

## Kentucky Secretary of State

Website: <http://www.sos.ky.gov/>

### Kentucky Land Office

The Kentucky Secretary of State's Land Office is the repository for all records pertaining to patents issued within the Kentucky boundary, including patents issued by the state of Virginia prior to Kentucky's statehood in 1792.

In Kentucky, there are four steps involved in land patenting: 1. The Warrant (or Warrants) authorizing the survey; 2. The Entry reserving the land for patenting; 3. The field Survey; and 4. The Governor's Grant finalizing the patent. No title is conveyed until the Grant is issued.

Website: [www.sos.ky.gov/land/](http://www.sos.ky.gov/land/)

### Military Registers & Land Records

Under the terms of the Proclamation of 1763, issued by England's King George III, soldiers who had served in the French & Indian War (1754-1763) were paid with bounty land warrants. The warrants were used to obtain land patents; the rank of the soldier determined the acreage awarded by the warrant. The same principle of "land for military service" was used to pay soldiers of the Revolutionary War. Each colony determined the acreage per rank, the requisite duration of service, and the location of their respective Military District. The Military District for Virginia was located in **southwestern Kentucky** and **south central Ohio**. This website includes information regarding Military Warrants issued to Virginia veterans prior to 1792 and all Kentucky patents authorized by those warrants.

### Land Allotment

Each state decided the veteran's land allotment. Legislation by the Virginia General Assembly & research by Bockstruck indicates Virginia paid the following bounties for service in the Revolutionary War:

Sailor who served his 3 yr enlistment or to the end of the war -- **100 acres**

Soldier who served his 3 yr enlistment or to the end of the war -- **100 acres**

Noncommissioned officer who enlisted & served his 3 yr enlistment -- **200 acres**

Sailor who served throughout the war -- **400 acres**

Soldier who served throughout the war -- **400 acres**

Noncommissioned officer who served throughout the war -- **400 acres**

Subaltern-Cornet -- **2000 to 2666 acres**

Subaltern-Ensign -- **2000 to 2666 acres**

Subaltern-Lieutenant -- **2000 to 2666 acres**

Surgeon's Mate -- **2666 to 8000 acres**

Surgeon -- **2666 to 8000 acres**

Chaplain -- **2666 to 8000 acres**

Captain -- **3000 to 4666 acres**

Major -- **4000 to 5333 acres**

Lt. Colonel -- **4500 to 6666 acres**

Colonel -- **5000 to 8888 acres**

Brigadier General -- **10,000 acres +**

Major General -- **15,000 to 17,500 acres**

And where any officer, soldier, or sailor shall have fallen or died in the service, his heirs or legal representatives shall be entitled to, and receive the same quantity of land as would have been due to such officer, soldier or sailor respectively, had he been living.

### **Kentucky Military District**

Before June 1, 1792, Kentucky was a part of Virginia. A Resolution to the Virginia General Assembly dated December 19, 1778, proposed the location of the Military District as follows: "That it is the opinion of this committee, that a certain tract of country to be bounded by the Green river and a southeast course from the head thereof to the Cumberland mountains, with the said mountains to the Carolina line, with the Carolina line to the Cherokee or Tennessee river, with the said river to the Ohio river, and with the Ohio river to the said Green river, ought to be reserved for supplying the officers and soldiers in the Virginia line with the respective proportions of land which have been or may be assigned to them by the general assembly, saving and reserving the land granted to Richard Henderson and company, and their legal rights to such persons as have heretofore actually located lands and settled thereon within the bounds aforesaid." The Virginia Land Law of May 3, 1779, confirmed the location proposed in the resolution.

After separating from Virginia, the Kentucky General Assembly opened the military district to settlers meeting age and residency requirements. Although the Act of December 21, 1795 was amended several times, the premise was the same—military claims needed to be filed or they would be void. The 1795 law stated lands not claimed by the military before January 1796, faced forfeiture to settlers filing under the South of Green River Series of patents.

### **Kentucky Military District Map**

**Website:** <http://www.sos.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/414AF781-A6FF-445A-976E-32E9AD384796/0/MilitaryDistrictsKY.pdf>

Not all Virginia veterans had used their Warrants before 1792. Virginia had reserved land in Ohio as part of a cession compromise with Congress. A portion of that area was deemed the Virginia Military District.

### **Virginia Military District in Ohio**

The district lands are found in 23 counties from the Ohio River northward, between the Scioto and Little Miami Rivers, as far as 141 miles inland. Warrants used in the Kentucky Military District end with #4627. If research indicates a veteran received a higher number, it was most surely used in Ohio. We have also found earlier numbers might have been used in both states. If the "Authorized" field in our Revolutionary War Warrants Database is blank, we suggest you contact the Ohio Historical Society, 1982 Velma Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211 to research warrant usage. By Acts of Congress dated May 30, 1830, and August 31, 1852, Virginia military warrants could be exchanged for land scrip. Land scrip could be used to acquire any public lands open for entry at private sale, according to research on the Western Reserve. For further information, visit this website: <http://www.rootsweb.com> Click on the Ohio GenWeb Project then "Ohio Lands".

### **Revolutionary War Database**

This database indexes 4,748 bounty land warrants issued by Virginia to veterans of the Revolutionary War. Warrants, the first step in land patenting, were given as payment for military services; the allotment was determined by the soldier's rank and time of service. Search by veteran name, warrant number, and immediate assignee.

**Website:** <http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/military/revwar/>

For the veteran's name, enter either the complete name or surname in the search box. The Warrant Number database indexes 4,748 Virginia Revolutionary Warrants. There are 121 duplicate numbers, therefore our warrants range in number from one to 4,627. Contact the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus for Virginia warrants with higher numbers than 4,627. To search by warrant number, key the entire four-digit number. Many Revolutionary War veterans sold their warrants. The Immediate Assignee database identifies individuals who purchased veterans' military warrants shortly after the warrants were issued. Heirs of deceased veterans may also be listed as the veteran's assignee. Search immediate assignees by complete name or surname. Format the complete name by first keying the assignee's surname then his given (first) name.

### West of Tennessee River Military Patents Database

The Jackson Purchase region of Kentucky was acquired under the October 19, 1818, land treaty between the United States and the Chickasaw Indian Nation. A number of Revolutionary War soldiers occupied the Jackson Purchase prior to the treaty. On December 26, 1820, the Kentucky General Assembly approved legislation for the "surveying of military claims west of the Tennessee River" and for the establishment of a town at Iron Banks. The 242 patents under this series were authorized by entries filed with the Military Surveyor prior to May 1, 1792

This database includes: information on entry, survey, & grant dates; the persons having the land surveyed & receiving the grant; watercourse/location with internal gazetteer; and members of the surveying team. There is also an internal link to the Revolutionary War Warrants Database. This database may also include scanned images of the Warrant(s) authorizing each survey, the Entries reserving land for patenting, the official Survey depicting each tract, and the Grant finalizing each patent. After the Grant is received, subsequent conveyances may be researched by contacting the appropriate county clerk or the Kentucky Department for Libraries & Archives in Frankfort.

Website: <http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/military/tnriver/>

### Non-Military Registers & Land Records

Under the Virginia Land Law of 1779, residents of the Kentucky District could purchase Certificates of Settlement and Preemption Warrants if they met certain residency requirements. Persons in Kentucky County **prior to January 1, 1778**, who had made an improvement and planted a crop of corn, were eligible for 400 acre Certificates of Settlement for the land they had improved. They could purchase an additional 1000 acres, adjoining the Settlement tract, under a Preemption Warrant.

Anyone in Kentucky County, Virginia, **after January 1, 1778 and before May 1779** (when the Land Law was written) was eligible for a 400 acre Preemption Warrant for the tract on which they had made an improvement and planted a corn crop.

A Land Commission was appointed to hear testimony from Kentucky County residents and their witnesses; the Commission then decided who qualified for Certificates of Settlement, 1000 acre Preemption Warrants and 400 acre Preemption Warrants. The Commission for the Kentucky District consisted of William Fleming, Edmund Lyne, James Barbour and Stephen Trigg. The Commission conducted their hearings in Harrodsburg, St. Asaph (Logan's Fort), Boonesborough, Bryants Station (near Lexington), and the Falls of Ohio (Louisville).

This database is indexed by Preemption Warrant number, the individual acquiring the Warrant & Certificate of Settlement, immediate assignees, and tract location. Microfilm of the Certificates of Settlement and authorizations for Preemption Warrants is available for research at the following facilities: Secretary of State's Land Office, Kentucky History Center and the Kentucky Department for Libraries & Archives (all in Frankfort), the Filson Club and the Sons of the American Revolution Library (both in Louisville), and the Library of Virginia (Richmond, Virginia.)

### Early Certificate of Settlement & Preemption Warrants in Kentucky County, Virginia

Website: <http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/nonmilitary/settlements/>

### Virginia Treasury Warrants

The May 1779 Land Laws passed by the Virginia General Assembly authorized the selling of Treasury Warrants to be used for patenting "waste and unappropriated land". After proof of payment was established, the Virginia Land Office provided a printed warrant specifying the quantity of land and the rights upon which it was due. No proof of prior military service or residency was requiring for purchasing a Treasury Warrant; the initial price was forty pounds for every hundred acres. Proceeds from the sale of the

Treasury Warrants were used "to create a sinking fund in aid of the annual taxes to discharge the public debt". Some Treasury Warrants were issued by special Acts or Resolutions of the Virginia General Assembly.

By declaring there were no limits on the number of Treasury Warrants that could be purchased, the Virginia General Assembly opened the door to land speculators and their agents. Multiple Treasury Warrants could authorize one single patent for thousands of acres.

This database includes all entries in the Virginia Treasury Warrants Register, Volumes 1 & II. Included are the names of persons purchasing Treasury Warrants, immediate assignees, acreage, cost of the warrant in pounds, shillings & pence, and the date the warrant was purchased. Treasury Warrant numbers range from 1 to 23082. Some warrant numbers were skipped; some warrant numbers were duplicated.

Under the terms of the May 1779 Land Law, no Treasury Warrant could be sold before October 15, 1779. On that date, our research indicates 1354 Treasury Warrants were issued. Treasury Warrant No. 1 was purchased by Leven Powell and assigned by Powell to Thomas Chinn. The Warrant allowed 1000 acres in one or more surveys; the cost of the Treasury Warrant was 400 pounds. Chinn used the Warrant to patent 1000 acres on Mill Creek, Harrison County, Kentucky. (Ref: Patent #3067, Old Kentucky Patent Series)

Treasury Warrants 2087 thru 2386 (300 in total, 560 acres each) were issued to Colonel George Rogers Clark for the purpose of recruiting his battalions in lieu of the bounty of \$750.00.

**Website:** <http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/nonmilitary/LandOfficeVTW/>

### **Virginia and Old Kentucky Patent Series**

Names in the drop-box listings are limited to recipients of the Grant (Grantees); names are not cross-referenced. To expand the search, we suggest researchers access the Kentucky Historical Society publications "Master Index: Virginia Surveys & Grants" and "Index to Old Kentucky Surveys & Grants." Use numbers in the "Original Survey Number" field in both publications to access patents on this database. Patents for which duplicate numbers were issued, such as 5079 are viewed as 5079#1 and 5079#2 in Historical Society publications. For this database, the numbers will be depicted as 5079.1 and 5079.2.

**Website:** <http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/nonmilitary/patentseries/vaandokpatents/Default.aspx>

### **Kentucky Land Patents-County Court Order Series**

The largest series of Kentucky Land Patents is the County Court Orders. These patents are authorized by warrants/orders purchased from the county court. Following the survey of the tract, the Governor issues a Grant finalizing the patent. This patent series was created in 1835 and remains in effect under the provisions of KRS 56.

**Website:** <http://apps.sos.ky.gov/land/nonmilitary/patentseries/cocourtorders/>

### **Reference Library**

Don't forget to check out these subjects under the Reference Library! (Subjects include online seminars, saddlebag notes, tax lists, gazetteer, glossary, maps, quick reference guides, county formation table, legislation, resources, links, Kentucky County officials, surveying, and measurements.)

**Website:** <http://sos.ky.gov/land/reference/>

Juvanne Martin, CG © Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
 The Research Network and Idaho Connections  
<http://www.researchnetwork.net/index.shtml>  
[Juvanne@earthlink.net](mailto:Juvanne@earthlink.net)