

Surveys

The third step in land patenting is the survey. The survey certificate includes a plat drawing and a description of the property. Surveys could be traded, sold, or reassigned any time during the patenting process. Researchers should check the back of the survey document for possible assignments.

The Jackson Purchase is the only area in Kentucky mapped in ranges, townships, and sections. The remainder of the state used the metes and bounds system. 'Metes' defines distance, usually in poles. 'Bounds' defines the next corner or point. Trees, stakes or rocks are frequently cited in the survey description. Each survey includes the following information:

Name of person having survey made

County in which land is located

Type and identification number of warrants along with previous owner of warrant, if applicable.

Nearest watercourse

Metes & Bounds description, often includes adjacent property owners (joiners)

Date of survey

Signature of surveyor (DS = Deputy Surveyor; SFC = Surveyor Fayette Co.)

Names of surveying party (CC or CM = Chain Carriers or Chainmen Mk = Marker of trees or corners; Hk = Housekeeper); Director or Pilot of Survey (usually the Housekeeper)

The back of the survey may include assignments, the patent number, and the date of grant issuance.

Surveying Measurements:

1 pole or 1 rod = 16.5 feet or 25 links

1 link = 0.66 feet or 7.92 inches

1 chain=100 links, 4 rods or 66 feet

80 chains = 1 mile, 320 rods, 1760 yards or 5280 feet

1 acre = 10 sq. chains, 160 sq. rods, 4840 sq. yards, or 43,560 sq. feet

1 square mile = 36 sq. sections or 640 acres

Township = 36 sq. miles (36 mile sq. sections)

Surveys depict the tract being patented . The surveyor may include notations of historical interest. For example, on June 3, 1785, Daniel Boone, deputy surveyor of Fayette County, plotted a tract for John Ellis "by virtue of a certificate granted by the commissioners on account of corn made in the year 1776."

Under the Virginia Land Law of 1779, a Fincastle/Kentucky County, Virginia, resident prior to January 1, 1778 could purchase a 400 acre Certificate of Settlement if he or she had built a cabin or planted a crop. An additional 1,000 acres adjacent to the settlement tract could be patented by purchasing a Preemption Warrant.

The Jackson Purchase in Western Kentucky was mapped in townships, ranges and sections by William Henderson in 1820.

Surveyors and engineers were among Kentucky's first historians. Countless entries and survey descriptions include notations and drawings of great importance to the history of the Commonwealth. The Wilderness Road (or Old Trace), for example, is depicted by drawings of footprints on early surveys. Daniel Boone is one of many surveyors who worked the Kentucky frontier. Others, to name a few, included John Floyd, William Preston, John Croke, William Croghan, Richard Anderson, Robert Todd, James Thompson, Thomas Marshall, and George May.