

A valuable source in researching the life of John Moore has been the French Tipton Papers, which will be referred to frequently. French Tipton was a Richmond, Kentucky, lawyer, farmer, judge, newspaper editor, and amateur historian, who was planning to write a history of Madison County, Kentucky. He was killed before he could complete his work, shot on a Richmond street in the 1880s. His extensive collection of information about the county and its inhabitants, which fill several large volumes, is housed in the Library of Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky.

John Moore was born circa 1745-1750, possibly in Virginia. About the late 1760s, he wed Susannah Grubbs, likely in Virginia. Volume 5, page 160, of the French Tipton Papers states that John Moore's wife was the sister of Higgason Grubbs. The Index to Real Estate Conveyances, Madison County, Kentucky, shows John and Susannah Moore sold 112 acres on the Kentucky River in October of 1797. From these two sources we can deduce her given and surname as Susannah Grubbs.

Susannah's father, William Grubbs, came from Virginia to prospect in Kentucky, where he died and was buried at Bryan's Station. His widow, with nine daughters and one son, later came to Kentucky. (French Tipton Papers, Volume 1, page 22)

The French Tipton Papers state that John and Susannah's sons, Robie (Robert) and John W., were born in Virginia. Their son, Reuben, was born on the Buffalo Branch of Tate's Creek, Madison County, Kentucky. The Buffalo Fork, where the Moores settled, was about ten miles from Richmond, which was to become the Madison County seat. Subsequent children are assumed to have been born at the same location.

No Indians occupied the Bluegrass region of what was to become Kentucky, although several tribes utilized its hunting grounds. By the late 1760s, white hunters reported abundant game, lush forests, and fertile land, although only the most adventurous braved the Indian danger.

In 1774, Daniel Boone and some 30 woodsmen were hired to open a "road" through the wilderness into Kentucky. The Wilderness Road was not really a road. It was a crude trail only pack animals could navigate. By 1796 it was widened to allow Conestoga wagons to pass.

Boone and his party were joined by 40 additional men and by June of 1775, Fort Boonesborough was completed, near the south bank of the Kentucky River. John Moore has been verified by the French Tipton Papers as a pioneer of Fort Boonesborough. His name appears on a large marble monument near the reconstructed fort at Fort Boonesborough State Park in Madison County, Kentucky.

John's wife, Susannah Grubbs, is not mentioned on the Boonesborough list, so it appears he may have left her and the older children in Virginia when he first came to

Kentucky seeking land. We can not say with certainty when Susannah and the children came to Kentucky, but it must have been by the late 1770s, since their son, Reuben, was said to have been born there. Did John go back to Virginia to bring his family to Kentucky or did they make the dangerous journey with other pioneers? This question is one of those for which we will never have an answer.

Pack animals carried farming and cooking utensils, beds and bedding, wearing apparel and provisions on the arduous journey over the Wilderness Road. Pieces of light furniture were strapped upon the backs of the animals. Packsaddles were fitted with thongs with which to tie on the bundles, and in some cases two creels of hickory withes, one on each side, were balanced across a horse. In these baskets were placed bedclothing, tents, and other supplies, and tucked inside each might be a child with its head sticking out. Cows were taken along to furnish milk for the children and the surplus was carried in canteens during the day. The family might have in their belongings a Bible, a Testament, and a Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church. Each man and boy carried a rifle and shot pouch and most of the women were armed with pistols.

The early pioneers understood the challenges they faced and maintained scouts on the lookout for Indians. They planted beans, corn, and melons on plots near the fort, close to protection. Indians swarmed the countryside during that decade. As the Indian danger increased in 1777, fewer settlers ventured outside the fort.

In early September of 1778, a war party of four hundred Indians, under British command, was discovered enroute to Boonesborough. To avoid battle, the two sides held lengthy discussions concerning possible compromises and surrender terms. A truce held for a few days, but on September 9th, the frontiersmen rejected a surrender order and promised to fight to the death. And so began the longest-lasting siege of frontier history.

The Indians tried a variety of ruses, such as tricking the settlers with fake retreats, igniting flax and hurling it onto the cabin roofs, and beginning construction of an underground tunnel. September heat and drought complicated the defense. Fire spread across the tops of cabins. British artillery weakened the settler's confidence. Miraculously, at the last minute, rain began to fall. On the eighth day it poured, the Indians withdrew during the night and the next morning the Indian tunnel collapsed. The fort was saved.

The survival of Boonesborough has been called "one of the momentous incidents" in Kentucky history. Had siege warfare destroyed the fort, the Kentucky front would have been lost during the American Revolution. (*Madison County: 200 Years in Retrospect*, Ellis, Everman, Sears, 1985)

It may be that John Moore was not at Fort Boonesborough at the time of the September seige. It is known that he was in Illinois with George Rogers Clark during July. Susannah and the children most likely were in the fort during those trying days, provided they had made the journey to "Kentuck" previously. Susannah would have been loading guns for the men, and fighting the fires on the cabins roofs.

In the second year of the Revolution, George Rogers Clark was put in charge of the defenses of Virginia's Kentucky region. The "year of the bloody sevens," saw Indian war parties equipped with good English guns and plentiful ammunition, warm blankets of English wool, hatchets and scalping knives of English steel, stalking the frontier settlements. Raid after raid was set out from Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes, English posts in Illinois.

It was Clark's audacious plan to lead an army against these posts, to strike at the British jugular. Clark managed to convince Virginia's governor, Patrick Henry, who gave him what meager support he could. Clark had hoped for a force of up to a thousand men, but when he started out a year later the best he could muster was about 175 frontiersmen, enough for four small companies, one of whom was John Moore. (French Tipton Papers, Volume 5, page 67) Clark designated his small force the Illinois Regiment, because of their destination, but they were hardly more than a company. *Virginians in the Revolution*, page 561, lists John Moore as a Sgt. in Clark's Illinois Regiment. The "Illinois Country" encompassed the present states of Illinois and Indiana.

These men who lived on the frontier were a special breed, undisciplined, aggressive, rowdy, with their own brand of honor. There was hardly a man among them who had not lost a blood relative or friend to the hired savages of the British Lt. Col. Hamilton, whom they called the Hair-Buyer because of the bounty he paid for settler's scalps.

They began the expedition from an island in the Ohio River, a mile above the Falls of the Ohio, site of present-day Louisville. After safely negotiating the Falls, they made their way 300 miles downriver by flatboat, undetected. At the juncture with the Tennessee River, not far from present-day Paducah, Kentucky, they hid their boats, and with their scanty supplies on their backs plunged across prairie and forest on foot toward Kaskaskia.

Clark and his men found the fort indifferently guarded by local militia and stormed it at midnight on July 4, 1778, in an action so sudden that there were no casualties, and the commandant was captured in bed with his wife. The French inhabitants of Kaskaskia, the oldest settlement in the western country, were readily persuaded to transfer their allegiance to the Americans, as were those of Cahokia and Vincennes. The tiny Illinois regiment found themselves in complete control of the Illinois region. The control was temporary as Lt. Col. Hamilton, the British commander at Detroit, led a counter-expedition of 500 which, at the beginning of winter, recaptured Vincennes from the handful of soldiers Clark left behind. Hamilton planned mopping-up operations against the Americans to be carried out in the spring.

Clark formulated a bold, almost fool-hardy plan, a forced winter march with his remaining 170 men against Vincennes. In a February rain they set out on an incredible 180-mile trek over prairie and swamp. They marched and slept wet. For miles they waded waist-deep through flooded bottom land. The last two days they had no rations at all. This desperate gamble paid off. Feigning a much larger force, they surprised the garrison and

faked Hamilton into surrendering. As the double line of redcoats filed out of the fort, the mud-coated, famished Americans trudged in, too weary to grasp the symbolism of their feat. They had saved the West for the United States during the American Revolution. (*The American Heritage Book of the Pioneer Spirit*, pages 108-09, 1959)

George Rogers Clark dispatched a scout, William Myers, to make the 1,000 mile journey to Williamsburg, Virginia to report to Governor Patrick Henry the capture of Lord Henry Hamilton at Vincennes. Myers arrived at the little garrison at the Falls of the Ohio on April 4, 1779. Setting out for the journey along the Wilderness Road in the company of John Moore, the two were but four miles out when they were ambushed on Beargrass Creek by Huron Indians. Myers was killed and John Moore was taken captive. (*The Wilderness Road*, Robert L. Kinkaid, page 138) Obviously, John Moore escaped from his captors, or was ransomed, since he lived to see his children grown and married, dying in 1825.

Although some Indian attacks continued throughout the decade, the last major Indian raid occurred in 1782. Pioneers began claiming land further from Fort Boonesborough. By 1785, hundreds of settlers had built scattered houses along the banks of creeks, John Moore on the Buffalo Branch of Tate's Creek.

Kentucky settlers suffered through a terrible winter in 1779-80. The frontier settlements were frozen in, struggling to survive. The Kentucky River froze to a depth of two feet. Animals died, deer were not able to get food or water, even the buffalo starved. Wildlife was almost exterminated. The area was paralyzed from the middle of November until the latter part of February. Families on their way to Kentucky perished.

During this inflationary period of Virginia currency, corn was \$100 to \$150 a bushel, salt \$500 a bushel. Meat was so scarce it could hardly be obtained at any price. Settlers ate the horses and cattle which had frozen to death.

Despite these privations, John Moore apparently prospered, since he is shown in the 1887 List of Tithables as owning seven horses and eleven cattle.

The Index to Real Estate Conveyances in Madison County, Kentucky, reveals many land transactions in the name of John Moore. On July 6, 1790, John Moore bought 160 acres on the north side of Buffalo Fork of Tate's Creek, from Higgason Grubbs, his brother-in-law. (*Madison County, Kentucky, Deed Book A*, pages 237-39) This parcel of land cost 200 pounds, current money of Virginia.

Corn was the staple food for people and their animals. Farmers mashed, fermented and distilled it into a special blend, possible only in the Bluegrass region, with its water filtered through the limestone. Distilling corn was the best way of preserving and transporting it downriver for sale. Boats laden with distilled corn, tobacco, and farm produce took six weeks to reach New Orleans, and another month to return with pack animals laden with sugar, cloth, and other necessities.

Farmers raised, besides corn and tobacco, rye, oats, flax, and hemp for rope-making. They raised cattle, sheep, and hogs, and were interested in horses and racing, the first track being built in 1783.

The settlers were not much interested in establishing schools, libraries, or newspapers. They preferred social activities to intellectual development. They attended militia musters, political debates, barbecues, agricultural fairs, and public brawls. They came to Richmond, the county seat, on Court Day. The public square was used as an informal marketplace where anyone could sell or barter vegetables, fresh meat, tools, weapons, poultry, and livestock. Business was brisk on Saturdays and on Court Days. By 1810, Richmond boasted a population of 366.

There were few ministers and fewer churches on the Kentucky frontier. Circuit riders entered Kentucky in the 1780s. Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians claimed followers in the county by 1800. (*Madison County: 200 Years in Retrospect*, Ellis, Everman, Sears)

In the 1820 Census John Moore was reported to have ten slaves, a sign of prosperity. Also listed in the household with John and Susannah were two young white males. Since their own children were grown and married, with homes of their own, possibly these boys were grandsons?

John Moore made his will in October of 1807, naming his wife and sons, John Jr. and Reuben, as executors. John Moore had previously given Robert, John Jr. and Nancy (Moore) Million the land which he intended them to have, so they did not benefit from his will. To Reuben, his father bequeathed the land on which he lived. His daughter, Susannah, who was unmarried at the time the will was written, was to receive her choice of horses from her father's stock, also one bed and furniture, one cow and calf, and one saddle and bridle. His wife "should enjoy all the rest of the real estate and personal property" so long as she remained a widow. At her death, any estate, both real and personal, was to be divided between daughters Rachel Fox, Polly Milner, Henrietta Biggerstaff, Susannah Moore, and Grandchildren Samuel and John Biggerstaff, sons of deceased daughter, Sally Biggerstaff.

John's will was proved up on the 3rd day of October, 1825. John was probably in his seventies when he died, a good life span at that time.

John Moore found his way through endless forests, fought Indians, cleared the trees and raised a log cabin. He scratched crops in the dirt between stumps. Susannah bore her children in primitive conditions, and worked from dawn till dusk to see that they were fed and clothed. Doubtless she was stoic and courageous. The parents and children were likely to have been close-knit in the face of the hardships, dangers, and bitter deprivations they had faced together. Neighbors gathered for house-raisings and other frolics, but all remained individualists, cherishing democracy. These people were among the first real Americans.

CHILDREN OF JOHN AND SUSANNAH (GRUBBS) MOORE

The names of John and Susannah's children, taken from John's will (*Madison County, Kentucky Will Book D*, pages 115-16) were Robert, Nancy, John, Mary, Rachall, Sally, Henrietta, Reuben, and Susannah.

ROBERT MOORE'S wife was Mary Rolling, whom he wed December 28, 1791.

NANCY MOORE married, on December 28, 1791, Robert Million. Since Nancy and her brother, Robert, married on the same day, this was likely a double wedding.

JOHN MOORE'S spouse, if any, is unknown.

MARY MOORE, or Polly, as she was called, took Abraham Milner as her husband on May 8, 1798.

RACHALL MOORE married John Fox on the 28th Day of February, 1799.

SALLY MOORE took Moses Biggerstaff as her husband on April 4, 1803.

HENRIETTA MOORE, nicknamed Henny, was married to Aaron Biggerstaff on January 13, 1805. Most likely Aaron and Moses, who was the husband of Henny's sister, Sally, were brothers.

REUBEN MOORE took as his wife, Nancy Simmons, on August 14, 1805. The following chapter details the lives of this couple, our direct ancestors, more fully.

SUSANNAH MOORE wed Joshua Quinn on April 6, 1808.

(*Madison County, Kentucky Marriages, 1786-1822, Vockery*)