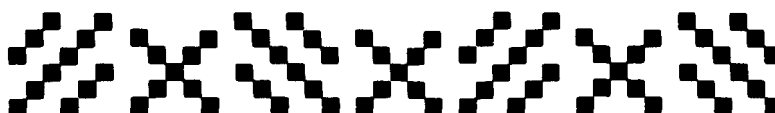


George Rogers Clark
and the American Revolution in the West

*George M. Waller**



Brave Lewis our colonel an officer bold,
At the mouth of Kanhawa did the Shawnees behold.
On the tenth of October, at the rising sun
The armies did meet and the battle begun.¹

In song and story the heritage of men and battles is often preserved. The quoted couplets are the beginning of an epic verse found in several variations celebrating the battle between forces under Colonel Andrew Lewis and the Shawnee at Point Pleasant, Ohio, in the fall of 1774. It was the first outbreak of open Indian war in the West since the end of the French and Indian War and Pontiac's Rebellion in the early 1760s. The Battle of Point Pleasant was the only pitched battle of the brief Lord Dunmore's War against the Shawnee. It signaled the reopening of the Indians' struggle

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¹ Printed in Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg, eds., *Documentary History of Dunmore's War, 1774* (Madison, 1905), 433. The Colonel Lewis referred to was Charles Lewis, a brother of Andrew Lewis who was in overall command at the Battle of Point Pleasant during Lord Dunmore's War in 1774.

against white advance that was to continue during the years of the American Revolution.²

George Rogers Clark was a twenty-two year old militia captain in this little "war," holding a commission from the royal governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore. He marched with a small force that attacked Indian villages on the Muskingum River in southeastern Ohio before joining Dunmore. Clark was not at the Battle of Point Pleasant but joined Dunmore's forces to move against the Shawnee town of Chillicothe on the Scioto River where the Indians in 1774 accepted a preliminary agreement, the "treaty" of Camp Charlotte.

Clark was to become one of the leading figures in the American Revolution, fighting against the British with whom he had so recently marched. I think it is appropriate in considering historic preservation to consider the problems of preserving the history of a war and the knowledge of a hero in that war. George Rogers Clark and the Revolution in the West are a kind of historic structure. Like other more material structures they need to be identified and preserved. Like historic buildings they have been altered, added to, and reshaped in the passage of time, in ways irrelevant to their original reality and historic meanings. These changes need to be stripped off—like the porticos added to ancient buildings—the original integrity reestablished, and their meaning for their time and for later times recognized.

Unlike historic buildings, heroes, wars, and original topography cannot be preserved or restored in a literal sense. They may only be recreated in words, maps, pictures, statues, or imaginative pictorializations as in films, slides, or tapes.

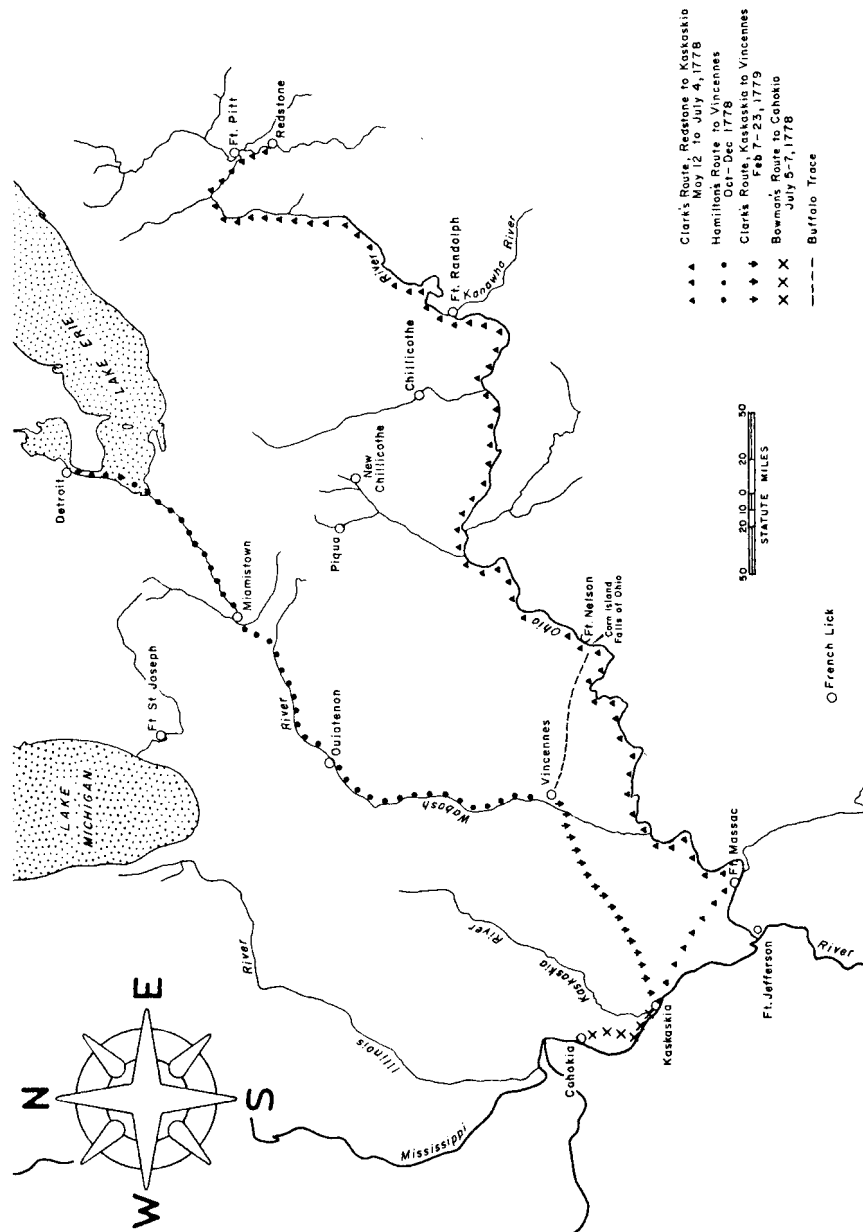
² Printed sources upon which this account is based can be found in the Draper Collection (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison) and in the following volumes edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg: *Documentary History of Dunmore's War, 1774; Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 1775-1777* (Madison, 1908); *Frontier Defense on the Upper Ohio, 1777-1778* (Madison, 1912). Additional sources are included in Louise Phelps Kellogg, ed., *Frontier Advance on the Upper Ohio, 1778-1779* (Madison, 1916); *ibid.*, *Frontier Retreat on the Upper Ohio, 1779-1781* (Madison, 1917); James Alton James, ed., *George Rogers Clark Papers, 1771-1781* (*Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, Vol. VIII; Virginia Series, Vol. III; Springfield, 1912); *ibid.*, *George Rogers Clark Papers, 1781-1784* (*Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, Vol. XIX; Virginia Series, Vol. IV; Springfield, 1926). Jack M. Sosin, *The Revolutionary Frontier, 1763-1783* (New York, 1967) provides a brief secondary account with an excellent bibliography. The most reliable biography of Clark is James A. James, *The Life of George Rogers Clark* (Chicago, 1928), supplemented by John D. Barnhart, ed., *Henry Hamilton and George Rogers Clark in the American Revolution* (Crawfordsville, Ind., 1951).

The originals rarely exist. Only a few slabs remain of an original French house at Vincennes. The Buffalo Trace across southern Indiana from Clarksville to Vincennes is now hardly traceable, even though topography still demonstrates the logic of its course, and one probable buffalo wallow is still clearly visible, although one suspects that it is kept wallowable by more modern kine. The barracks of Fort Patrick Henry, *nee* Fort Sackville, at Vincennes were being torn down and carried off board by board even before the end of the Revolutionary War, and now it is proving difficult to locate the exact position of the fort itself. At the important Indian trading post of Ouiatenon it has taken strenuous archaeological research to establish where it was on the Wabash River below Lafayette. Kaskaskia and its "elegant stone fort"³ have vanished under the changing currents of the Mississippi. Dams and reservoirs have changed the landscape and the contours of rivers. Clark's little base for his attack on Kaskaskia, Corn Island in the Ohio at Louisville, was gradually eroded by the river and finally chewed up entirely in the hoppers of the cement plants nearby. The list could be multiplied.

This address will concentrate on only a few of the problems in recreating a more accurate and meaningful understanding of Clark's part in the War for American Independence. The answers, as far as they are available, are in the original documents, but it is no easy task to dig them out or assess their meaning. One hopes that the craft of the historian may correct some of the many misconceptions foisted on us by those who depended too much on the accounts of aging contemporaries or family tradition, by those whose verbosity or lack of clarity clouded the story, or by writers who have been carried away by romanticizing and their own literary flourishes. The celebration of the bicentennial of the Revolution over the next few years may forward the job. Indiana and its surrounding states deserve to know what happened in this area during the Revolution and what the area's meaning was for the larger struggle.

A major problem has been that most of us lack a grasp of the order of events, perhaps because the Revolutionary struggle was the longest war we have ever fought, with the

³ George Rogers Clark probably to Governor Patrick Henry of Virginia, summer or fall, 1777, in James, *George Rogers Clark Papers, 1771-1781*, VIII, 30.



Courtesy George M. Waller.

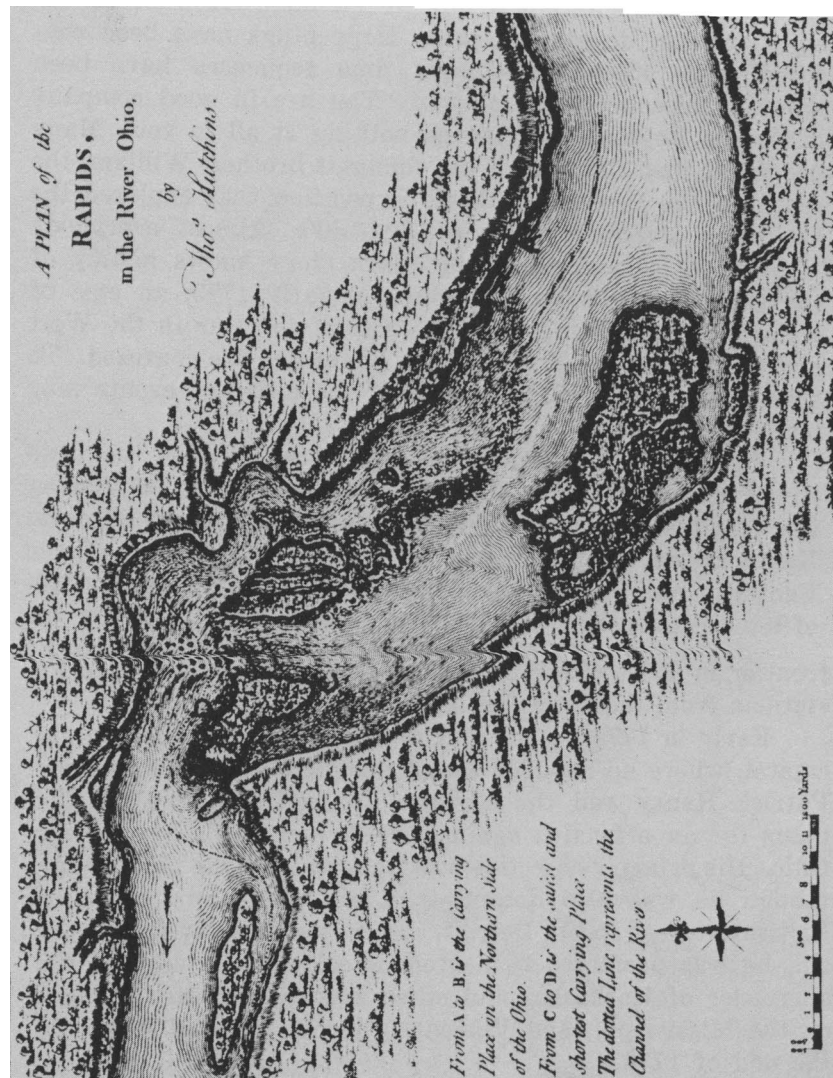
exception of the recent affair in Vietnam. It went on for eight tedious, desperate years. Happenings have been confused with other happenings, time sequences have been ignored, misconceptions abound. You are in good company if George Rogers Clark means nothing at all to you. Many people confuse Clark with his youngest brother, William, the Clark in the Lewis and Clark Expedition that explored the Louisiana Purchase area in 1804-1806. Almost everybody who knows something of the Clark story knows mainly of the famous march on Vincennes in early 1779, an epic of endurance and daring. For the rest of the war in the West and Clark's part in it even many historians are confused. To start with, a very brief sketch of the order of events may help.

In late 1776 Indians began to attack across the Ohio River into Kentucky. Clark was instrumental in convincing the Virginia government, which claimed the area, to organize Kentucky as a county, and he became commander of the Kentucky militia with the rank of major. When the British officially unleashed the Indians against Americans on the frontier in 1777, Clark directed the defense of the Kentucky stations from the little fort at Harrodsburg.

Early in 1778 Clark went to Williamsburg, the Virginia capital, where he received secret instructions from Governor Patrick Henry and the Virginia Council to carry out his plans for an offensive against the British posts beyond the Ohio. His primary objective was Kaskaskia on the Mississippi, though he was also dreaming of an attack on the major British western post, Detroit. Then just twenty-five years old, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel. He secured the surrender of Kaskaskia and other French inhabited villages on the Mississippi, and Vincennes on the Wabash River, by the end of 1778.

Vincennes—also primarily inhabited by French settlers—had acceded to the Americans readily when called upon by a visiting delegation of Frenchmen sent by Clark from Kaskaskia. But Henry Hamilton, lieutenant governor of the District of Detroit and the British commander in the West, had marched to retake Vincennes when he heard of Clark's exploits in the Illinois Country. Hamilton succeeded in regaining control of the post late in 1778. In February, 1779, Clark recaptured Vincennes after his legendary march

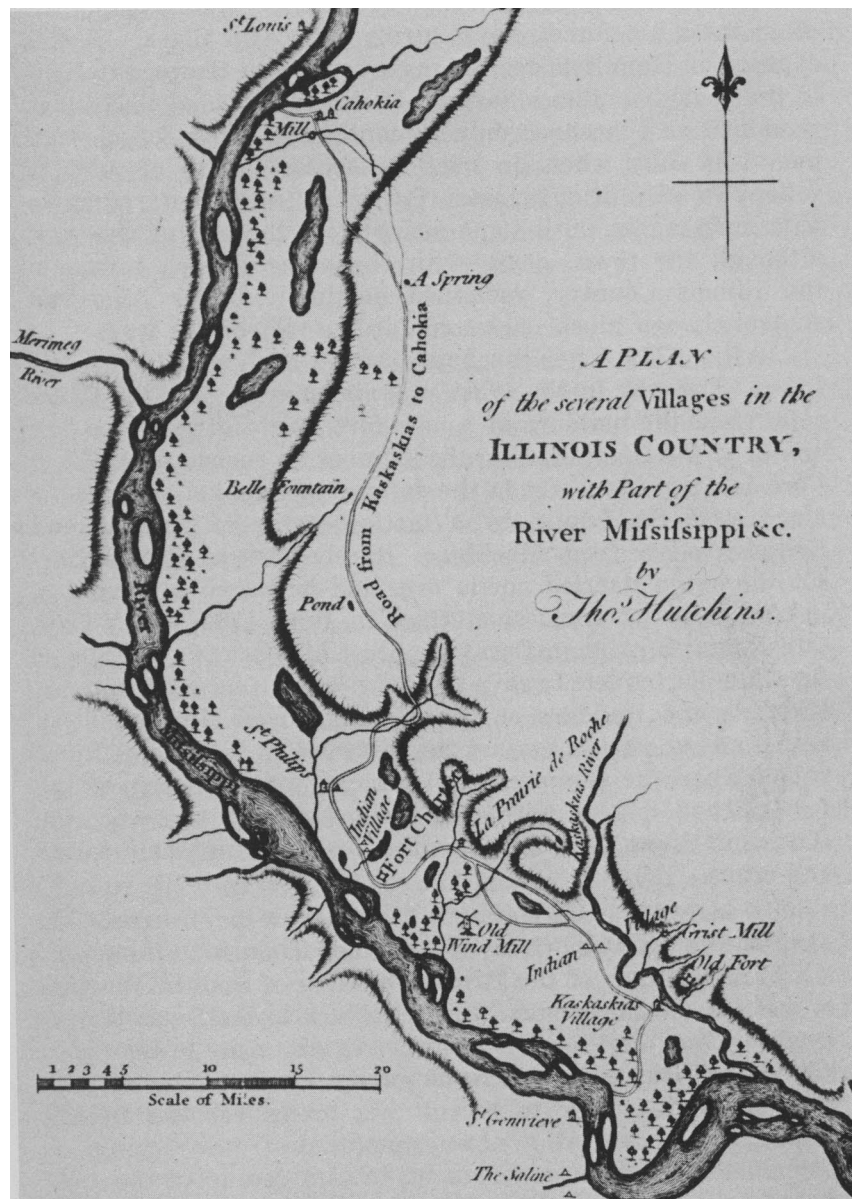
THOMAS HUTCHINS' SKETCH OF THE FALLS OF THE OHIO



Corn Island, where George Rogers Clark established his base before advancing to the Mississippi, is the island in the lower center right, near the southern shore of the Ohio River.

Reproduced from Thomas Hutchins, *A Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina* (London, 1778).

THOMAS HUTCHINS' PLAN OF THE FRENCH VILLAGES
ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI



The "old fort" on the bluffs east of the village of Kaskaskia was not used during the American Revolution. The fort Clark captured in Kaskaskia was in the southeast corner of the village.

Reproduced from Thomas Hutchins, *A Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina* (London, 1778).

through flooded country between the Mississippi and the Wabash, catching the British commander before Hamilton could mass his forces for a spring attack on Clark. Clark's capture of Hamilton dealt a massive though temporary blow to the British-Indian alliances. It should be noted that Clark remained at Vincennes only a month, returning for another month in July when he tried unsuccessfully to organize a follow-up expedition against Detroit. He did not return to Vincennes again until some years after the end of the war, although the town, along with the other French towns in the Illinois Country, remained nominally under American control though much neglected for the rest of the war.

After 1779 American hopes for an early end to the war faded. The war in the West was stalemated. In 1780 Clark supervised the building of a new fort, Fort Jefferson, at the mouth of the Ohio. During the summer he rushed north from Fort Jefferson to assist in the defense of Cahokia, attacked—along with St. Louis—by a motley group of Indians and British traders from Mackinac. Barely back at Fort Jefferson, he again hurried north, overland with two companions, in time to divert a massive attack in June, 1780, led by Captain Henry Bird from Detroit against his post at the Falls of the Ohio but too late to save the defenseless Kentucky stations, Martin's and Ruddle's on the Licking River. In retaliation he led an expedition against the Shawnee in the Miami River valley where he commanded American forces in one of the few pitched battles with the Indians during the war, the Battle of Piqua, killing many Indians, burning their towns and crops.

In early 1781 Clark started to prepare a major expedition against Detroit authorized by Governor Thomas Jefferson of Virginia. In view of the British invasion of eastern Virginia it seems a visionary plan. In fact, Clark himself was temporarily pressed into service with the regular army in the fighting around Richmond where he gave a good account of himself. Traveling back to recruit his forces for the Detroit attack, Clark carried a new commission from Virginia as brigadier general in order to make him senior to the Continental commander, Colonel Daniel Brodhead, at Fort Pitt, a man intensely jealous of Clark. The expedition failed. Brodhead's thinly veiled opposition and a high rate of desertion among Clark's troops culminated in the overwhelming

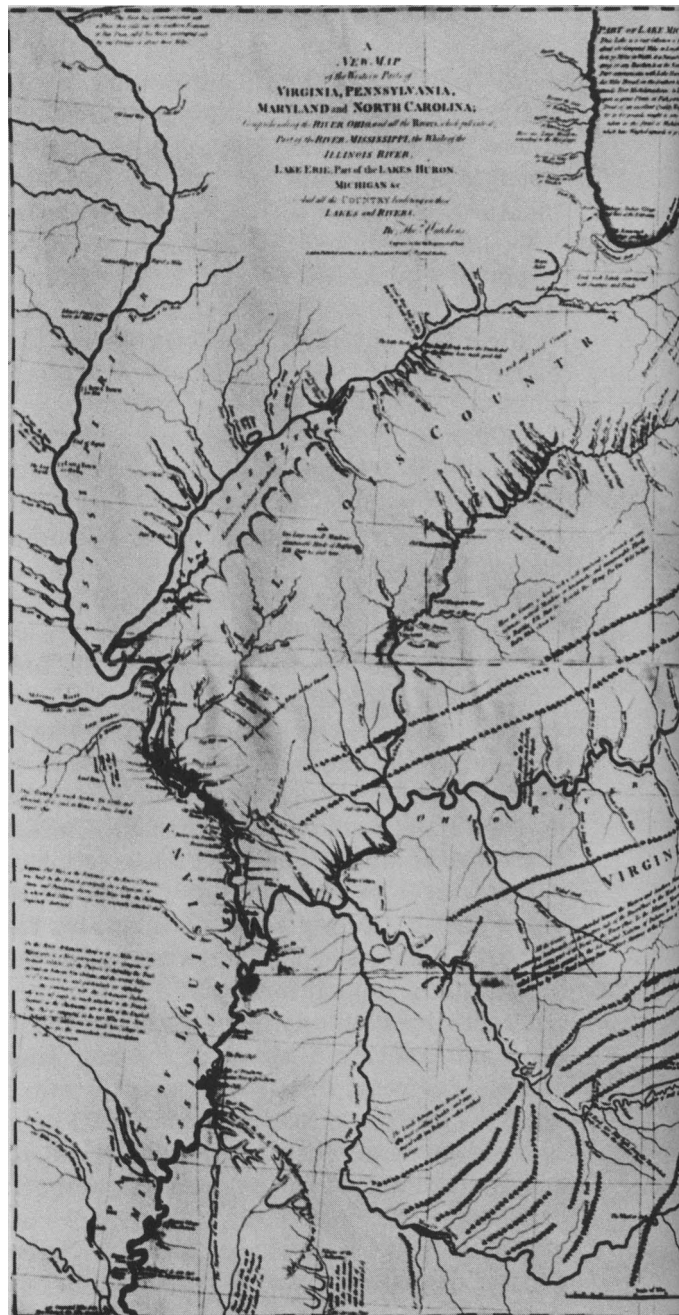
defeat of Colonel Archibald Lochry, a Pennsylvania militia commander who was bringing a detachment down the Ohio River to join Clark. Indians massing to attack Clark fell upon Lochry's small force in southeastern Indiana near the mouth of the Miami River with devastating effect.

Clark remained at the newly completed Fort Nelson at Louisville until the fall of 1782 when he led a last foray against the Shawnee towns across the Ohio but found no Indians to fight. With the war ending, he returned to Richmond, Virginia, and accepted retirement in the spring of 1783.

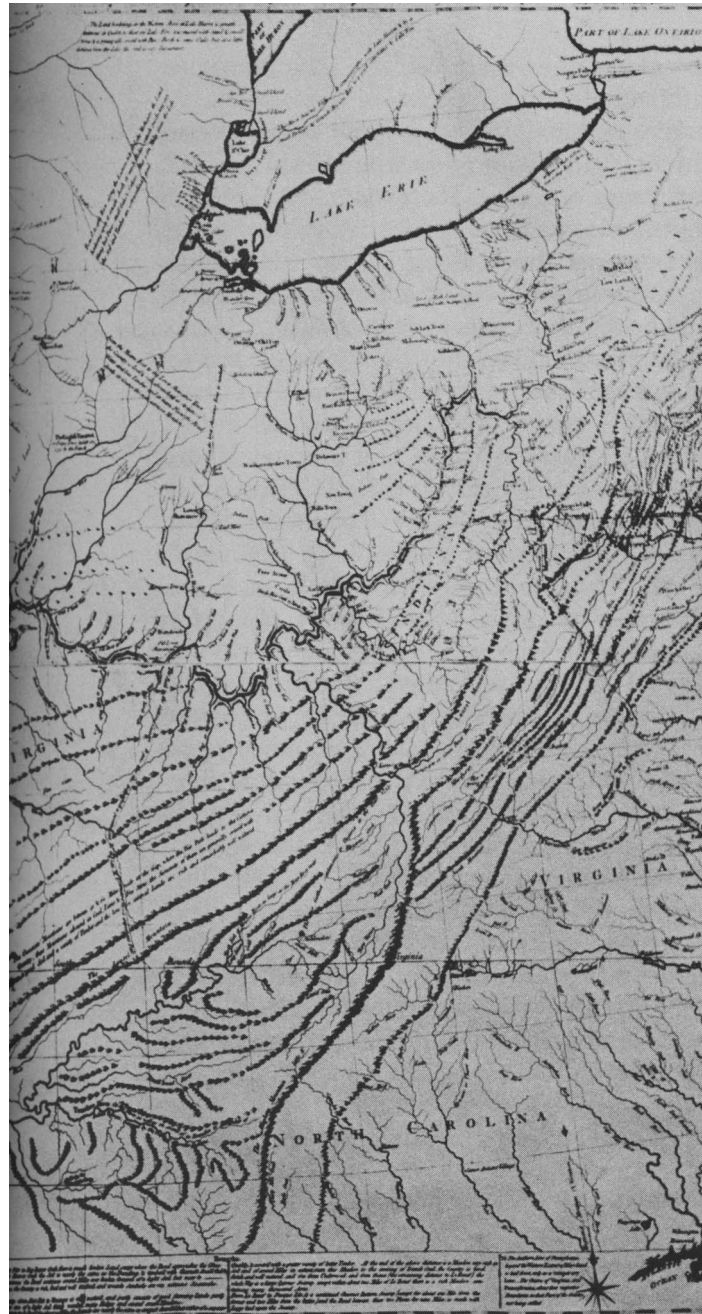
This short sketch omits any mention of the ongoing defense of the Kentucky stations, of the futile efforts of successive commanders at Fort Pitt to take the offensive against the Indians west and north of the upper Ohio, of allied French and Spanish forces in thrusts against Fort St. Joseph east of the lower end of Lake Michigan and Miamistown at the head of the Maumee, and of many other movements in the war in the West. But moving in for a closer look, one finds many problems.

For instance, what was Clark like? He was tall and well built. He was acknowledged to be a superb leader. Contemporaries are lavish in praising his qualities, but we find no references to his personality and character except what we can infer from his writing or his actions. No contemporary portrait of him exists. One painted from life in his later years shows an embittered old man, his face twisted perhaps in pain. His wartime exertions had a telling effect on his health, his disappointments and lack of rewards on his mind. His excessive drinking right after the war occasioned troubled comment from even his good friends, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. It had probably set in during the tedious months spent in enforced idleness at Fort Nelson toward the end of the war when severe shortages of supplies, money, and men prevented further campaigning. It doubtless further hurt his health.

Some say Clark was redheaded. No real evidence exists. Do we visualize him with long hair or short? Did he wear a wig? Did he fight in buckskin or in uniform? Did he wear a tricorne or a broadbrimmed hat? Someone even asked recently if he needed dentures, like George Washington. Portraits dating from after Clark's death obviously idealize his image and portray a dignified, retired officer, respected



Thomas Hutchins, *A New Map of the Western Parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina . . .* (London, 1778).



Reproduced from Thomas Hutchins, *A Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina* (London, 1778).

as he actually was after the controversies that swirled around him in the immediate postwar period died down.

A more important question, which I have never found discussed, is how did he find his way in the West? Where did his knowledge of its geography, its people, its Indians, its distances come from? How did he come by the information that enabled him to assess the value of his targets? Some things we know. In the years before the Revolution, Clark worked with a number of other surveyors, ranging widely through Kentucky and well down the Ohio, familiarizing himself with the eastern and southern side of the river from the age of nineteen. In the spring of 1777 before his march on Kaskaskia he had sent Benjamin Linn and Samuel Moore to spy on the place but what led him to do that? In marching overland from near the mouth of the Tennessee River to Kaskaskia he availed himself of a guide, John Saunders, an American hunter who had been there. Further, as a surveyor, Clark knew how to lay out a straight line of march from one point to another.

But to know where the distant point toward which he marched was suggests the use of maps. Here, a figure enters the picture who has not previously been associated with the story of George Rogers Clark. His possible connection would appear to be a matter of interest. He is Thomas Hutchins, born in New Jersey in 1730, twenty-two years Clark's senior. Holding a commission as a British army engineer, Hutchins fought in the French and Indian War and helped suppress Pontiac's Rebellion. He was stationed at Fort Pitt, indeed probably helped to design the fort. He traveled widely in the Great Lakes region and down the Ohio, mapping and sketching the area. He served in the garrisons at Fort Chartres and Kaskaskia until 1772 when he was sent down the Mississippi to help with the building of British defenses in West Florida.⁴

⁴ Biographical material about Hutchins may be found in Dumas Malone, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography* (20 vols., New York, 1943), IX, 435-36; Thomas Hutchins, *A Topographical Description of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and North Carolina*, reprinted from 1778 edition, ed. and intro. by Frederick Charles Hicks (Cleveland, 1904); Thomas Hutchins, *The Courses of the Ohio River . . .*, ed. Beverly W. Bond, Jr. (*Publications of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio*, 1942; Cincinnati, 1942). Hutchins' manuscript is located in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California; the map is in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

It may be that Hutchins should be called Mapmaker of the American Revolution in the West. His masterpiece, however, was published in 1778 and was thus not available to Clark when the campaign in the Illinois Country took place.⁵ Hutchins had gone to London to discuss plans for fortifications in West Florida as well as to arrange for publication of his book and accompanying map providing a "Topographical Description" of the West. He refused to return to fight against the Americans, was imprisoned in England, and after his release returned to America with assistance from Benjamin Franklin in France. He became geographer for the Continental southern army under General Nathanael Greene and then, after the war, geographer of the United States, a title never since conferred on anyone.

Hutchins supervised the survey extending the Mason and Dixon Line, established the boundary between Massachusetts and New York, and, finally, undertook the great work of laying out ranges, base lines, and other surveys west of the Ohio River in accordance with the Land Ordinance of 1785. While engaged in this work he died in 1789. He had been a man "of good character, of polite manners, of great integrity, who made a regular profession of religion,"⁶ and of him his eulogist said: "He has measured much earth, but a small space now contains him."⁷

Hutchins' maps are remarkable for their period. He drew on prior French knowledge of the country, and he had been associated with another British army engineer, then Lieutenant Philip Pittman, while in service at Fort Chartres near Kaskaskia. Pittman had traveled from West Florida to the Illinois Country charting the Mississippi as he went.⁸ Hutchins had worked with Captain Harry Gordon, whose elaborate map of the Ohio from Fort Pitt to the mouth of the river was probably based on Hutchins' surveys and sketches.⁹

⁵ Hutchins, *Topographical Description*.

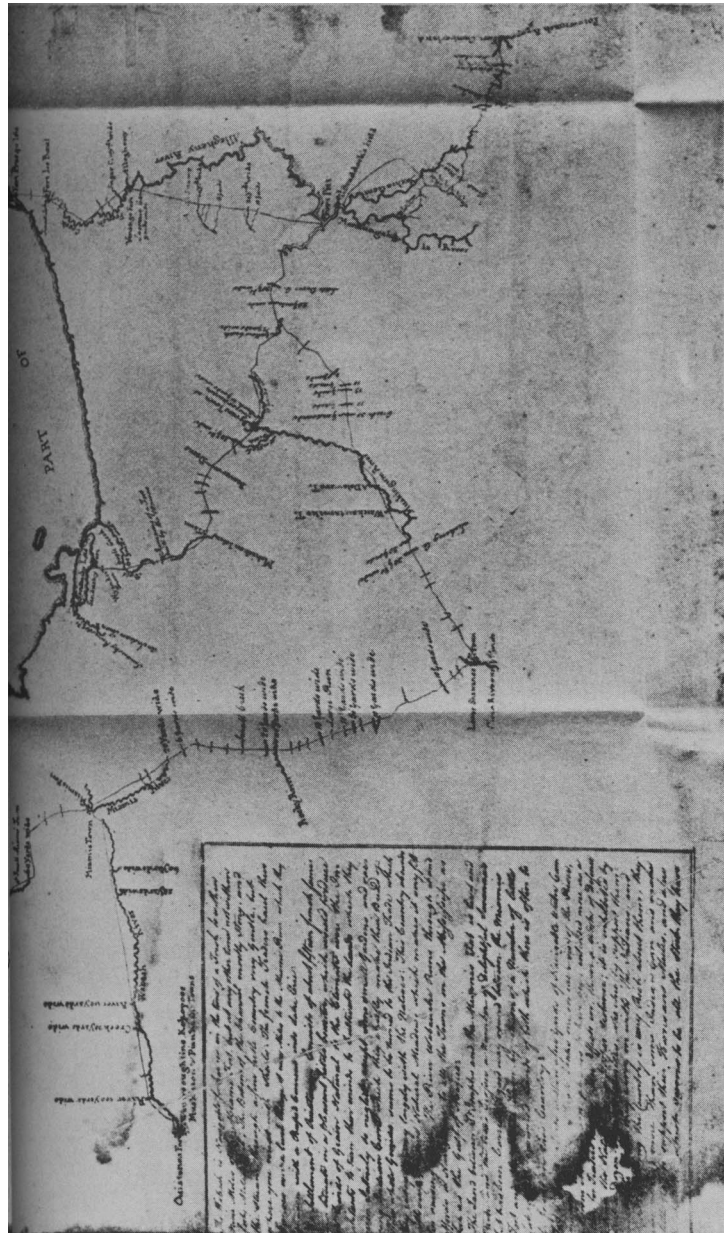
⁶ [?] Hazard to Jeremy Belknap, July 13, 1789, quoted in Hicks' introduction to 1904 edition of Hutchins' *Topographical Description*, 7.

⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*, 49.

⁸ Captain Philip Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi* [*sic*] . . . , reprinted from 1770 edition, ed. Frank Heywood Hodder (Cleveland, 1906); Max Savelle, *George Morgan, Colony Builder* (New York, 1932).

⁹ Gordon's map is located in the Library of Congress.

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Courtesy Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

The connection with George Rogers Clark, it may be speculated, was through George Morgan. Hutchins had become a close friend of Morgan when both were active at Fort Chartres and Kaskaskia. Morgan, a partner in the prestigious Philadelphia trading firm of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, supervised a massive trading operation on the Mississippi and Wabash rivers, at Kaskaskia and Vincennes, in the years before the Revolution. He had traveled west with Hutchins, and their association continued lifelong.¹⁰

When Clark was in the Pittsburgh area gathering supplies for his campaign to the Illinois Country, Morgan was prominent there as agent for the Indian Commission of the United States Congress, engaged in prolonged negotiations with the Delaware and other tribes in an attempt to keep them from forming an attachment to the British. Hutchins may well have left a great many sketches and drawings with Morgan when he went to England. In addition, Morgan as well as Hutchins had extensive knowledge of the country from former association with the old trader, George Croghan, who knew the area and the Indians better than any man.

It may be objected that Clark's project, closely tied to Virginia's hope to claim the regions of the West in the future, would not recommend itself to Morgan, who represented rival Pennsylvania interests. Therefore Morgan might not be inclined to share his knowledge with Clark. But in 1778, in the early stages of the war in the West, the Virginia-Pennsylvania rivalry which frustrated so many plans for offensives later in the war was still subordinated to the overriding concern of both factions to hold the West against the British.

Furthermore, additional connections exist between Kaskaskia traders, Americans in the Pittsburgh area, and Clark. Two men who remained in Kaskaskia, Thomas Bentley and Daniel Murray, held strong leanings toward the Americans and had many friends in Pittsburgh. Lieutenant William Linn received help from these Kaskaskia men when he brought a supply of powder up from New Orleans for the American armies, the powder later provided for Clark's expedition. Linn's brother, Benjamin, had been one of Clark's spies sent to reconnoiter Kaskaskia and Vincennes, probably because

¹⁰ Savelle, *George Morgan*.

he had been there before. It was a mission very likely suggested to Clark by Bentley, through friends. Both Linns served under Clark subsequently. Two of Clark's other officers, Joseph Bowman and William Harrod, frequented the Pittsburgh area and had extensive contacts there. A friend of Hutchins at Kaskaskia, Patrick Kennedy, became Clark's commissary on the famous march to Vincennes and remained there as quartermaster for Clark's garrison.

Within this complex of personal connections the exchange of information seems most likely, information that may have enabled Clark to confirm and pin down more definitely his own vast knowledge acquired in years on the frontier. Hutchins' map becomes a kind of historic landmark, with its many comments on the nature of the country written across areas portrayed, his precise marking of streams, mountains, prairies, and trails. Its preserves the features of the country known to Clark and other armies that campaigned there, features now lost through natural and manmade changes.

Notice should be drawn to other problems that arise in attempting to understand this small scale but complex western struggle. Though a dominant figure in this theater of the war, Clark was not the only important American leader, nor were the valiant men who followed him the only ones to fight. In the area between the Great Lakes, the Ohio, and the Mississippi, America was fighting on four frontiers.

On the upper Ohio an impoverished garrison of regulars at Fort Pitt was commanded by a succession of officers appointed by General Washington at the direction of Congress. From this post control was extended to garrisons at Fort Henry (Wheeling), Fort Randolph (at the mouth of the Kanawha River), Fort McIntosh (at the mouth of Beaver Creek), and Fort Laurens (on the Tuscaroras River), as well as small forts north of Pittsburgh on the Allegheny.

A second, inner frontier at the western edge of the Appalachians stretched along the upper Kanawha, the Greenbrier, and the New rivers. The settlements on the Holston, Watauga, Nolichucky, and upper Tennessee rivers made up a third frontier in the southwestern corner of Virginia and western North Carolina, which extended west in 1780 to the Cumberland settlements around what is now Nashville, Tennessee. Clark was prominent in defending the fourth frontier, the Kentucky stations and their western prolonga-

tions at Fort Jefferson just below the mouth of the Ohio and in the Illinois Country and Vincennes.

In this area the war was mainly an Indian war. Well before the Revolution the Indians were resisting the aggressive, land hungry frontiersmen. Indians had learned to live with the fur traders, indeed coveted trade, first with the French and then with the British. But the arrival of pioneers who felled the forests, planted trees, and built cabins alarmed them and provoked resistance. During the war the struggle merely took on added seriousness insofar as the Indians were supplied and often led by the British.

On the upper Ohio the Delaware remained peacefully inclined for several years, influenced by Moravian missionaries and the diplomatic skills of George Morgan at Fort Pitt. Attacks across the upper Ohio and against the Kentucky stations even through the Year of the Three Sevens—the Bloody Year of 1777—came mainly from small, roving bands of Mingo (western Seneca), Munsee, and a few renegade Delaware and Shawnee. The Shawnee became the principal scourge of Kentucky only in 1778. By the spring of 1777 the Cherokee had been subdued along the Holston frontier. Except for occasional trouble from the irreconcilable Chickamauga offshoot under Chief Dragging Canoe, this tribe made little more trouble. Clark fought no Indians in his Illinois campaign and encountered Indians willing to fight only in the first of his two raids into Shawnee country in 1780. On the Wabash and Maumee rivers, the Miami, Wea, Piankeshaw, and Kickapoo wavered between the British and the United States throughout the war, did little fighting, and were cowed by Clark most of the time. One Piankeshaw chief, indeed, professed enduring support of the Kentucky Big Knives. Remnants of the Illinois tribe, few, lazy, and debauched, the Kaskaskia and Michigami Indians, did not fight.

Large numbers of the British Indians in Michigan and Canada—Ottawa, Chippewa, Wyandot, Potawatomi, and Huron—joined in attacks on the upper Ohio and in Kentucky only in relatively small bands. A few hundred were the most who took part in any siege or battle out of the thousands presumably controlled by the British. It may be said that offensively the Indians were no real asset to the British, although, paradoxically, it would have been fatal to the

British cause in the West if the Indians had not given as much help as they did. Under guerrilla leaders like William Caldwell; Alexander McKee; the Girty brothers, Simon, James, and George; and Captain Henry Bird of the regular British army, along with occasional French Canadian officers, the warriors would attack undefended cabins and weakly held forts. They were too restless to maintain a long siege. The nine days' siege of Boonesborough was the longest. They never attacked a position where Clark was known to be present and rarely risked a pitched battle. The leaders were too few to control them, and renegades like Simon Girty had no inclination to do so. Cruel treatment of their victims, especially the old, the wounded, and women and children was typical.

Yet in negotiations with Clark and his officers, or with Morgan at Fort Pitt, Indian leaders were reasonable, often good humored, and indicated a fair appreciation of America's side of the war. It may be suggested that even fewer would have fought for the British if frontiersmen had not frequently descended to their level and perpetrated equally monstrous atrocities on them. The wanton murders of the friendly Shawnee, Chief Cornstalk, and of White Eyes, who had labored earnestly to keep his Delaware friendly, are only two instances.

The British and their Indian allies were not the only enemies of the American frontiersmen. The men of Virginia were fighting in the West against rival Pennsylvania interests for future possession of the land. Clark's march to the Mississippi and the visionary scheme of a massive Virginia mounted attack on Detroit in 1781 may have originated as much with leading Virginia land speculators as with Clark. Firm evidence is lacking, but Clark's preliminary discussions with Governor Patrick Henry in 1776 may have led the young westerner to conceive his plan. Historians have questioned his choice of targets. They make sense if he was acting to forestall Pennsylvania more than to counter the British, though his proposals would effectively serve both purposes. It is clear, too, that personal interest in western lands as well as official concern for Virginia's claims were combined in the persons of Patrick Henry, George Mason, George Washington, and many other less prominent individuals, and seem to have preoccupied an inordinate amount of their thinking despite their heavy official duties.

The militia of states like Virginia and Pennsylvania were also constantly pitted against the regular army establishment in the western theater of the war. The long time commander at Fort Pitt, Colonel Daniel Brodhead, proved a bitter and frustrated enemy of Clark. Opponents of both the regulars and the dedicated frontier militiamen were an increasing population on the Ohio, in the Kentucky stations, and in older parts of the back country. Such opponents included unpatriotic land seekers, growing numbers of Tories fleeing from eastern hostility, and an influential body of separate state men who denied the claims of any eastern state to the area. Opposition arose, too, between those who favored a defensive war and those, like Clark, who wanted to take the war to the enemy.

Personal rivalry to Clark became evident in the disagreement raised by beleaguered Kentucky defenders facing Indian attack from across the Ohio at a point midway between the last fort on the upper Ohio and Clark's forces concentrated at Louisville. The Warriors' Path crossed near the mouth of the Licking River, a crossing too far from Clark at Fort Nelson to be detected.

Preoccupation with these and many other problems doomed any chance for consistent military effort. The war became a wearying, irresolute seesaw of guerrilla tactics. The Indians were masters of such tactics. Clark was successful when he was able to move swiftly with small forces against unsuspecting targets, when—not by choice but necessity—he had to emulate the Indians and gained their same advantages. Large scale campaigns, whether mounted by the British, the regulars from Fort Pitt, or attempted by Clark, always failed. Major offensives were a logistical impossibility. Equipping, feeding, and transporting large numbers of men, with supplies or artillery, over long distances through difficult terrain proved beyond the means of either side.

Yet in a long war when unity of purpose characterized none of the thirteen states, western Americans at least held their ground, pinned down large numbers of the British and their Indians so that they could not be used against the eastern areas, and gave the United States a claim on the West that American negotiators could fight for at the peace table.