

## ISAAC ISRAEL JETT

(1759-1792)

Battles at St. Clair

Isaac Israel Jett is thought to have been born in Culpepper County in 1759 shortly before his father and mother (Stephen Jett (b. 1735) and Elizabeth Read (b. 1733)) left Culpepper County to live in Granville, North Carolina. In addition it is thought that Isaac Jett and his family may have come to Kentucky along with the migration of the Jett family from Granville to Kentucky in 1790 or 1791. The Jett family was a large family and one of Isaac's brothers was Stephen Jett Jr. who was born in 1775. Additional information regarding the family of Isaac is included in the Notes.

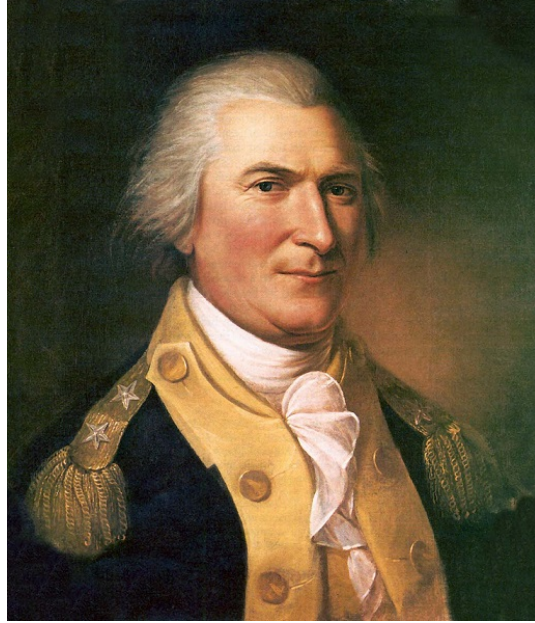
We suspect that Isaac and his family accompanied Stephen Jett Sr. and the rest of the Granville Jett's to Kentucky in late 1790. The emigration to Kentucky involved crossing from North Carolina back into Virginia and then progressing over the mountains and then taking flat boats.



Wilderness Trail from  
Holston River to Boonesborough, Ky

The danger from Indian attack was high in that there was significant resistance by the Indians to migration into Kentucky.

Indians made raids where they could all over Kentucky. The Kentucky Militia acted in concert with the U.S. Military in various battles against the Indians. General Arthur St. Clair who was both a general of the Army and Governor of the Northwest Territory was instructed to deal with the situation.



General Arthur St. Clair

On November 1792, St. Clair and his army including a contingent of Kentucky militia men encountered a large contingent of confederated Indian forces. Little Turtle led the Miami and Delaware forces.



Chief Little Turtle

Blue Jacket led the Shawnee contingent.



Chief Blue Jacket

Many of St. Clair's men were untrained and their provisions were both poor and defective as later investigations would bear out.

St. Clair had begun his campaign with about 2,000 men of which about 600 were militia. After desertions and illnesses St. Clair was left with just under 1500 men and 200 plus camp followers including wives, children and women of questionable repute. As the soldiers progressed through the Ohio wilderness the number dropped to about 1200 including camp followers. Early on the morning of November 4, a large scale battle began near the headwaters of the Wabash River. That battle is referred to under numerous names including St. Clair's Defeat, Battle of the Wabash, Battle of Wabash River and the Battle of a Thousand Slain. Unfortunately, St. Clair had not sent out scouts and so the attack was a surprise attack and bulwarks had not been set up the night before. The attack was disastrous with a number of fixed bayonet charges by the American forces being turned back by the Indians. Most agree that the Indian forces were better led than the American forces.

By the end of the battle of the 1000 individuals led into the battle only twenty-four escaped without harm. Captives from the battle were brutally tortured and killed. St. Clair himself, who suffered from gout, had three horses shot out from under him. Survivors were routed and fled to Ft. Jefferson a number of miles away.

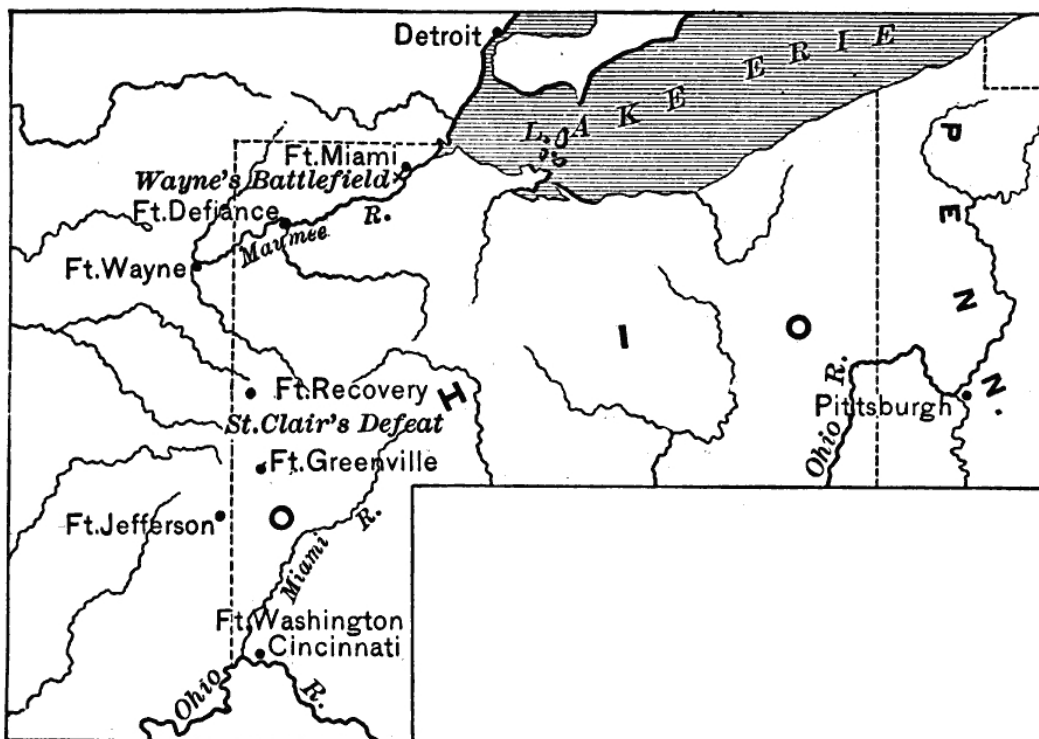
St. Clair's Defeat, is not well known in American history even though it was three times larger than Custer's Defeat by the Sioux at Little Big Horn. The U.S. Army at the time was small and this disaster wiped out about one quarter of the entire U.S. Army. Fifty two officers were involved and thirty-nine were killed. In short 88% of the officers were casualties. Six hundred and thirty two soldiers out of 920 were killed and 264 were wounded resulting in a 97.4 % casualty rate. Almost all of the 200 of the camp followers including women and children were slaughtered or tortured and killed.

When General George Washington heard about the defeat he was livid at General St. Clair. Congress did an investigation of St. Clair's action but later exonerated him finding that the weapons, powder, tents and other supplies were of terrible quality.

In addition, the Congress recruited more soldiers putting them under the command of General "Mad" Anthony Wayne. General Wayne defeated the Indian Tribes at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in Ohio in 1794. Half of General Wayne's troops consisted of 1500 Kentucky Militiamen led by Adjutant General John Adair who later would become a governor of Kentucky.

St. Clair's War is interesting to our family for a couple of reasons. One of them involves the fate of Isaac Jett. In 1791, the Kentucky Board of War was established and given the power to call out the state militia to help the U.S. Army. We also know that the Kentucky Militia had also been a part of the disastrous defeat in Ohio in connection with St. Clair.

Apparently, Isaac Jett would be involved in a battle with the same Indians which defeated St. Clair's forces. Kentucky became the 15<sup>th</sup> State on June 1, 1792. On June 20, the Kentucky State Militia was formed and soldiers were sent under the command of Major John Adair in 1792. One of these militiamen was Isaac Israel Jett. Major Adair had been assigned along with 100 militia to take a large number of packhorses from Ft. Washington (now Cincinnati, OH) to Ft. Recovery (also known as Ft. St. Clair and located near Eaton, OH) to Ft. Jefferson. Below is a map showing the location of some of these forts.



Map showing Ft. Washington and Ft. Recovery

Adair and his men were on the return trip from Ft. Jefferson and camped on November 5, 1792 outside the walls of Ft. St. Clair (Ft. Recovery). Early in the morning of November 6, they were attacked by a large party of Miami Indians (estimated about 250 in number) under the leadership of Chief Little Turtle (the same chief who had disastrously defeated the Americans at St. Clair's defeat). The result was that six of the militiamen died in battle, five were wounded and four were missing. In addition about 140 pack horses were lost. Included in the list of the men who died in Battle was Isaac Jett. Isaac Jett's grave is located in Easton, Ohio with the others who died on November 6, 1792.



Marker of Battle where Isaac Jett was killed.



Grave Marker for Isaac Jett

We do not have a list of all of the individuals under the command of Major Adair; however there is reason to believe that another Jett may have been there that day. That individual is Stephen Jett Jr. who was born in 1775. He would have been about 17 years old and would at that period have made the migration with the Jett family from Granville, North Carolina to Kentucky. It is suspected that Stephen Jett Jr. (b. 1775) accompanied his brother to war and fought at the battle at Ft. St. Clair where Isaac was killed. The reason that we suspect this is that we know that Stephen was present in Kentucky in 1792 and we find an interesting notation in the Kentucky Census of 1850. Stephen Jett Jr., who is at that time 75 years old, reports that he was born in North Carolina (at 1775 due to his age) and reports his previous occupation as being a soldier in (Cinclairs (St. Clair's) War). The census taker obviously was writing down what St. Clair sounded like.).

We also believe that Stephen Jett Jr. served in Captain Michael Davidson's Company of the Kentucky Mounted Volunteers Militia which was commanded by Lt. Colonel Richard Davenport. Stephen's service was between August 15, 1813 to November 8, 1813 as part of the War of 1812, Davenport's Regiment was part of the Thames Campaign. The Battle of the Thames (also known as the Battle of Moraviantown) happened on October 5, 1813. The Kentucky militia made a frontal attack upon the British regulars who broke rank and fled with fifteen of the Kentuckians being killed or wounded. This battle which was led by General Henry Harrison defeated the British and their Indian allies and resulted in the death of one of the great Indian leaders, Tecumseh.



Chief Tecumseh

This battle restored American control to the area around Detroit.