

= Isaac Shelby =

Isaac Shelby (December 11 , 1750 ? July 18 , 1826) was the first and fifth Governor of the U.S. state of Kentucky and served in the state legislatures of Virginia and North Carolina . He was also a soldier in Lord Dunmore 's War , the Revolutionary War , and the War of 1812 . While governor , he personally led the Kentucky militia in the Battle of the Thames , an action that was rewarded with a Congressional Gold Medal . Counties in nine states , and several cities and military bases , have been named in his honor . His fondness for John Dickinson 's The Liberty Song is believed to be the reason Kentucky adopted the state motto " United we stand , divided we fall " .

Shelby 's military service began when he served as second @-@ in @-@ command to his father at the Battle of Point Pleasant , the only major battle of Lord Dunmore 's War . He gained the reputation of an expert woodsman and surveyor , and spent the early part of the Revolutionary War gathering supplies for the Continental Army . Later in the war , he and John Sevier led expeditions over the Appalachian Mountains against the British forces in North Carolina . He played a pivotal role in the British defeat at the Battle of King 's Mountain . For his service , he was presented with a ceremonial sword and a pair of pistols by the North Carolina legislature , and the nickname " Old King 's Mountain " followed him the rest of his life .

Following the war , Shelby relocated to Kentucky on lands awarded to him for his military service and became involved in Kentucky 's transition from a county of Virginia to an independent state . His heroism made him popular with the citizens of the state , and the state electoral college unanimously elected him governor in 1792 . He secured the state from Indian attacks and organized its first government . He leveraged the Citizen Genet affair to convince the Washington administration to make an agreement with the Spanish for free trade on the Mississippi River .

At the end of his gubernatorial term , Shelby retired from public life , but he was called back into politics by the impending War of 1812 . Kentuckians urged Shelby to run for governor again and lead them through the anticipated conflict . He was elected easily , and at the request of General William Henry Harrison , commanded troops from Kentucky at the Battle of the Thames . At the conclusion of the war , he declined President James Monroe 's offer to become Secretary of War . In his last act of public service , he and Andrew Jackson acted as commissioners to negotiate the Jackson Purchase from the Chickasaw Indian tribe . Shelby died at his estate in Lincoln County , Kentucky , on July 18 , 1826 .

= = Early life = =

Isaac Shelby was born in the Province of Maryland on December 11 , 1750 , near Hagerstown in Frederick (now Washington) County . He was the third child and second son of Evan and Letitia (Cox) Shelby , who immigrated from Tregaron , Wales , in 1735 . Though the family had historically been loyal to the Church of England , they became Presbyterians after coming to British America ; this was the denomination Isaac Shelby embraced during his life .

Shelby was educated at the local schools in his native colony . He worked on his father 's plantation , and occasionally found work as a surveyor . At age eighteen , he was appointed deputy sheriff of Frederick County . Shelby 's father lost a great deal of money when Pontiac 's Rebellion disrupted his lucrative fur trade business , and two years later , the business ' records were destroyed in a house fire . Consequently in December 1770 , the family moved to the area near Bristol , Tennessee , where they built a fort and a trading post . Here , Shelby and his father worked for three years herding cattle .

During Lord Dunmore 's War , a border conflict between colonists and American Indians , Shelby was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Virginia militia by Colonel William Preston . As second @-@ in @-@ command of his father 's Fincastle County company , he participated in the decisive Battle of Point Pleasant on October 10 , 1774 . The younger Shelby earned commendation for his skill and gallantry in this battle . The victorious militiamen erected Fort Blair on the site of the battle . They remained stationed there , with Shelby as second @-@ in @-@ command , until July 1775 when Lord Dunmore ordered the fort destroyed , fearing it might become useful to colonial rebels in

the growing American Revolution .

= = Revolutionary War = =

After his unit was disbanded , Shelby surveyed for the Transylvania Company , a land company that had purchased much of present @-@ day Kentucky from the Cherokees in a deal that was later invalidated by the government of Virginia . After fulfilling his duties with the Transylvania Company , he rejoined his family in Virginia , but returned to Kentucky the following year to claim and improve land there for himself . While there , he fell ill , and went home to recover in July 1776 . Back in Virginia , fighting in the American Revolutionary War was underway , and Shelby found a commission from the Virginia Committee of Safety appointing him captain of a company of Minutemen . In 1777 , Virginia governor Patrick Henry appointed Shelby to a position securing provisions for the army on the frontier . He served a similar role for units in the Continental Army in 1778 and 1779 . With his own money , Shelby purchased provisions for John Sevier 's 1779 expedition against the Chickamauga , a band of Cherokees who were resisting colonial expansion .

Shelby was elected to represent Washington County in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1779 . Later that year , he was commissioned a major by Governor Thomas Jefferson and charged with escorting a group of commissioners to establish a frontier boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina . Shortly after his arrival in the region , North Carolina Governor Richard Caswell elevated him to the rank of colonel and made him magistrate of newly formed Sullivan County .

Shelby was surveying lands in Kentucky in 1780 when he heard of the colonists ' defeat at Charleston . He hurried to North Carolina , where he found a request for aid from General Charles McDowell to defend the borders of North Carolina from the British . Shelby assembled three hundred militiamen and joined McDowell at Cherokee Ford in South Carolina . On the morning of July 31 , 1780 , he surrounded the British stronghold at Thicketty Fort on the Pacolet River with 600 men . He immediately demanded a surrender , but the British refused . Shelby brought his men within musket range and again demanded surrender . Though the fort likely would have withstood the attack , the British commander lost his nerve and capitulated . Without firing a shot , Shelby 's men captured 94 prisoners .

Following the surrender of Thicketty Fort , Shelby joined a band of partisans under Lieutenant Elijah Clarke . This unit was pursued by British Major Patrick Ferguson . On the morning of August 8 , 1780 , some of Shelby 's men were gathering peaches from an orchard when they were surprised by some of Ferguson 's men on a reconnaissance mission . Shelby 's men quickly readied their arms and drove back the British patrol . Soon , however , the British were reinforced and the colonists fell back . The pattern continued , with one side being reinforced and gaining an advantage , followed by the other . Shelby 's men were winning the battle when Ferguson 's main force of 1 @,@ 000 men arrived . Outmanned , they retreated to a nearby hill where British musket fire could not reach them . Now safe , they taunted the British , and Ferguson 's force withdrew from the area . Thus ended the Battle of Cedar Springs .

General McDowell then ordered Shelby and Clarke to take Musgrove 's Mill , a British encampment on the Enoree River . They rode all night with two hundred men , reaching their location about dawn on August 18 , 1780 . The colonists had estimated that the enemy force was of comparable size , but an advance scout brought word that there were approximately 500 British soldiers in the camp who were preparing for battle . Shelby 's men and horses were too tired for a retreat and they had lost the element of surprise . He ordered his men to construct a breastwork from nearby logs and brush . In half an hour the makeshift fortifications were complete , and twenty @-@ five colonial riders charged the British camp to provoke the attack . The British pursued them back to the main colonial force . Despite being outnumbered , the colonists killed several British officers and put their army to flight .

= = = Battle of King 's Mountain = = =

Shelby and Clarke elected not to pursue the British fleeing the Battle of Musgrove Mill . Instead ,

they set their sights on a British fort at Ninety Six , South Carolina , where they were sure they would find Ferguson . However , while en route , Shelby and his men were met with news of General Horatio Gates ' defeat at the Battle of Camden . With the backing of General Cornwallis , Ferguson could ride to meet Shelby with his entire force , so Shelby retreated over the Appalachian Mountains into North Carolina .

Following the colonists ' retreat , an emboldened Ferguson dispatched a paroled prisoner across the mountains to warn the colonists to cease their opposition or Ferguson would lay waste to the countryside . Angered by this act , Shelby and John Sevier began to plan another raid on the British . Shelby and Sevier raised 240 men each , and were joined by William Campbell with 400 from Washington County , Virginia and Charles McDowell with 160 men from Burke and Rutherford counties in North Carolina . The forces mustered at Sycamore Shoals on September 25 , 1780 . The troops crossed the difficult terrain of the Blue Ridge Mountains and arrived at McDowell 's estate near Morganton , North Carolina , on September 30 , 1780 . Here , they were joined by Colonel Benjamin Cleveland and Major Joseph Winston with 350 men from Surry and Wilkes counties .

The combined force pursued Ferguson to King 's Mountain , where he had fortified himself , declaring that " God Almighty and all the rebels out of hell " could not move him from it . The Battle of Kings Mountain commenced October 7 , 1780 . Shelby had ordered his men to advance from tree to tree , firing from behind each one ; he called this technique " Indian play " because he had seen the Indians use it in his previous battles with them . Ferguson ordered bayonet charges that forced Shelby 's men to fall back on three separate occasions , but eventually the colonists dislodged Ferguson 's men from their position . Seeing the battle was lost , Ferguson and his key officers attempted a retreat . The colonists were instructed to kill Ferguson . Simultaneous shots by Sevier 's men broke both Ferguson 's arms , fatally pierced his skull , and knocked him from his mount . Seeing their commander dead , the remaining British soldiers waved white flags of surrender .

King 's Mountain was the high point of Shelby 's military service , and from that point forward his men dubbed him " Old King 's Mountain " . The North Carolina legislature passed a vote of thanks to Shelby and Sevier for their service and ordered that each be presented a pair of pistols and a ceremonial sword . (Shelby did not receive these items until he requested them from the legislature in 1813 .)

As the colonists and their prisoners began the march from King 's Mountain , they learned that nine colonial prisoners had been hanged by the British at Fort Ninety @-@ Six . This was not the first such incident in the region , and the enraged colonists vowed that they would now put a stop to the hangings in the Carolinas . Summoning a jury from their number ? which was legal because two North Carolina magistrates were present ? the colonists selected random prisoners and charged them with crimes ranging from theft to arson to murder . By evening , the jury had convicted thirty @-@ six prisoners and sentenced them to hang . After the first nine hangings , however , Shelby ordered them stopped . He never gave a reason for this action , but his order was obeyed nonetheless , and the remaining " convicts " rejoined their fellow prisoners .

The King 's Mountain victors and their prisoners returned to McDowell 's estate early on the morning of October 10 , 1780 . From there , the various commanders and their men went their separate ways . Shelby and his men joined General Daniel Morgan at New Providence , South Carolina . While there , Shelby advised Morgan to take Fort Ninety @-@ Six and Augusta because he believed the British forces there were supplying the Cherokee with weapons for their raids against colonial settlers . Morgan agreed to the plan , as did General Horatio Gates , the supreme commander of colonial forces in the region . Assured that his plan would be carried out , Shelby returned home and promised to return the following spring with 300 men . On his way to Fort Ninety @-@ Six , Morgan was attacked by Banastre Tarleton and gained a decisive victory over him at the Battle of Cowpens . Shelby later lamented the fact that General Nathanael Greene , who relieved Gates only days after Shelby departed for home , claimed the lion 's share of the credit for Cowpens when it was Shelby 's plan that had put Morgan in the position to begin with .

= = = Later wartime service and settlement in Kentucky = = =

Upon his return home , Shelby and his father were named commissioners to negotiate a treaty between colonial settlers and the Chickamauga . This service delayed his return to Greene , but in October 1781 he and Sevier led 600 riflemen to join Greene in South Carolina . Greene had thought to use Shelby 's and Sevier 's men to prevent Cornwallis from returning to Charleston . However , Cornwallis was defeated at the Siege of Yorktown shortly after Shelby and Sevier arrived , and Greene sent them on to join General Francis Marion on the Pee Dee River . On Marion 's orders , Shelby and Colonel Hezekiah Maham captured a British fort at Fair Lawn near Moncks Corner on November 27 , 1781 .

While still in the field , Shelby was elected to the North Carolina General Assembly . He requested and was granted a leave of absence from the Army to attend the legislative session of December 1781 . He was re-elected in 1782 and attended the April session of the legislature that year . In early 1783 he was chosen as a commissioner to survey preemption claims of soldiers along the Cumberland River .

Shelby returned to Kentucky in April 1783 , settling at Boonesborough . He married Susannah Hart on April 19 , 1783 ; the couple had eleven children . Their eldest daughter , Sarah , married Dr. Ephraim McDowell , and the youngest daughter , Letitia , married future Kentucky secretary of state Charles Stewart Todd . On November 1 , 1783 , the family moved to Lincoln County , near Knob Lick , and occupied land awarded to Shelby for his military service . Shelby was named one of the first trustees of Transylvania Seminary (later Transylvania University) in 1783 , and on December 1 , 1787 , founded the Kentucky Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge .

Shelby began working to secure Kentucky 's separation from Virginia as early as 1784 . That year , he attended a convention to consider leading an expedition against the Indians and separating Kentucky from Virginia . He was a delegate to subsequent conventions in 1787 , 1788 , and 1789 that worked toward a constitution for Kentucky . During these conventions he helped thwart James Wilkinson 's scheme to align Kentucky with the Spanish . In 1791 Shelby , Charles Scott and Benjamin Logan were among those chosen by the Virginia legislature to serve on the Board of War for the district of Kentucky . Shelby was also made High Sheriff on Lincoln County . In 1792 he was a delegate to the final convention that framed the first Kentucky Constitution .

= = First term as governor = =

Under the new constitution , the voters chose electors who then elected the governor and members of the Kentucky Senate . Though there is no indication that Shelby actively sought the office of governor , he was elected unanimously to that post by the electors on May 17 , 1791 . He took office on June 4 , 1792 , the day the state was admitted to the Union . Though not actively partisan , he identified with the Democratic -Republican . Much of his term was devoted to establishing basic laws , military divisions and a tax structure .

One of Shelby 's chief concerns was securing federal aid to defend the frontier . Although Kentuckians were engaged in an undeclared war with American Indians north of the Ohio River , Shelby had been ordered by Secretary of War Henry Knox not to conduct offensive military actions against the Indians . Furthermore , he was limited by federal regulations that restricted the service of state militiamen to thirty days , which was too short to be effective . With the meager resources of his fledgling state he was only able to defend the most vulnerable areas from Indian attack . Meanwhile , Kentuckians suspected that the Indians were being stirred up and supplied by the British .

Shelby appealed to President Washington for help ; Washington responded by appointing General " Mad " Anthony Wayne to the area with orders to push the Indians out of the Northwest Territory . Wayne arrived at Fort Washington (present -day Cincinnati , Ohio) in May 1793 , but was prevented from taking any immediate action because federal commissioners were still attempting to negotiate a treaty with the Indians . He called for 12,000 volunteer troops from Kentucky , but few heeded the call and Shelby resorted to conscription . By the time the soldiers arrived , winter had set in . He ordered the men to go home and return in the spring .

After a winter filled with Indian attacks , including one which claimed the life of Shelby 's younger

brother Evan Shelby III , Kentucky militia units won some minor victories over the Indians in early 1794 . In spring the response to Wayne 's call for troops was more enthusiastic ; 1 @, @ 600 volunteers mustered at Fort Greenville and were hastily trained . By August , 1794 , Wayne was on the offensive against the Indians and dealt them a decisive blow at the August 20 , 1794 Battle of Fallen Timbers . This victory , and the ensuing Treaty of Greenville , secured the territory , and although Shelby did not agree with some of the restrictions placed upon western settlers by this treaty , he abided by its terms and enforced those that were under his jurisdiction .

Another major concern of the Shelby administration was free navigation on the Mississippi River , which was vital to the state 's economic interests . For political reasons the Spanish had closed the port at New Orleans to the Americans . This would have been the natural market for the tobacco , flour and hemp grown by Kentucky farmers ; overland routes were too expensive to be profitable . This made it difficult for land speculators to entice immigration to the area to turn a profit on their investments . Many Kentuckians felt the federal government was not acting decisively or quickly enough to remedy this situation .

= = = Citizen Genêt affair = = =

While Kentuckians despised the British and Spanish , they had a strong affinity for the French . They admired the republican government that had arisen from the French Revolution , and they had not forgotten France 's aid during the Revolutionary War . When French Ambassador Edmond @-@ Charles Genêt , popularly known as Citizen Genêt , arrived in the United States in April 1793 , George Rogers Clark was already considering an expedition to capture Spanish lands in the west . Genêt 's agent , André Michaux , was dispatched to Kentucky to assess the support of Kentuckians toward Clark 's expedition . When he gained an audience with Governor Shelby , he did so with letters of introduction from Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and Kentucky Senator John Brown .

Jefferson had written a separate letter to Shelby warning him against aiding the French schemes and informing him that negotiations were under way with the Spanish regarding trade on the Mississippi . When the letter was sent on August 29 , 1793 , it was Jefferson 's intent that it reach Shelby before Michaux did , but Shelby did not receive it until October 1793 . On September 13 , 1793 , Michaux met with Shelby , but there is no evidence that Shelby agreed to help him . In his response to Jefferson 's delayed letter , Shelby assured Jefferson that Kentuckians " possess too just a sense of the obligation they owe the General Government , to embark in any enterprise that would be so injurious to the United States " .

In November 1793 , Shelby received a letter from another of Genêt 's agents , Charles Delpeau . He confided to Shelby that he had been sent to secure supplies for an expedition against Spanish holdings , and inquired whether Shelby had been instructed to arrest individuals associated with such a scheme . Three days later Shelby responded by letter , relating Jefferson 's warning against aiding the French . Despite having no evidence that Shelby was party to Genêt 's scheme , both Jefferson and Knox felt compelled to warn him a second time . Jefferson provided names and descriptions of the French agents believed to be in Kentucky and encouraged their arrest . Knox went a step further by suggesting Kentucky would be reimbursed for any costs incurred resisting the French by force , should such action become necessary . General Anthony Wayne informed him that his cavalry was at the state 's disposal . Arthur St. Clair , governor of the American Northwest Territory , also admonished Shelby against cooperation with Genêt .

In his response to Jefferson , Shelby questioned whether he had the legal authority to intervene with force against his constituency and expressed his personal aversion to doing so .

I shall upon all occasions be averse to the exercise of any power which I do not consider myself as being clearly and explicitly invested with , much less would I assume power to exercise it against men whom I consider as friends and brethren , in favor of a man whom I view as an enemy and a tyrant [the king of Spain] . I shall also feel but little inclination to take an active part in punishing or restraining any of my fellow @-@ citizens for a supposed intention only to gratify or remove the fears of the ministers of a foreign prince , who openly withholds from us an invaluable right [

navigation of the Mississippi] and who secretly instigates against us a most savage and cruel enemy .

Shelby tempered this lukewarm commitment by assuring Jefferson that " I shall , at all times , hold it my duty to perform whatever may be constitutionally required of me , as Governor of Kentucky , by the President of the United States . "

In March 1794 , perhaps in response to Shelby 's concerns , Congress passed a measure granting the government additional powers in the event of an invasion or insurrection . Jefferson 's successor Edmund Randolph , who actually received Shelby 's letter , wrote Shelby to inform him of the new powers at his disposal , and informing him that the new regime in France had recalled Genêt . Two months later Genêt 's agents ceased their operations in Kentucky and the potential crisis was averted . In 1795 , President Washington negotiated an agreement with the Spanish that secured the right of Americans to trade on the river .

Having successfully dealt with the major challenges and issues involved in forming a new state government , Shelby left the state safe and financially sound . Kentucky 's constitution prevented a governor from serving consecutive terms , so Shelby retired to Traveler 's Rest , his Lincoln County estate , at the conclusion of his term in 1796 . For the next 15 years he tended to affairs on his farm . He was selected as a presidential elector in six consecutive elections , but these were his only appearances in public life during this period .

= = Second term as governor = =

Gabriel Slaughter was the favorite choice for governor of Kentucky in 1812 . Only one impediment to his potential candidacy existed . Growing tensions between the United States , France , and Great Britain threatened to break into open war . With this prospect looming , Isaac Shelby 's name began circulating as a possible candidate for governor . Slaughter , who lived near Shelby , visited him and asked whether he would run . Shelby assured him that he had no desire to do so unless a national emergency that required his leadership emerged . Satisfied with this answer , Slaughter began his campaign .

The situation with the European powers grew worse , and on June 18 , 1812 the United States declared war on Great Britain , beginning the War of 1812 . Cries grew louder for Shelby to return as Kentucky 's chief executive . On July 18 , 1812 , less than a month before the election , Shelby acquiesced and announced his candidacy .

During the campaign Shelby 's political enemies , notably Humphrey Marshall , criticized his response to Jefferson 's second letter regarding the Genêt affair and questioned his loyalty to the United States . Shelby contended that his noncommittal response to the letter was meant to draw the federal government 's attention to the situation in the west . He cited the agreement between Washington and the Spanish as evidence that his ploy had worked . He also claimed to have known at the time he wrote the letter that the French scheme was destined to fail .

Slaughter 's supporters mocked Shelby 's advanced age (he was almost 62) , calling him " Old Daddy Shelby " . One Kentucky paper even printed an anonymous charge that Shelby had run from the Battle of King 's Mountain . Though few even among Shelby 's enemies believed the story , his supporters and Shelby himself responded through missives in the state 's newspapers . One supporter typified these responses , writing " It is reported that Colonel Shelby ' run [sic] at King 's Mountain . ' True he did . He first run [sic] up to the enemy ... then after an action of about forty @-@ seven minutes , he run [sic] again with 900 prisoners . "

As the canvass stretched into August , Shelby grew more confident of victory and began preparations to return to the state house . He predicted a victory of 10 @,@ 000 votes ; the final margin was more than 17 @,@ 000 . When he took the oath of office , Shelby became the first Kentucky governor to serve non @-@ consecutive terms . (James Garrard had been permitted to serve consecutive terms in 1796 and 1800 by special legislative exemption .)

Preparations for the war dominated Shelby 's second term . Two days before his inauguration , he and outgoing governor Charles Scott met at the state house to appoint William Henry Harrison commander of the Kentucky militia . This was done in violation of a constitutional mandate that the

post be held by a native Kentuckian . Already commander of the militias of Indiana and Illinois , Harrison picked up Kentucky volunteers at Newport before hurrying to the defense of Fort Wayne .

Shelby pressured President James Madison to give Harrison command of all military forces in the Northwest . Madison acceded , rescinding his earlier appointment of James Winchester . On the state level , Shelby revised militia laws to make every male between the ages of 18 and 45 eligible for military service ; ministers were excluded from the provision . Seven thousand volunteers enlisted , and many more had to be turned away . Shelby encouraged the state 's women to sew and knit items for Kentucky 's troops .

Shelby 's confidence in the federal government 's war planning was shaken by the disastrous Battle of Frenchtown in which a number of Kentucky soldiers died . He vowed to personally act to aid the war effort should the opportunity arise , and was authorized by the legislature to do so . In March 1813 , Harrison requested another 1 @, @ 200 Kentuckians to join him at Fort Meigs . Shelby dispatched the requested number , among whom was his oldest son James , under General Green Clay . The reinforcements arrived to find Fort Meigs under siege by a combined force of British and Indians . Clay 's force was able to stop the siege , but a large number of them were captured and massacred by Indians . Initial reports put James Shelby among the dead , but he was later discovered to have been captured and released in a prisoner exchange .

On July 30 , 1813 , General Harrison again wrote Shelby requesting volunteers , and this time he asked that Shelby lead them personally . Shelby raised a force of 3 @, @ 500 volunteers , double the number Harrison requested . Future governor John J. Crittenden served as Shelby 's aide @- @ de @- @ camp . Now a Major General , Shelby led the volunteers to join Harrison in a campaign that culminated in the American victory at the Battle of the Thames .

In Harrison 's report of the battle to Secretary of War John Armstrong , Jr . , he said of Shelby , " I am at a loss to how to mention [the service] of Governor Shelby , being convinced that no eulogism of mine can reach his merit . " In 1817 , Shelby received the thanks of Congress and was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his service in the war . Friends of Shelby suggested he run for Vice President , but Shelby quickly and emphatically declined .

= = Later life and death = =

Upon Shelby 's leaving office in 1816 , President Monroe offered him the post of Secretary of War , but he declined because of his age . Already a founding member of the Kentucky Bible Society , Shelby consented to serve as vice @- @ president of the New American Bible Society in 1816 . He was a faithful member of Danville Presbyterian church , but in 1816 , built a small nondenominational church on his property . In 1818 , he accompanied Andrew Jackson in negotiating the Jackson Purchase with the Chickasaw . He also served as the first president of the Kentucky Agricultural Society in 1818 and was chairman of the first board of trustees of Centre College in 1819 .

In 1820 Shelby was stricken with paralysis in his right arm and leg . He died of a stroke on July 18 , 1826 , at his home in Lincoln County . He was buried on the grounds of his estate , Traveller 's Rest . The state erected a monument over his grave in 1827 . In 1952 the Shelby family cemetery was given to the state government and became the Isaac Shelby Cemetery State Historic Site .

= = Legacy = =

Shelby 's patriotism is believed to have inspired the Kentucky state motto : " United we stand , divided we fall " . He was fond of The Liberty Song , a 1768 composition by John Dickinson , which contains the line " They join in hand , brave Americans all , By uniting we stand , by dividing we fall . " Though he is sometimes credited with designing the state seal , his public papers show that the design was suggested by James Wilkinson .

Centre College began awarding the Isaac Shelby Medallion in 1972 , and since then , it has become the College 's most prestigious honor . Those awarded the Medallion exemplify the ideals of service to Centre and dedication to the public good that were embraced by Shelby during his time at

Centre and in Kentucky .

= = = Places named for Isaac Shelby = = =

Nine states have a county named after Shelby , as do numerous cities and military installations .