



Kentucky's War of 1812: Spencer County

The Kentucky Historical Society's historical marker 837 in Taylorsville recognizes that in 1824 Spencer County was named after a veteran killed at the Battle of Tippecanoe, which some consider to be the first battle of the War of 1812.

Capt. Spear Spencer moved to Kentucky from Pennsylvania and became active in the Kentucky Militia. By the early 1800s, he had moved to Indiana and fought in several campaigns against Native Americans.

By the time Gen. William Henry Harrison encountered the Shawnee at the Battle of Tippecanoe in November 1811, Spencer led the "Yellow Jackets," his militia company. In Harrison's after-action report, the general noted that several of Spencer's officers were killed. He added, "Spencer was wounded in the head. He exhorted his men to fight valiantly. He was shot through both thighs and fell; still continuing to encourage them, he was raised up, and received a ball through his body, which put an immediate end to his existence."

KHS is the administrator of the Kentucky War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission. For more information, see www.history.ky.gov.