

Adventures on the American Frontier

Resolute Men of the Illinois Country

Part Three

George Rogers Clark
Fights the British for America



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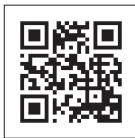
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After the French and Indian War, when the French had been forced to surrender the Illinois Country to the British and the Native Americans had been pushed out of the way, British-Americans began moving into the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. Soon the sound of the ax echoed throughout the heart of Kentucky.



One day in 1775, a boy sat alone in the Kentucky woods, roasting a wild duck on a stick over a campfire. He did not see the tall, red-haired young man who stood only a few feet away at the edge of the clearing.

“That smells good,” the watcher said, and the startled boy dropped the duck into the fire. He looked up and saw a big man dressed in deerskins.

“My name is George Rogers Clark,” the newcomer said. “Don’t let that duck burn.”

The boy, who was fifteen years old but



small for his age, rescued the duck. "My name is James Ray," he said. "What brings you here, Mr. Clark? Ain't nobody in these parts except for us folks at Harrod's."

"That's just where I'm going," said George. "I've been doing some surveying up along the Ohio River for the Ohio Land Company for two or three years now. I heard that William and James Harrod were out here in the Kentucky wilderness. I came to see how you brave fellows are doing, and to see if I can do anything to help you."

James looked up from the duck, which he was now removing from the stick. He saw that his visitor was eyeing it hungrily.

“Can I share it with you, Mr. Clark?” he asked politely. He held the little fowl toward his visitor. “Help yourself.”

George did just that. James, hungry from a day of hunting in the woods to get meat for the people of Harrodsburg, watched his food disappear. There was only a little meat left on the bones when at last the guest handed the duck back to James.



“I’m sorry,” George said. “I didn’t leave much for you, did I?”

“It’ll hold me until we get to the fort,” James said. He was too polite to tell the stranger how hungry he really was. When he had eaten every last scrap that was left on the duck’s bones, James put out his fire. He picked up a deerskin in which were the choice roasting pieces of meat that he was taking to Harrodsburg.

“I’ll carry that,” George told him. “Lead on, James.”