

INTRODUCTION

Levi Jackson, born March 17, 1816, in western Kentucky, became Laurel County's first County Judge when that office was established by the 1850 Kentucky Constitution. He served three terms as County Judge and remained active in the county's affairs until his death on July 17, 1879. This property was held intact by his heirs until the two surviving children gave their portion to the State of Kentucky for a State Park to be named for their father and the Wilderness Road. The Park now contains some 815 acres. The remaining acreage of the Jackson property including the Freeman Cemetery and the tavern site lies adjacent to the park and is now in private ownership.

MOUNTAIN LIFE MUSEUM

Miss Ella Jackson gave the park many family items, which are on display in the Mountain Life Museum. Other families have presented items to the museum in order that the way of life of the early pioneer may be portrayed for our visitors of today in these seven log buildings. It is in this way that we are able to preserve a portion of heritage.

This is not the original sites of these buildings. They were arranged at this location as many of the homestead cabins were. The buildings themselves are original, moved in from their original sites and rebuilt.

Building #1

This cabin was first used as a two-room school building. The first room now consists of house hold utensils that were used by the people at that particular time. The second room houses a gun collection.

Buildings #2 and #3

These two rooms were at one time a cabin that some folks lived in--known as the old Hopkins Home, which is set up to represent early pioneer life when a large family slept in one room.

#2--Trundle bed used by Levi Jackson, the first county judge of Laurel County. The cradle in this room was handmade. The kettles were used as cooking utensils. These early pioneers cooked over an open fire with cranes, which was used to hold the food containers in order for it to swing over the fire and cook.

#3--The old loom was used for weaving--spinning wheels used to spin the yarn on spindels for weaving--measuring wheel used to measure the yarn. In the fire place is an apple butter kettle and its laddle.

Building #4

This is the old Methodist Church of Bald Rock Chapel, 1880's. The logs in this church are over 200 years old. The church has its original pulpit--above the pulpit is the old collection plate that was used at that time. One of the old benches is original. The communion set in the front right corner was used by a Swiss family. It was given to the museum by Adolf Feichter. The piano in this room, is made of Rosewood, and is over 200 years old. It was placed in this museum by Russell Dyche, an editor of the local newspaper for many years, and one of the three local men who were responsible for the establishment of Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park.

After leaving Building #4, the old church, one can see in the yard the old dug well and the apple cider press.

Building #5

This is the smokehouse, where meat was cured! Notice the meat trough that was made out of a poplar log. The salt kettle was used in mining salt petre that was used in making gun powder. A collection of carpenter tools that were used around the farm and homestead make up the rest of the display in this building.

Building #6

This is the blacksmith's shop where homestead repairs took place. The billows were used to make the fire burn faster thus making it hotter. Notice the old hammer, anvil, etc., that were used in shoeing horses. This building was as the jailhouse in the movie "The Kentuckian" starring Bert Lancaster, Diana Lynn, and Diane Foster. This is the reason the bars were placed on the windows.

Building #7

The barn is covered with shingles or shakes! This is where the homestead vehicles, farm implements, etc., are kept! In the room on the left side of the barn, one can see an old still and wagon wheels! The right section consists of tools--most of them handmade.

To upstairs and see the old Prairie Schooner--it was also used in the movie "The Kentuckian."

This concludes our visit with you in the Mountain Life Museum of Levi Jackson Wilderness Road State Park. We hope you have enjoyed your visit here. Please be careful as you continue your journey, because we are looking forward to seeing you back at Levi Jackson in the near future!