



The Ruddlesforter

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Publication of the Ruddell and Martin Stations Historical Association

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The Ruddlesforter is a publication by and for individuals interested in the preservation of the history of these significant Revolutionary War forts. For further information contact:

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REUNION 2000

Don't forget to plan a summer vacation to attend the 220th
anniversary reunion to be held in June 2000.

British Attacks Against Ruddle's & Martin's Stations In June 1780

by Don Lee and Martha Pelfrey

In the summer of 1780 a large force of British and Indians swooped down on the American frontier forts in Kentucky, killing more than 24 men, women and children. In just two days, the tiny forts of Ruddle's and Martin's stations were destroyed and more than 400 prisoners were taken on a death march to Detroit. Many of the old, the young and the weak died during that grueling march of 600 miles.

During the Revolutionary war there were three invasions by the British and Indians against the American Forts in Kentucky. The most significant of these was the attack on Ruddle's and Martin's forts by British Captain Henry Bird. This second invasion was a well-planned counter attack by the British Command at Detroit in retaliation for General Clark's victory at Vincennes and the capture of Lt. Governor Hamilton of Detroit. The plan was to destroy the Kentucky forts and drive the settlers back over the mountains to the East Coast.

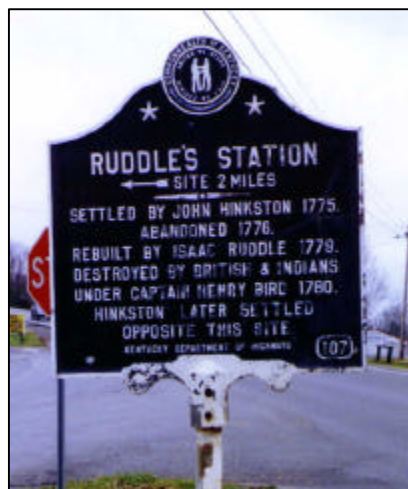
Captain Bird was chosen because of

his ability to recruit the Lake Indians. In the fall of 1779, he went among the tribal councils winning them over to his plan. It was easy since the Indians were already furious over American Colonel Bowman's burning of Indian villages and crops near Piqua and Chillicothe (old town) in July. They were eager to retaliate against American intrusions upon their lands. There would be much plunder to be gained by such an attack. May of 1780 was a very wet season in the Ohio Valley. The streams were full to overflowing and navigation on the small rivers was good. Captain Bird left Detroit in the middle of May with 200 Canadian Regulars, Tories and about 300 Lake Indians, mostly Ottawas, Hurons, Taways, and Mingoes. He had with him several cannon. Some accounts say he had six, others accounts say he had three.

Allan W. Eckert in his book *The Frontiersmen* says he had six. Five French swivels mounted on horseback and one large brass cannon on wheels. He went south by boat on Lake Erie and entered the mouth of the Maumee River where present-day Toledo is located and went up stream or south into central Ohio. At the mouth of the Auglaize River a force of about 300 warriors of the Delawares, Hurons, Wyandots, Ottawas, Chippawaa, Tawas, Miamis and Potawatomes met him. From there, they paddled their boats south on the Auglaize to a portage point called Wapakoneta by the Indians. Boats, supplies and cannons were carried south over a portage trail to the Great Miami. The portage was difficult and took him two weeks to travel the twenty miles. By the time he reached the mouth of the Great Miami at the Ohio River the Shawnee had joined him giving him eight

hundred and fifty Indians and a total force of about twelve hundred fifty men. With the Shawnee came four white men: the Girtys-Simon, James and George and the Indian agent Alexander McKee. The four kept the Indians keyed up in furious anger by reminding them of the murder of their Chiefs Cornstalk, Pucksinwah and Black Fish.

Captain Bird was confronted with a problem. His plans called for him to go south and attack the Fort at Louisville, however, the Indians wanted to go south and attack the small weaker forts in central Kentucky where there would be more plunder. His intelligence sources told him that he would be more successful if he attacked Ruddles, Martins, Bryan's Stations and Lexington. From the mouth of the Great Miami, the army turned upstream to a point where Cincinnati now stands, across from the mouth of the Licking River. They went up the Licking about forty Miles to the forks of the Licking where the City of Falmouth is now Located. Here huts were built to store most of their supplies. Here they left the River and traveled over land east of and parallel to the South Fork of the Licking. As they went they carved a wide wagon road through the woods along a Buffalo Trace, now known as the Broadford Road. Bird's War Road took them down the dry bed of Snake Lick Creek past the abandoned Boyd's Station. They crossed the South Licking at a broad ford in a great bend of the River. The place is still known as Bird's Crossing. They encountered much difficulty in the crossing and built a temporary log roadway to cross. The road paralleled the South Licking and numerous Streams were crossed including Raven Creek and



Mill Creek. Gray's Run was forded near the present City of Cynthiana. At Lair station they again crossed the South Licking and went south to Ruddles Station.

In the dim light of morning in a heavy downpour of rain, they crept up to the field in front of the fort. A guard sounded the alarm and in a few minutes, the faces of 100 men peered over the wall. Some accounts say they exchanged rifle fire until Bird had his cannon in place. A shot was fired from a smaller cannon and the ball only imbedded into the wall of the stockade with little damage. Immediately Bird ordered the big wheeled cannon loaded and aimed. Panic swept the fort at the sight of the huge gun. The ground shook and the sound thundered up the valley from the roar of the great gun. The north wall of the stockade was shattered as the cannon ball torn it's way through the logs. It was the first time a cannon had been used against a Kentucky fort.

As Captain Bird ordered the Cannon reloaded a white flag began to wave over the stockade. The gate opened slightly and several men emerged. They met outside the fort and talked in the rain. Capt. Bird ordered in the name of King George III that the fort be immediately and unconditionally surrendered.

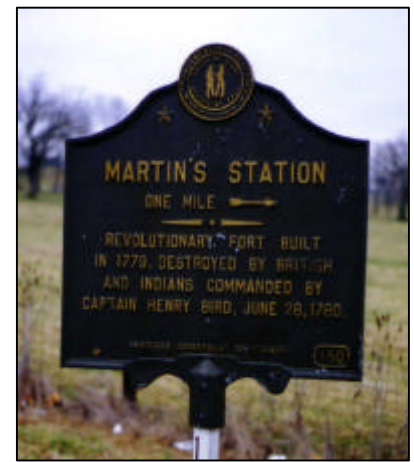
It was agreed that Ruddell and his men would be taken prisoner and the women and children would be allowed to travel on their own to the safety of the nearest settlement. There being no other choice, the surrender was accepted. The agreement did not set well with the Indians because it did not give them the opportunity to get revenge for the deaths of their Chiefs and for the burning of their villages. As soon as the gate was opened, they rushed in, seizing people and claiming them as prisoners. The old and sickly were killed while babies were pulled from their mothers arms, bashed against posts and thrown into the fires. Mrs. Ruddell's three-year-old baby was pulled from her arms and thrown into the fire. It is said the lives of 24 or more men, women and children were taken in those brief moments. The prisoners, called slaves by the Indians, were divided up as was the plunder from the cabins. The prisoners were required to carry the loot and plunder on their backs while the

Indians rode the horses taken from the fort.

Captain Bird and his men were so outnumbered by the Indians that he had no control over the outrages that were committed. He was so disgusted with the turn of events he wanted to return to Detroit right away, however, the Indians were pleased with their success at Ruddles and wanted to attack Martin's Station some five miles south on Stoner Creek. Martin's were a new station with a large population. The American Captain Gatliff had been called up in March to defend Martin's fort, but was away from the fort with Simon Kenton hunting when Capt. Bird and his men arrived. Martins had heard of the Ruddles surrender and decided to do the same with the assurances there would be no more killing. Again, the Indians broke their promise. Bird was able to convince the Indians that he would take charge of the prisoners from Martins and they could have the prisoners from Ruddles.

By this time, Bird had seen enough of the barbarous conduct and feeling he could no longer trust his allies that he gave orders for the whole force to return to Detroit. He wanted to take advantage of the high waters for his return trip. Word had also reached him of General Clark's return to Louisville and being much encumbered by the large number prisoners and plunder, he had no wish to fight Clark at this time. Detachments of Indians went on to other forts to plunder and steal horses. When the people of Bryan's Station heard of the defeats at Martins and Ruddles they abandoned the Station and fled. The Indians burned it.

On June 27, with some 400 captives the British and Indians began a death march to Detroit. The Indians had killed all the cattle at the forts leaving little food and few supplies. Some records are very critical of Bird saying he placed the prisoners on a ration of 1 cup of flour per day for men and 1/2 cup for women and children. They followed their old wagon trail north to the forks of Licking. At the place known as Bird's Crossing one of the canons fell into the River and could not be retrieved. Some say it is still there to this day. The captives loaded down with plunder from their own homes were forced to walk as much as 20 miles per day. A blow from a tomahawk soon



dispatched the weak that fell behind. A bounty of \$5 was paid for each scalp or prisoner. The Prisoners were forced to cross the Licking River a number of Times. At one of the crossings a Mrs. Christian Spears was drowned. Later at Detroit Mr. Spears married one of the other prisoners.

Many prisoners died along the way from exhaustion, illnesses, wounds and starvation. Some prisoners stayed at Detroit while others were taken to live among the Indians and others were sent on to Montreal. Many families were divided. At Detroit prisoners worked as carpenters, farmers, stonemasons and other trades. Women worked at housekeeping or sewing for the officers of the fort. Some lived as captives for years. Samuel VanHook in an affidavit said he was held for four years and two months. Some stayed in Canada while others continued to live among the Indians

The attacks on Ruddles and Martins represent a horrible and sad day in the history of Kentucky yet it has been forgotten by most people and remembered by too few. Some years after the attacks a landowner collected the remains of those killed and placed them in a concrete vault cut out of the hillside. The Daughters of the American Revolution placed a marker at the site, but that is all that remains of Ruddell's fort. They both sit on private land. Martin's fort has only an abandoned and overgrown graveyard to mark the spot on which it once stood. This Nation and the Commonwealth of Kentucky owes a great debt to those who gave their lives and their freedom here. They have never been commemorated for their suffering and that is the greatest outrage.

President's Report on 1st Meeting

The Meeting was held at Noon on March 6, 1999, Biancki's Restaurant, Cynthiana, Kentucky, with the following in attendance:

Mildred Belew
Demossville, Kentucky

Jon Hagee
Lexington, Kentucky
Conway family

Jim Sellars
Okinawa, Japan
Sellers and Monger family

Bob Francis
Ft. Eustice, Virginia
Hinkson and McCune family

Betty Hewitt Lair Wyatt
Cynthiana, Kentucky
Lair family

Martha Pelfrey
Cold Spring, Kentucky
Conway family

Ed & Joyce Lee
Bristol, Tennessee
Vanhook family

Peggy Shumate Warth
Alexandria, Kentucky
Spears family

Henry D. "Don" Lee
Falmouth, Kentucky
Vanhook family

Nancy O'Malley
Lexington, Kentucky
Archaeologist, University of Kentucky

With Don Lee acting as moderator, all present introduced themselves and told what their interest was in the forts and/or who were their ancestor(s). After a nice lunch we proceeded to business. Nominations were made and voted upon with the following officers elected to

serve until an election can be held or decided upon by the members:

Don Lee- President
Martha Pelfrey- Vice President
Peggy Warth- Secretary/Treasurer
Jim Sellars- Chairman Newsletter
Bob Francis- Archives Chairman
Jon Hagee- WebPages Chairman

It was decided the name of the new organization should be:

**Ruddell & Martin Stations
Historical Association
PO Box 297
Alexandria, KY 41001**

It was discussed and decided we would use "Ruddell" as the official Spelling of Ruddell since most documents use that spelling. After discussion we decided to use the Word "Stations" instead of fort based on Nancy O'Malley's definitions of stations and forts.

Nancy O'Malley was present and spoke informally about her work on the forts and stations of Kentucky. She talked about Ruddell & Martin stations and a need to do a more complete study of these sites. She also answered question about her work with the University of Kentucky Archaeological Research programs, a most interesting and well-informed Lady.

After a discussed of the aims and goals of the new association we decided on a Picnic to be held on Saturday, June 26, 1999. The meeting was adjourned and most hung around to socialize and get acquainted.

That was the beginning of Ruddell & Martin Stations Historical Association.

Submitted,
Don Lee
President

**Send in Your Letters or
Comments**

ruddlesfort-1@rootsweb.com

From Allan W. Eckert

Dear Mr. Lee,

From all indications, you and your organization are doing a fantastic job and deserve a great deal of praise. Most certainly you have it from me.

In regard to your question concerning what kind of boats Captain Byrd and his force used in their crossing of the Ohio River prior to the attack on Ruddell's and Martin's Stations, I must rely on my memory alone here, since I no longer have any research notes or related data -- all of that material having been donated to the Filson Club in Louisville when I retired from historical writing some six years ago.

It seems to me that I recall that the boats used were large (20/24-person) canoes that had been constructed by the Shawnees specifically for this purpose at Chillicothe (present Oldtown, near Xenia, Ohio) and which were transported to the Ohio River by being trussed to four horses each -- two on opposite sides of the bow and two on opposite sides of the stern, with the canoe slung between them.

These craft were carried empty, while the goods to be ferried across the river were transported by packhorses. It was a remarkably well-planned and executed effort. The large canoes, after being used to cross the river, were skillfully hidden in large growths of dense brush close to the river and recovered and used again when Bryd's force returned to the river after the attacks. Again, please bear in mind that this is strictly from memory, so it would need some verification before being accepted as entirely factual. Also, as I recall, some of the Indians supporting Byrd hastily made their own elm-bark canoes upon arrival at the Ohio River, each of these capable of carrying 2-4 warriors. Most of the mounted Indians, however, swam their horses across the river.

Again, I think you're doing a wonderful job and you have my heartiest congratulations.

Sincerely yours,
Allan W. Eckert

The Scalping of Joseph Conway.

Joseph Conway (informant's father) was born in Greenbriar Co., Va., in 1763 - Early moved to Kentucky with his father's, Samuel Conway's family, and settled in Ruddell's Station. Henry Groff, one Purseley and others also resided there. About 200 Indians came and attacked the fort, found one side of the fort unfinished; and the whites hastened and finished it, putting up pickets; and that evening the Indians made a violent attack, and whites returned the fire; none were injured in the fort, and not certain that they killed any Indians. Next morning the Indians had retired, and the whites found many articles which they had dropped. The Indians continued to hover around for a couple of weeks altogether, and then retired.

Joseph Conway and two others went out about a mile and a half reconnoitering, when Conway was shot by a party of their Indians, and wounded in the left side, and was caught and tomahawked, breaking his skull, and scalped, and left for dead. The others escaped unharmed. The reports of the guns were heard at the fort, and a party went out and met the two fugitives returning, who reported that Conway was killed; they went on, and brought in Conway, who was gradually recovering, when the Indians sent to Detroit for reinforcements and cannon.

Two weeks after Conway was wounded, Colonel Bird and party appeared, with cannon. They first fired a cannon shot and missed; then a second shot, which knocked out one of the corners of a block-house, and then the inmates concluded the British and Indians could take the place, and listened to terms.

The British pledged protection to the prisoners and their property, and were not to be surrendered to the Indians; but no effort was made by the British to fulfill their pledge.

Conway with his head bandaged was taken by an old Indian and his son, who were really kind to him; they also took an unmarried sister of Conway's, older than he was, who dressed his head. Before leaving Ruddell's, one Indian tore off the

Capt. Isaac Ruddell's Pay Roll - Company of militia, in Kentucky County, under command of Col. John Bowman, No date - except a few dates of enlistment are given, from July 21st to Oct. 25th 1779:

Isaac Ruddell Capt.
John Haggins, Rent,
John Macher, Ensign
Joseph Ejector, 2nd Lt.
John Waters, Sgt.
John Smith, Jr.
Paul Fisher
Casper Brown
George Royal
John Burger Jr.
Henry Burger
Sam^l Edderman
Edward Low
John Burger Jr.
Friedrich Janner
Thos Macher
John Smith Jr.
George Ruddell
Wm Scott
Stephen Ruddell
Wm Marshall
Th^s Emery - kill^d 5th Oct.
Patrick Ryan

Isiah Ryan
Reuben Bupner
Alon Waters
Wm Landace
Henry Postenbustle
George Hatfall
Jacob Leach Sr.
Andrew Postenbustle
Wm Dellenberg
Peter Call
Martin Tuffanier
Wm Mungen Sr.
Wm Mungen Jr.
Charles Mungen
Peter Rough
Lemard Croft
Geo. Brinker
Lemard Postenbustle
Henry Postenbustle Jr.
John Bird
And^w Bartle
James Stewart
Peter Royal

George Baker
And^w Baker
Henry Royal

John Hutter
James Ruddell
John Cloyd, drummer

Draper Manuscripts, George Rogers Clark Papers, 17J:27-28

bandage from Conway's head, but he was repelled by the old Indian and his son as interfering with their prisoner. They were taken direct to Detroit, and turned over to the British there, and remained there four years. Conway was placed in the hospital, and when recovered, was placed on the limits, and permitted to work as he could get employment. The rest of the Conway

family, father, mother and two daughters, with their son and daughter already there, all got together at Detroit.

Draper Manuscript Collection, Draper's Notes, 24S:169-171.



Mythic image of Simon Girty (1741-1818), found in *A Sketch of the Life and Character of Daniel Boone*, by Ted Franklin Belue.

Lyman Copeland Draper (1815-1891) was the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's first director. He collected first-hand accounts from men and women involved in the early history of the trans-Allegheny west. The original documents are housed at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and microfilm copies can be found at various libraries across the U.S.

Draper's Interview with James Chambers.

James Chambers, a native of Ireland, was born in 1749. He immigrated to America as a young man and during the Revolutionary War served in the militia of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. In June of 1781 he was taken prisoner by the Indians near Big Sewickley Creek and taken to Detroit. His interview reads:

Bird treated prisoners well. Chambers saw the 6 pounder at Detroit taken on Bird's expedition of '80, and saw the man who drove the horse that drew it on the land part of the march. Also got acquainted with several of the prisoners taken by Bird - Capt. Ruddell and Simon Girty was with Bird. John Hinkston was in possession of the Indians - Girty and Hinkston were old acquaintances - were great cronies, and swapped clothes when he was prisoner - Girty went to Bird, and said Hinkston was very supple and active, and if he did not take him from the Indians and put him under a guard of British soldiers, he would be certain to effect his escape. Bird did so - that night Hinkston made his escape and it was thought Girty brought about this change of Hinkston from the Indians to the British, in order to aid him in escaping. - John Sellers, another prisoner taken at Ruddell's or Martin's escaped a little before Hinkston - they were the only ones who did escape. Girty, too, knew of Hinkston's having killed Wipey, about '74, who hunted on Conemaugh, and kept it from the Indians, who, had they known it, would have killed him.

When Bird returned with his prisoners, a number of cabins were built outside the fort at Detroit for the prisoners taken at Ruddell's and Martin's forts; men, women and children, Capt. Ruddell and family among them. And these cabins were familiarly called Yankee Hall. The men had their liberty and worked out some of the time for wages. After a while, Du Poister [Arnet S. DePeyster] who commanded at Detroit gave the use of an island to Ruddell, some 3 miles above Detroit, and in which were some improvements - and he moved his family there, raised corn, etc. These favors led to the suspicion that Ruddell was tinctured with Toryism and Ruddell when he

returned to Virginia was tried on this charge and acquitted. Bird said he would never be engaged in another such expedition as that to Kentucky in 1780.

Draper Manuscript Collection, Draper's Notes, 4S:98-99.

Captain John Hinkston's Narrative

Extract upon Capt. Hinkston's narrative, who was made prisoner on the surrender of Ruddle's Fort; in Kentucky the 25th of June (1780), and made his escape on the 28th.

On the 24th about sunrise, a heavy fire was begun on the fort by small arms, which continued without intermission until noon, when it was observed, that a battery of two three pounders was erected on an advantages spot. The first discharged made such an impression on the fort, that all within were convinced they could not hold out. A flag was sent out and the terms agreed to were that the garrison should surrender themselves as prisoners, be permitted to retain their wearing apparel, and conducted safely to a settlement near Detroit, where provisions should be found there until they could raise corn for themselves.

On the 26th the white, with a party of Indians appeared before Martin's Fort, seven miles up Licking Creek, which surrendered without resistance on the same terms as the other fort and previous were in the hands of the enemy when Capt. Hinkston made his escape; who further adds, that they consisted of a company of regulars from Detroit, under Capt. Bird, a company of Canadians, thirty Tory volunteers, and about 700 Indians from various tribes. Capt. Bird informed Capt. Hinkston; that he had taken the Governors dispatches going down the Ohio, which gave an account that no expedition would be sent into their country this summer; which seemed to elate him much. The enemy came down Stoney River (on the Great Miami) up the Ohio and Licking, without being discovered. *S. C. Gazette, June 31, 1781. Draper Manuscript Collection, George Rogers Clark Papers, 16J:82 - 83.*

Join the Ruddell's and Martin's
Stations Association at:

[http://www.webpub.com/~jhagee/
rudd-app.html](http://www.webpub.com/~jhagee/rudd-app.html)

Draper s Interview with John M. Ruddell

From John M. Ruddell, 12 miles north of Quincy, Illinois, Adams County. – born in Bourbon County, Kentucky, 1811: removed with his father to Pike County, Missouri, 1817 & in 1829 to Illinois.

Capt. Isaac Ruddell was born in Va. Valley, where the Bowmans & Hite were – of Welch descent – no knowledge of any military service: married Elizabeth Bowman, sister of Col. John Bowman: moved to Kentucky in about 1779, & settled Ruddell's Station, with several families, with him from Virginia.

On the 18th June 1780, Capt. Bird & white, & Indians brought artillery – appeared & demanded its surrender, refused, & then fired on it with the cannon – several days, & finally made a breach, & got possession – A long shot killed a white of the British party - & when the guns were stacked, Bird desired Capt. Ruddell to point out the gun that had performed the successful shot of three or four hundred yards & Bird had it largely ornamented with silver on his return & kept it for his personal use. No knowledge of names of Indian chiefs or of numbers on either side.

When taken, an Indian siezed the infant child of Mrs. Ruddell and dashed its brains out against a tree. Of Capt. Ruddell's family, his oldest son George was not taken, being away on a tour of service under Col. John Todd. The rest 4 sons & 1 daughter, & the infant, taken; Stephen, Elizabeth, Abraham, John and Isaac.

Stephen the oldest, born in Shenandoah Valley Sept. 18, 1768, Abraham about 4 years younger, the prisoners were at once seperated among the captors – so that Mrs. Ruddell did not know the fate of her family – nor they of the others: the last, Stephen and Abram, who were taken by the Shawnees, saw of

their mother, an Indian had just killed her child, & struck her over the forehead with a club, & the blood was running from the wound – probably a blow to make her relinquish her hold on her child.

At Detroit, the commanding British officer [Maj Leinault] discovered that Capt. Ruddell was a fellow Mason - & then did all he could to befriend him - & sent out & had the Ruddell family brought in & redeemed – Mrs. Ruddell & her daughter & two youngest sons – paying a keg of whisky for the daughter. She subsequently married John Mulherrin, & settled & died in Pike Co. Mo., died about 12 or 14 years ago leaving several children – one Wm. Mulherrin, born 1811, lives 4 miles below Clarksville, at a woodyard on Mo. Side - & his sister, Mrs. Ben Barton, Mrs. James Simes (near Painesville Mo. Pike Co.) & Mrs. Denny (Painsville) about 7 miles back of Clarksville – quite aged. Mrs. Rebecca Grine will be most likely to write. Painesville P.O.

But Stephen & Abram could not be found, & it was feared they had been killed. Can't say how long it was before Capt. Isaac Ruddell, he and his wife, returned to Kentucky at Ruddell's Mills – there died about 1809 very near the same time – each mighty 260 lbs. These two sons John and Isaac grew up, but never married; - they had one son Cornelius born after the captivity. Their son George Ruddell settled at New Madrid early in this century, & lost property by the great earthquake - & left descendants. Abram Ruddell first settled on White River, Ind. A few years, then about 1820 moved to New Madrid region in Missouri – died there about 1836, leaving descendants. Bird of Bird's Point married a Ruddell.

Stephen and Abram were adopted and raised by the Indians – by different families in same village. Stephen knew Tecumseh in his youth – played [illegible] together at Piqua - & always said Tecumseh was honorable & humane – a very remarkable man for ability. [continues with Tecumseh, very faded and hard to read]

Stephen Ruddell was failing in health for several years, but was confined but the last month or two, & died at his residence on the high ground skirting the Mississippi, a dozen miles above Quincy, Adams Co. Illinois Oct 16th 1845. He

often said he had never the head or tooth ache in his life. He was a trifle short of six feet in height, heavily formed weighing 200 pounds, until he fell off in his closing years. He was light complexioned, with a bluish-grey eye – round full, pleasant countenance.

Abram Ruddell was spare & bony – six feet & one inch high. He was rough in his demeanor – never religious. His conversation betrayed the Indian, ever using “me” for “I.” He grew up among the Indians, always seeming to have an [illegible] hatred for them: would get drunk, & in that state would frequently kill some of the Indians - & under the guise of liquor it would be overlooked as having occurred by a person morally [illegible] Once he got a long hollow weed, & inserted one end in a kettle of boiling maple syrup, & appeared to be enjoying it busely, when an Indian asked him if it did not burn him. No, said Ruddell, it became cool while passing up the tube - & the Indian then wished to try it - & swallowed a large mouthful so burned him that he died in consequence. So Ruddell got rid of another of the hated Red Skins. *Draper Manuscript Collection, Draper's Notes, 22S:41-52.*

Maryland Journal October 17, 1780

Philadelphia, Oct 10, 1780.

Extract of a letter from Pittsburgh, Sept. 1. “Since my last, the savages have killed and scalped ten men, about 60 miles up the Monongahela; and Capt. Bird, with a few regulars and Canadians, and, they report, 700 savages, hath entirely broke up one of the Kentucky settlements, having made prisoners 400 men, women and children. But this stroke may prove serviceable to us, as it will, I hope, if not finally stopped, give a check to the immigrations to the Ohio, which is prodigious, and which must weaken the country below. The grasping hand of the covetous and avaricious, neomonopolizer, not only of the American money but of American lands, has in a manner put anus into the hands of our enemies. The former practice is now. I hope, Effectually abolished, and tarish the latter war.” *Draper Manuscript Collection, George Rogers Clark Papers, 29J:19-20*

Letter of
Col. Benjamin Logan
to the
Governor of Virginia

August 31, 1782

“Your excellency and Council will please to indulge me a few moments longer when I take the liberty to add the situation of 470 persons who surrendered themselves prisoners of war to a British officer then on command from Detroit with a great number of Indians. As well, I as I recollect, these unhappy people were captured in June, 1780; and from authentic intelligence that we have received, they were actually divided in the most distressing manner that could be invented – many of the men were vtaken to detroit, and their wives retained among the Indians as slaves. Some of the men are now at Montreal, and others in different parts towards the Lakes. As the British were the perpetrators of this cruel piece of mischief, I think by the articles of the Cartel for the exchange and relief of prisoners taken in the Southern Department, and subsequent measures taken by the different commissaries for that purpose. It is their business immediately to deliver up in this country or at some American post all the prisoners then taken – or retaliation be had on our parts. Unless they are guarded back, they will never get through the Indian Country.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect and esteem Your excellency’s most obt. And most humble servant.”

Benjamin Logan, County Lieutenant
Draper manuscript Collection, Draper’s Notes, 11S:15-16.

Letter to
Gen. George Washington

October 25, 1782

His Excellency General Washington
Virginia, In Council, Oct 25th, 1782
Dr. Sir: In June, 1780, a party of British troops and Northern Indians made an incursion into Kentucky, and carried off

between three and four hundred people to Detroit and its neighborhood, where I am informed, the men are at present detained, and many of the poor women separated from their husbands, and given to the Indians who use them as slaves. This piece of cruelty calls for redress, and I know of no person so proper to demand it as yourself with whom the power of negotiating things of this sort rests. I think under the cartel settled By Gen. Greene with the commanding officer in Charlestown, these poor people have a just right to their enlargement. By it, all prisoners of war on both sides in the Southern States, taken before the 19th of June, 1781, were to be set at liberty, and those on parole were discharged from it. The agreement extended to this State, and in consequence of it many persons that had fallen into the hands of the enemy were discharged. If you think with me, I make no doubt you will take the necessary steps for their enlargement, and their being sent under an escort either to Fort Pitt, or to our own garrison at the Falls of the Ohio, which last place would be most agreeable to them as being nearer home.
Draper Manuscript Collection, Draper’s Notes, 10S:81-84

Letter to the
Commissioners of the
Western Country

November 29, 1782

Speaks of demand through Gen. Washington for Kentucky prisoners of June, 1780, and carried to Detroit.

“You have his [Gen. Washington’s] answer enclosed, which I beg the favor of you to make public, that their friends may provide for them against their return. How they will effect it, I know not, as you will find they are to be sent to his army, from which the distance to their own house is so great, that I fear they will suffer much before they can reach them. As soon as I am informed of the number belonging to this State, and their names, I will immediately forward the list to you.”
Draper Manuscript Collection, Draper’s Notes, 10S:90-91.



The Shawnee Chief Blue Jacket

Draper’s Interview with
Mrs. Ledwell, Miss Ferris
and Joseph Munger Jr.

August 5, 1863, Mrs. Honn and daughter, latter 18, were taken prisoners at the capture of Ruddell’s and Martin’s Stations, Kentucky, 1780 – Indians chased Miss Catherine Honn half a mile in running gauntlet, she was fleet, the Indian finally knocking her down with a club. She married first Charles Munger (father of Joseph Munger Sr., now deceased) who was killed in Wayne’s battle; and then she married Joseph Ferris, and died ten years ago some 85 years old.

The mother, Mrs. Honn, was placed in Blue Jacket’s family, and kept the cows and made butter, she esteemed it a blessing that she was thus placed there instead of in some other Indian family.

On the return of Bird’s army from capturing Martin and Ruddell’s Stations, some of the weak children were taken aside and tomahawked, and scalps produced. Some of the captives remained and settled in the country around Detroit and Western Canada / descendants left.
Draper Manuscript Collection, Draper’s Notes, 17S:200.

The Ruddell Captivity

By Governor Jeremiah
Morrow
July 22, 1843

Colonel Bird and his Indian Allies appeared before the station - demanded a surrender saying they had cannon. Riddle and those with him disbelieving it - Would not listen to any such proposition. The fire opened upon the little fortress - "the pickets were cut down like corn stalks" said Governor Morrow. Seeing the folly of attempting to maintain so unequal a contest, when convinced so effectually of the presence of cannon - raised the white flag, and entered into written terms of capitulation with Bird. The women and children were to be protected and taken to the nearest station and there safely delivered. The men were to be prisoners, with the privilege of taking each his gun, and a pack of such articles as they pleased, and

this unexamined - and the fort then delivered up to Bird and the Indians. These were the terms.

The Indians entered the fort and comenced a terrible slaughter - Governor Morrow thinks some 20 were tomahawked in cold blood - the women and children, instead of being taken to the neighboring station agreed upon, were marched off as prisoners. Riddle escaped the slaughter - went and remonstrated with Bird, who expressed and seemed to feel regret that he had no control over the Indians. Hurried down Licking, crossed the Ohio, and then feeling safe, camped up Mill Creek a short distance, hunted and rested themselves, and returned to their towns at leisure.

While camped on Mill Creek, Mrs. Riddle received in some way a severe cut across her forehead from an Indian's knife - sent her little son with her, then about 8 years old, to get some ginson root for her - and had not proceed far when some Indian, finding out his errand whipped him for it. He was then out of sight of his mother - and very soon hearing the report of a rifle near where he left her, and seeing no more, he painfully suspected that his dear mother was killed - for they had already tomahawked such of the prisoners as lagged by the way before crossing the Ohio. Young as he was, the little lad knew something of the Indians reared as had been chiefly among them, and in constant fear and dread of them. He was taken to Piqua on the Big Miami - and there had his ears stilled around the run, washed from head to foot, and formerly adopted into the nation. The last of the ceremony was pass through a double row of Indians, squaws and children - not to run the gauntlet - when a squaw took him by the arm and led him out of the line. It was soon explained to him, that she was a widow and had a boy about his own age, and proposed becoming his mother.

Young Riddle said he wanted to go and live with his own mother if she were living. The squaw then suggested to him, how he would like to live with her if his natural mother were not alive. Still he held off giving consent. Then she changed the mode of inquiry, and asked if he wouldn't like to live with her as well as with any of the squaws he saw there. Yes, was the reply, she took him home, treated

him kindly, grew up and hunted - the then boy, her own son, dying in the mean time -with the meat he furnished, and the little field of corn they made, supplied their wants. He grew to manhood, and became contented; and when the armies of the white subsequently invaded the Indian country he felt, conscientiously felt the wrong and inquiry - sided very naturally with the Indians in opposing the whites.

[Stephen Ruddell] was interpreter for the Shawnees at Waynes Treaty - there for the first time learned that his mother was living - proposed to his Indian mother to go to Kentucky and live with his own mother - his Indian mother didn't like the idea - then, having an affection for her, he proposed taking her along with him and living with him among the whites. This she declined - consented that she should go and see his mother - knowing how much more his natural mother must feel for him, when his adopted one could scarcely hear to part with him sufficiently long for even that. He went, spent several weeks there, began to think after all the white lived best - and moreover, he had always made up his mind not to marry among the Indians, and now thought pleasant it would be to get himself a white wife and settle down.

[Stephen] returned to the Shawnees country - told his Indian mother of his determination - assisted in removing her to the westward to some friends, she died on the way. Riddle returned to Kentucky somewhere on Licking, was frequently engaged as interpreter by government during the war of 1812, in councils with the Shawnee Indians, all of whom save, 30 under Tecumseh's influence, sided with the United States. Was selected to a head a party of them taken into service. Subsequently became a "new light" preacher - and is probably yet living in Kentucky - His father was taken to Detroit - there complained of the breaking of the capitulation - Bird was tried, but acquitted on the ground that he could not control the Indians. What a event is that to engage such allies!

N.B. These facts were communicated to Governor Morrow by Riddle himself, when Gov. Morrow with Governors Meigs and Wirthinton held a council to dissuade the Indians from taking part in the war. *Draper Manuscript Collection, Kentucky Papers, 8CC:23.*

The Pennsylvania Gazette

August 13, 1783

PHILADELPHIA, August 13.

Captain Dalton, Superintendent of Indian affairs for the United State, arrived here last week from Canada, which he left about a month since, in company with 200 Americans, who are at length happily liberated from a cruel captivity with the savages. But he is sorry to inform us that there are a number of unfortunate fellow sufferers, who are still retained as prisoners by the Indians. The sufferings of Captain Dalton and his lady have been very great, both having been many years prisoners with the enemy, and forced to endure the most cruel treatment from their captors. For the satisfaction of their friends, Captain Dalton has given a list of the unhappy people who are confined chiefly among the six nations, viz. the Shawanese, Delaware, Munseys, Ouiactenaws, Putawawtawmaws, &c. &c.

The List is as follows:

James Grey, Jonathan Gold, James Stuart, George Fulks, Elizabeth Fulks, Mrs. Brown and three children, Jonathan Long, Mary Long, Barbara McFall, John McFall, Lucy Linn, Hugh Stear, Thomas Williams, Katy Dundas, John Jones, Mary Jones, Mary McLee, Susy McLee, Ann McLee, Abraham Whiteker, Kenmit Morris, Hannah Burk, William Morgan, James Rogers, Jonathan Trimble, William Hitchkok, Edmund Keer, Sarah Wilson, Nicholas Wilson, Nicholas Oatman, Margaret Sheerer, John Turney, Joseph Wilson, William Bangle, John Barton, Adam Shoemaker, John Dumford, Ambrose White, Jonathan Troy, Adam Brown, Francis Colaway, James Barley, Abraham Coone, Mary Emerick, Silvester Ash, George Ash, Henry Ash, Abraham Ash, Isaac Ash, Jesse Bland, Betsey Poke, Isaac Davis, Mary Denton, George Lech, Valentine Lawrence, Jonathan Hicks, Martin Coile, Barbury Coile, Cristin Coile, Barbury Coile, Margaret Baker, Betsey McCormick, James Cooper, Benjamin Brooks, Polly Francis, Betsey Plumer, Nancy Dalton, Mary Kennedy and two children, Peggy Pauland, Katy Sicks, Katy Etelmaw, David Etelmaw, Daniel Etelmaw, Elizabeth Fisher, Frederick Fisher, George Mawfit, Henry

Calaway, Polly Whiteman and her sister, Barbary Burger, Jonathan Calaway, Jones Hoy, Peggy Paulin, Charles McLane, Timothy Dormin and his wife, Jonathan Wilson, Jonathan Hanna, Rachel McKutchy, Darkey Miller, Nancy Martin, James McSwine, Becky Lee, Sally Lee, Thomas Lee, Jonathan Delong, James Crawford, Betsey McCaumin and son, James Cain, ---- Miller, ---- Whitts, -- --- Calaway, ---- Ward, Samuel Davis, Isaac Riddle and two brothers, Elizabeth Turner, Charles Mitchell, Polly Mitchell, Sally Whitenire, Andrew Armstrong and his sister, Lasley Malone, Robert Nealie, Elijah Mathews, Stephen Parish, James Davison, Henry Licters, Jacob Vingordor, Alexander Thomson, Jonathan Reddock, William Benjamin, Robert Cruders, Elijah Hunt, Adam Templeman, Jonathan Shull, ---- Pankburn, Samuel Proctor, Joseph Newman, Zephar Hawkins, Rudolph House and his brother, Nelly Smith, Katy Rinkle, Betsey Doherty, Polly McCurdy, Mrs. Hersler and four children, Joseph Smith, David Price, Kijah Patterson.

Captain Dalton says, that on their way home, through Canada, they experienced the most polite treatment from the English officers, but were more than once abused by different parties of those wretches who had fled to Canada from the back parts of the United States, to avoid the vengeance of their countrymen, for the many horrid murders and burnings committed by them in conjunction with the English and Indians.

As Captain Dalton has been among the savages for many years, has now given his friends and the public an estimation of the different savage nations they had to encounter with, the number of warriors annexed to each nation that were employed by the British, and have stained

their tomahawks with the blood of Americans, viz.

Chactaws, 6008
Oneidas, 160
Chickisaws, 400
Tuskeroras, 200
Cherokees, 500
Onondagas, 300
Creeks, 700
Cayugas, 230
Frankishaws, 400
Jeneckaws, 400
Oniactinaws, 300
Suiz and Southuze, 1300
Kickapoos, 500
Putawawtawmaws, 400
Munseys, 150
Fulawain, 150
Delaware, 500
Muskulthe or Nation Shawanaws, 300
of Fire, 250
Mohickons, 60
Reinars or Foxes 300
Uchipweys, 3000
Puyon, 150
Ottawaws, 300
Sokkie, 350
Mowhawks, 300
Abbinokkie, on the
Oneidas, 150
St. Lawrence 200

8160Warriors 11690

A small vessel from one of the eastern ports arrived at Quebec a little time before Captain Dalton left it; but the Captain being abused for keeping the American colours flying, and not suffered to enter, he left the port without breaking bulk, notwithstanding the articles he had to dispose of were much in demand at Quebec, and he was offered a great price for them.



White prisoner being dressed in the Indian style.

Johann Leonhard Kratz

A Hessian Soldier's Incredible
Story of Hardship and Love

By Johannes Helmut Merz

On the 31st of May 1779 Leonhard Kratz for whatever reason decided, that he had enough of this prisoner life and escaped from the Albemarle barracks. On his own and alone, he made it over the Blue Mountain ridge to the Shenandoah valley. From now on Kratz had to depend on his own survival instinct in a wild, rough, and tough pioneer environment.

After Leonhard's escape from the barracks and his arrival in the Shenandoah valley, he met the Munger family, who were planning to pack up and seek new settlement in Kentucky.

The Munger's were an old German settler family, who had lived in the valley since long before the revolution, and with the family growing, needed more land.

Old William Munger had bought a 250 acres farm in 1771 on the Naked Creek, north of Staunton near the Page/Rockingham County line. He left this farm in trust to his sons David and John, and prepared to hitch up his wagons and move with the rest of the family to the new territory of Kentucky. He needed all the manpower he could get, and in Leonhard Kratz, the escaped soldier, he found a strong and capable man.

This is how Mary Burch's Family Record of 1880 described the situation:

"The years 1779 and 1780 were distinguished by the vast number of emigrants who crowded to Kentucky for the purpose of settling and availing themselves of the benefits of the land law by locating land warrants. Among the numerous bands which left Virginia for the Lone Land, was one in which there was a family named Munger, another Toofelmeyer, and the 'paroled' soldier Leonhard Kratz, he by his acquaintance with the country acting as a guide to the party. Indian hostility was proportionally active, and both movers and settlers were in great danger. In the Munger family was a daughter named Mary. It is not known whether any acquaintance existed between the two previous to leaving Virginia or not, be that as it may, somewhere on the journey young Leonhard proposed to Mary, and she accepted happily his proposal.

The next step was to obtain parental sanction. This consent, upon application, was most positively refused, their chief

objection, was his being a soldier from a far off land, a stranger. This, of course, was quite a serious state of affairs to the lovers, and something desperate had to be done.

He waited till the company were pretty well advanced into the wilderness, and under his guidance, when he suddenly brought them to a halt by declaring he would go no further with them as a guide, unless they consented to his marriage with their daughter. So, after due deliberation, they came to the conclusion that "discretion was the better part", and consented. The marriage ceremony, according to the requirements of the times, was performed in the open air by the side of the wagons that contained their all, as soon as a properly authorized person was found."

This is a very romantic story indeed, and has been told time and again to Leonhard and Mary's grand- and great-grandchildren, I am sure, but a few questions did come up, which needed to be investigated and clarified. With the help of some other sources of information I have reconstructed as it really must have happened.

Leonhard Kratz was a stranger in this country, he did not know it at all. Therefore, he had neither the experience nor the knowledge to serve as a guide to lead new settlers from the Shenandoah valley to Kentucky. He also had very little experience as an Indian fighter, except that he knew how to handle a rifle and how to shoot. The other more important fact was, that old German settler families like the Munger's would not have trusted their lives and all their worldly possessions to a "soldier from a far off land," which was their feelings toward Leonhard. But the Munger's needed him for one good reason alone, he was a strong man and had a strong back, and that was his most appreciated asset.

Let me at this point introduce Captain Isaac Ruddle of the Virginia Militia from the Shenandoah valley. Already back in 1777 he and his brother George had gone to Kentucky to check out the land and to stake his land claim. Each of them staked out 1,400 acres of virgin land in the area which was later known as Bourbon County.

Captain Ruddle went back to Virginia and received a commission to raise a company of volunteers, and in 1779 began to assemble a wagon train for the move to Kentucky. The Munger's, their son-in-law Martin Toffelmeyer with his wife and family, and Leonhard Kratz joined up with the wagon train, and Captain Ruddle led them to Kentucky. With the love affair developing between Mary and Leonhard, the Captain most likely was the man with authority to perform the wedding ceremony at the side of the wagons in the open air. An actual wedding certificate was in all probability never made out, and if, it was never found.

Captain Ruddle's wagon train reached the Licking river in Kentucky, and the whole group settled in or near a fort which had been abandoned three years earlier by the pioneer Hinkson because of Indian trouble. Here in this fort Ruddle established what is known in later history as the Ruddle's Fort.

He enlarged and fortified it, making it one of the strongest forts in the Kentucky wilderness, capable of accommodating from two to three hundred people. His garrison was composed of forty-nine men, and on his list were Charles Munger Sr., William Munger Jr., Martin Tuffleman (Toffelmeyer), and Leonard Croft (Kratz).

It is not quite clear whether this list contained just the names of settlers at the fort, or whether it was a list of men of Ruddle's Virginia militia company, in which case they would have had to take an oath of allegiance and to swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America. If this was indeed the case, it would explain the rather harsh treatment these men received later at the hands of the British and the Indians. It would also mean that the Hessian soldier Leonhard Kratz broke his oath to his Prince and to King George III.

The spring following the hard winter of 1779 was unusually fine, and the inhabitants of Ruddle's Fort saw their cattle grow fat on the luscious bluegrass, and the rich soil gave promise of bounteous crops. Everywhere there was an atmosphere of peace and prosperity and general well being. There was no premonition of the tragedy that awaited them. That's how later a Kentucky historian had described the scene.

(The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, Vol.54, No.189, October 1956 - "Destruction of Ruddle's and Martin's forts in the Revolutionary War. Pages 302-304, by Maude Ward Lafferty.)

The war with Great Britain was still going on. From the British strong point of Detroit at the far west end of Lake Erie, a force of 200 English soldiers and Canadian volunteers under the command of Captain Henry Bird of His Majesty's 8th Regiment of Foot, plus some 600 Indians led by Simon Girty, swooped down upon the unsuspecting new settlements of Kentucky. The intent of the mission was to destroy the settlements, to discourage the flow of settlers coming west, and to prevent the area from becoming an agricultural supply base for the Colonial army.

The invading force, equipped with some six pound cannons, on the 22 June 1780 attacked Ruddle's Fort and forced Captain Ruddle to surrender, after Captain Bird promised that no harm would come to them. The same fate awaited the Martin's Fort nearby. Despite Bird's promises, the Indians were hard to control, they killed and scalped some of the inhabitants, and destroyed all the livestock and food supplies. Most of the settlers were taken prisoner. In all this confusion and tragedy Mary Kratz gave birth to her first child. It was not a good time for such an event.

Leonard and Mary were separated from each other. Mary was taken with the other women. They traveled by water in canoes, going north by day, and resting on the river's shore by night. Several nights later, while preparing to camp, Mary accidentally fell and struck her baby's head against a tree, it died instantly. Mary hollowed out a grave with her bare hands and buried her first-born child.

The captive men were herded north to Detroit on a strenuous overland march, burdened with whatever possessions the Indians saw fit to appropriate as spoils of war. Leonhard told the story himself many times in later life, that he was loaded down with a huge copper kettle, extending over his head and secured to his back. The weight of the kettle scraped into his flesh, causing infected wounds, which left him with scars for the

remainder of his life. Starvation almost ended his sufferings. An Indian squaw named Mona du Quatte is said to have secretly provided him with food. Years afterwards he was able to repay her kindness by providing care in her old age, whenever she visited his homestead on Lake Erie.

On 4 August 1780, Major Arent S. DePeyster, British commander at Detroit, wrote to Lt. Col. Mason Bolton:

"Captain Bird arrived here this morning with about one hundred and fifty prisoners, mostly Germans who speak English. The remainder coming -- for in spite of all his endeavors to prevent it, the Indians broke into their forts and seized many -- the whole will amount to about three hundred and fifty. Their chief desire is to remain and settle at this place as you will see by the enclosed letter"

The enclosure, written by Captain Henry Bird on 24 July 1780, says in part:

"..... many of the prisoners would not take the oath to the (American) Congress. I do not believe we have more than two families who are really rebels. The rest are desirous of being settled in Detroit with some land. They fled, they say, from persecution and declare if the Government will assist them to get them on foot as farmers, they will, as Militia, faithfully defend the country that affords them protection."

After arrival of the male prisoners, the Indians turned them over to the Detroit landowners Alexander and William Macomb, sons of John Macomb from Albany, N.Y. John Macomb had purchased land from the Potawatomi Indians on 6 July 1776, which included several islands in the Detroit river, among which were Hog Island, later renamed Belle Island, and Grosse Ile. The same year Lt. Governor Henry Hamilton granted William Macomb permission to occupy Grosse Ile. In 1780 the original deed was acknowledged as a "volunteer act of the chiefs of the Potawatomi Nation" before Arent S. DePeyster, the newly appointed commander at Detroit.

The Macombs, who maintained friendly relations with the Indians by trading with them, are claimed to have

"bought" the prisoners. There is no evidence at all that such a deal has taken place. The Indians may have received some presents in appreciation of bringing the prisoners safely to Detroit.

Once released at Detroit, Leonhard Kratz kept watching for the arrival of the women down at the boat docks along the river. Finally, Mary arrived. He did not recognize her until she called out his name. He took her into his arms and carried her to camp quarters, where she could be cared for. The joy of their reunion was saddened by the story of the loss of the baby.

With no earthly possessions but their mutual love and devotion, Leonhard and Mary accepted the Macomb's offer to farm for them on Hog Island. In 1781 a son Peter was born, named in honour of Leonhard's father. The Munger and Tofflemeyer families settled nearby.

Captain Isaac Ruddell and his wife remained prisoners of the British until after the war. They returned to Bourbon

County, Kentucky, in 1784. In 1788 Ruddell built a gristmill near his new home on a branch of the Licking river. He died about 1808 and is buried in the old Presbyterian graveyard, located outside Ruddell's Mills.

There is a plaque standing just at the crossroads a little north of the cemetery, erected by the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

RUDELLE'S MILLS

Near his home Isaac Ruddell built a gristmill in 1788 on the north side of Hinkson bridge, and a sawmill in 1795 to be operated by his son Abram. A 720-spindle cotton mill erected 500 feet west by Thomas and Hugh Brent in 1828, burned 1836. Soon rebuilt by Abram Spears, it also spun wool until about 1855. Ruddell gave land for Stoner Mouth Church and cemetery.

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Johannes "John" Helmut Merz, a native of Radolfzell/Baden, Germany, is the author of several books on Hessian soldiers in the American Revolutionary War. His latest book is *The Hessians of Upper Canada*.

For more information on Hessian soldiers visit Johannes' website at:
<http://www.cgocable.net/~hessian/index.html>

**If you have a story or record on someone who lived at
Ruddell's or Martin's Stations please submit it for a future
issue of the Ruddlesforter.**

Ruddlesfort-1@rootsweb.com

Captain John Dunkin of Elk Garden

By Emory L. Hamilton

Several years ago the writer was most fortunate in procuring a copy of the diary of Samuel Harvey Laughlin, born in 1799, and a grandson of Captain John Dunkin. The diary was written in 1845 by Laughlin, a well-educated man, from details related by his mother and grandparents who were prisoners of the British in Canada during the Revolutionary war. The contents of this paper are the unedited words of James H. Laughlin, and a copy of the diary is filed in the Southwest Virginia Historical Society Archives at Clinch Valley College, Wise, Va.

Captain John Dunkin (1743-1818), who settled in Elk Garden about 1769, was an only son of Thomas Dunkin. Earlier in life, this Thomas Dunkin had immigrated from Scotland to Ireland, where he later married Elizabeth Alexander (born about 1710), also of Scottish descent. About 1740 he emigrated to Pennsylvania, eventually settling in Lancaster County where he died in 1760, leaving a wife, one son, and four daughters.

Captain John Dunkin, subject of this sketch, married Eleanor Sharp, daughter of John Sharp, and sister of John, Jr., Thomas, and Benjamin Sharp. The latter was a King's Mountain soldier. The Sharp family were also immigrants from Pennsylvania, who settled near Wallace, in Washington County, Virginia, before moving on to Kentucky and farther westward. Captain Dunkin died on Spring Creek in Washington County, Virginia, in 1818. His wife Eleanor had died in 1816.

The sisters of Captain John Dunkin were Elizabeth, who married Samuel Porter and lived at Castlewood, in Russell County, Virginia. Martha married Solomon Litton and lived at Elk Garden, Russell County. Mary Jane married James Laughlin, son of John and Mary Price Laughlin, and lived in Washington County, Virginia. There was a younger sister (name unknown) who married a Mr. Robinson in Russell County, Virginia, and later returned to Pennsylvania.

By 1769 young John Dunkin, with his mother, his wife and children, three of whom were born before leaving Pennsylvania, had reached Elk Garden, where he was made first a Sergeant, and later a Captain in the frontier militia of Washington County, and was very active in protecting the frontier against Indian

forays from 1774 to 1778. When Powell Valley was evacuated in 1776 because of the Cherokee War, he led a party of settlers and militia into the valley and guarded the settlers while they brought out their personal property, which they had been unable to do because of the sudden evacuation of the valley.

Samuel Harvey Laughlin states:

"On one occasion while he (Capt. Dunkin) lived on the Clinch, a predatory band of Indians came into the settlement and murdered a man named Bush and his wife, and took their children, three daughters and a son, prisoner. The son was nearly grown. Captain Dunkin with a few men followed the trail and, by hard marching, overtook them, killed three of the Indians, and rescued the prisoners without losing a man.

"Further to the northwest where Powell Valley had begun to be settled, in what is now Lee County, Virginia, the Indians were in the habit of murdering travellers. Before settlement had become permanent, the great buffalo trace to Kentucky, or that part of Virginia forming Kentucky - by way of Cumberland Gap, from 1766 to 1775 was a route for hunters and adventurous explorers on whom numerous murders and robberies were committed by various tribes of Indians, but mostly by Cherokee and Shawnee. Captain Dunkin and his little faithful band frequently went out and remained for different periods on tours of duty in protecting the settlers of this valley and on the road.

"On one of these tours, he and his company fell in with a band of Indians whom they instantly attacked, killing four and wounding a fifth. They followed the wounded Indian some distance to a place where he had entered a cave. Captain Joseph Martin (builder of Martin's Station in Lee Co., VA) was along with other Rangers, having met Capt. Dunkin, and was with him when it was agreed between the two that while others kept guard outside, they would enter the cave and take the Indian or kill him.

"They entered each with a blazing torch in one hand and a pistol in the other, cocked and primed. After going in sixty or seventy yards, Captain Dunkin saw the Indian's eyes shining in the distance and taking deliberate aim, not knowing but that the Indian had a gun, and supposing

others to be with him, was so lucky as to shoot him through the head.

"In the year 1777 he went to Kentucky, raised corn, and made improvements by raising a cabin in the forks between Hingstons and Stoners Forks of Licking River. After thus preparing in Kentucky in 1777 and 1778 he moved his family, including his aged mother, and two sisters and their husbands, Samuel Porter and Solomon Litton, out from the Clinch to Kentucky in 1779. I say he removed them, for besides being the head of his family, he was the commander and leader of the immigrants, though Porter and Litton, and others who went along, were men of enterprise and good soldiers and woodsmen. These two (Porter and Litton) had farms begun also by improvements near Martin's Station. Martin's Station was on Stoner's River (or fork of Licking) five miles above its confluence with Hingston or Licking River. Ruddle's Station (pronounced Riddle's) was three miles below the junction or forks, consequently the forts were eight miles apart.

"The winter of 1779 and 1780 was unusually severe and is remembered in the history of the time, and traditionally as the "hard winter." The rivers and the streams were all frozen - cattle and domestic animals died by the hundreds and thousands, as doubtless did the wild game, Wild meat, when it could be procured by the border settlers, was very poor, and the corn and grain were early consumed, and the people put to great straits to procure subsistence of any sort, however common or coarse. Settlers were reduced to the very point of starvation, so much so that they were compelled to live on the most unwholesome meats without bread.

"Many families traveling out to Kentucky by way of Cumberland Gap and the Wilderness road were compelled to encamp, erect huts and such other shelter as they could obtain, and subsist on the dead carcasses of their cattle, sheep, etc. as died from the effects of the weather and want.

"When the spring of 1781 was ushered in there was an unusual bustle among the new settlers of Kentucky. They had the finest land in the world to cultivate, much of it easily cleared so as to fit it with corn crops, potatoes, etc. The previous winter

had admonished them of the necessity of making as much provisions for the next winter as possible. In the spring there seemed to be but little danger from the Indians. In the vicinity of the forts, the planters pitched or planted large crops and everything seemed to smile and promise future prosperity. They seemed to be removed from the constant dangers and troubles with the Revolutionary War, still in progress, brought to the neighborhood of their brethren in all the country east of the mountains.

"Early the crops of corn began to ripen and heaven seemed to be suspending the cornucopia over the famished land. There was a smile on every man's countenance, as he looked out upon the luminescence of the growing Indian corn. There was happiness and security in the forest. Happiness there really was, and security there seemed to be where they all lived, each fort like a great family. While living there in the snug and fancied security, they sang their domestic tedeums around blazing wood fires. While this happy sylvan state of things existed upon the fair frontier Colonel Byrd was busily employed at Detroit, plotting their destruction in combination with the northern nations of Indians in alliance with Great Britain in our Revolutionary War, a conspiracy against the peace and happiness of these unoffending frontier settlers which was soon to turn all their rejoicing and supposed security into a scene of sorrow and mourning.

"On or about the first of June, 1780, Colonel Byrd, a British officer, collected a body of about 600 Canadians and Indians at or near Detroit, and after marching by land to the Great Miami where it was navigable, they took canoes, boats, priogues, etc., and floated down the river to the Ohio. They rowed up the latter river to the mouth of Licking River, opposite to where Cincinnati now stands, and on the banks of which at its mouth now stands the thriving town of Newport and Covington; thence up the Licking River to the north fork of that river, a short distance below Ruddle's Station and thence by land. On the 22nd of June they appeared suddenly before Ruddle's Station as if they had fallen from the clouds or rose out of the ground by enchantment. The people hastily closed their gates and began to prepare for defense, but the show

of artillery and the overwhelming number of the enemy appalled the stout hearts. Therefore they surrendered on pledges of personal safety from the Indians, but the whole of their property was given up to the plunder and rapine of the savages. After the fort was sacked, and the march was commenced, many prisoners were forced to carry the spoils on their backs for their captors. Every kind of property was taken.

"Hearing the roar of artillery at Martin's Station which greatly surprised the people, two runners, a man named McGuire, and Thomas Berry, a relation of my grandfather, were dispatched to ascertain what was the matter at Ruddle's Fort. They were met on the way by the enemy, and on attempting to retreat were fired on. McGuire's horse was killed and he was taken prisoner. Berry, escaped back to the fort.

"On the next day (June 23, 1780) the enemy appeared before the fort and summoned them to surrender. Two hours were given these brave men in Martin's Station to consider - and they were notified if they did not surrender that the Indians would be let loose upon them to deal with as they pleased. They surrendered without firing a gun. (Withers in his History of Border Wars, says that Colonel Byrd took pain and had to exert all his authority to save the prisoners from slaughter.)

"The prisoners taken at Martin's were united with the prisoners from Ruddle's. There was understood to be an agreement between the British and Indians that the prisoners taken at Ruddle's should belong to the Indians, and those at Martin's to the British. Let this be as it may; according to Marshall, Butler, Withers, and other historians of these times the hole of the property of the Americans, including their Negroes, was given to the Indians.

"My grandfather Dunkin likely had ten or twelve Negroes, and a fine personal property in stock and furniture, etc., of which he was altogether plundered. After the treaty of Greenville, he got back an old African woman named Dinnah, and a boy. This robbery and captivity reduced my grandfather to poverty.

"The prisoners were all taken down the Licking River, by the route which the British had ascended to the Ohio, down that river to the mouth of the Great

Miami, up that river as far as navigable, and thence to Detroit, and then to Montreal. My grandfather and my mother who was old enough to remember, often described to me the sight of the falls of the Niagara, as they passed round by a portage on their way to Detroit. In recounting these adventures to me and my brothers, my mother used to dwell upon the hardships of the whole journey from Kentucky. When the march started, my grandfather carried one of his children. All packed what few clothes were allowed them. She said the British treated them humanely. The Indians who had the Ruddle's Fort prisoners sold most all of them to the British for trifles. The British wanted them to exchange for their own prisoners, then in possession of our armies in the colonies.

"I do not know, nor do I remember from the relations of my grandfather, or from the statements of my mother or her older sister, Aunt Betty Laughlin (wife of James Laughlin), whether all the prisoners were carried on to Montreal. My grandfather was, however, with his family, and a letter from Uncle Benjamin Sharp gives the reason why he was imprisoned in jail at that place. His eldest son, John Dunkin, Jr., made his escape from the British at Montreal, and his father who was known to have been an officer of standing, was suspected of having aided his son to escape to carry communications across the wilderness through New York to General Washington's army, the headquarters being then perhaps in Pennsylvania. John Dunkin, Jr. reported personally to General Washington, by whom he was well provided for until his father and family were exchanged and met him in Pennsylvania on their return home, they having come through western New York and by Philadelphia, through Pennsylvania and Maryland and to that part of Washington County in western Virginia where, or nearly where he had moved from when he went to Kentucky, and there he continued to live for the rest of his life.

"After his return he never went back to Kentucky to look after his land and improvements, and thereby lost a "head right" to one of the best tracts of land on Licking River.

"My great grandmother, the mother of my grandfather Dunkin, came from Pennsylvania with him, removed to Kentucky with him, was a prisoner with him in Canada, and returned to Holston with him, being seventy when captured, and lived many years after their return.

"On return from Canada the prisoners came by way of Lake Champlain, by Saratoga, down the Hudson by water and across New Jersey to Philadelphia. My mother has often told me of the astonishing scenes of rejoicing in Philadelphia at the final achievement of our national independence as they passed through that city, and of the kindness everywhere of the people to them on their journey.

"On the march to Canada and at Detroit and Montreal, my grandfather often saw among the Indians, and associating with the British officers of rank the renegade and incarnate devil, Simon Girty. This demon in human shape dealt in the scalps of American men, women and children, bought and paid for by the British authorities. Girty's influence among the Indians was very great. In history his name descends embalmed in the execrations of all mankind.

"My grandfather Dunkin, ever after I knew him, was a taciturn, serious, and rather melancholy man. He was a large stout man, and in his younger days, and until his spirit was broken and his health impaired by his Canadian captivity, and the loss of his property, had been a man of great vigor of mind and body, and fond of hazardous and arduous adventure."

Historical Summary:

The first mention of John Dunkin is found in an old Fincastle County Court record for May 5, 1773, when he was appointed on a road commission to "view" a road from the Townhouse (Chilhowie, VA) to Castlewood. Then on January 29, 1777 he was recommended by the court of newly formed Washington County, Virginia, as a member of the Commission of Peace, serving on that body through November, 1778. He was recommended by the court of Washington County for a Captain of Militia on February 26, 1777, although he had long been in the frontier militia for we find him as a Sergeant in command of Glade Hollow Fort when it was first garrisoned in 1774.

At a court held for Washington County, Virginia, on the 20th of March, 1781, there is entered this interesting order:

"On motion of James Litton (brother of Solomon) and James Laughlin, and by consent and order of the Court they are appointed guardians of the estates of Captain John Dunkin and Solomon Litton, prisoners of the enemy in Canada, and to use all legal methods for saving and securing the said estates, whereupon they, together with William Davidson and John Vance entered into and acknowledged their bonds for eight thousand pounds for the faithful performance of the same."

After returning from captivity Captain Dunkin went to live on Spring Creek near Abingdon, Va. Solomon Litton returned to his old home at Elk Garden, and Samuel Porter to Temple Hill, Castlewood, VA, but the latter was not returning to the peace he probably anticipated. Shortly after his return Samuel Porter was charged by Col. Arthur Campbell for Courts martial on charges of treason while a prisoner in Canada.

Campbell's reasons for charges of treason seem vague and obscure and many have been groundless, for none other than that great patriot General William Russell very indignantly interceded to the Governor of Virginia on behalf of Porter, who was his closest neighbor. To history buffs the record of this charge found in the Calendar of Virginia State Papers should make an interesting study.

From: Historical Sketches, Volume 10, 1976, pages 22-28, The Historical Society of Southwest Virginia.



These are to Certify that Capt^m James Simrell for
Colonel Joseph Holms, and my self Settled the Dif
ferent Rations for Prisoners of the Cananda
Prisoners Now Laying in the Borough of Winchester
from the Twenty Eight day of December One thousand
and Seven hundred and Eighty two, Untill the Twenty
fifth day this Inst (Feb'y) and there Appears by they
Several Provision Vouchers signed by my self in behalf
of the Whole Two thousand One hundred and sixteen
Rations each ration Consist of One pound flour
One pound of Beef One Gill Whiskey and the pro
portional Quantity of Soap and Candles. Given under
my hand this 25th day of February 1783

John Mahan
for the whole

From Your Editor . . .

Ruddlesforters,

I would like to first welcome all the new members to the Ruddell and Martin Stations Historical Association. This is your association and your newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to present all available articles, stories, legends and records of the people who lived and died at Ruddell's and Martin's Stations during the Revolutionary War.

I invite any interested person to submit whatever they feel would benefit the association and interested researchers. Our ancestors lived through some trying times and their story deserves to be told. Lets all pitch in and make this possible. We hope to hear from you soon and don't forget to attend the 220th anniversary reunion next year.

Sincerely,



Jim Sellars
Editor

In the Next Issue of *The Ruddlesforter* . . .

- News from the 1999 reunion
- More from the Draper Manuscripts
- Revolutionary War Pensions
- Newspapers from the Past
- Daniel Trabue's Narrative
- And More!

*Send in Your Stories or
Records!*

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