

Chapter 12 (11-01-11)

Freemasonry in Southern Indiana:

"...the principles of Masonry are based on pure morality,...the ethics of Christianity,... the doctrines of patriotism and brotherly love, and its sentiments of exalted benevolence."

Dewitt Clinton 1769-1828

What part did Freemasonry play among the influential men of Southern Indiana?

Who were these men?

Freemasonry played a part in the connectivity of the men in Southern Indiana during Territorial times. It also probably played a part in the sense of right and wrong for these men. DeWitt Clinton, Past Grand Master of Freemasonry in New York, described the values of Masonry: "We are certain that the principles of Masonry are based upon pure morality; that its ethics are the ethics of Christianity; its doctrine the doctrines of patriotism and brotherly love; and its sentiments of exalted benevolence." (McDonald, Daniel, *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana From 1806 to 1898*, Published by the Authority of the Grand Lodge, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1898, p. 10.)

Vincennes Lodge

Masonry was established first in the Indiana Territory at Vincennes on August 27th, 1807 by a dispensation, or special consideration, issued by the Abraham Lodge at Louisville. Several members of the latter lodge transferred to the Vincennes Lodge.

Daniel McDonald, author of *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana from 1806 to 1898*, wrote:

At the time this lodge [Vincennes Lodge] was organized the Masonic Institution was the only secret fraternal organization in existence, so far as is known, and nearly all those who were eligible became members of the Order. Vincennes was the only town of any importance in the great territory now comprising the States of Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan. It was the capital of the Territory, and was the point at which the military and civil forces were concentrated. Among the prominent men connected with the military and the civil organizations of the Territory who located at Vincennes at the beginning of the formative period of the Territory, many of them had received the Masonic degrees prior to taking up their residence there, and they early set about organizing themselves into a lodge of Masons....

McDonald, Daniel, *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana from 1806 to 1898*, Indiana Grand Lodge, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1898, p. 37.

Prominent men in the Vincennes Lodge were General Washington Johnston, Waller Taylor, Thomas Randolph, William Prince, and Henry Vander Burgh

General Washington Johnston

General Washington Johnston was not a general; he was named for General George Washington, the first president of the United States. In other words his given name was "General" and his middle name was "Washington." In 1794 Johnston's sister, Susanna Johnston Lewis married Davis Floyd in Louisville. At the time she was 14 years old, a widow, and pregnant. Of interest is a legal notice in the Friday, April 23rd, 1802 issue *The Kentucky Gazette*, Volume XV, Number 814. The notice reported on a lawsuit in the Clark County, Indiana Territory Court of Quarter Sessions for March, 1802 and noted the names of "Gabriel Johnston, Gen. Washington Johnston, John Harrison and Mary his wife, and Davis Floyd and Susanna his wife." They were sued in their capacity as heirs of Benjamin and Betrey Johnston (widow). Benjamin was born in 1732

and died in 1791 while his first wife, Dorothy Jones Johnston was born in 1736 and died in 1785. Apparently, Benjamin remarried and married Betrey.

Johnston was born near the home of the real Gen. Washington in Culpepper County, Virginia in 1776. Johnston moved from Virginia to Louisville where he studied law in the office of John Harrison, a cousin of Gov. Harrison. His wife was probably the Mary Johnston Harrison referred in the legal notice described in the foregoing paragraph. Johnston then moved to Vincennes in 1793. He was the first attorney admitted to practice law in the Knox County Bar at Vincennes and continued in practice there until his death in 1833. He served as the first clerk of the Territorial House of Representatives in Vincennes in 1805 and 1806 and then as a member of the Territorial House of Representatives from 1807 through 1811. He was a past Master of the lodge at Louisville and assisted in the organization of the lodge at Vincennes in 1807 where he transferred his membership. He is credited with being the founder of Masonry in Indiana.

As appears elsewhere in this book Johnston played a role in defeating slavery in the Indiana Territory. At first he favored the introduction of slavery into the Territory in collaboration with Gov. Harrison, Judge Parke, and Thomas Randolph, and then, after Indiana became a state, he got involved in a legal dispute with his black servant who originally indentured herself voluntarily before statehood, and then changed her mind after statehood. In 1807 when he was first elected Knox County's representative in the Indiana Territorial House of Representatives he "acted openly and avowedly with the pro-slavery party." That meant he was allied with Harrison, Parke, and Randolph. However, something happened to change his mind. It is known that Floyd was fiercely anti-slavery by 1805. It is likely that Johnston and Floyd were frequently together at family occasions, at Masonic meetings in Vincennes and maybe Louisville, and while Floyd was serving as Clark County's representative in the

Territorial House of Representatives during the 1805 and 1806 sessions and as its clerk in 1807. Floyd may have stayed in Johnston's home while he was in Vincennes. It is also known that Johnston defended Floyd when, after his affiliation with Burr, Floyd's character was attacked by his adversaries. It is likely that Johnston was influenced by Floyd on the former's opinion on slavery in the Territory. Or did Floyd's wife, who was Johnston's sister, influence him on this issue? History is frequently unaware of the contributions that females made in earlier societies. Some historians have even suggested Johnston was put on the 1808 legislative committee to assure the issuance of a proslavery report from the committee, but changed his vote for political reasons. Unlike Floyd, Johnston did not have the requisite compassion for slaves or his servants. We now know that Johnston did not write the committee report; it was written by John Badollet. Johnston enlisted in Capt. Charles Beggs' Dragoon Company and fought in the Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7th, 1811. He was the Territorial Attorney General for the years 1811 to 1814 and then served in the General Assembly during the years of 1821, 1822, 1826, and 1829. In 1822 he was the speaker of the House. Johnston is buried in a Vincennes cemetery where his gravesite is marked by an attractive monument.

Waller Taylor

Waller Taylor was born in Lunenburg County, Virginia in 1786. He spent his childhood there, studied law, and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1800 to 1802. Two years later he moved to Vincennes, Indiana Territory and practiced law there. In 1807 he was appointed by Judge Thomas Davis in Jeffersonville as chancellor-judge of the Indiana Territory. That same year Gov. Harrison commissioned him as a major in the Indiana Territorial militia. He served in the Indiana Territorial General Assembly from 1809 until Indiana became a state in 1816. He fought in the Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7th, 1811 as Gen. Harrison's aide-de-camp and later served in the War of 1812 where he rose to the rank of adjutant general. In 1816 he and John Noble were

elected as Indiana's first two U. S. Senators where Taylor served until 1825. He died the next year in Lunenburg County.

Unfortunately, Taylor was a supporter of slavery in the Indiana Territory. Being commissioned in the militia by Gov. Harrison in 1807 may have been an inducement to Taylor to prop up Harrison's campaign to suspend the anti-slavery provision in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Of course, no propping up succeeded and legal slavery died in the Indiana Territory in 1809.

Thomas Randolph

Thomas Randolph was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1771 and was related to the great Randolph family in Virginia. He graduated from William and Mary College with high honors, studied law, and served one term in the Virginia legislature. He married the first time in Virginia and had a child; his wife died a short time later. For some reason he moved to the Indiana Territory and was appointed by Gov. Harrison as the third Attorney General for the Territory, for which appointment the pay was very poor. In 1809 he was Harrison's hand picked candidate to run for delegate to the U. S. Congress. He lost to Jonathan Jennings. Jennings was an anti-slavery proponent while Randolph was allied with Harrison and Judge Parke in favor of slavery. He married the second time in Indiana in 1809. He volunteered as an aide to Gen. Harrison in the Battle of Tippecanoe and unfortunately was killed by an Indian bullet in that battle. Maj. Waller Taylor buried him and Joseph Hamilton Daveiss, who was another casualty of the battle, next to each other on the battle field. In retrospect Randolph's decision to come to the Indiana Territory met with little or no success and he lost his life. Hopefully, his widow found a new life. It is unlikely that Floyd and Randolph were ever close friends.

William Prince

Prince was born in Ireland in 1772 and immigrated to the United States in 1796 at the age of 24 years where he settled in Vincennes, Indiana Territory. In 1800 he was commissioned as the first sheriff of Knox County and served in that position until 1804. In 1805 he was commissioned a justice of the peace of Knox County. In 1806 Gov. Harrison sent him to convince the Delaware Indians that the United States was eager to maintain friendly contact with the tribe. In 1810 he was appointed auditor for the Indiana Territory in which position he served until 1813 when he was replaced by Floyd, although Johnston took over the office for a short time before he was commissioned the second time. In 1813 he was appointed the prosecuting attorney of Gibson and Knox Counties, and in the following year he was appointed the prosecuting attorney of Warrick County. He also served as postmaster at Vincennes in 1803 and then again in 1812 and 1813.

In 1806 Prince got involved in the Aaron Burr conspiracy but not to the extent that Davis Floyd did. Apparently, Prince was told the same thing that Floyd was told by Burr or Floyd may have been Burr's informant to Prince. Anyway, Prince contended that the matter was explained to him as a filibuster against Mexico, a possession of Spain, that the United States would be at war with Spain by the time the expedition reached Mexico, and that the U. S. government had authorized Burr's expedition against Mexico. Prince conferred with Burr who reassured him and then with Judge Thomas T. Davis (whose widow, Betsy, was Floyd's second wife) who told him he had seen the letter from the Secretary of War saying that Pres. Jefferson had approved the expedition. In 1810 Prince was attacked in a petition to the Territorial General Assembly for his participation in the Burr Conspiracy. Johnston headed the Territorial House committee that responded to the petition and condemned the petitioners for their petition that was "soiled with a spirit of vindictiveness." The committee exonerated Prince.

Also in 1806 Prince was commissioned a captain in the first regiment of the Indiana militia. He resigned that commission about a year and a half later for an unknown reason. He was at the Battle of Tippecanoe as the sergeant-major of Maj. Parke's troop of light dragoons. Next, he served in the War of 1812, first as a brigade major in the Indiana militia, and then in 1814 as a captain of a squadron of cavalry.

Around 1811 and 1812 Prince improved some land where the town of Princeton is situated. When Gibson County was organized Princeton was chosen as the county seat. Prince won a lottery to name the town and named it Princeton, of course. Later he would serve as the county treasurer, county agent, and trustee of Princeton Academy. In 1817 he was first appointed and then elected the president judge of the First Judicial Circuit which circuit was in the western third of the young state. Remember Floyd served as the president judge of the Second Judicial Circuit starting in 1817. Prince resigned the judgeship the next year to become an Indian agent and as such negotiated treaties with various Indian tribes from 1818 until 1821 when he resigned. He also represented Gibson County as state senator in 1816 and 1817 and as a member of the State House of Representatives in 1821 and 1822.

He ran and won a seat as Congressman from the First Congressional District of Indiana in 1823 and served about a year and one half of his term when he died in 1824.

Prince and Floyd were close friends as Burr supporters, Freemasons, military companions, and political associates.

Henry Vander Burgh

Henry Vander Burgh was born in Troy, New York in 1760. At the tender age of 16 years Vander Burgh was commissioned a lieutenant in the 5th New York

Regiment of the Continental Army in 1776. Later he was promoted to captain of the 2nd New York Regiment and served in the Continental Army until the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. After the war he moved to the Indiana Territory and became one of its Territorial judges until his death in 1812. Vanderburgh County was named for him when the county was formed in 1818.

Charlestown (Blazing Star) Lodge

Distinguished members of the Blazing Star Lodge at Charlestown were Isaac Naylor and Col. Joseph Bartholomew.

Isaac Naylor

Isaac Naylor was born in Rockingham County in Virginia in 1790. Three years later he and his parents moved to Kentucky where they first lived in Bourbon County, and then Harrison County. In his autobiography he reported that "Our long winter evenings were usually spent in hearing and telling stories of ghosts, of hunting, of Indian skirmishes and Indian campaigns." In 1805 he and his family moved to Clark County, Indiana Territory, thirteen miles from the Falls of the Ohio. While in Kentucky and the Indiana Territory he learned to read and write and the rudiments of arithmetic. He became a clerk in his uncle's small store in Charlestown, Indiana Territory. At the time Charlestown was the county seat.

At the age of nineteen Naylor was employed to work on a flatboat. The boat with three persons on board passed through the Falls of the Ohio on January 10th, 1810 and arrived in New Orleans on March 10th, 1810, a trip of exactly two months. His employer was a farmer and the flatboat was loaded with farm goods. Naylor stayed behind in New Orleans to sell the rest of the farm goods and finally left there in on May 1st, 1810 and arrived back in Charlestown on June

1st, 1810. He received \$100.00 pay for his five month sojourn. Describing his journey home Naylor said: "In traveling home I passed through many Cheyenne and Chickasaw tribes of Indians. In the journey home I walked eight hundred miles, swimming across streams, wading through swamps, and sleeping in the open air on the ground." Naylor, Isaac, "An Autobiography," *The Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol. IV, No. 3, Sept. 1908, p. 136. In early 1811 he worked again on a flatboat traveling to New Orleans for the sum of \$60.00. He walked home for the second time.

In the meantime Naylor had studied Latin and read several books in Latin. Having accomplished one of his youthful goals to read Latin he decided to pursue his other goal to fight Indians. He joined a company of riflemen of the Indiana militia and left for Vincennes on September 12th, 1811, a distance of 120 miles, arriving there six days later where they stayed a week. They left Vincennes and traveled about sixty miles where they built Fort Harrison near Terre Haute. They left here and arrived in Prophet's Town on November 6th, 1811. Naylor described the Battle of Tippecanoe in his autobiography as follows:

We slept on our arms. Two hours before daybreak, on the morning of the 7th, [November, 1811] the battle commenced. The result is part of American history. Whilst the leaden messengers of death were doing their fatal deeds in every part of our encampment, I felt a strong mental impression that the God of Battles would preserve my life.

I mention this fact because many persons who fell in the battle had presentments of their deaths. Such was the case of a young man who fell at the fire where we both slept. Such presentments belong to the science of philosophy of our nature. They are facts not to be accounted for by us.

Naylor, "An Autobiography," *Indiana Magazine of History*, pp. 137-138.

Naylor returned to Charlestown in early 1812 and studied algebra and languages. In 1813-14 school he taught school in Woodford County, Kentucky and studied Montesquieu's *Spirits of Laws*. During the summer of 1814 he

taught at a school in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1816 he was a clerk in John Dauthill's store in Charlestown and read Dr. Paley's *Moral Philosophy* and his *Natural Theology*. In 1817 he read law in Gallatin County, Kentucky in the law office of Samuel Todd, Esq. and later in the year he studied law with Hon. James Scott, one of the first judges of the Indiana Supreme Court at Corydon, Indiana. Further, he was the registrar of the land office at Jeffersonville.

In 1818 he was licensed to practice law by the Indiana Supreme Court. He resided in Charlestown and practiced law in many counties, north and west. On April 27th, 1826 he married Miss Mary Anderson, who was the daughter of Capt. Robert Anderson, a Revolutionary War soldier. In 1833 he and his family moved to Crawfordsville, Indiana. In 1837 he was elected by the Indiana General Assembly as judge of the First Judicial Circuit for twenty-three years. He died in 1873.

Joseph Bartholomew

Joseph Bartholomew was born in New Jersey in 1766 but grew up at Laurel Hill in western Pennsylvania. In 1788 he married Christiana Peckinpaugh and they moved to Louisville. For some reason he was present at Greenville, Ohio when the Greenville Treaty was signed by the Shawnees and other Indian tribes. He helped survey the boundary lines covered by the Treaty and later helped survey the First Principal Meridian. In 1798 he and his family moved to the Indiana Territory near the town of Charlestown. They had ten children and his wife died in 1809. In the spring of 1811 he married a Miss McNaught. They had five children. Sometime prior to March 1811 Gov. Harrison appointed Bartholomew as commander of the Clark Militia and by August 11, 1811 he had been appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the Second Regiment of the Indiana Militia Infantry. It is not known when Bartholomew became a Mason. He may have been a member of the Abraham Lodge in Louisville, he was probably a member

of the Pisgah Lodge in Charlestown when it was organized, and he may have attended meetings of the Vincennes Lodge after his regiment arrived in the Territorial Capitol on November 18th, 1811. In the meantime Gen. Harrison appointed Major Joseph Hamilton Daveiss commander of the Indiana militia dragoons. The infantry were foot soldiers and the dragoons were horse soldiers who fought on either horses or on foot.

In the Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7th, 1811, Bartholomew commanded two companies in the Indiana Militia Infantry stationed at the southeast corner of the battle encampment site. During the battle he was shot in the right forearm breaking both bones. In his report to the Secretary of War on the battle Gen. Harrison said of him: "Colonel Joseph Bartholomew, a very valuable officer, commanded the militia infantry. He was wounded early in the action and his services lost to me." It is reported that his wounds gave him trouble for the rest of his life.

Bartholomew was involved with some Indian skirmishes in the Indiana Territory in 1812 and 1813 but then returned to his farm near Charlestown. After Indiana became a state in 1816, he held various state and local political positions including memberships in Indiana's House of Representatives and the Indiana Senate. In 1825 he was back on his farm full time. His second wife died from injuries she sustained when her horse bolted and she fell and broke her leg. In 1830 he was forced to sell his farm to make good on a surety bond he had signed for a friend. He and his family then moved to Illinois where he acquired another farm. He helped campaign for Gen. Harrison in the U. S. Presidential election of 1840. He died on the morning after Harrison's election as President, completely ignorant of who had won.

Bartholomew County, Indiana was named for him to honor him for his part in the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Corydon (Pisgah) Lodge

The Pisgah Lodge at Corydon was the fifth lodge to be formed in Indiana. It followed the Vincennes Lodge as No. 1, the Union Lodge as No. 2 at Madison, the Blazing Star Lodge as No. 3 at Charlestown, and Lawrenceburg Lodge as No. 4 at Lawrenceburg.

The Pisgah Lodge was chartered in August of 1817 and Floyd was its first Master. Among its membership were Gov. Thomas Posey, Jonathan Jennings, and John Tipton.

Thomas Posey

Thomas Posey was born in Virginia and fought in the Battle of Point Pleasant for the British in 1774 in Lord Dunmore's War. He then became a captain in the Virginia continentals when the Americans declared war on England and fought against his former commander, Lord Dunmore, at Gwynn's Island in 1776. His company was transferred to Morgan's renowned rifle corps, and he served with honor and great courage at Piscataquay, Bemis Heights, Stillwater, Stony Point, and at Yorktown. He also served in the Indian campaigns under Anthony Wayne, in Georgia, and, in the Northwest Territory. He was a state senator and the lieutenant-governor of Kentucky, a United States senator from Louisiana, and governor of the Indiana Territory from 1812 to 1816. Davis Floyd served as his personal secretary while in office. Posey spent most of his time as governor in Jeffersonville since he did not care for the climate in Corydon, the Territorial capitol. He ran against Jonathan Jennings for governor in 1816 but lost. He then became an Indian agent and died in that office.

Jonathan Jennings

Jonathan Jennings was born in New Jersey in 1784, his father was a minister, and he was schooled in the common schools of Pennsylvania. He moved to the Indiana Territory about 1800. He was elected as the territorial delegate to Congress in 1809, 1811, 1812, and 1814. In 1816 he was the president of the Constitutional Convention in Corydon when Indiana sought statehood. He was elected the first governor of the new state, beating out Territorial governor, Thomas Posey. He served two terms and was then elected to Congress in 1822 and then again in 1824, 1826, and 1828. He lost his seat in Congress in 1830 probably because of problems with alcohol. Jennings has frequently been credited with beating slavery in Indiana but he was a Johnny-come-lately and an opportunist. Slavery was defeated by other men by the time he beat Thomas Randolph for the delegate's seat in Congress in 1809.

John Tipton

A short biography of John Tipton is found in Chapter 15 of this biography.

Indiana Grand Lodge

Between the founding of the lodge at Vincennes and Indiana statehood in 1816 lodges were formed in Lawrenceburg, Vevay, Rising Sun, Madison, Charlestown, Brookville, Salem, and Corydon. On December 3rd, 1817 representatives of the nine Indiana lodges including Vincennes met at Corydon. General Washington Johnston (sometimes spelled Johnson) represented Vincennes, Joseph Bartholomew represented Charlestown, and Davis Floyd represented Corydon. The purpose of the meeting was to form a Grand Lodge in the new state. Alexander Buckner and John Miller from Charlestown were also present although not official representatives of the Charlestown lodge. Buckner was elected the Grand Master of the Convention and Floyd was elected secretary. Seven of the lodges voted for the formation of a Grand Lodge and two voted against it. The

two negative votes came from Brookville and Corydon. It is not known why Floyd voted against the formation unless he was honoring instructions given to him by the membership of his lodge. Further, if Floyd had been a member of the Louisville lodge, his loyalty thereto may have convinced him not to vote for a new Grand Lodge in Indiana. Following this vote a resolution was unanimously adopted by the representatives including Floyd to inform the Grand Lodges of Kentucky and Ohio of the action to form a Grand Lodge in Indiana. Previously, the lodges in Indiana were under dispensations of the Grand Lodges of either Kentucky or Ohio. Four members were chosen to convey to the two Grand Lodges the withdrawal of the Indiana lodges from their respective Mother Lodges. Johnston and Floyd were selected as two of the four-member committee to convey the withdrawals. In all probability Floyd favored the creation of a Grand Lodge in Indiana and that he was merely voting his instructions from the Corydon lodge.

On December 4th, 1817 the convention adopted a resolution stating that on January 12th, 1818 delegates of the nine lodges would assemble in Madison for the purpose of opening a Grand Lodge in Indiana. The resolution assured the Grand Lodges of Kentucky and Ohio that "No disgust, no disrespect to the Grand Lodges of Kentucky and Ohio has induced us to adopt this measure; necessity and the welfare of the Craft command it. We shall at every opportunity be happy to communicate through our Grand Lodge with your most Worshipful Grand Lodge, and assure you we are your friends and brothers." McDonald, *A History of Freemasonry in Indiana from 1806 to 1898*, p. 19. It is probable that this language was fashioned by Floyd since he was the wordsmith for the convention. However, McDonald claimed that Johnston was the author. But McDonald had also claimed that Johnston had authored the Anti-Slavery Report issued by a three-member committee of the Territorial House of Representatives in 1808. He cited a paragraph from Jacob P. Dunn's book, *Indiana*, which said that the Report "appears to be wholly his work," meaning Johnston. However,

the Report was written by John Badollet, a fiercely anti-slavery man and noted anti-slavery writer in Vincennes.

Battle of Tippecanoe

The Battle at Tippecanoe was organized and fought after the slavery issue in the Territory had been resolved waiting for the constitutional decision to be made when the Territory applied for statehood. The Battle was an instance of the connectivity of Freemasons including (1) Col. Abraham Owen as aide de camp for Gen. Harrison (killed in action); (2) Col. George Rogers Clark Floyd as commander of the 4th U. S. Infantry; (3) Col. Joseph Bartholomew (previously mentioned) as commander of the field and staff of the Indiana militia infantry (wounded in action); (4) Lt. Col. Joseph Hamilton Daveiss as commander of the Indiana militia dragoons (killed in action); (5) Floyd (subject of this book) as the adjutant of the Indiana militia dragoons field and staff; (6) Johnston (previously mentioned) as the quartermaster of the same field and staff; and Sergeant Major William Prince (previously mentioned).

Abraham Owen

General Harrison's aide-de-camp, Col. Abraham Owen, was killed early in the battle at the side of the general. He had been master of the Shelbyville Lodge in Kentucky. He was a colonel in the Kentucky militia, a surveyor, a member of the Constitutional Convention that framed Kentucky's first Constitution, and a member of its lower legislative house.

George Rogers Clark Floyd

Col. George Rogers Clark Floyd was the son of Col. and Judge John Floyd who brought his family and siblings and their families to Kentucky in 1779 and who was killed by Indians in 1783. Floyd was born in Kentucky in 1781, was named for his father's intimate friend, George Rogers Clark, and was married two times.

His first wife was Maria Maupin; they were married in 1806. His second wife was Sally Fontaine and they married in 1811, less than a month before the Battle of Tippecanoe. Col. Floyd served in the Kentucky Militia and then in 1808 entered the regular U. S. Army where he eventually attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was the commander of the 4th U. S. Regular Army regiment of infantry at the Battle of Tippecanoe. It is documented that he was a past master of the Abraham Lodge in Louisville and was the scribe of the Louisville Chapter #5, Masons in 1818. He died in 1823.

Joseph Hamilton Daveiss

In August 1811 he was elected Grand Master of Masonry in Kentucky. He was described "as an orator [who] had few equals and the lustre of his gifts lost nothing in comparison with his noted contemporary Henry Clay." As a federal prosecutor in Kentucky in 1806 he was the first official to take notice of Aaron Burr's activities and to bring him before the federal court in that state. His prime witness against Burr was none other than his fellow Freemason, Davis Floyd. When he had the court subpoena Floyd in the fall of 1806, Floyd's excuse for not appearing was that he was in the legislature at Vincennes attending to Territorial business in the Indiana Territory. Daveiss and Floyd were friends at the time. They may have attended Masonic meetings together in Louisville and elsewhere. They may have traveled to Washington city together. Daveiss would have known fellow Mason, George Rogers Clark Floyd, who was Davis Floyd's blood first cousin. For Daveiss, subpoenaing Floyd was probably like subpoenaing a good friend with a known propensity to tell the truth. Daveiss was a Federalist; so were the origins of Burr, but now Daveiss was working for a Democratic president, Jefferson. In the West Burr was either admired or hated depending on the prejudice of the westerner. Daveiss was prejudiced against Burr. He lost his federal criminal court case in Kentucky against Burr not once but twice. He was hoping that the notorious Gen. James Wilkinson was going to supply him

with the witnesses he needed to get an indictment against Burr. When the list was not forthcoming, Daveiss had to rely on the only person he knew who had information and was honest.

Shortly after Daveiss' election as Grand Master of Masonry in Kentucky in August 1811 he volunteered as a private soldier to join the army of Gen. William Henry Harrison at the latter's post in Vincennes. On his way to Vincennes by horseback he stopped in Louisville on September 13, 1811 and visited the Abraham Lodge. Floyd may have attended that meeting. At that time the Vincennes Lodge was under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky and was an offshoot of the Abraham Lodge where several of its members transferred to the Vincennes Lodge. During his stay in Vincennes he conducted three Masonic meetings and conferred several Masonic degrees. The Battle of Tippecanoe took place on the morning of November 7, 1811. Daveiss had enlisted as a private but was soon promoted to a major of the Indiana militia dragoons, the same rank that Floyd had previously held. Col. George Rogers Clark Floyd commanded the 4th U. S. Army infantry regiment at the Battle of Tippecanoe; this was a regular U. S. Army unit as opposed to a state or territorial militia unit. Daveiss and Floyd were both members of the same dragoon unit. In modern parlance dragoon meant that they were horse soldiers or cavalry, who traveled by horse and fought either on horse or on foot.

When the Indians attacked Gen. Harrison's forces at Tippecanoe they encountered the line on the east side of the encampment which Col. G. R. C. Floyd's infantry unit was defending. Daveiss commanded a unit of dragoons who were stationed behind the infantry lines at the northeast corner of the encampment. When the Indians attacked, Daveiss asked General Harrison several times for permission to rush the Indians which request was eventually granted. Isaac Naylor in an undated handwritten manuscript on file at the Indiana State Historical Library said that Davis Floyd "was the adjutant of the

squadron of dragoons commanded by Col. Joseph H. Daviess in the army of Tippecanoe. [An adjutant is a staff officer who assists the commanding officer of a unit in the administrative work of the latter's command.] Davis Floyd was one of those who charged the Indians outside the encampment where Maj. Daveiss received his mortal wounds." There is a debate over whether Daveiss and Floyd were on horses or on foot. A famous woodcutting of the scene shows them on horses. Daveiss died from his wounds the next day.

Other Masons at the Battle of Tippecanoe

Private Isaac White, who was made a Mason by Daveiss while in Vincennes, lost his life in the battle. He was killed when he, Daveiss, and Floyd charged outside the encampment to attack Indians hidden behind some trees or logs. Other Masons who saw action in the battle other than the two Floyds and who were members or former members of the Louisville Lodge were Maj. Walter Taylor, a transferee from Louisville to Vincennes who served as one of Harrison's aides (he buried Daveiss on the spot where he fell); Major Marston G. Clark from Salem, Indiana (he was a nephew of George Rogers Clark and later organized the Salem Lodge and served as the Grand Master of Indiana); Capt. Peter Funk who was an officer in Daveiss' dragoon unit; and Lt. Presly Ross and Privates Peter Priest and Richard Findley.

Louisville Lodge

On November 19, 1811 the Louisville Lodge held an emergency meeting to mourn the loss of Major Daveiss. The record is silent as to whether any of his Mason brothers who fought in the battle were present. However, it is doubtful because his interment occurred on the battlefield.

In 1818 Floyd was elected Deputy Grand Master of Indiana and Johnson (Johnston) would serve in that capacity in 1828 and 1829. Free Masonry provided several elements which contributed to the resolution of the slavery issue in the Indiana Territory by providing a moral compass, Christian principles, compassion for mankind, and goodwill for all.

Books and references relied upon other than those cited in this chapter:

(1) Wilson, George R., "General Washington Johnston," *Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol. XX, No. 2, June 1924, pp. 123-153.

Images:

(1) Engraving of Daveiss and Floyd Charging the Indians outside the Encampment at Tippecanoe.

(2) Photographs of General Washington Johnston's burial site and monument in Vincennes, Indiana.