

Indiana - First

INDIANA

1779 ~ 1929



GEORGE ROGERS CLARK
ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY



—By Frederick C. Yohn

Surrender of Fort Sackville
to
George Rogers Clark, February 25, 1779

INDIANA

1779 ~ 1929

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DEDICATED TO
THE OLD NORTHWEST

RICH in people and in resources, the heart of the American nation, a wonderful land in which to live. The states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin, and so much of Minnesota as lies east of the Mississippi River, each a vast inland empire, have grown to their present greatness out of the long nameless country described as "the territory northwest of the river Ohio."

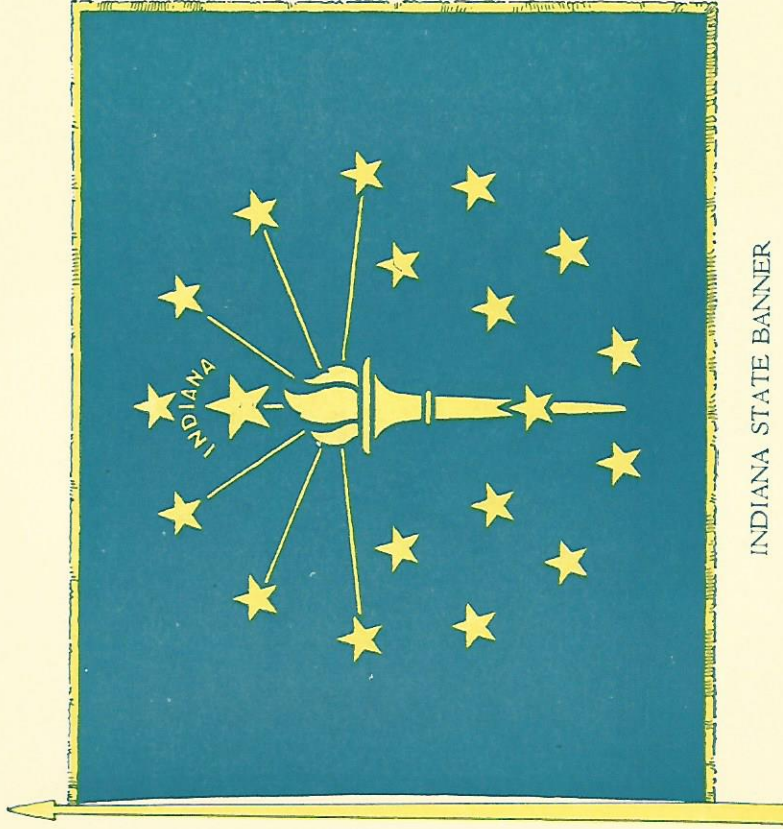
The years 1928 and 1929 are the 150th anniversary of the campaigns of the American Revolution in which George Rogers Clark carried the arms of Virginia and the American cause into this wide region. His march from Kaskaskia to Vincennes and his capture of Fort Sackville, February 25, 1779, are among the most heroic deeds in the history of our western world.

The city of Vincennes, the state of Indiana, and the federal government have united to build upon the site of Fort Sackville a national memorial worthy of the personality and achievements of the man who won the Old Northwest for the United States. Ohio, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin alike look to George Rogers Clark, Pierre Gibault, Francis Vigo and the other men of 1778-79 as the first builders of the American nation in the heart of the continent.

On this anniversary year we join in grateful recognition of the men and the deeds which made our present states and our nation possible.

Ed Jackson

Governor of Indiana



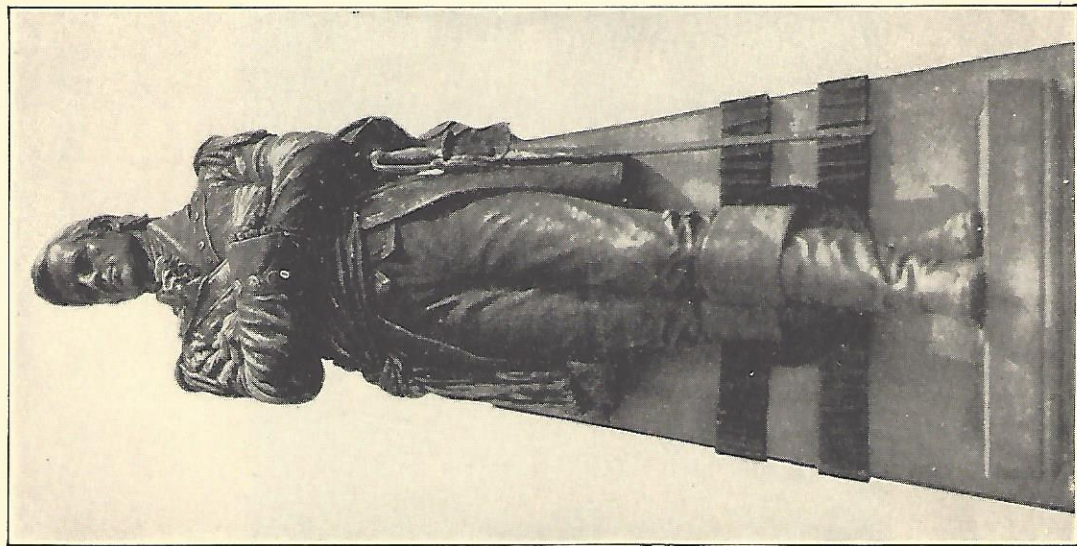
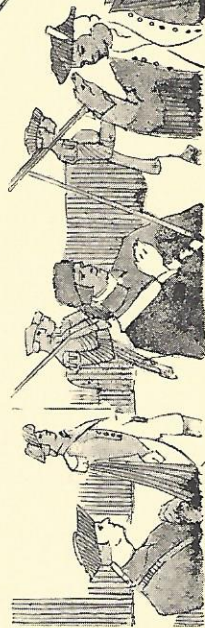
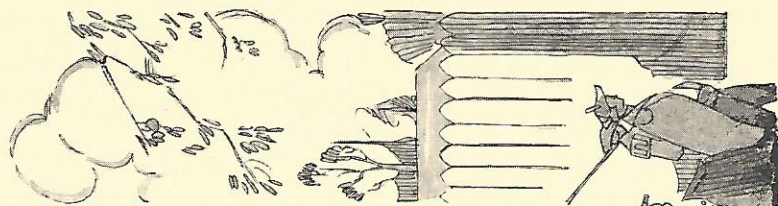
INDIANA STATE BANNER

George Rogers Clark and the American Revolution in the West

ON the morning of February 25, 1779, a significant ceremony took place near the bank of the Wabash River in Vincennes. At 10 o'clock, Colonel Henry Hamilton, lieutenant-governor of Detroit, British commander in the Northwest, marched out of Fort Sackville and surrendered to Colonel George Rogers Clark, the commander of the troops of Virginia in the West. Colonel Clark and his men entered the fort, and raised a flag in token of possession by Virginia; Vincennes became an American town, never again to be in possession of the English. Doubtless most of the inhabitants of Vincennes, 621 according to Colonel Hamilton's census, witnessed the scene. As they watched the change of garrisons, many must have thought of the events which led up to the surrender of Fort Sackville; few could have realized what the future was to bring forth. Today from the vantage point of the intervening one hundred fifty years, it is well worth while for us to survey both the course of Colonel Clark's campaign and the developments which followed it.

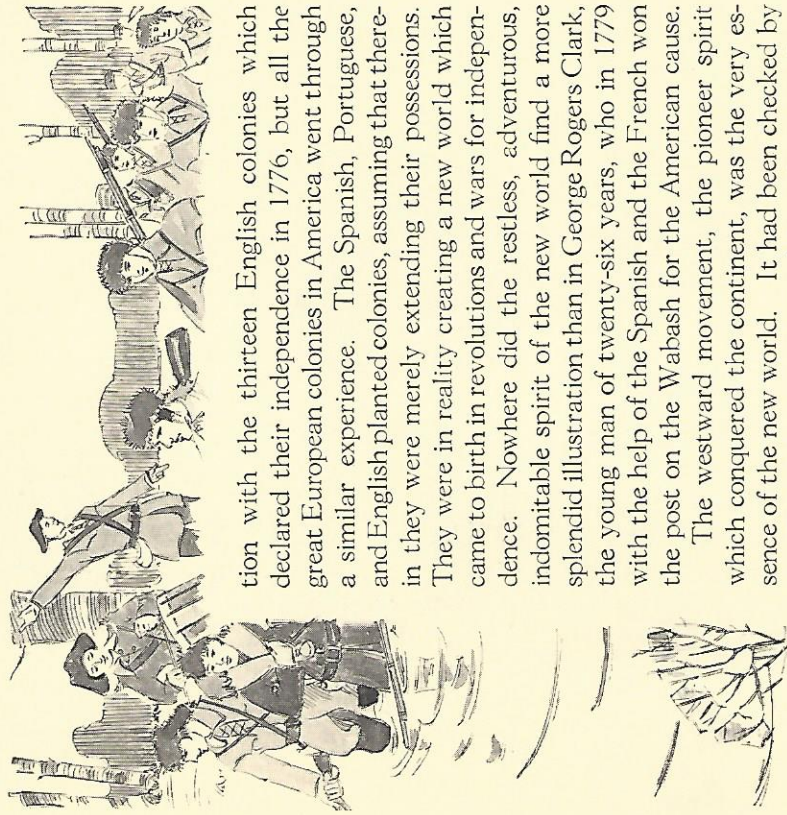
THE REVOLUTION IN THE WEST

This event in the valley of the Wabash was one of the crises of the American Revolution. We usually think of the Revolution solely in connec-



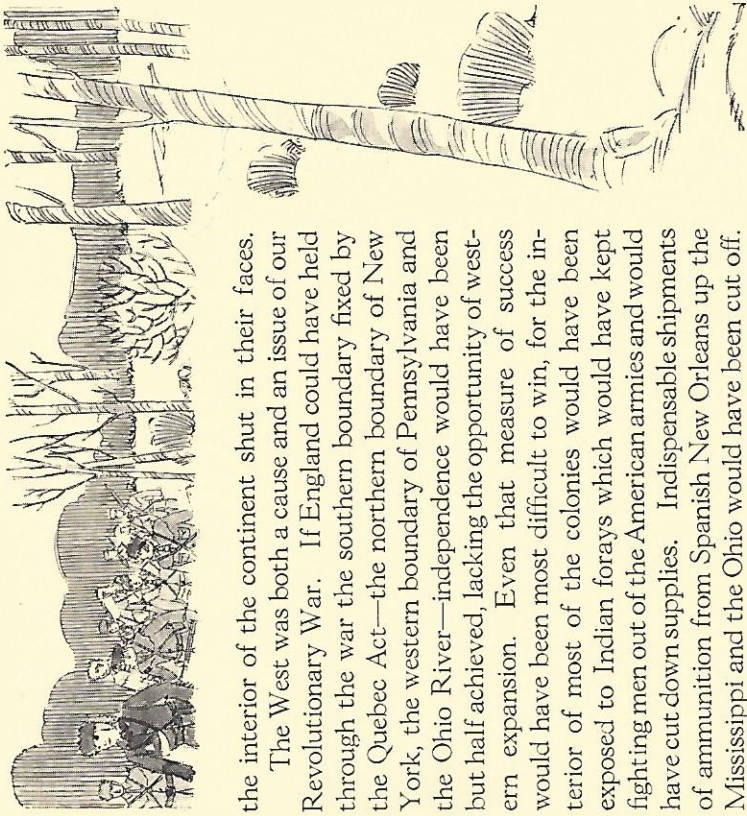
—Charles A. Mulligan, Sculptor

GEORGE ROGERS CLARK
Monument at Quincy, Illinois



tion with the thirteen English colonies which declared their independence in 1776, but all the great European colonies in America went through a similar experience. The Spanish, Portuguese, and English planted colonies, assuming that there-in they were merely extending their possessions. They were in reality creating a new world which came to birth in revolutions and wars for independence. Nowhere did the restless, adventurous, indomitable spirit of the new world find a more splendid illustration than in George Rogers Clark, the young man of twenty-six years, who in 1779 with the help of the Spanish and the French won the post on the Wabash for the American cause.

The westward movement, the pioneer spirit which conquered the continent, was the very essence of the new world. It had been checked by the British government. Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and especially Virginia, had claims to extensive lands in the West, but the mother country tried to exclude their citizens from these lands. One of the "Intolerable Acts" passed by Parliament in 1774 annexed the whole region northwest of the River Ohio to the Province of Quebec. This Quebec Act and the policy it represented of limiting the thirteen colonies to the Atlantic seaboard must be reckoned with trade regulations and taxation as precipitating the Revolution. As Massachusetts took up arms at Lexington on April 19, 1775, rather than submit to offensive trade regulation enforced by an army, so Virginians and Carolinians could not endure to have the door to



the interior of the continent shut in their faces.

The West was both a cause and an issue of our Revolutionary War. If England could have held through the war the southern boundary fixed by the Quebec Act—the northern boundary of New York, the western boundary of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River—independence would have been but half achieved, lacking the opportunity of western expansion. Even that measure of success would have been most difficult to win, for the interior of most of the colonies would have been exposed to Indian forays which would have kept fighting men out of the American armies and would have cut down supplies. Indispensable shipments of ammunition from Spanish New Orleans up the Mississippi and the Ohio would have been cut off. With the English in control of the sea and the interior, it would have gone hard with the rebellious colonies.

The storm center in the West, beyond the mountains, was Kentucky. Next to Pittsburgh in importance, and far more exposed, was the little fort built in March, 1775, by James Harrod, where Harrodsburg now stands, the first permanent settlement in Kentucky. Many settlers came west that year, but the next year Indian forays from north of the Ohio River created such havoc that most of the survivors streamed back across the mountains for safety. If the Kentucky settlements were wiped out, those in western Pennsylvania and in North Carolina west of the mountains (now Tennessee) seemed likely to be destroyed, and the British