

Grayson County, KY Land Owned By George Washington

By Jerry Long
c.2024



The Leitchfield Gazette

The Leitchfield Gazette, Leitchfield, KY, Friday, 26 June 1931, p.1 & 8:

SURVEY OF LAND OWNED BY GEORGE WASHINGTON MADE

Additional Proof Uncovered Showing First President
of Land Owned 5,00 Acres In Grayson County

Allen P Cabbage representing in this county the George Washington Bicentennial Commission at Washington, has found many interesting facts concerning the two tracts of land which George Washington owned in Grayson county.

Marvin White from the office of Dr Willard Rouse Jillson, state geologist, Frankfort, has surveyed and mapped the two tracts of 2,000 and 3,000 acres each which are located in the western

part of Grayson county, bordering on the waters of Rough River. Mr. White is a native of Dundee in Ohio county just across Rough River.

The two tracts of land mapped adjoin the original 15,000-acre survey owned by David Leitch, for whom Leitchfield was named. William Porter owns an old map of the Leitch survey.

Location of the Washington land was made possible through the description given in the original deed, a copy of which Mr. Cabbage possesses. November 5 1798, George Washington bought from Henry Lee, of Strathford, Westmoreland County, Virginia, 5,000 acres of land on Rough River in Kentucky for L600, current money of Virginia.

Further evidence that the first President owned land in Grayson county is borne out in an old court order, the original of which is now owned by Virgil Davison, of Yeaman. The old court order granted James Landrum the privilege of erecting a dam in Rough River at Oldham's Ford. One acre of land was condemned by the court and Mr. Landrum was ordered to pay to the heirs of George Washington \$2.00 for the one-acre mill site.

The court order, made 15 years after Washington's death on December 14 1799 reads as follows:

STATE OF KENTUCKY, GRAYSON COUNTY COURT,
Monday December Term, 1814
December 14, 1814.

On the motion and petition of James Landrum for leave to build a water grist mill on his land. And that an acre of land being in this county belonging to George Washington's heirs be laid off and granted him for such a use.

The sheriff having returned a report agreeable to the order of the court which is as follows, to-wit:

We, the jury of the inquest held at Oldham's Ford on Rough Creek, on the land claimed by the heirs of George Washington, in Grayson County, on the 21st day of December, 1814, under the direction of a writ of aquadammum of James Landrum, after having been impaneled by the sheriff and sworn for the purpose of condemning one acre of ground on the Grayson County side of Rough Creek for an abutment of a water grist mill, etc., do say that after examining the stream of Rough Creek above and below, find that it will not injure no proprietor of land adjacent to said mill, mansion house, the office curtalege or gardens thereto immediately belonging, or orchards will not be overflowed, and that in our opinion the face of passage or ordinary navigation will not be obstructed, nor the holder of the present neighborhood cannot be annoyed by the stagnation of the water of said dam, four feet above a certain mark made by us for the height of the said dam.

Except one acre of land belonging to the heirs of George Washington for abutment for said mill, beginning at a small hickory about two rods from the water of said creek at a common stage immediately on the bank of said Rough Creek on the Grayson County side, opposite an elm on the other side; running thence down said creek thirteen and one-half rods to a sugar tree about two rods from a first bark, opposite a sycamore and about two rods below the upper part of an old fish dam; thence, running out so as to make one acre of land that the sum James Landrum, if he builds the said mill, pays the heirs of George Washington \$2.00.

Given under our hands and seals the day and date above stated:

John Oldham, Daniel Ashcraft, John Wilson, Robert Jack, James Wilson, Daniel McClure, Jacob Myer, John Deremiah, Phillip Turpin, John Shaw, Elisha Payton and Henry Turpin.

Ordered that leave be given said Landrum to build said mill upon his paying the heirs of George Washington two dollars a copy a test, EDWIN THOMAS Clerk Grayson County.

This day personally appeared John Oldham, sent at the request of Francis Landrum, before me Justice of Peace of Grayson County and after being duly sworn states as follows:

That the mill dam of James Landrum on Rough Creek, which he was one of the jury, condemned it to be four feet high from the top of the rock on the south side of the creek where the bank then was, making the dam about eight feet high.

Given under my hand this 20th day of November 1814 .

J. W. DEWEESE

Justice of Peace, Grayson County

A copy of a certificate filed in the writ of aquadamum of James Landrum attached.

EDWIN THOMAS

Clerk Grayson County Court

Other proof of the fact that the Father of Our Country was in possession of land in Grayson county is found in the following excerpt from Allen's History of Kentucky, page 144, published in 1872:

"Somewhere between 1777 and 1770 Gen. George Washington made a visit to Kentucky on a surveying expedition and made surveys in what are now Greenup and Lawrence counties for one John Fry. The patent for these lands was issued by the Crown of Great Britain in 1772. Upon the beginning corner of one of these surveys General Washington cut the initials of his own name. One of the surveys was on the Big Sandy River and the other on the Little Sandy. We have no very satisfactory account of this visit. We learn, however, from his will made in the year 1790, that he owned 5,000 acres of land in Kentucky, on Rough Creek, and that he disposed of the same by the will alluded to, valuing said land at \$1,0000 or \$2.00 per acre and regarding it as being more valuable on account of the abundance of iron ore on it."

Near Hites Falls on both sides of Rough River, one may find samples of iron ore, according to geologists.

There remains no doubt whatever in the minds of those acquainted with the facts but what Washington owned 5,000 acres of land in Grayson county.

The following Grayson county citizens own farms in the original 3,000-acre tract owned by George Washington: Virgil Davison, Hardin Porter, S. H. Decker, Charles Carter, W. B. Smith, W. A. Young, Rector Decker, Fred Cummings, Robert Hopper, Ted Beatty, Willie Decker, Sam Young, Jane Patterson, Grayson Wilson, Willie Porter, Ches Carter, Fon Young, Alex Oller, William Downey, Katie Geary, George Barton, Martin Decker, Henry Davidson and Charley Godsey.

The following own land in the 2,000-acre tract: Willie Porter , Less Young, Virgil Davison, Blumer Porter, James Rankin, Bud Sarver, Anderson Davidson, Hardin Porter, Alva Landrum, John Tunstall, J. W, Smith Heirs, Spurrier Porter, Crit Porter, Ernest Wilhelm and Green Brothers.



The Leitchfield Gazette

The Leitchfield Gazette, Leitchfield, KY, Thursday, 4 April 1940, p.4:

Father, Son Held Office Same Grayson Office 70 Years

(Prepared by Allen P. Cabbage, in 1937, and read before the Hardin County Historical Society.)

There is a section of land in Grayson County in and around what is known as Yeaman, which was once owned by George Washington. This is the only land that George Washington ever owned in Kentucky. It was my pleasure to have a part in locating the George Washington Kentucky lands. In the year 1932, which was the occasion of the George Washington Bicentennial Celebration, an effort was put forth to definitely establish the present location of all of the lands that George Washington ever owned. It was known that he once owned land in Kentucky, but the exact location was not known. Colonel Lawrence Martin, Director of the Division of Maps of the Library of Congress, was commissioned to locate the lands of George Washington. He wrote to Judge Samuel Wilson, of Lexington, Kentucky, and sent him a copy of the deed which was executed to George Washington for these lands, and the deed sets out that the lands are located in Jefferson County, Kentucky, between the waters of Rough Creek and Green River, which, of course, embraces a large territory. Judge Wilson sent this deed to me and asked me to assist him in locating the lands. The deed called for two tracts of land, containing 2,000 and 3,000 acres, respectively, and as soon as I read it I was convinced that it was all located in Grayson County. The deed calls to begin on the south side of Rough Creek, waters of Green River, 120 poles below the mouth of Short Creek. Rough Creek borders Grayson County on the north, and Short Creek flows into Rough Creek in Grayson County. Beginning 120 poles below the mouth of Short Creek I thought, would easily put the entire 5,000 acres within Grayson County. My opinion was further fortified by the fact that the deed also mentioned David Leitch's 15,000-acre survey, and I had run onto that same survey many times in abstracting land titles in Grayson County. In making the investigation I found a certified copy of an old court order in the handwriting of Edwin Thomas, County Court Clerk. I knew it was genuine because I know the care with which he did things. The court order is as follows:

State of Kentucky,
Grayson County Court,
Monday, December Term, 1814.
December 14 1814.

On the motion and petition of James Landrum for leave to build a water grist mill on his land. And that an acre of land being in this county belonging to George Washington's heir be laid off and granted him for such a use

The sheriff having returned a report agreeable to the order of the court which is as follows, to-wit:

We, the jury of the inquest held at Oldham's Ford on Rough Creek, on the land claimed by the heirs of George Washington, in Grayson County, on the 21st day of December, 1814, under the direction of a writ of aquadammum of James Landrum, after having been impaneled by the sheriff and sworn for the purpose of condemning one acre of ground on the Grayson County side of Rough Creek, for an abutment of a water grist mill, etc., do say that after examining the stream of Rough Creek, above and below, find that it will not injure no proprietor of land adjacent to said mill, mansion house, the office curtalege or gardens thereto immediately belonging, or orchards will not be overflowed, and that in our opinion the fare of passage of ordinary navigation will not be obstructed, nor the holder of the present neighborhood cannot be annoyed by the stagnation of the water of said dam, four feet above a certain mark made by us for the height of the said dam.

Except one acre of land belonging to the heirs of George Washington for abutment for said mill, beginning at a small hickory about two rods from the water of said creek at a common stage immediately on the hank of said Rough Creek on the Grayson County side, opposite an elm on the other side; running thence down said creek thirteen and one-half rods to a sugar tree about two roils from a first bank, opposite a sycamine and about two rods below the upper part of an old fish dam; thence, running out so as to make one acre of land that the said James Landrum, if he builds the said mill, pays the heirs of George Washington \$2.00.

Given under my hand and seals the day and date above stated.

John Oldham, Daniel Ashcraft, John Wilson, Robert Jack, James Wilson, David McClure, Jacob Myer, John Deremiah, Phillip Turpin, John Shaw, Elisha Payton and Henry Turpin.

Ordered that leave be given said Landrum to build said mill upon his paying the heirs of George Washington two dollars. A copy.

Attest. Edwin Thomas, Clerk Grayson County Court.

This day personally appeared John Oldham, sent at the request of Francis Landrum, before me Justice of Peace of Grayson County, and after being duly sworn states as follows:

That the mill dam of James Landrum on Rough Creek, which he was one of the jury, condemned it to be four feet high from the top of the rock on the south side of the creek where the bank then was, making the dam about eight feet high.

Given under my hand this 20th day of November 1814.

J. W. Deweese, Justice of Peace, Grayson County

A copy of a certificate filed in the writ of aquadamum of James Landrum attached. Edwin Thomas, Clerk Grayson County Court.

In Allen's History of Kentucky, page 144, published in 1872, we find mention of this land, and which states that George Washington by his will valued the land at \$2.00 an acre, and that he regarded it as being more valuable on account of the abundance of iron ore on it. This is consistent with the facts, as there are outcroppings of iron ore on the land, and immediately across Rough River from this land, in Ohio County, there is such an outcropping of iron ore that a hill there is known as "Iron Ore Hill." It would also be noted that the valuation placed on the land by George Washington is the same valuation that was allowed in the proceedings filed in the Grayson County Court, not many years after the death of George Washington. This land was acquired by George Washington from Henry Lee, generally known as "Light-horse Harry" Lee. The same lands were formerly owned by Dr. Alexander Skinner, who devised the land to Henry Lee. When the deed was executed by Lee to Washington, on November 5, 1798, this land was located in Hardin County, Kentucky, which had been formed from Nelson County in the year 1792. The deed refers to the land as being located in Jefferson County, Kentucky, but this was an error and came about by reason of the fact that when the lands were originally surveyed, in 1783 or 1784, the lands were then embraced in Jefferson County, and the deed to Washington made in 1798, retained the name of Jefferson County as given in the surveys, evidently overlooking the transformations which Jefferson County had undergone in the meantime. The deeds sets out as consideration 600 pounds current money of Virginia, but as a matter of fact the real consideration was the transfer by Washington to Lee of the famous horse "Magnolia," which Henry Lee had a great longing to own. On December 9, 1788 George Washington made this entry in his diary:

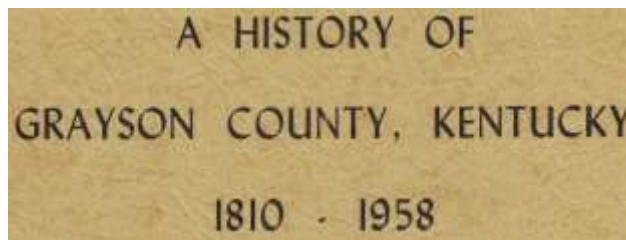
"Concluded my exchange after dinner today with Colo. Hy. Lee of Magnolia for 5,000 acres of Kentucky land.

On December 11, 1788 Lee wrote to Washington as follows:

It is probable I may take Magnolia in one or two days and send him to South Carolina. Then let me ask the favor of you furnishing me with his pedigree and age certified, and your bill of sale. The lands I pay for him I estimate at 500£.

Washington probably never visited those lands. On January 18, 1795 he wrote his nephew, George Lewis, asking him to try to locate these lands upon his contemplated visit to Kentucky the following spring. Whether George Lewis visited the lands is not known, but in 1797 General Alexander Spotswood did go upon the land and reported to Washington. After I had made my investigation as to the location of the lands in 1932, notwithstanding the fact that I was personally satisfied as to the location of the lands. I had a survey made by the State Geological Department, and that survey, a copy of which I have, definitely locates the entire 5,000 acres in what is now Grayson County.

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**A History of Grayson County, Kentucky, 1810-1958,
Duvall Morrison (Utica, KY: McDowell Publications, 1979) pp.6-9:**

Deeds of Geo. Washington's Grayson County Land

(1) All that tract or parcel of land, containing three thousand acres, lying and being in the County of Jefferson on the South side of Rough Creek, waters of Green River, together with the appurtenances thereunto belonging, which said tract of land is bounded as followeth, to wit, Beginning at a beech on the bank of Rough Creek, one hundred and twenty poles below the mouth of Short Creek, running thence South thirty-two degrees East, six hundred and ninety poles to two white oak and white ash, corner to David Leitch's fifteen thousand acres Survey, thence South fifty-eight degrees West five hundred and forty poles crossing the first South branch of Rough Creek below Short Creek at five hundred and ten poles, to two white oaks and black gum, thence North thirty-two degrees West twelve hundred and sixty poles to a beech on the bank of Rough Creek, sixty poles above the mouth of the second large South branch of the same below Short Creek, thence up with the several meanders of Rough Creek to the lower line of Andrew Woodrow's three hundred acre tract that includes the second falls of said Creek, then out South one hundred and forty poles to his corner, then up with his side line East three hundred poles to his Northeast corner, then North to the bank of Rough Creek, then up with the meanders thereof to the beginning.

(2) And also one other tract or parcel of land, with appurtenances, containing two thousand acres, lying and being in the county of Jefferson, aforesaid, on the side of Rough Creek, adjoining John Saunders' three thousand acre survey on the upper side thereof, and also his other two thousand acre survey at the Southwest corner thereof, and joining David Leitch's land on the north side of the seine, and bounded as followeth: Beginning at a beech, one hundred and twenty poles below the mouth of Short Creek, being also a corner to said three thousand acre survey, and on the bank of Rough Creek, running along the line of the same South thirty-two degrees East, two hundred and forty poles to two beeches and a gum, also a corner to said Leitch's survey, thence along the line thereof North fifty-seven degrees East four hundred and sixty poles crossing Short Creek at one hundred and twenty poles to a sugan tree, and two hickories, then along said Leitch's line North three hundred poles to three chestnut oaks in the line of said Saunders' other two thousand acre survey, then with the line thereof West forty-five poles to three white oaks, thence along another line thereof North eight degrees West two hundred and fifty poles to a beech, hickory, and ash, corner to the same, thence North fifty-two degrees West two hundred and fifty-five poles to a beech and ash at the upper end of the first narrows below the third falls of Rough Creek, and on the bank' thereof, thence down with the several meanders of the same to the beginning.

The actual deed from Henry Lee to George Washington is recorded in the Court of Appeals record, Deed Book pages 484-486 and transcribed as follows:

Ct. of App., D. B. "D". 484-488 - Deed dated 5th of November, 1798 - Henry Lee, of Stratford, in Westmoreland Co., Va., to George Washington, of Mount Vernon, in Fairfax Co., Va., consid. 600 pounds--current money of Virginia in hand paid.

This same land had been granted by the Commonwealth of Virginia (under the hand and seal of Patrick Henry, then governor of the same) to Alexander Skinner; both patents bearing date, the second day of December in the year one thousand, seven hundred and eight-five, and by him, the said Alexander Skinner, conveyed to the said Henry Lee, together with S., S.

Signed--Henry Lee (Seal)
Witnesses: Corbin Washington
Wm. Jett
H. L. Turner
T. Turner

The 5,000 acres of Grayson County land which was once owned by George Washington was owned in 1934 (according to Mr. Willard Rouse Jillson) by the following:

3,000 acre tract

Hardin Porter, Janie Patterson, W. T. Porter, Virgil Davidson, C. A. Carter, Chester Carrier, W. B. Smith, W. Hoffs, William Patterson, W. A. Young, Alex Oiler, A. F. Young, William Downey, Fred Cummings, Mrs. Kate Geary, Bob Hopper, Wayne Decker, Willie Decker, Sam Decker, Grayson Wilson, Henry Dawson, Dude Payton, Harvey Cummings, Sam Young, and Charlie Godsey.

2,000 acre tract:

Hardin Porter, Blemmer Porter, John Tunstall, J. W. Smith, (heirs) Jim Rankin, Bud Sarver, Crit Porter, Forest Wilhelm, and Green Brothers.

In making further investigation, Mr. Cabbage found a certified copy of an old court order which read as follows: State of Kentucky - Grayson County Court - Monday, December Term, 1814. - December 14, 1814. -- On the motion and petition of James Landrum for leave to build a water grist mill on this land, and that an acre of land being in this county belonging to George Washington's heirs be laid off and granted him for such use,

The sheriff haveing returned a report agreeable to the order of the court which is as follows, to-wit: We, the jury of the inquest held at Oldham's Ford on Rough Creek on the land claimed by the heirs of George Washington, in Grayson County, on the 21st day of December, 1814, under the direction of a writ of aquadammum of James Landrum, after having been impanel by the sheriff and sworn for the purpose of condemming one acre of ground on the Grayson County side of Rough Creek for an abutment of a water grist mill, etc., do say that after examining the stream of Rough Creek above and below, find that it will not injure any proprietor of land adjacent to said m: mansion house, the office curtalege or gardens thereto immediately belonging, or orchards will not be overflowed, and that in our opinion the face of passage of ordinary navigation will not be obstructed, nor the holder of the present neighborhood cannot be annoyed by the stagnation of the water of said dam, four feet above a certain mark made by us for the height of' the said dam.

Except one acre of land belonging to the heirs of George Washington for abutment for said mill, beginning at a small hickory about two rods from the water of said creek at a common stage immediately on the bank of said Rough Creek on the Grayson County side, opposite an elm on the other side; running thence down said creek thirteen and one half rods to a sugar tree about two rods from a first bank opposite a sycamore and two rods below the upper part of an old fish dam; thence, running out so as to make one acre of land that the said James Landrum, if he builds the said mill, pays the heirs of George Washington \$2.00.

Given under my hand and seals the day and date above stated. John Oldham, Daniel Ashcroft, John Wilson, Robert Jack, James Wilson, David McClure, Jacob Myer, John Deremiah, Phillip Turpin, John Snow, Elisha Payton and Henry Turpin.

Ordered that leave be given said Landrum to build said mill upon his paying the heirs of George Washington two dollars. C copy attest.

Edwin Thomas, Clerk, Grayson County Court.

This day personally appeared John Oldham, sent at the request of Francis Landrum before me, Justice of Peace of Grayson County, and after being duly sworn states as follows:

That the mill dam of James Landrum on Rough Creek, which he was one of the jury, condemned it to be four feet high from the top of the rock on the south side of the creek where the bank then was, making the dam about eight feet high.

Given under my hand this 20th day of November, 1814

J. W. Deweese, Justice of Peace, Grayson County – a copy of a certificate filed in the writ of aquadammum of James Landrum attached.

Edwin Thomas, Clerk of Grayson County Court.

In Allen's History of Kentucky, page 144, published in 1872, Washington's land was mentioned by which George Washington was said to value his Kentucky land at \$2. an acre, and that he regarded it as being more valuable on account of the abundance of iron ore on it. This is consistent with the facts, as there are outcroppings of iron ore on this land today.

This land was acquired by George Washington from Henry Lee. When the deed was executed by Lee to Washington on November 5, 1798, this land was then located in Hardin County, Kentucky, which had been formed from Nelson county in the year 1792. The deeds set out as consideration 600 pounds current money of Virginia, but as a matter of fact, the real consideration was the transfer by Washington to Lee of the famous horse "Magnolia," which Henry Lee had a great longing to own.

On December 9, 1788, George Washington made this entry in his diary:

"Concluded my exchange after dinner today with Col . Hy. Lee of Magnolia for 5,000 acres of Kentucky land." Washington probably never visited these lands. On January 18, 1795, he wrote his nephew, George Lewis, asking him to try to locate these lands upon his contemplated visit to Kentucky the following spring. Whether George Lewis visited the lands is not known, but in 1797, General Alexander Spotswood did go upon the land and reported to Washington. After Mr. Cabbage of Leitchfield made his investigations in 1932, he had a survey made by the State Geological Department, and that survey definitely located the entire 5,000 acres that George Washington owned in Kentucky to be in what is now Grayson County.



**Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 22 February 1959, p.1D
and Ohio County Messenger, Beaver Dam, KY, Friday, 13 March 1959:**

**Gen. Washington's Horse Trade
5,000 Acres In Grayson County
Belonged To The First President**

By Margaret Morgan, Messenger and Inquirer, Staff Reporter

Leitchfield, Ky. – World literature contains several outstanding bargains.

Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of red pottage. The bored student Faust traded his soul to the Devil for a life which was something less than scholarly. Early American settlers bought Manhattan Island for \$24 worth of colored cloth and trinkets.

A less lauded bargain came out of a horse trade George Washington made in 1788.

Henry "Lighthorse Harry" Lee, "famed as a Revolutionary cavalry officer, was a member of the dying Continental Congress. He owned, among other lands, a Kentucky Revolutionary War grant he had obtained from Dr. Alexander Skinner.

General George Washington was about to be unanimously elected first president of the United States.

Tradition has it that Lee had long coveted Washington's horse, Magnolia. The same stories say Lee was quite a tippler, and that he had tippled considerably one day when he and Washington were having dinner together.

"I'll give you all my grant Kentucky for Magnolia," Lee quoted as having said. Supposedly the general accepted the offer. On Dec. 9, 1788 Washington wrote in his diary, "Concluded my exchange after dinner today with Colo. Hy. Lee for Magnolia for 5,000 acres of Kentucky land."

On Dec. 11, 1788, Lee wrote Washington, "It is probable I may take Magnolia in one or two days and send him to South Carolina. Then let me ask the favor of you furnishing me with his pedigree and age, certified, and your bill of sale. The lands I pay for him I estimate at 500 Pounds."

Whether Lee ever got Magnolia's pedigree is not recorded, but ten years passed before Washington got the deed to his Kentucky acreage. Dated Nov. 5, 1798, it stated that the lands were in Jefferson County, Ky., as indeed they were in 1783 or 1784 when they were originally surveyed. Later, however, the land was considered a part of Nelson County, then of Hardin, Ohio, and finally of Grayson County.

Washington probably never visited his Kentucky land. On January j 18, 1795, he wrote his nephew, George Lewis, asking him to try to locate the lands on Lewis contemplated trip into the West in the spring.

Whether Lewis ever saw the land is not known, but in 1797 Gen. Alexander Spottswood visited the holdings and reported to Washington.

Allen's History of Kentucky, j published in 1872, says George Washington by his will valued the land at \$2 an acre, and that he regarded it as being more valuable on account of the abundance of iron ore on it.

That same valuation was placed on the land by a court order on the 15th anniversary of Washington's death, Dec. 14, 1814, in proceedings filed in Grayson County Court.

The court order granted James Landrum the privilege of erecting a grist mill on Rough River at Oldham's Ford. One acre of land was condemned by the court and Landrum was ordered to pay the heirs of George Washington \$2 for the one-acre mill site.

Landrum was the great-great-grandfather of P. H. Landrum, editor and publisher of the Ohio County News.

The mill was built just below Hite's Falls, in the community now known as Yeaman. The business was passed down to Landrum's son and grandson. The latter sold it to William Myrtle who operated the mill until 1867 when it was destroyed by a flood on Rough River.

Little remains of the grist mill except one millstone or, as the residents of Yeaman say, one corn bur, approximately a half mile down the river from Kentucky Highway 54.

The mill site became a part of the Ed Davison place, land now owned by W. C. Cummings. Virgil Davison of Yeaman owned the original court order. He took it to town with him one June day in 1936 and showed it to a friend. The friend asked if he could show it to another friend.

During the day Davison started to mount for the first time a Western horse he had just acquired. He lost his balance, fell, and fractured his skull. He died shortly after.

The original court order has not been seen by Davison's family since.

At one time Virgil Davison owned 1,000 acres of Washington's grant. His son, David, who shares today, Feb. 22, with Washington as a birthdate, owns a portion of it now. A large part of the acreage belongs to Green Brothers Estate, operated by Miss Jennie Green. Among other owners of large portions are Victor Young and Mike Porter.

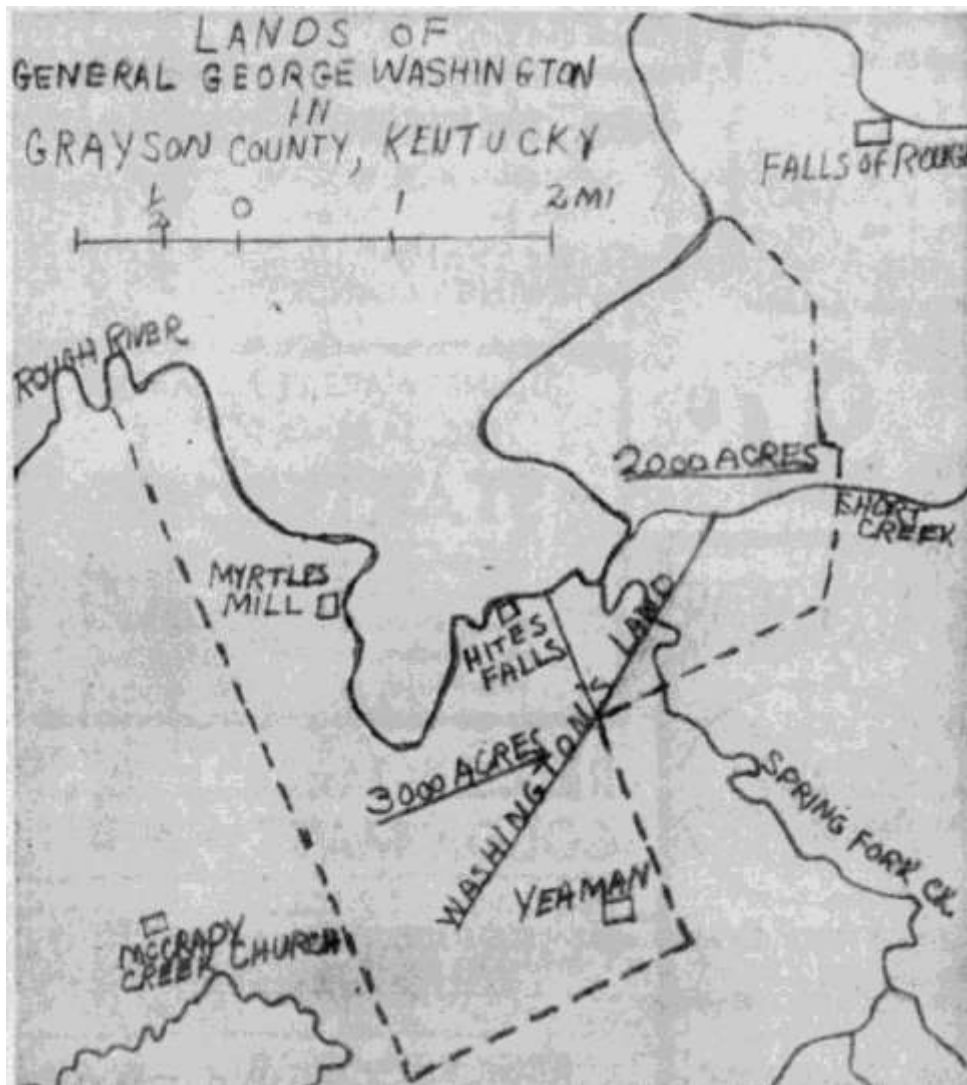
In 1931 Allen P. Cabbage of Leitchfield represented Grayson County on the Washington Bicentennial Commission and in that capacity compiled all the facts he could locate concerning the Washington lands. He has recorded other bits of history of Grayson County over the years. Today he lies seriously ill at Norton Memorial Infirmary, Louisville.

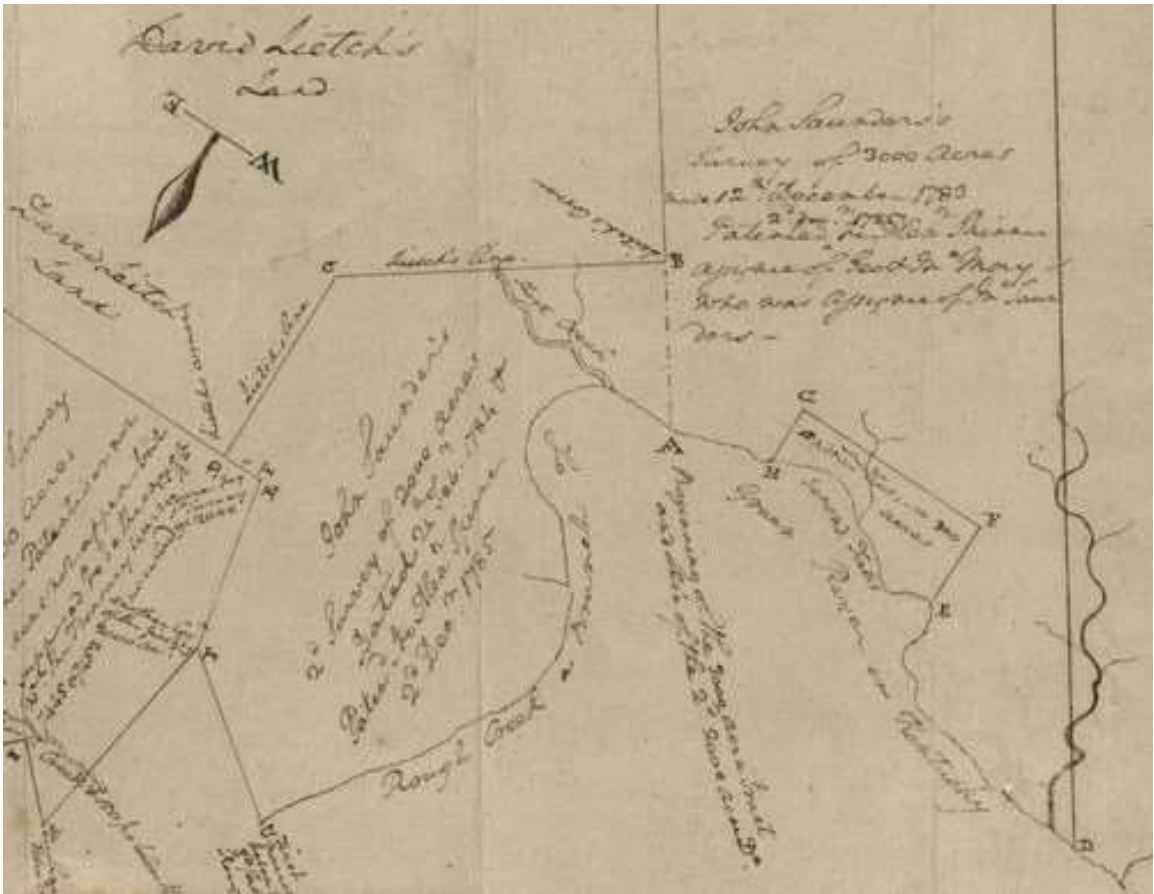
Marvin White, a native of Dundee in Ohio County, working out of the office of Dr. Willard Rouse Jillson, state geologist, surveyed and mapped the two tracts of 2,000 and 3,000 acres respectively in 1931.

More recently Duvall Morrison, a teacher of social studies at Caneyville School, has delved into all records he could locate at Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green and Leitchfield and has completed the manuscript of a history of Grayson County. In the history he tells of Washington's and Lee's horse trade.

Neither Washington, his heirs, nor more recent owners of the 5,000 acres have found iron ore in sufficient quantities for mining.

Still, with or without the iron ore, it is doubtful if the rolling, creek and river-bottom, partially timbered acreage could be bought today for the price of a horse, even for a top money-winner.





Part of John Filson's 1784 map of Kentucky. George Washington's 5,000 acres is at bottom between Rough Creek and Green River.



The Leitchfield Gazette

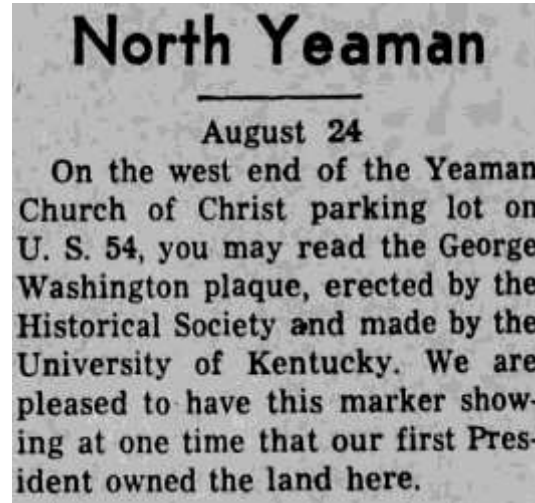
The Leitchfield Gazette, Leitchfield, KY, Wednesday, 29 July 1964, p.1:

WILL ERECT MARKER
 W. A. Wentworth, chairman, Kentucky Historical Marker Program, announces that a marker for the George Washington land in western Grayson County soon will be ready for erection.



The Leitchfield Gazette

The Leitchfield Gazette, Leitchfield, KY, Wednesday, 26 August 1964, p.6:



Washington's Land Historical Marker

Kentucky Historical Highway marker, number 212, is located west of Yeaman Church of Christ on Kentucky Highway 54 in Grayson County. It marks five thousand acres of land owned by George Washington in present-day Grayson County. The marker was installed on August 20, 1964. The marker reads:

Washington's Land

Filson's 1784 map of "Kentucke" showed "abundance of iron ore" here. General A. Spotswood visited area in 1797 and reported to George Washington, who purchased tract of 5,000 acres, Nov., 1798. His death, 1799, came before he could visit or develop the land.



Ohio County News, Hartford, KY, Thursday, 26 December 1976,
Centennial Edition, Part III, pp.4-5 & 8:

Washington once owned Ohio-Grayson
county land - traded horse for it

By Nina Schroader, Ohio County News

George Washington in 1770 owned 40,000 acres of land and had traveled as far west as Ohio searching for this good land. He never saw the land but in 1798 one year before his death, Washington received the deed to 5,000 acres of land for which he had traded his famous Arabian Stallion, Magnolia in Kentucky 10 years before receiving the deed.

This land lies mostly In Grayson County with a bottle neck along Rough River with a high hill known as "Iron Ore Hill" in Ohio County. Several Ohio Countians are heirs or will be heirs to the land.

George Washington's father, Augustine Washington, spent most of his time developing an iron works, but died in 1743 almost a half century before Washington traded for the land believed to be rich in iron.

Perhaps his knowledge and background caused him to become interested in the trade with Henry (Lighthorse Harry) Lee for the land. It was also Henry Lee who summed up the way Americans felt about Washington with "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." It was when Washington was a young surveyor that he began to buy valuable land and in 1750 he owned 1,500 acres.

Henry Lee, the famed revolutionary officer owned the War grant he had obtained from Dr. Alexander Skinner, a surveyor who possibly acquired it for surveying fee. Lee had always wanted the famed white stallion of Washington who was about to become president. While "tipsy" following dinner Lee offered General Washington the land for the horse. On December 9, 1788, Washington wrote in his diary "concluded my exchange after dinner with Hy. Lee for Magnolia for 5,000 acres of Kentucky land.

Lee estimated the worth of the lands at 500 pounds, but later the deed made in 1798 set out 600 pounds current money of Virginia as the real consideration.

Washington on January 18, 1795 wrote his nephew, George Lewis asking him to try to locate the lands on his contemplated trip into the west in the spring. It is not known if Lewis ever visited the land but in 1797, General Alexander Spotswood visited the holdings and reported to Washington. History of Kentucky said Washington in his will valued the land at \$2 per acre and he regarded it as being more valuable on account of the abundance of iron ore on it. That same value was placed upon the land 15 years after Washington's death, December 14, 1814 in proceedings in Grayson County Court.

Another tale of the trade for the land comes from Joe Creason's Kentucky column In the Courier-Journal several years ago when Mary Brame, a Mayfield teacher, wrote that it was because of disappointment in Magnolia that he was willing to trade him to Light Horse Harry Lee. Her story is that Magnolia had been beaten in a race by Thomas Jefferson's fastest horse.

No iron ore has ever been extracted from the hill and tales are that very little ore and poor quality is there. However the Ohio County hill is called Iron Ore Hill and is owned by Nadine Muffett, a descendant of Ed Davison.

James Landrum, great great grandfather of Percy H. Landrum, Hartford, requested by order of his father, Francis Landrum, Grayson County Court to issue an order for leave to build a water grist mill on his land and that an acre of land being in Grayson county belonging to George Washington heirs be laid off and granted him for such a use. The mill was later known as Myrtle's Mill and was located on Rough River just below Hite's falls in the community of Yeaman. The business was passed down to Landrum's son, Frank Landrum and to his grandson, Tom man. The business was passed down to Landrum's son Frank Landrum and to his grandson, Tom Landrum. The mill was later sold to William Myrtle, who operated the mill until 1867 when it was

destroyed by a flood on Rough River. Little remains of the grist mill except one millstone or as residents say, one corn buhr about a half mile down the river from Highway 54. The mill site became a part of the Ed Davison place, which in 1959 was owned by W. C. Cummings. Today, it is owned by George Lewis.

Virgil Davison of Yeaman owned the original "Sheepskin" court order. He took it to Leitchfield with him in 1936 and showed it to a friend. The friend asked if he could show it to another person. During the day, Davison mounted a wild Western horse he had purchased. He lost his balance, fell and fractured his skull and died shortly thereafter. The original court order has not been found to this day by the Davison family. At one time, Virgil Davison, owned 1,000 acres of the ground. His son, David Davison, father of Mrs. Rolla Richards, Jr., No Creek still owned a portion, a part known as the Alum hill from which runs alum water. This area because of its high wooded cliffs is also known as Buzzard's roost and is owned by Elliott C. Porter.

Today four families own the 5,000 acres, a portion of the Col. Green estate obtained through squatter's rights at Falls of Rough, now owned by Mrs. Patrick O'Neill, the Porters, Harry, Mike and Elliott C., Spurrier and Charlie Porter, David Davison and Victor Young of Leitchfield, all obtaining their land through inheritance.

Jack Porter, great, great grandfather of Harry, Mike and Elliott C., Blemmer and Mrs. Lucy Cummings, purchased the unsold land of the Washington survey from the Washington heirs, the cost unknown. The land was divided into a 3,000 acre tract and a 2,000 acre tract with Jack Porter getting practically all the 2,000 acres. Three of the five Jack Porter descendants live on the land. A copy of the deed signed by Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia to Lee from Skinner dated 1781 is owned by Harry Porter.

When the deed was executed by Lee to Washington in 1798, the land was located in Hardin County, which had been formed from Nelson County, in 1792. The deed refers to the land being in Jefferson County, Kentucky but according to the late Allen Cabbage, Leitchfield attorney, in an article in the Leitchfield Gazette in 1940, this is incorrect. Cabbage was commissioned on the bicentennial of George Washington's birth date in 1932 to tract the exact boundaries of the Washington land. When the lands were originally surveyed in 1783 or 1784, the land was in Jefferson County and the deed to Washington made in 1798 retained the name of Jefferson County as given in the surveys, overlooking the transformation which had taken place.

The Porters and their families live on the historic rich bottom land and wooded hillsides with many by-gone day reminders of their ancestors. The antiques of ancestors furnish the century old homes. They recall tales of bygone days and of the land. One of the Porter boys sneaked a gossip tale about an illegitimate child which Washington fathered in Posey-County, Indiana. He, however has no authentic written proof that this was true.

The family holds a bill of sale for the purchase of an eight year old negro girl for which they paid \$300. She was purchased to take care of Harry, Michael and Elliott's grandfather's crippled sister, Aunt Polly. According to the story, the young girl slept much of the time and they had a string tied to her toe and whenever she was needed, they would pull the other end of the string to awaken her.

Many Ohio Countians including Mrs. Buda Patton, Fordsvllle, Mrs. W. B. Neal, Fordsvllle, Mrs. Rolla Richards, Hartford, Betty Davison, Mrs. Robert Muffett, Charles Edward Davison, Davison Station, Loretta Davison, Centertown, Mrs. Nadine Muffett, Mrs. Mary Davison Tuttle, Mrs. Elizabeth Davison Daniel, Davison Station, Mrs. Marjorie Probus, Beaver Dam, and Blackman Davison, Davison Station, and their families all have ancestral ties with the George Washington land.

It is doubtful if ever again even an acre of the land will be traded for a nag unless it is a paying winner. The cheapest value of the land today would be \$500,000.



Historical Marker is located on Highway 54 which passes through the Kentucky land in Grayson County once owned by George Washington. Right: Harry C. Porter holds the framed deed executed by Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia, from George Washington heirs.



Land of the George Washington survey with the center hill in the background being "Iron Ore Hill" in Ohio County.

