

= George Madison =

George Madison ( June 1763 ? October 14 , 1816 ) was the sixth Governor of Kentucky . He was the first governor of Kentucky to die in office , serving only a few weeks in 1816 . Little is known of Madison 's early life . He was a member of the influential Madison family of Virginia , and was a second cousin to President James Madison . He served with distinction in three wars ? the Revolutionary War , Northwest Indian War , and War of 1812 . He was twice wounded in the Northwest Indian War , and in the War of 1812 he was taken prisoner following the Battle of Frenchtown in Michigan .

Madison 's political experience before becoming governor consisted of a twenty @-@ year tenure as state auditor . Although his military service made him extremely popular in Kentucky , he sought no higher office until the citizens insisted he run for governor in 1816 . James Johnson , his only challenger in the race , dropped out early due to Madison 's overwhelming popularity , and Madison was elected without opposition . A few weeks later , he became the first Kentucky governor to die in office . Opponents of his lieutenant governor , Gabriel Slaughter , mounted a popular but unsuccessful challenge to Slaughter 's succeeding Madison in office .

= = Early life = =

George Madison was born in June 1763 in the portion of Augusta County , Virginia that eventually became Rockingham County . [ a ] His parents were John and Agatha ( Strother ) Madison . His brother James became the Episcopal bishop of Virginia and the president of the College of William & Mary . Another brother was Captain Thomas Madison . They were second cousins to President James Madison .

Madison was educated in the local schools and also received instruction at home . Before he was legally old enough to enlist , he entered the Continental Army as a private during the Revolutionary War .

It is not known when Madison moved to Kentucky , but land records in Lincoln County indicate he and his brother Gabriel were there by at least 1784 . He married Jane Smith and they had four children ? Agatha , William , Myra , and George . [ b ] Jane Smith @-@ Madison died in 1811 .

= = Service in the Northwest Indian War = =

Madison served with the Kentucky militia during the Northwest Indian War . He was a subaltern in Arthur St. Clair 's army in the American defeat at the Battle of the Wabash on November 4 , 1791 . During the retreat , a soldier named William Kennan found Madison sitting on a log . Kennan was being pursued by Indians and admonished Madison to run , but Madison , who was already known to be of frail constitution , stood to reveal that he had been badly wounded and was bleeding profusely . Kennan quickly retrieved an abandoned horse he had seen ; he helped Madison astride the horse , and they both escaped .

Later in the war , Madison served under Major John Adair . On November 5 , 1792 , Adair 's men were encamped near Fort St. Clair when they were ambushed by an Indian force under the command of Little Turtle . Adair ordered a retreat , then rallied his men and divided them into three groups . He ordered those under Madison to turn the enemy 's flank , but they failed and Madison was wounded again in this battle . Following this , Adair withdrew to Fort St. Clair . In Adair 's report to Brigadier General James Wilkinson , he wrote : " Madison 's bravery and conduct need no comment ; they are well @-@ known . "

= = Political career = =

Governor Isaac Shelby appointed Madison as Auditor of Public Accounts on March 7 , 1796 . He served in this capacity in state government for twenty years . He never sought a higher office but 19th @-@ century historian Lewis Collins said that " there was no office within the gift of the people

which he could not have easily attained , without the slightest solicitation . " In 1800 , Madison was appointed as a trustee of the Kentucky Seminary in Franklin County . On December 5 , 1806 , he served on a grand jury in the case of Aaron Burr 's conduct ; they did not find grounds for treason charges . Madison was appointed director of the Bank of Kentucky later that year .

During the War of 1812 , Governor Shelby called for volunteers to serve in the Army of the Northwest . Colonel John Allen raised a regiment , and Madison was commissioned as his second @-@ in @-@ command . The regiment , known as the 1st Rifle Regiment of Kentucky Volunteers , fought under James Winchester at the Battle of Frenchtown . Winchester was captured by General Henry Proctor , but about four hundred men under Madison repelled several charges by the British . Madison 's men believed they had won the victory when they observed a white flag in the midst of the British force , but the flag was being waved by Winchester as an order for Madison 's force to surrender .

When Madison discovered that Winchester was waving the flag , he refused the order to surrender on grounds that , as a prisoner , Winchester had no authority to issue it . Proctor demanded Madison 's unconditional surrender , but Madison insisted that the terms of surrender include Proctor 's protection of the American prisoners from the Indian allies of the British . Proctor initially balked at anything but an unconditional surrender , but after Madison 's promise that the Americans would " sell their lives as dearly as possible " , Proctor acquiesced .

Proctor had taken as many prisoners as he had soldiers , and had little power to enforce the terms he had agreed to . The American non @-@ commissioned officers were paroled to return home . Madison and the other officers were taken to Fort Malden , then on to a prison in Quebec . The American wounded who could not march were left under the care of American physicians . Shortly after the battle , the Indians looted the American provisions , which included a large quantity of whiskey . Drunk and violent , they slaughtered many of the American wounded in what became known as the Massacre of the River Raisin .

Madison was freed from prison a year after his capture , as part of a prisoner exchange . He returned to Kentucky following his release and was honored at a public dinner on September 6 , 1814 . In 1816 , he resigned as auditor of public accounts due to failing health . But , submitting to public demand , he became a candidate for governor later that year . James Johnson , the other candidate for office , withdrew from the race due to Madison 's popularity , thus the latter was elected without opposition .

= = Death and aftermath = =

Madison traveled to Blue Lick Springs for his health soon after the election , but was too weak to return to Frankfort for the inauguration . A Bourbon County justice of the peace administered the oath of office on September 5 , 1816 at the springs . Madison 's only official act of office was the appointment of Colonel Charles S. Todd as secretary of state . He died on October 14 , 1816 , just weeks into his term , the first governor of the state to die in office . He is buried in Frankfort Cemetery .

Opponents of his lieutenant governor , Gabriel Slaughter , immediately challenged his ascendancy to the governorship . They claimed that a governor should not be allowed to serve without having been elected to that office by the people . A measure calling for a special gubernatorial election easily passed the state House of Representatives , but failed in the senate by a vote of 18 ? 14 . Slaughter was allowed to exercise the powers of the governor , but many government officials and citizens of the state refused to call him by that title , opting for " acting governor " or " lieutenant governor " instead .