



Battle of Boyd's Creek

Stephen Holston Chapter,
TENNESSEE SAR

CONTENTS

Where is Boyd's Creek?	2
The Battle of Boyd's Creek	3
Monument to the Battle	5
Partial List of Pensioners Who Fought at the Battle of Boyd's Creek	6

WHERE IS BOYD'S CREEK?

Boyds Creek

Unincorporated community



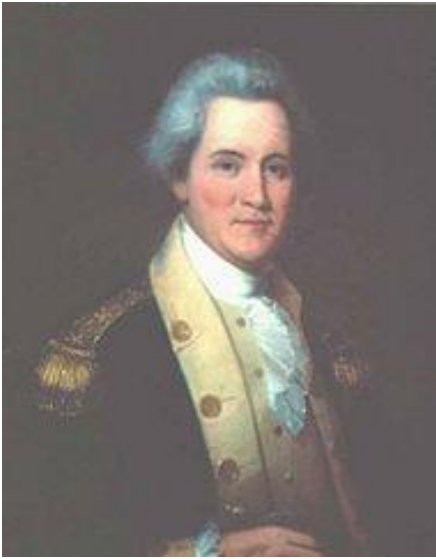
Coordinates: [35°55'24"N 83°39'33"W](#)[35.92333°N 83.65917°W](#)Coordinates:
[35°55'24"N 83°39'33"W](#)[35.92333°N 83.65917°W](#)

<u>Country</u>	<u>United States</u>
<u>State</u>	<u>Tennessee</u>
<u>County</u>	<u>Sevier</u>
<u>Elevation</u>	899 ft (274 m)
<u>Time zone</u>	<u>Eastern (EST) (UTC-5)</u>
• <u>Summer (DST)</u>	<u>EDT (UTC-4)</u>
<u>ZIP codes</u>	37876
<u>GNIS feature ID</u>	1314721 ¹¹

Boyds Creek is an unincorporated community in Sevier County, Tennessee, United States. It is named for a small southward-flowing tributary of the French Broad River of the same name, which itself derives its name from a Virginian trader, killed by a band of Cherokee Indians, whose body was thrown into the stream.

THE BATTLE OF BOYD'S CREEK

Excerpted from *The ANNALS of TENNESSEE to the END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY*. G. M. Ramsey, Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia, 1853, pp. 261-265



SEVIER'S CHEROKEE EXPEDITION THE BATTLE OF BOYD'S CREEK

“Whilst the volunteers were being enrolled and equipped in sufficient numbers for the magnitude of the campaign he contemplated, SEVIER put himself at the head of about one hundred men, principally of Captain RUSSELL'S and Captain GUESS'S companies, with whom he set out in advance of the other troops.

The second night this party camped upon Long Creek. Captain GUESS was here sent forward with a small body

of men to make discovery. On ascending a slight hill, they found themselves within forty yards of a large Indian force, before they discovered it. They fired from their horses and retreated to SEVIER'S camp. The Indians also fired, but without effect. SEVIER prepared his command to receive a night attack. Before day, Captain PRUETT reinforced him after a rapid march, with about seventy men. Thus reinforced, SEVIER next morning pursued his march, expecting every minute to meet the enemy.

When they came to the point at which the spies had met and fired upon the Indians, they found traces of a large body of them. They had, in their hasty retreat, left one warrior who had been killed the evening before by the spies. The pursuit was continued vigorously by the troops, who crossed French Broad at the Big Island and encamped on Boyd's Creek.

The next day, early in the morning, the advance guard under the command of Captain STINSON, continued the march, and at the distance of three miles found the encampment of the enemy and their fires still burning. A reinforcement was immediately ordered to the front, and the guard was directed if it came up with the Indians, to fire upon them and retreat, and thus draw them on. Three-quarters of a mile from their camp, the enemy fired upon the advance from an ambuscade. It returned the fire and retreated, and, as had been anticipated, was pursued by the enemy till it joined the main body. This was formed into three divisions: the centre commanded by Col. John SEVIER, the right wing by Major Jesse WALTON, and the left by Major Jonathan Tipton.

Orders were given that as soon as the enemy should approach the front, the right wing should wheel to the left, and the left wing to the right, and thus enclose them. In this order were the troops arranged when they met the Indians at Cedar Spring, who rushed forward after the guard with great rapidity, till checked by the opposition of the main body. Major WALTON with the right wing wheeled briskly to the left, and performed the order which he was to execute with precise accuracy. But the left wing moved to the right with less celerity, and when the centre fired upon the Indians, doing immense execution, the latter retreated through the unoccupied space left open between the extremities of the right and left wings, and running into a swamp, escaped the destruction which otherwise seemed ready to involve them.

The victory was decisive. The loss of the enemy amounted to twenty-eight killed on the ground and very many wounded, who got off without being taken. On the side of SEVIER'S troops not a man was even wounded. The victorious little army then returned to the Big Island—afterwards called Sevier's Island—and waited there the arrival of reinforcements that promised to follow.

“This prompt collection of troops, and rapid expedition of SEVIER, saved the frontier from a bloody invasion. Had he been more tardy, the Indians would have reached the settlements, scattered themselves along the extended border, driven them into stations, or perhaps massacred them in their cabins and fields. Their force was understood to be large and to be well armed.”

Another narrative of this engagement gives further details:

“The Indians had formed in a half-moon, and lay concealed in the grass. Had their stratagem no been discovered, their position, and the shape of the ground, would have enabled them to enclose and overcome the horsemen. Lieutenant LANE and John WARD had dismounted for the fight, when SEVIER, having noticed the semi-circular position of the Indians, ordered a halt, with the purpose of engaging the two extremes of the Indian line, and keeping up the action until the other part of his troops could come up. LANE and his comrade, WARD, remounted, and fell back upon SEVIER without being hurt, though fired at by several warriors near them. A brisk fire was, for a short time, kept up by SEVIER's party and the nearest Indians. The troops behind, hearing the first fire, had quickened their pace and were coming in sight. James RODDY, with about twenty men, quickly came up, and soon after the main body of the troops.

The Indians noticed this reinforcement and closed their lines. SEVIER immediately ordered the charge, which would have been still more fatal, but that the pursuit led through a swampy branch, which impeded the progress of the horsemen. In the charge, SEVIER was in close pursuit of a warrior who, finding that he would be overtaken, turned and fired at him. The bullet cut the hair of his temple without doing further injury. SEVIER then spurred his horse forward and attempted to kill the Indian with his sword, having emptied

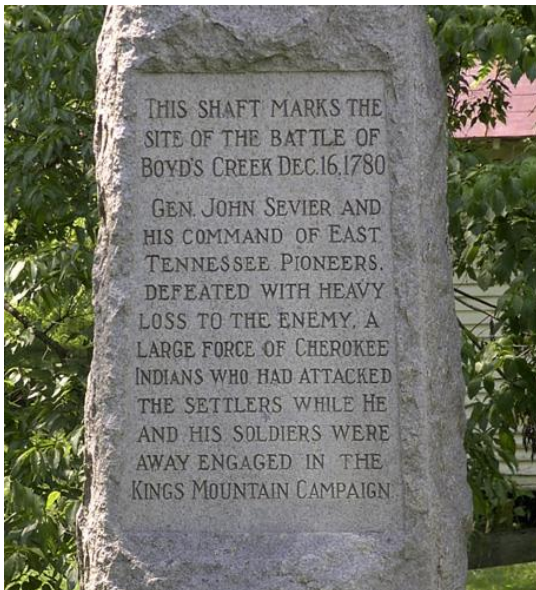
his pistols in the first moment of the charge. The warrior parried the licks from the sword with his empty gun.

The conflict was becoming doubtful between the two combatants thus engaged, when one of the soldiers, rather ungallantly, came up, shot the warrior, and decided the combat in favour of his commander. The horse of Adam SHERRILL threw his rider, and, in the fall, some of his ribs were broken. An Indian sprang upon him with his tomahawk drawn. When in the act of striking a ball from a comrade's rifle brought him to the ground, and SHERRILL escaped. After a short pursuit, the Indians dispersed into the adjoining highlands and knolls, where the cavalry could not pursue them. Of the whites not one was killed, but three seriously wounded.

“This battle of Boyd's Creek has always been considered as one of the best fought battles in the border war of Tennessee. Major Tipton was severely wounded. Besides the officers and men already mentioned as having participated in it, there were Capt. Landon CARTER, James SEVIER, the son, and Abraham SEVIER, the brother of John SEVIER, Thomas GIST, Abel PEARSON, James HUBBARD, Major Benj. SHARP, Captain Saml. HANDLY, Col. Jacob Brown, Jeremiah JACK, Esq., Nathan GAUN, Isaac TAYLOR and George DOHERTY.”

END

MONUMENT TO THE BATTLE



PARTIAL LIST OF PENSIONERS WHO FOUGHT AT THE BATTLE OF BOYD'S CREEK

Alexander, William - Pension #S1785

Brown, Jacob - Pension #W333

Burchfield, Robert Pension #R1444

Carter, Landon - Pension #W900

Dodson, John - Pension #S2518

Doherty, George - Pension #S1807

Ferrill, Smith - Pension #S1513

Gann, Nathan - Pension #S1820

Gist, Joseph - Pension #W7517

Gist, Thomas - Pension #S1762

Handly, Samuel - Pension #S1911

Hardin, Benjamin - Pension #S32293

Hill, Abraham - Pension #S15890

Jones, Darling - Pension #W7922

Lane, Isaac - Pension #6137

Pearce, James - Pension #W5529

Pearson, Abel - Pension #S3661

Riggs, Reuben - Pension #45880

Robertson, William - Pension #S4790

Sample, Samuel - Pension #S1719

Sevier, Abraham - Pension #S1589

Sevier, James - Pension #S45889

Sevier, John - Pension #W6011

Smith, William - Pension #S1723

Stevenson, James - Pension #S4009

Taylor, Isaac - Pension #W6236

Tipton, Jonathon - Pension #W1098

Turnley, George - Pension #S21545

Weaver, Samuel - Pension #S3516

Williams, James - Pension #S32607

Wilson, John - Pension #W6540

Wilson, Joseph - Pension #S3569

Wilson, William - Pension #W2218