling stories when daylight was scarce. The fires used to cook and heat the cabins in the station fort, probably surrounded by a stockade, produced wonderful odors which permeated the clothing of the inhabitants and their interior living sections. One of the favorite treats for the occupants of these dwellings was hoe cake--thin bread made of cornmeal and baked on the inside face of a hoe at an open fireplace. Returning to the station fort they would encounter the sweet smelling smoke being emitted from the stone chimneys, a sure sign that family would be waiting for them. The songs of birds would fill the air and the sounds of lowing cattle, bleating sheep and goats, and clucking of chickens would have been noises of the frontier. The laughter and crying of children would also be part of the scene. In the springtime the redbud and dogwood trees would have been in full bloom. In the fall the colors of red, yellow, and purple leaves would have glistened in the sunlight. Had someone ever asked Davis Floyd what his memories were growing up on Bear Grass Creek near Louisville he would have probably said it was the most wonderful place in the world because he did not know any other world. And had anyone asked him who had the most influence on him as a youth other than his mother and father, he would have probably said, Uncle John.

It is also likely that the family stories which are told in the first two chapters of this book were recited around the fireplaces and campfires on Bear Grass Creek. That is how they were perpetuated. Today, children know everything about movie and television stars and famous athletes but nothing about the history of their own families. The focus has been taken off the family and placed in the commercial world of the rich and famous.

What was Davis Floyd's attitude about Indians? Four of his uncles were killed by Indians. He heard the stories about the kidnapping of Daniel Boone's daughter

and her two young friends, Col. Callaway's daughters. He heard about the disaster at Floyd's defeat. His dearest uncle was killed by Indians when he was nine years old. One of the aversions to the Indians was their type of warfare which did not discriminate among men, women, and children. One of the grievances in the *Declaration of Independence* against Great Britain was its use of Indian warfare against the Colonists which included the indiscriminate murdering of woman and children. There is no doubt that this type of warfare played a major role in the white man's dislike of Indians.

What Traits Were Imparted on Davis Floyd?

What traits were molded into Davis Floyd growing up on the western frontier from 1779 until he married in 1794 at the approximate age of 20 years or what was the result of that experience? Let us turn to authors who were closer to the time of Davis Floyd to answer this question.

In the *Journals of the General Assembly* in a section entitled "Sketches of Members," Floyd is described as follows:

Floyd has been described as very tall, dark complexioned, full of courage, and ready for everything. Another source says that he was "a very remarkable man, one who could have made a considerable mark in the world had he felt disposed. He was a bold daring fellow, considerably above medium height, and 'very dark for a white man,' full of fun, anecdote, and good sense, always ready for anything that promised excitement or adventure, full of fight in his chosen profession [law], and able to cope with the best intellectuals of his time or any time." He was a Methodist, and preached at the church in Corydon....

His efforts in the interest of his country during the War of 1812 received the following glowing tribute from Acting Governor John Gibson in a letter to the Secretary of War: "...permit me Sir, to recommend to yourself and through you to His Excellency the President, Maj. Davis Floyd of this Territory, as a Patriot and soldier. He has since his unfortunate connection with A. Burr proven to his

country upon several occasions his attachment and fidelity to her and I've no doubt was an opportunity afforded to him, he would by his patriotic ardour wipe off every stain from his character. He is well qualified for Military Command. I therefore take the liberty of soliciting that he may be appointed a Major or at least a captain in the Regular Service."

He must have been impressive as a judge. Says one writer, "He was very tall, dark-complexioned man, with a heavy voice and rapid speech, and was specially skillful in the management of a case in court. He was eminently a 'jury lawyer' but was also a good judge of law and a fair student. On the bench he was grave, decorous, but would 'down' a lawyer detected in an attempt to impose on his credulity or befop him with intricate legal technicalities.."

Journals of the General Assembly, "Sketches of Members, p. 974-976.

It is obvious that Davis Floyd's traits were compatible with growing up on the western frontier in the latter part of the 18th Century and the example set by his Uncle, John Floyd. It is also obvious that the description of Davis Floyd in the *Journals of the General Assembly* is compatible with the recited facts in this book about his life.

Books and References Other than Those Cited in this Chapter:

- (1) Cartlidge, Anna M., *The Children and Grandchildren of William and Abadiah (Davis) Floyd*, (unpublished manuscript), 1966.
- (2) Cartlidge, Anna M., *Marriages of People Named Floyd*, Published by The Maryland Geneological Society, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland 1982.
- (3) Jennings, Kathleen, *Louisville's First Families: A Series of Geneological Sketches*, The Standard Printing Co., Louisville, KY.
- (4) Mordy, James C., *The Paternity of Sgt. Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Children of Robert Clark Floyd (1752-1807) and Charles Floyd (1760-1828)*, Kansas City, Missouri, (unpublished manuscript) 2000.

Images:

- (1) John Filson's Map, the First Map of Kentucky, 1784, Showing Location of Floyd's Station.
- (2) Vintage Postcard of Beargrass Creek, Cherokee Park, Louisville, Kentucky.
- (3) Photograph of Painting of John Floyd.
- (4) Vintage Postcard of (Sgt. Charles) Floyd Monument at Sioux City, Iowa.
- (5) Photographs of John Floyd's sons, John Floyd II, and John Floyd III.
- (6) Photograph of William Floyd Tuley.