Introduction to Kentucky Land Records

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Land Resources

**Kentucky Land Office**

The Secretary of State's office is the place to start when researching Kentucky land acquisitions and seeking information about Kentucky's cities and counties.

In Kentucky, land is allocated via the patenting process. The Kentucky Secretary of State's office is the repository for all records pertaining to patents issued within the Kentucky boundary, including those issued by the state of Virginia prior to Kentucky's statehood in 1792. This website contains searchable databases and information regarding military warrants issued for service in the French and Indian War, Lord Dunmore's War and the Revolutionary War; non-military warrants and the resulting patents and a number of other databases.

You can also find on this website information about Kentucky cities, including filings since 1942, classification, incorporation date, and status.

For additional information about Kentucky land records and related topics, please visit the Land Office's [Online Resources](#) page, which houses materials that will aid researchers in their study of the Kentucky land patenting process and Land Office databases.

If you would like to obtain copies of records maintained by the Land Office, please print and return or submit online a Land Office Order Form. Prepayment is not required; an invoice will be included when your order is returned to you.

The Land Office would love to hear from you. Please feel free to contact us about your research.

- phone: (502) 564-3430
- email
- mail: Office of the Secretary of State Land Office 700 Capital Ave., Ste. 80 Frankfort, KY 40601

The Office of the Secretary of State is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., ET.
• The Kentucky Land Grants: a systematic index to all of the land grants recorded in the State Land Office in Frankfort, KY by Willard Rouse Jillson

• Available on Ancestry.com
Land Patenting Process

- **Warrant(s)**
  - Authorize surveys to be made

- **Entries**
  - Reserves land for patenting

- **Survey**
  - Actual field survey describing metes and bounds

- **Governor’s Grant**
  - Finalize patent and conveys title to the individual
Warrants

• Identify how much land to survey
• The reason for the warrant’s issuance
• Date of issuance
• Name of warrant purchaser or recipient
• Do not identify land location

• Could be sold, traded, or reassigned
  – in whole or part
• Various types of warrants
  – Preemption
  – Treasury
  – Settlement
  – Finding of Salt
  – Making of Roads
Entries

• Filing is made in County Surveyor’s Entry Book
  – Reserves the land for patenting
• Notations may list the following
  – Date of Entry
  – Name of the person
  – Type of warrant used
  – Location of the land to be surveyed
    • Including closest watercourse, if known
• Protected applicants claims until surveyors plotted the tract
Surveys

- Survey certificate includes
  - Plat drawing
  - Description of the property

- Surveys could be
  - Sold
  - Traded
  - Reassigned

- Check the back of the survey document for possible assignments

- Depict the tract of land being patented
February 1778

Surveyed for Thomas Boone

800 acres of land by virtue of a treasury warrant No. 6324 July 20th, 1772 Situated lying and being in the County of Fayette about 5 miles Nearly West from the upper blue lick at an old camp made by Daniel and Edwar Boone and bounded as follows vizt beginning at A a buckeye and hackberry thence North 400 poles crossing a branch to B a Walnut ash and sugar tree thence West 320 poles to C a sugar tree and linn thence South 400 poles to D a buckeye and white ash thence East 320 poles to the beginning.

Samuel Boone and 
Daniel Morgan Boone and 

Chinnin. Daniel Boone

Survey 6750

## Surveying Measurements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Equivalent in Feet or Inches</th>
<th>Equivalent in Rods, Links, Squares, Miles, Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 pole or rod</td>
<td>16.5 feet or 25 links</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 link</td>
<td>0.66 feet or 7.92 inches</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 chain</td>
<td>100 links, 4 rods, or 66 feet</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 chains</td>
<td>1 miles, 320 rods, 1760 yards, or 5280 feet</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 acre</td>
<td>10 sq. chains, 160 sq. rods, 4840 sq. yard, or 43,560 sq. feet</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 square mile</td>
<td>1 section of land or 640 acres</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township</td>
<td>36 sq. miles (36 mile sq. sections)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grants

• Issuance of the governor’s grant finalizes the land patenting transaction
• Includes the following
  – Names
  – Previous assigns
  – Type of warrant used
  – Warrant number
  – Date of Survey
  – Exact location
  – Grant date
  – Governor’s name
KY Land Patent Series

- **Virginia Series**
  - Grants issued prior to 1792

- **Old Kentucky Series**
  - Grants issued from 1792-1815

- **South of Green River**
  - Grants issued from 1795 forward

- **Tellico Series**
  - Grants in southeast Kentucky

- **Kentucky Land Warrant Series**
  - Grants from 1815 forward

- **South of Walkers Line Series**
  - Grants from 1820 forward

- **West of Tennessee River Military Series**
  - Grants from 1821 to 1828

- **West of Tennessee River Series**
  - Grants from 1822-1900

- **County Court Order Series**
  - Grants from 1835 to present date
Key Points to Remember*

*Handout will be available for download at the end of the presentation.
Kentucky Deed Records

- Document residence
- Migration
- Heirs
- Neighbors
- Financial Status
- Relationship / Marriage

- Could be filed in any court of record
  - Including the Supreme Court of the District of Kentucky (prior to 1792
  - Court of Appeals
  - Court of Quarter Sessions
  - District Courts
  - Circuit Courts
  - County Courts
Unique Filing System

• Indexes
  – Check both grantor and grantee (*grantee pay the fee)
  – H for Heirs of ………
  – S for Settlement of ……..
  – W for Will of ……….
  – C for Commissioner …….

• Check both First and Last Names
  – Especially if the first name is also a surname
Holding and Transmitting Title without a Deed

- Owning land by virtue of a land grant
  - Not necessary to also hold a deed
  - Grant was in place of the deed

- Land by Will
  - Not necessary when land was sold, given, or devised via a will to a Son, Daughter, or Spouse
  - Heirs kept the property, ownership could be retained for generations without having a deed made
Deeds of Partition and Commissioners Deeds

- Estate needs to be settled or partitioned among heirs
- May be contained in a separate deed book
- Tax records may be helpful
- Commissioners appointed by the court
- C for Commissioner
Availability of Deed Records

• By County
• Indexed by both Grantor and Grantee
• [http://kdla.ky.gov/researchers/Pages/courthousedisasters.aspx](http://kdla.ky.gov/researchers/Pages/courthousedisasters.aspx)
Any Questions

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