**Historical Marker Nomination Form**

*This form is available for downloading online at* [*www.phmc.state.pa.us*](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us)*.*

Review Policies for Approval, and then complete this form. Please type or print, using font size no smaller than 10 point.

1. Subject of Marker / Marker Title

State name of person (include birth and death dates), event, innovation, or site to be commemorated.

**Colonel William Clapham (1722-1763), The Clapham Massacre Site**

2. Please use the space below to provide a historical overview and specify fully the

historical significance of the person, event, innovation, or site. **Be sure to explain why this marker will have meaning for people from the whole state or country, not just from your own community. If of broader significance, be sure to describe the subject's Pennsylvania connection.** Be thorough, but concise, and try not to exceed the space provided.

**As white settlers and squatters migrated west of the Appalachians in the mid-1700’s, Native American alarm began to increase. Traders such as George Croghan and John Frazier had long standing ties with the Ohio Valley tribes, but as new trading posts sprang up and Fort Pitt expanded from a small frontier outpost to a massive fortress, the Ohio Valley tribes analyzed the situation and quickly realized that the British Empire was closing in on their traditional lands.**

**It was at this time, following the French and Indian War, that an Ottawa leader named Pontiac began to organize a confederacy of tribes to stand against this encroachment. Allied tribes from the Great Lakes Region and the Ohio River Valley would launch attacks against frontier outposts.**

**The war known as Pontiac’s Rebellion began with a surprise attack on Fort Michilimackinac, but by late May of 1763, the Pontiac’s allied tribes of the Ohio Valley would now set their sights on the symbol of British Empire in their region- Fort Pitt. The Fort Pitt campaign would begin, however, in the most unlikely of places.**

**Colonel William Clapham operated a trading post and extensive plantation near the Youghiogheny River. He was a well-known and respected figure on the trans-Appalachian frontier in Pennsylvania, but unlike his associate George Croghan, he was not trusted by the Ohio Valley tribes.**

**Clapham emigrated to Pennsylvania during the Seven Years’ War and worked with Benjamin Franklin to establish a chain of forts on the Appalachian Frontier. This was a difficult, but important task in the wake of Braddock’s Defeat in 1755. After assisting in the establishment of numerous frontier forts including Fort Hunter and Fort Augusta, Clapham headed west to Pittsburgh in 1760 where he would soon enter into an economic venture with Indian trader George Croghan to establish a plantation and trading post on “Sweickley Bottoms” where Sewickley Creek enters into the Youghiogheny River. But just as his trading post was taking shape, hostilities between the Ohio Valley tribes and white settlers in the Fort Pitt region began to reach a breaking point. Clapham, an experienced Indian fighter from the Massachusetts frontier, would find himself at the wrong place at the wrong time.**

**His plantation would become the sight where the first attack of Pontiac’s Rebellion took place on Pennsylvania soil. Here, Delaware warriors allied to Pontiac, killed five people, including Clapham. Following this event, Pontiac’s Confederacy would launch successful attacks against British settlements and forts west of the Appalachian Mountain Chain. After killing these five individuals, a war belt was returned to Pontiac’s allied tribes in other regions of Pennsylvania and soon these tribes would lay siege to Fort Pitt. This siege would last until the British, under Colonel Henry Bouquet, won a very important victory at the Battle of Bushy Run to break the siege in early August of 1763.**

**The attack was led by an Indian named Wolf(e), son of Keedyeskung, who recently escaped from captivity at Fort Pitt where he was being detained for horse theft. He had a deep hatred of the British and now set his sights on revenge. Sadly, he and several allied warriors took out their vengeance on the unsuspecting Clapham family. Such an attack had long been rumored in the Ohio Country. Now, it had become a grim reality.**

**The murder of Clapham, his family and several of his workers sent shock waves through the region and marked the start of the Fort Pitt campaign. The siege that ensued following the Clapham Massacre was only lifted following Colonel Henry Bouquet’s victory at the Battle of Bushy Run.**

**Pontiac’s Rebellion was a hard lesson for the British. They realized that keeping control of their huge American land holdings would not be easy. After issuing the Proclamation of 1763, the British hoped to establish a buffer zone between white settlements and Native American lands. This proclamation was ignored. White settlers continued to pour into the trans-Appalachian Frontier. Attempts to halt this migration were futile and led to resentment within the colonies. Many historians point to this as a major cause of the America Revolution along with the need for the British to being taxation of their American colonies to help pay off the massive debts incurred by the Crown from the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s insurgency.**

**Despite his brutal and untimely death, Clapham was a giant on the Pennsylvania frontier in the mid-18th Century and his work with other important figures of the era such as Benjamin Franklin, James Burd and George Croghan cannot be ignored.**

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3. Please provide a draft of the text for the marker. (Note: A final text will be written in collaboration with PHMC staff.)

**This site was where the first attack of Pontiac’s Rebellion in Pennsylvania took place. Here, Delaware warriors allied to Pontiac killed five people, including a trader named William Clapham, an associate of George Croghan. Following this event, Pontiac’s Confederacy would launch successful attacks against British settlements and forts west of the Appalachian Mountain Chain before finally being defeated at Bushy Run in August 1763.**

4. Are you requesting a city type marker (27” x 41½”, approx. 40 words, approx. cost $1400.00) or a roadside type marker (45¼” x 45 ¾”, approx. 70 words, approx. cost $1875.00)?

**❑X** Roadside type ❑ City type

5. Bibliographical data — From which publications/sources did you obtain your information and/or can information be secured to understand the historical background, to evaluate historical significance, and to prepare appropriate marker text? Feel free to attach a list, utilizing the format below for referencing them. At least 3 or 4 sources (primary and secondary) are ideal. If completing this form as a Word document, you may delete the underlines or type over them using the “insert” key on your computer keyboard.

Lucier, Armand F., comp. *Pontiac's Conspiracy and Other Indian Affairs: Notices Abstracted from Colonial Newspapers, 1763-1765*. Bowie: Heritage, 2000. Print.

**Lucier's work was filled with primary source colonial newspaper accounts of Pontiac's Uprising. I used several sources with the book to help viewers of my website better understand the Clapham Massacre, the 1766 peace agreement with Pontiac and Sir William Johnson, and Pontiac's death in 1796.**

"Report from Fort Pitt." *The Pennsylvania Gazette* [Philadelphia] 31 May 1763: n. pag. Print.

**Another important primary source that was used in my research for the Clapham Massacre site was the May 31, 1763 article in the Pennsylvania Gazette.**

Trent, William. "The Journal of William Trent." Letter. 29 May 1763. MS. Fort Pitt, P, PA.

**An excerpt from Trent's journal describing the Clapham Massacre. This graphic description details the first attack of Pontiac's Rebellion on Pennsylvania soil and the brutality of frontier warfare. This proved to be a valuable primary resource for research.**

Trent, William. *The Journal of William Trent, May 1763*. Digital image. *The Journal of Captain William Trent*. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.

**This item was found in the archives of the library at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. It details not only the Clapham attack, but the entire action of Pontiac's Rebellion in and around the Pittsburgh area.**

Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North*

*America, 1754-1766*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000. Print.

**Anderson writes in great detail of the Fort Pitt siege including another mention of the Clapham Massacre. Anderson is regarded as one of the most important historians of this era.**

Sipe, C. Hale. *Fort Ligonier and Its Times*. New York: Arno, 1971. Print.

**Another source that helped provide insight into the Clapham attack was Sipe's work on the history of Fort Ligonier. This book also had information pertaining to the 1763 attack on Fort Ligonier which was one of the few Native American attacks on a British fort that not taken by Pontiac’s warriors.**

Dixon, David. *Never Come to Peace Again: Pontiac's Uprising and the Fate of the British Empire in North America*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2005. Print.

**Dixon's book was very helpful in providing details into Clapham background, his migration to the Pittsburgh area, and his partnering with George Croghan. It also provides information on Wolf, the Native American who led the attack on the Clapham family, and his deep resentment of the British and all white settlers in his region.**

**NOTE: Supporting Documentation is important - Attach copies of excerpts from essential published or unpublished primary or secondary source material. Again, at least 3 or 4 examples are expected. This material should support the overview you have written, and verify your claims. Letters of support are acceptable to include. Those from experts on the proposed marker subject carry the most weight.**

Trent, William. *The Journal of William Trent, May 1763*. Digital image. *The Journal of Captain William Trent*. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, n.d. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.

**"At Break of day this Morning three Men came from Col. Clapham's who was settled at the Oswegly Old Town about 25 Miles from here on the Youghyogeane River, with an account that Col. Clapham, with one of his Men, two women and a child were Merdered by Wolfe and some other Delaware Indians, about two o'clock the day before.  The 27th Wolfe with some others robed one Mr. Coleman on the road between Ligonier of upwards of 50 pounds- The women that were killed at Col. Clapham's were treated in such a brutal manner that Decency forbids the Mentioning.  This evening we had two soldiers scalped at the Sawmill."**

Sipe, C. Hale. *Fort Ligonier and Its Times*. New York: Arno, 1971. Print.

**"On the same day (May 28th), Colonel Clapham, his wife, three children and another woman were killed at their home on George Croghan's tract of land near West Newton by the Wolf, Keskesung, and three other Delaware, one of whom was named Butler.  
The women were treated with shocking indecency.  The men who were working near Clapham's escaped and brought news to Colonel Ecuyer at Fort Pitt.  Colonel John Burd entered in his journal on June 5 that, 'John Harris gave me an account of Colonel Clapham and twelve others being killed.'  Captain Ecuyer sent a messeger to Fort Venago to warn the small garrison there, but he returned a short time later having been shot twice and severely wounded."**

Lucier, Armand F., comp. *Pontiac's Conspiracy and Other Indian Affairs: Notices Abstracted from Colonial Newspapers, 1763-1765*. Bowie: Heritage, 2000. Print.

**"There is most melancholy news here, the Indians have broke out in divers Places and have murdered Colonel Chapman (sic) and his Family; and two of our Men at the Saw-Mill just by the Ford, and scalps taken off each Man.  An Indian has brought a war belt to the Tuscarora, who says Detroit was invested and St. Dusky cut off and Ensign Pawly taken prisoner."  
  
  
- Pennsylvania Gazette, May 31, 1763 (As edited by Armand F. Lucier)**

Anderson, Fred. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North*

*America, 1754-1766*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000. Print.

**"On May 28th, Delaware and Mingo warriors shed first blood in the upper Ohio Country when they wiped out Colonel William Clapham's small settlement, twenty-five miles from the Forks."**

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6. Describe the suggested marker site. Are there any surviving features, built or

topographical, that relate to the proposed commemoration? (While survival of such features is not a determining factor in the approval of markers, a suggested marker should be close enough to the site described to take advantage of any features that do survive. It should also be located so as to maximize visibility and accessibility to the public.) If possible, please attach a photograph. The final location will be subject to PHMC approval.

**The proposed marker site should be near the confluence of Sewickley Creek and the Youghiogheny River between the towns of West Newton and Suttersville.**

7. Provide information on suggested marker site:

*If completing this form as a Word document, you may delete the underlines or type over them using the “insert” key on your computer keyboard.*

County: Westmoreland

Street address or intersection (town or city location): *(“325 Main St.” or “southwest corner of Main and Oak Streets”)*

West Newton Road near the confluence of Sewickley Creek and the Youghiogheny River

City: West Newton

Highway route number (for locations other than city streets): *(“PA 322”)* West Newton

Road, near PA 136

Nearest town and distance in miles: *(“2 miles east of Centerville”)* 1 mile, West Newton

If not a highway, identify closest highway route and give approximate distance from it: *(“.5 miles south of Pa. 6”)*

1.5 miles from PA 136

If the marker is suggested for placement inside a park, specify exact location within the park: *(“Adjacent to gazebo in Memorial Park; along Main Street side of park”)*

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8. Please provide information on yourself as preparer of this form:

Name: Dylan Haney\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: 1290 Rostraver Road\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City: Belle Vernon State: PA Zip:15012

Zip + four code

Telephone: ( 724 )579-5131\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: ( )

E-mail address: aweljhaney@hotmail.com\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Legislative District or Rep(s): 58th District, Ted Harhai

If you are writing on behalf of an organization, please indicate your title and the name of the organization *(“President, Eastern Historical Society”)*.

Your signature:

Submission date:

Please submit your nomination (pages 5 to 8 only) without using cover, page protectors, bindings, and other “presentation” materials. Annual postmark deadline is **December 1**.

Return twelve (12) copies of your completed nomination form including any additional supporting material, collated into twelve (12) complete packets for distribution to evaluators, to:

Historical Marker Program

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Bureau for Historic Preservation

400 North Street, 2nd Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

If you have any questions about completing this form, please contact Karen Galle at

(717) 705-4266, or via email at: kgalle@pa.gov.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired and wish to contact a hearing person via Text Telephone, you may use the PA Relay Center at 1-800-654-5984.