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WAR OF 1812
1812 · 1815
BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION
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Kentucky's War of 1812:
Gov. Joseph Desha

The Kentucky Historical Society's historical marker 1878 in Mason County commemorates Gov. Joseph Desha, a War of 1812 veteran.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1768, Desha's family lived briefly in Kentucky before moving to Tennessee. Desha soon returned to Kentucky and settled in Mason County. A farmer, he also had a varied political career, serving in the Kentucky House, the Kentucky Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Also active in the Kentucky Militia, Desha fought in several campaigns against Native Americans and served in the War of 1812. After the war, he continued his political career and became governor in 1824. His gubernatorial term, however, was marked with controversy. When Desha's son was sentenced to hang for murder, the governor pardoned his son, for which he was widely criticized.

Desha died in 1842 and was buried in Georgetown.

Pictured: Gov. Joseph Desha, a War of 1812 veteran. Image courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society.

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