Preparations for fighting the Indians. Colonel John P. Boyd. Response to a Call for Volunteers.

The government had suggested to Harrison the propriety of seizing Tecumtha and the Prophet, and holding them as hostages for the good behavior of their followers. The governor, in turn, suggested, as a better method of obtaining peace and security, an increase of the military resources of the Territory, and the establishment of a military post high up the Wabash toward the Prophet's town. The wisdom of this suggestion was conceded. The Fourth Regiment of United States Infantry, under Colonel John P. Boyd,[1] was ordered from Pittsburg to the Falls of the Ohio, now Louisville; and Governor Harrison was authorized[a] to employ these troops and call out the militia of the Territory for the purpose of attacking the hostile savages on the Tippecanoe, if he should deem it advisable. This authorization gave the inhabitants about Vincennes great relief. They had already, before the arrival of the order, appointed a committee at a public meeting[b] to ask the government to direct the dispersion of the hostile bands at the Prophet's town.[2]

[a] July 17, 1811.

[b] July 31.

The government was anxious to preserve peace with the Indians, and Harrison's orders gave him very little discretionary powers in the matter of levying war upon the savages. They were sufficient for his purpose. He determined to push forward, build a fort on the Wabash, make peaceful overtures, and if they were rejected, open war vigorously. He called Colonel Boyd to Vincennes with his detachment, consisting of a part of the Fourth Regiment and some riflemen, and asked for volunteers. The response was quick and ample. Revenge because of wrongs suffered at the hands of the Indians north of the Ohio slumbered in many bosoms, especially in Kentucky; and when the voice of the popular Harrison called for aid, it was like the sound of the trumpet. Old Indian warriors in Kentucky like General Samuel Wells

[1] John Parke Boyd was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, December 21, 1764. His father was from Scotland, and his mother was a descendant of Tristam Coffin, the first of that family who emigrated to America. He entered the army in 1786, as ensign in the Second Regiment. With a spirit of adventure, he went to India in 1789, having first touched at the Isle of France. In a letter to his father from Madras, in June, 1790, he says, "Having procured recommendatory letters to the English consul residing at the court of his highness, the Nizam, I proceeded to his capital, Hydrabad, 450 miles from Madras. On my arrival, I was presented to his highness in form by the English consul. My reception was as favorable as my most sanguine wishes had anticipated. After the usual ceremony was over, he presented me with the command of two kansolars of infantry, each of which consists of 500 men." His commission and pay were in accordance with his command. He describes the army of the Nizam, which had taken the field against Tippoo Sultan. It consisted of 150,000 infantry, 60,000 cavalry, and 500 elephants, each elephant supporting a "castle" containing a nabob and servants. He remained in India several years, in a sort of guerrilla service, and obtained much favor. He was in Paris early in 1808, and at home in the autumn of that year, when he was appointed (October 2) colonel of the Fourth Regiment of the U. S. Army. He was in the battle of Tippecanoe in November, 1811, and on the commencement of war with Great Britain he was appointed (August 26) a brigadier general. He held that rank throughout the war. He was at the capture of Fort George, and in the battle of Chrysler's Field, or Williamsburg, in Canada. He left the army in 1815, and the following year he went to England to obtain indemnity for the loss of a valuable cargo of saltpetre, captured by an English cruiser while on its way from the East Indies. He procured only a single installment of $30,000. President Jackson appointed him Naval Officer at Boston in 1830. He died there the same year, on the 4th of October, at the age of sixty-six years.

General Boyd was a tall, well-formed, and handsome man; kind, courteous, and generous. I am indebted to the courtesy of the Hon. William Willis, of Portland, Maine, for the materials of the above brief sketch and the profile of the general.

[2] The committee consisted of Samuel T. Scott, Alexander Devin, Luke Decker, Ephraim Jordan, Daniel M'Clure, Walter Wilson, and Francis Vigo. In a letter dated August 3, 1811, and addressed to the President, they said, "In this part of the country we have not, as yet, lost any of our fellow-citizens by the Indians; but depredations upon the property of those who live upon the frontiers, and insults to the families that are left unprotected, almost daily occur."—Dillon's *History of Indiana*, page 456.