

# The Kentucky Land Grant System

(continued)

surveying guidelines. An act authorizing the printing and publishing of William Henderson's map was also passed by the Legislature. In 1821, lands which were not patented by the veterans were ordered sold at public auction if a minimum state price was met. Sales were to be held in Princeton and later in Waidborough. Documents available for researching this series of 9,308 patents include the receipt showing amount paid and the grant finalizing the patent. It is also possible to plat the exact location of the patent using the 1885 Loughridge map of the Jackson Purchase.

## —*South of Walker's Line Series*

Due to surveying error, the Kentucky Land Office became responsible for patenting lands in a small northern area of Tennessee north of the parallel 36 degrees and 30 minutes. The series includes 4,327 patents issued by Kentucky for lands in Tennessee.

## —*County Court Order Series*

All series of land patents were combined into one by the 1835 Act of the General Assembly establishing the county Court Order system. Under this series, counties sold warrants for unappropriated land within their boundaries at the rate of \$5.00 per 100 acres. Later legislation set the maximum acreage at 200 acres per warrant. Under the authorization of the warrant (or order), the county surveyor completes the survey description and plat drawing. The warrant and survey, along with affidavits declaring the land to be unappropriated to the "best knowledge of the surveyor and applicant," are then sent to Frankfort where the grant is issued. This series of over 70,000 land patents is the last to be researched, laminated, and microfilmed by the Kentucky Historical Society under a contract with the Land Office. The index for this grouping is also being computerized; this will provide access not only to survey and grant name, but also watercourse, time period, and county. A separate Warrants Index will list how the county warrants were used; this is particularly helpful when warrants are divided and used in several patents.

## **Key Points to Remember in Land Patenting**

—The only Military Warrants recognized in the Kentucky Land Grant system were for service in the French & Indian War and the Revolutionary War (by Virginia soldiers). No Military Warrants were used in Kentucky land patents for service in the War of 1812 or later wars.

—Follow the patent through step-by-step. Study the Warrant first, Entry if available, Survey Description & Plat, and then the Grant. This will help place the order of the transaction, particularly when numerous assignments have been made.

—Microfilm of the original documents is available on a limited basis. Some libraries restrict their holdings to copies of the Land Office Survey & Grant books; although these are extremely helpful in platting country patents, for example, warrants and miscellaneous papers, such as caveats and wills, are not included in those books. The Kentucky Historical Society and the Secretary of State's Land Office are the only Frankfort agencies housing complete documentation for the Kentucky Land Grant records.

—There is no "master patent map" available. Due to a shortage of Land Office staff, as well as the lack of a state surveying team, no patent map was made as patents were issued. There are, however, several historians on the county level who have accepted the challenge of mapping early land patents within their county or particular area. IT CAN BE DONE! (What is the status of your county? Have early patents been researched and platted?)

—Remember, Warrants & Surveys could be traded, sold, or reassigned anytime during the patenting process. Study both sides of each document to trace the order of assignments.

—Last, but definitely not least, all original records of Kentucky Land Grants are housed with the Office of Secretary of State in Frankfort. You are invited to inspect the documents anytime during regular working hours, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Due to the direct involvement of each Secretary of State since the 1960s, we are happy to report the documents are being preserved in bound volumes and microfilmed according to archival standards by the staff of the Kentucky Historical Society Micrographics Division. The Land Office will also be happy to work with researchers by phone if they have questions regarding the patenting system or need to order copies. Familiarize yourself with the Kentucky Land Grants—they may be just what you are needing to answer those land acquisition questions. We are ready to assist you in any way we can.

For further information, contact the Land Office, Secretary of State, Capitol Building, Frankfort, KY 40601-3493; (502) 564-3490.