

PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE LESSON PLANS

By Candace T. Carr

GRADE LEVEL: Elementary

Prepared in partial fulfillment of requirements for
"INDIANA AND THE NEW NATION, 1776-1876"
a project of the Historic Southern Indiana

PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE LESSON PLANS

Candace Taff Carr

On the afternoon of September 3, 1812, twenty-four pioneers living in a typical scattered settlement on the southern Indiana Territory frontier, were brutally murdered and mutilated by a band of marauding Indians. This was a tragic but familiar scene in the history of the westward expansion. In the

a small, unprotected settlement was NOT a surprise. Men were gone to war, Detroit had just been captured by the British and the Indians, and Harrison had negotiated several unpopular treaties with the Indians. In the narrower scope of Indiana's history, this massacre was perhaps the most atrocious of any.

The content of these lessons include:

- 1) background material on the settler/Indian conflict of America, especially the Indiana territory in the early 1800's
- 2) introduction of the political decisions, national policies, and war strategies that resulted in attacks on settlers on the frontier
- 3) perspectives of both sides of the conflict: both

Lesson # 1 -- Overview; Indian Conflict in the Indiana Territory
around 1813

Objectives: Students will:

- 1) recognize events of early 1800's that led to conflict in 1813
- 2) determine the cause and effect of the Pigeon Roost massacre
- 3) describe the historic and geographic context

Materials: Quote by Zebulon Collings
TimeLine with dates, but no events
Classroom map of Indiana or Great Lakes region

Introduction:

Teacher read

Quote by Zebulon Collings

"The manner in which I used to work in those perilous times

was as follows: On all occasions I carried my rifle, tomahawk, and
butcher knife, with a loaded pistol in my belt. When I went to
plow, I laid my gun on the plowed ground and stuck up a stick by it
for a mark, so I could get it quickly in case it was wanted. I had
two good dogs—I took one into the house, leaving the other

Indian Conflict Timeline

1763

White settlement forbidden west of the

1783-1789 Treaty of Paris allows Americans to settle west of the
Appalachian Mountains; Both Indians and settlers claim
land

1785

Land Ordinance claims that before land can be sold

June, 1813 Bartholomew's raid

Indian Conflict Timeline

1763 _____

1783-1789 _____

1785 _____

1795 _____

1800 _____

1803-1809 _____

1811 _____

August 15, 1812 _____

August 16, 1812 _____

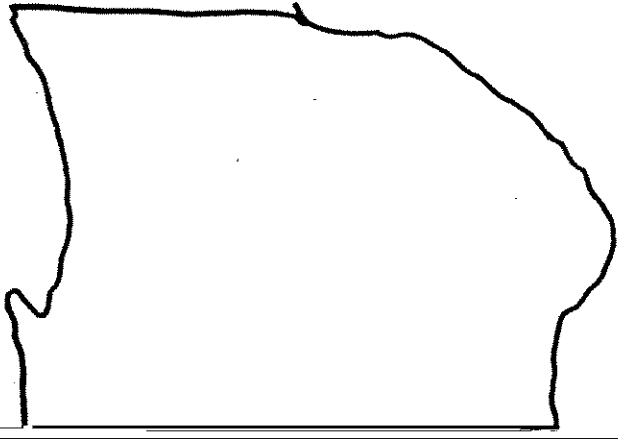
April, 1813 _____

June, 1813 _____

October, 1813 _____

December, 1814 _____

↑
N.



Indiana and during the War of 1812

- Map Key:
1. Fort Dearborn massacre, August 1812
 2. Fort Detroit surrender
 3. Fort Wayne seige
 4. Battle of Mississinewa

_____ [unclear]

6. Fort Harrison seige
7. Fort Knox (Vincennes)
8. Charlestown
9. Clarksville

Lesson # 2 -- The Pigeon Roost Massacre

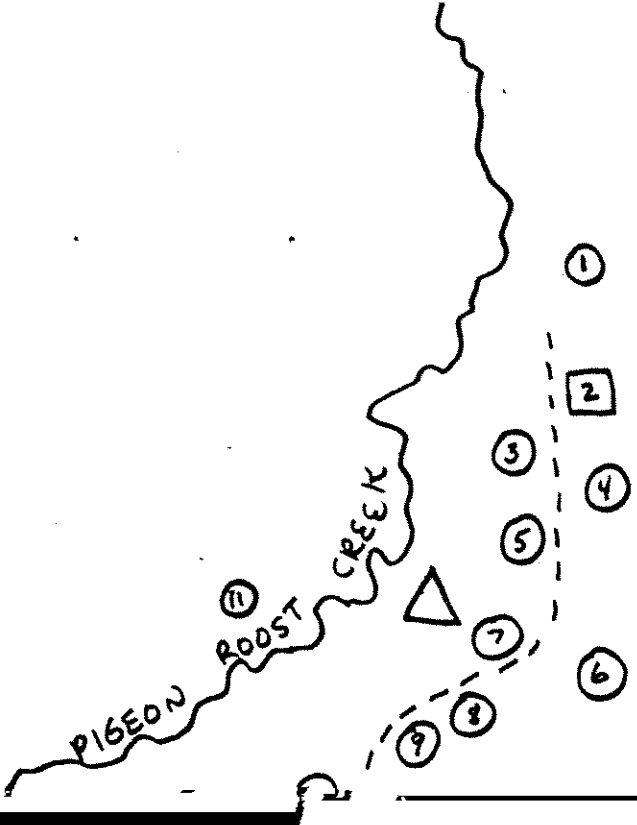
Objectives: Students will:

- 1) compare and contrast eye witness and scholarly accounts of the massacre
- 2) determine biases and differences in accounts

- 3) transfer knowledge from a written text to a variety of maps

Materials: Teacher prepared site maps (1 per student)

TRAIL of the
PIGEON ROOST
MASSACRE



12

13

Trail of the Pigeon Roost Massacre

- Map Key:
1. Elias Payne home, family killed
 2. Vienna Blockhouse

4. Jeremiah Payne's home
5. Mrs. Henry Collings killed
6. Richard Collings' home, family killed
7. Henry Collings' home

9. How did the massacre change the lives of those who still lived in the Indiana Territory?

Arville Funk article, from The Hoosier Scrapbook, 1981, page 4.

10. Find three facts that add to your knowledge or change your knowledge about the massacre.

11. Which of the three accounts is the most accurate?

the War of
elsewhere.

Roost in
dered the
ge to Fort

some de-
same per-

Likewise,
he second
he staff of
ted gram-

me
ied

ared in one of the Bedford pa-
Indians committed on the set-
hor to be ignorant of the whole
same settlement.
lers of Pigeon Roost in Scott
ace with the red man. We had
ed giving offense. The Indians
this time, they had committed
ers. But near the close of the
slight whisperings of danger to
ndians. As such reports were
of alarming the credulous, we
at the Battle of Tippecanoe had
see Prophet, at the head of the
y General Harrison; therefore,
hing to fear. But a short time
ometimes truth even in "flying
f eleven Indians came into our
ity then and there perpetrated
ion on my mind that can never
o, still I remember its details
ame to the house of Elias Paine

Moffit,

y were

children

of to the

ry Col-

nds be-

. Mrs.

savage

farm-

terior.

an cold

home,

ess of

more

-beau-

their

months

ther's

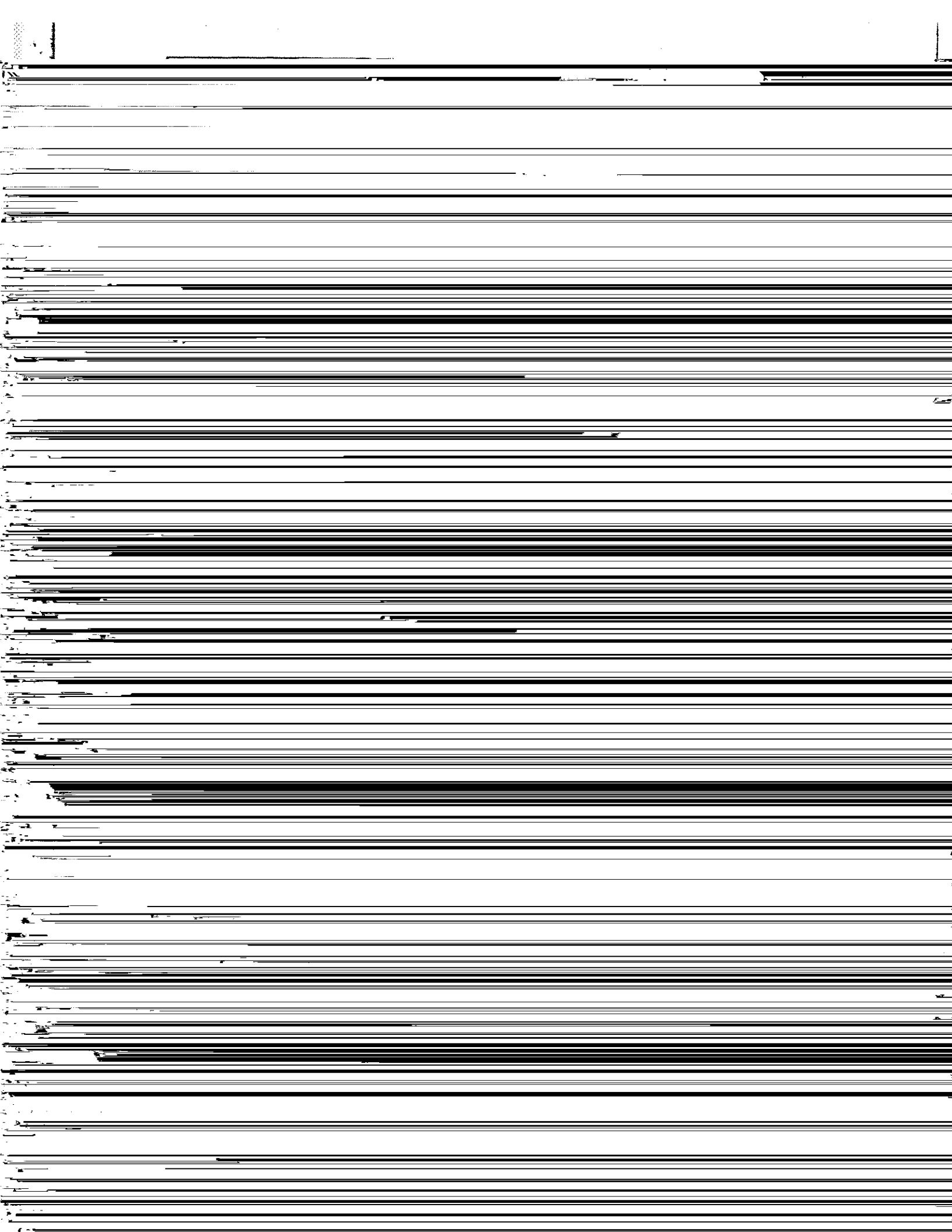
to re-

on the

n re-

ctive







de-
y the
of the
rs on
and
1815.
set-
ilous
, and
laid
so I
k one
give
en be
table
table
nty of
nown
e nor
1859),

from Arville Funk, The Hoosier Scrapbook,
1981. Reprinted with the author's
permission.

Pigeon Roost massacre

24 settlers are slain in 1812 Indian raid on Scott County area

The first and most tragic of several Indian raids and massacres in the Indiana Territory during the War of 1812 occurred at the little settlement of Pigeon Roost in Vienna Township of Scott County a few miles south of present-day Scottsburg.

The Pigeon Roost community had been settled by an old rugged frontiersman and soldier, William E. Collings, who brought his family and others

brave who had hunted around the settlement as a guide for the group.)

In the late afternoon of Sept. 3, the war party arrived at the farm of Elias Payne who lived northeast of present-day Vienna. Payne's wife and seven children were the first victims. The Indians scattered household goods and burned the cabin. Circling westward to avoid the Vienna blockhouse, the party

John rushed toward the cabin. William Collings upheld his fame as a marksman when he killed the pursuing Indian with a well-directed shot just as he was about to tomahawk the boy. Of the four trapped in the cabin, only William provided armed resistance since Norris could not fire effectively because of the shoulder wound. William Collings proved to be the only resistance the war party

Lesson # 3 -- Field Trip to Pigeon Roost Memorial

Objectives: Students will--

- 1) recall sequence of events concerning the massacre upon arrival at the site
- 2) note the inscription on the memorial, the location and upkeep of the site
- 3) collect data from the cemetery

- 4) reflect upon the event in a period of silence

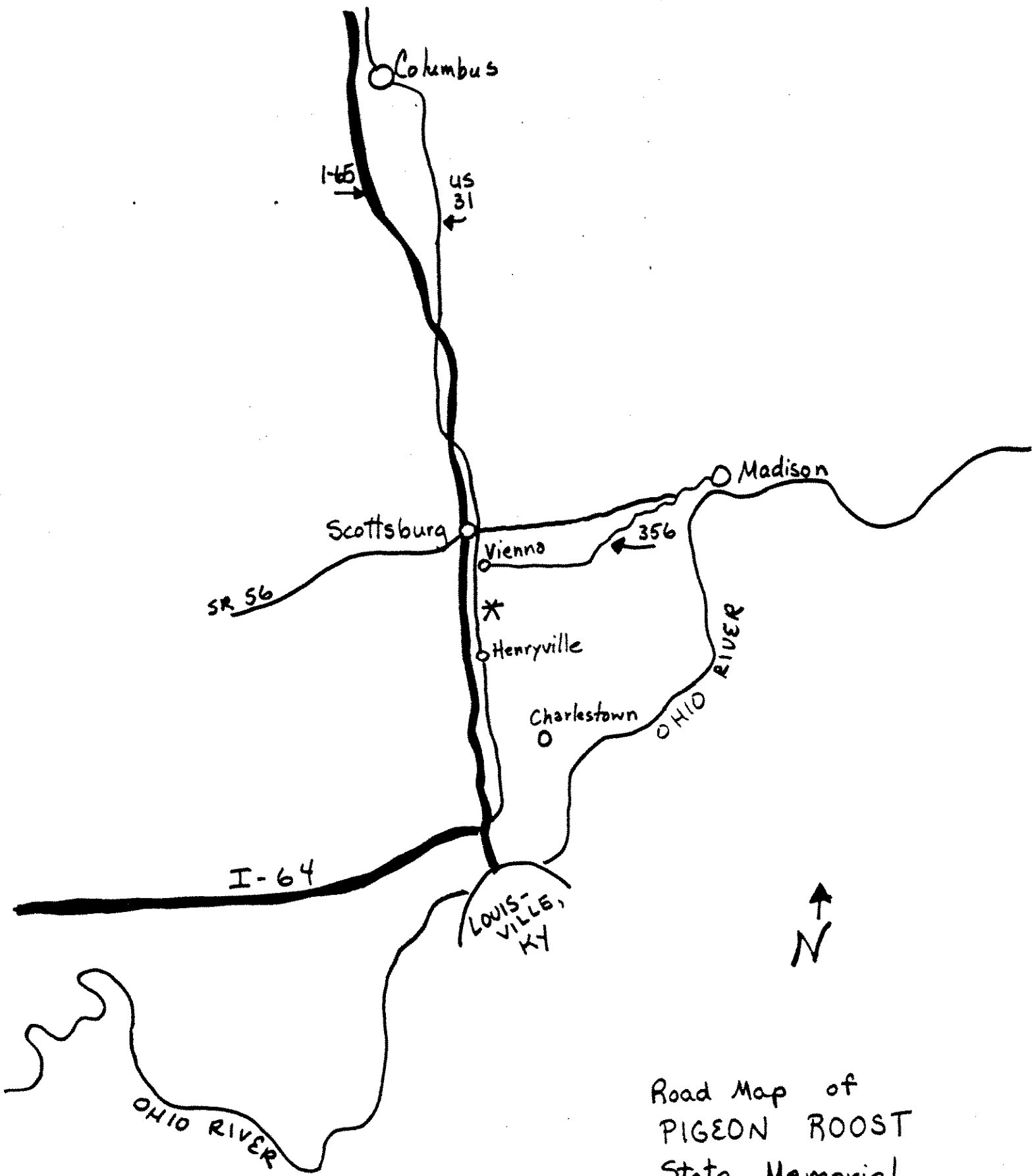
Materials: camera
Indiana road map
Scott County map
dark crayons and large sheets of newsprint

Introduction:

- Students will trace the travel to the site on an Indiana road map.
- Students will trace the route of the raiding Indians on a Scott County map and locate the site.
- Review the list of victims and survivors and the Pigeon Roost maps done in class for lesson #2.

Development:

- Visit the site. Walk around the memorial, noting inscriptions, upkeep of the site.
- Tour the cemetery, making rubbings of tombstones with the same family names of victims and survivors.
- Engage the assistance of a Friends of Pigeon Roost resource person to speak to the group at the site.
(Contact Mrs. Helen Trueblood, Pigeon Roost Massacre Association, R.R. #3, Scottsburg, Indiana 47170)



Road Map of
PIGEON ROOST
State Memorial

Lesson # 4 -- Cause and Effect of the Pigeon Roost Massacre
RESOLUTIONS

Objectives: Students will:

- 1) analyze events that ultimately resulted in the Pigeon Roost massacre
- 2) make associations of cause and effect
- 3) evaluate the immediate solutions at the time of the massacre
- 4) generate solutions in light of hindsight

Materials: pencil
paper

Introduction:

Read list of events leading up to the Pigeon Roost massacre from the time line

Divide class into groups of 3 to 5; each group will determine

Pigeon Roost Massacre

Victims

1. Isaac Coffman
Elias Payne
2. Mrs. Elias Payne
Seven Children
4. Mrs. Henry Collings
5. Mrs. Richard Collings

Survivors

3. Jeremiah Payne and family
7. William Collings
Lydia and John Collings
Captain Norris
10. Mrs. John Biggs
Two children

PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE

Enrichment activities

Make a timeline of all the events concerning American/Indian conflicts from 1893 to 1816.

Write a letter to a relative living in another area from the viewpoint of a survivor of the Pigeon Roost Massacre.

Make a salt and flour map of the area around Pigeon Roost, including the three blockhouses.

Write a tall tale about William Collings and his heroic deeds on the Indiana frontier.

Make a map of the Indiana or Northwest Territory.

Pigeon Roost Lesson Plans Bibliography

Books

1. Barnhart and Riker, Indiana to 1816: the Colonial Period. Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society. Indianapolis, IN. 1971. page 377.
2. Funk, Arville. "Pigeon Roost Massacre." The Hoosier Scrapbook. Alfco Publications. Corydon, IN. 1981. pages 4-5.
3. Indiana State Sentinel. January 24, 1853. Quoted in The Massacre at Pigeon Roost.