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## 1861 - Kentucky Civil War Neutrality Proclamation

Wallace Hettle  
*University of Northern Iowa*

Beriah Magoffin

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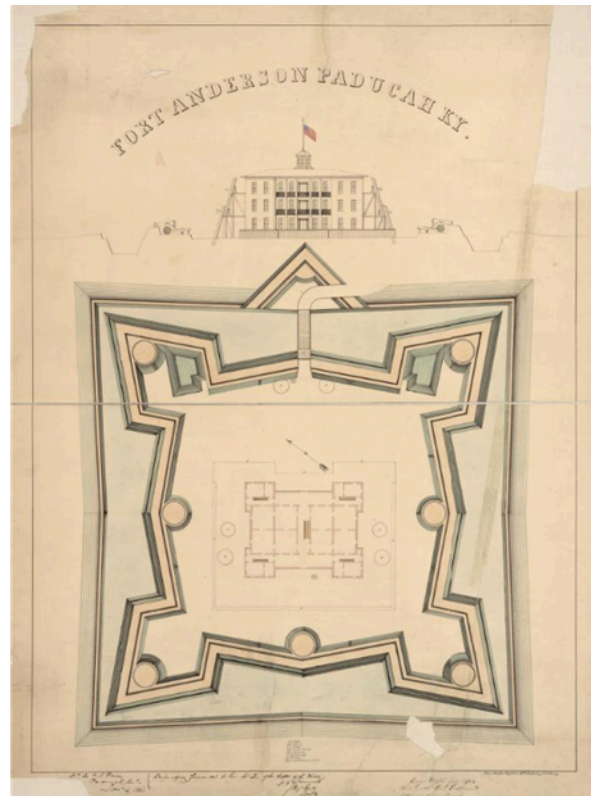
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1861 - Kentucky Civil War Neutrality Proclamation



Rziha, John. Fort Anderson, Paducah, Ky. 1861. Map.  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2008627280/>.

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*No Introduction*

Kentucky Civil War Neutrality Proclamation

Whereas, Numerous applications have been made to me from many good citizens of this Commonwealth, praying me to issue a proclamation forbidding the march of any forces of this or any other State or States, over our soil, to make an apprehended attack upon the Federal forces at Cairo. in Illinois, or to disturb any otherwise the peaceful attitude of Kentucky with reference to the deplorable war now waging between the United States and the Confederate States; and whereas, numerous applications from like good citizens of this Commonwealth have also been made to me, praying me to issue a proclamation forbidding the occupation of any post or place, or the march over our sacred soil by any force of the United States for any purpose; and whereas, it is made fully evident, by every indication of public sentiment, that it is the determined purpose of the good people of Kentucky to maintain with courageous firmness, the fixed position of self-defense, proposing or intruding no invasion or aggression towards any other State or States, forbidding the quartering of troops upon her soil by either of the hostile sections, but simply standing aloof from an unnatural, horrid, and lamentable strife, for the existence of which Kentucky, neither by thought, word, nor act, is in any-wise responsible; and whereas, the policy thus recommended by so many of my fellow-citizens of all political leanings, is, in my judgement, wise, peaceful, safe, and honorable, and the most likely to preserve peace and amity between the neighboring bordering States on both shores of the Ohio river. and protect Kentucky, generally, from the ravages of a deplorable war; and whereas, the arms distributed to the “State Guard,” composed as it is of gentlemen equally conscientious and honest, who entertain the

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opinions of both parties, are not to be used *against the Federal Government nor the Confederate States*, but to resist and prevent encroachments upon her soil, her rights, her honor, and her sovereignty by either of the belligerent parties, and to preserve the peace, safety, prosperity, and happiness and strict neutrality of her people, in the hope she may soon have an opportunity to become a successful mediator between them; and in order to remove the unfounded distrust and suspicions of purposes to force Kentucky out of the Union, at the point of the bayonet—which may have been strongly and wickedly engendered in the public mind in regard to my own position and that of the “State Guard.”

Now, therefore, I, BERIAH MAGOFFIN, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and Commander-in-Chief of all her military forces, on land or water, have issued this, my *proclamation*, hereby notifying and warning all other States, whether separate or united, and especially the “United States” and the “Confederate States,” that I solemnly forbid any movement upon the soil of Kentucky or the occupation of any port, post, or place whatever within the lawful boundary and jurisdiction of this State, by any of the forces under the orders of the States aforesaid, for any purpose whatever, until authorized by invitation or permission of the Legislative and Executive authorities of this State previously granted. I also hereby especially and solemnly forbid all good citizens of this Commonwealth, whether incorporated in the “State Guard” or otherwise, making any warlike or hostile demonstrations whatever against any of the authorities aforesaid, earnestly requesting all citizens, civil and military authorities; to remain when off military duty, quietly and peaceably at their homes, pursuing their wonted lawful avocations; to refrain from all words and acts likely to engender hot blood and provoke collision; to pursue such a line of wise conduct as will promote peace and tranquility, and a sense of safety and security, and thus keep far away from our beloved land and people the deplorable calamities

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of invasion; but at the same time earnestly counseling my fellow-citizens of Kentucky to make prompt and efficient preparations to assume the armor and attitude prescribed by the paramount and supreme law of self-defense—and strictly of self-defense alone; praying Almighty God to have us evermore in His holy keeping, and to preserve us in peace, prosperity, and security forever.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereto set my name,  
and caused the seal of the Commonwealth to be  
affixed. Done at Frankfort this, the 20th day of  
May, 1861, and in the 69th year of the Commonwealth.

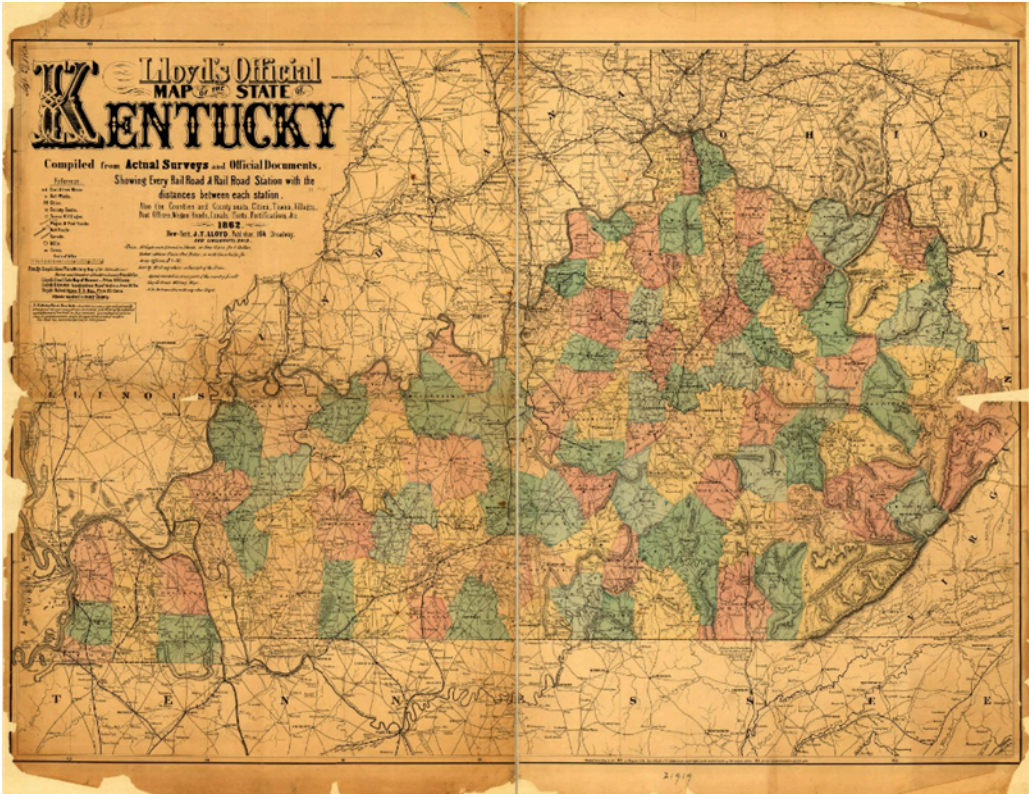
B. MAGOFFIN.

By the Governor:

THOMAS B. MONROE, JR., *Secretary of State*.

*Magoffin, B. Proclamation by the Governor of Kentucky, May 20, 1861 retrieved from Duke University Digital Repository <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r41g0m071>.*

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Lloyd, James T. Lloyd's official map of the State of Kentucky. New York and Cincinnati, J. T. Lloyd, 1862. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/99447352/>.