

WAS YOUR ANCESTOR AT FORT MEIGS?

Based on Episode 2, The First Siege of Fort Meigs. Fort Meigs stood in what is now Perrysburg, Wood County, Ohio.

SIEGE WINDOW TO REMEMBER **APRIL 28 – MAY 9, 1813**

KEY DATES

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED
Feb 2, 1813	Ground broken for the fort
Feb – Apr 1813	Six-month militia terms expire; many men march home before the British arrive
Apr 28	British General Procter arrives; the siege begins
May 1	Bombardment opens
May 5	Kentucky militia under Clay arrive; Dudley's men are cut off on the north bank; Miller's sortie on the south bank
May 9	Procter lifts the siege
Summer – fall	Kentucky militia stay on in the garrison; one more siege follows that summer

STEP 1 WAS HE A REGULAR OR MILITIA?

	REGULAR ARMY	MILITIA OR VOLUNTEER
WHO	Enlisted in the U.S. Army, such as the 17th and 19th Infantry or Cushing's Company, 2nd Artillery	Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, or Virginia militia, plus volunteer companies such as the Petersburg Volunteers (VA) and Pittsburgh Blues (PA)
START WITH	<i>Registers of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914</i> (NARA M233), free with images on FamilySearch	The state roster. Ohio: 1916 <i>Roster of Ohio Soldiers in the War of 1812</i> (free, Ohio History Connection). Kentucky: its published roster. Pennsylvania: <i>Pennsylvania Archives</i> . Virginia: state rolls and guides
WHAT IT CAN SHOW	Age, birthplace, occupation, height, eye and hair color, regiment, company commander, when and how he left	Company, rank, and the dates each muster roll covered (via the compiled service record)
THEN	Federal enlistment, discharge, and related Army records. Do not assume a volunteer-style compiled service record exists	Compiled military service record, from the National Archives or a searchable index
EITHER WAY	Pension and bounty land files (see the Fort Miamis episode). They are where wives, children, and later residences usually appear.	

STEP 2 MATCH HIS DATES TO THE SIEGE

- ☐ **Compare dates.** Set his dates of service beside April 28 – May 9, 1813. His muster roll or service record shows when his company came and went.
- ☐ **Helped build is not the same as defended.** Militia from Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Virginia built and held the fort through the winter, mostly on six-month terms. Many went home between February and April.
- ☐ **Kentucky arrivals stayed longer.** Men who came with Clay on May 5 stayed on into the fall, which gives you a longer window to find them in rolls, orders, and letters.

STEP 3 THREE WAYS TO PLACE HIM INSIDE THE FORT

- 1 His service record.** Compiled service record cards are copied from muster rolls and payrolls and show company, rank, and the dates each roll covered. His company on the rolls at Fort Meigs between April 28 and May 9 puts you on solid ground.
- 2 His company's paperwork.** Orderly books, diaries, and officers' letters can name a man on guard duty, a work detail, or a court martial. Cushing's orderly book and diary were published in 1944 (ed. Harlow Lindley), and the Ohio History Connection holds the records.
- 3 His own words.** Pension and bounty land applicants had to describe their service, often decades later. Read every page, because the Fort Meigs statement is often buried in a later affidavit.

When all three agree, write it into your family history with confidence. When only a family story says so, label it a story that still needs proof.

MORE PLACES TO LOOK

- **Newspapers.** Official reports of the siege were reprinted across Ohio and Kentucky in 1813, and some named officers and men killed or wounded. Search May and June 1813 for his company or his captain's name.
- **Wood County records.** Wood County was organized in 1820 and named for the fort's engineer, Eleazer Wood. Perrysburg became the first permanent county seat in 1822. If your family settled near the fort after the war, find out when the deed, probate, and court series begin, because coverage varies by record type.

WATCH-OUTS

Casualty figures vary. About 1,000 Americans were killed, wounded, or captured, most in Dudley's command on May 5. Treat any single number with care. If your ancestor was with Dudley, the next Ohio Under Siege episode, *Dudley's Defeat*, covers that story.

Family stories are leads, not proof. "Great-grandfather defended Fort Meigs" may be true, or he may have left in March.

WHERE TO SEARCH

FamilySearch · United States, Registers of Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798–1914 (free)

familysearch.org/search/collection/1880762

Ohio History Connection · 1812 War Roster Search (free)

resources.ohiohistory.org/roster

FamilySearch Wiki · US Army Enlistments, 1798–1914: how to read the registers

familysearch.org/en/wiki/US_Army_Enlistments,_1798-1914

MORE FREE RESEARCH GUIDES: [BRICKWALLSBUCKEYES.COM](https://brickwallsbuckeyes.com)

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