

## Department of Historic Resources

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## 13 NEW STATE HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKERS APPROVED

*—War of 1812 markers slated for City of Hampton (3 markers) and Dinwiddie County—*

*—Other markers cover topics in the counties of Appomattox, Augusta, James City, and York; and the cities of Lynchburg and Richmond (4 markers)—*

**[Note: The full text for each marker is reproduced at the end of this release.]**

RICHMOND – From the first Poles to arrive in Virginia in 1608 to the life of painter “Grandma” Moses in the Shenandoah Valley, new historical highway markers approved by the state’s Department of Historic Resources cover a variety of topics, including signs highlighting the War of 1812.

The marker titled “First Poles Arrive,” honoring the first Polish natives to arrive in Jamestown, will be erected near the historic English settlement, in **James City County**. Recruited by the Virginia Company, Polish craftsmen in Jamestown “contributed to the development of a glass factory and the production of potash, naval stores, and wood products” and were praised for “their work ethic” by Captain John Smith, according to the recently approved marker text.

In **Augusta County**, a new marker will highlight the period Anna Mary Robertson Moses—a.k.a. “Grandma” Moses—lived in the Shenandoah Valley with her husband, Thomas. The family purchased a farm with a Federal-style house built in 1830 known as Mt. Airy and “gained renown for their butter, milk, and potato chips,” according to the marker. Moses started painting in her late 70s after she had moved to Eagle Bridge NY, but she depicted Mt. Airy in at least three known paintings, produced in her distinctive Primitive American style.

Four signs approved by the department cover topics relating to the War of 1812. Three of these markers are slated for installation in **Hampton**. Two signs, “British Approach to Hampton” and the “Sack of Hampton,” recall the British campaign against “little Hampton” and the town’s capture by the British on June 25, 1813. A third Hampton marker, “War of 1812 Military Legacy,” commemorates a lasting legacy of that

successful British invasion—the post-war construction of Fort Monroe to defend Hampton Roads and the U.S. hinterland from future foreign incursions.

A **Dinwiddie County** marker will honor county native Winfield Scott, “one of America’s early military heroes.” Scott was twice wounded and promoted to brigadier general during the War of 1812. He also fought in the Mexican-American War and served the U.S. during the Civil War, formulating his “Anaconda Plan,” which proposed “blockading the Southern coast and severing the Confederacy in the West,” a plan that “presaged eventual Union victory,” in the words of the approved marker text.

These four signs continue an initiative started last year to create two dozen or so markers about the War of 1812 in Virginia in order to increase public awareness of the state’s significant role in that conflict. The department is collaborating with the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission to develop the signs.

### **Other markers:**

In addition to the sign honoring Grandma Moses, three other signs will focus on individuals or topics relating to women’s history:

- “Mary Wingfield Scott (1895-1983),” in **Richmond**, honors this early preservationist who “is credited with the transformation of historic preservation in Virginia.” She founded the William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (today’s Preservation Virginia) and purchased and restored Richmond’s historic Linden Row, which she donated to the Historic Richmond Foundation.
- “Richmond Exchange for Woman’s Work” recalls this organization formed in 1883 that helped “women in reduced circumstances support themselves by selling handmade goods through a consignment shop operated by the exchange.” The exchange ceased operation in 1957.
- “The Theft Case of Mary Aggie,” to be erected in **York County**, highlights this 1730 event involving Aggie, an enslaved woman convicted of theft. When Aggie pled “benefit of clergy” in her defense, a claim that “then allowed only white men to escape the harshest penalties for most offenses,” according to the marker, Lt. Gov. William Gooch supported Aggie and pardoned her. That act led in 1732 to the General Assembly extending “a limited form of benefit of clergy to all races and women.”

Other markers approved for installation along Virginia’s roadways by DHR’s Historic Resources Board during its March 17 quarterly meeting include the following:

- Church Hill Tunnel, in **Richmond**, recalls the collapse on October 2, 1925 of a 190-foot portion of this railroad tunnel, resulting in the deaths of many workers and the entombing of a train.

- Evergreen Cemetery, in **Richmond**, honors this historic African American graveyard where many nationally renowned black leaders are buried, including business woman Maggie L. Walker and newspaper editor John Mitchell Jr.
- Historic Holiday Lake 4-H Club and W.P.A. Camp, in **Appomattox County**, highlights the origins of this 4-H educational center, which arose as a camp built for, and by Works Progress Administration workers in 1937 who reforested the surrounding land and laid out Holliday Lake State Park.
- Diamond Hill Baptist Church, in **Lynchburg**, summarizes the history of this church established in 1872 and which “became central to the Civil Rights movement in the Lynchburg area” under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Virgil A. Woods from 1958-1963.

The Virginia highway marker program, which began in 1927 with the installation of the first historical markers along U.S. Rte. 1, is considered the oldest such program in the nation. Currently there are more than 2,200 official state markers, mostly erected and maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

The manufacturing cost of each new highway marker is covered by its respective sponsor, except for those markers developed by the Department of Historic Resources as part of a nearly decade-long program to create new markers that focus on the history of women, African Americans, and Virginia Indians. Markers created by DHR are funded by a federal grant.

More information about the Historical Highway Marker Program is available on the website of the Department of Historic Resources at <http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/>.

### **Full Text of Markers:**

#### **First Poles Arrive**

Skilled craftsmen of Polish origin recruited by the Virginia Company began arriving in Jamestown aboard the Mary and Margaret about 1 Oct. 1608. Poles contributed to the development of a glass factory and the production of potash, naval stores, and wood products. Soon samples of their work were shipped back to England. The workers were so highly prized that they were assigned apprentices so that their skill "shall not dye with them." Capt. John Smith praised their work ethic in his writings. Court records indicate that as a result of a dispute, Poles were granted full voting rights on 21 July 1619.

Sponsor: American Council for Polish Culture

Locality: James City County

#### **Church Hill Tunnel**

About 200 feet east is the western portal of the Church Hill Tunnel. On 11 Dec. 1873, Chesapeake and Ohio locomotive number 2 passed through the tunnel, marking the completion of one of the longest tunnels in the United States. The tunnel was being

repaired on 2 Oct. 1925, when Chesapeake and Ohio locomotive number 231 entered the tunnel heading west, pulling ten flat cars. The train was near the western portal when suddenly 190 feet of the tunnel collapsed, trapping and killing railroad workers, some of whom remain entombed in the tunnel along with the train.

Sponsor: Walter S. Griggs, Jr., VCU School of Business

Locality: Richmond City

### **Evergreen Cemetery**

In 1891, Evergreen Cemetery was established as a preeminent resting place for many of Virginia's most influential African-American residents. These include Maggie L. Walker, the nation's first female bank president and founder of the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank, and John Mitchell, Jr., champion of African-American rights and editor of the Richmond Planet newspaper. J. Henry Brown, a stonemason by trade, designed many of the tombstones erected here. By the early 1970s, the cemetery had fallen into disrepair. In 1975, volunteers from the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site led an effort to restore Evergreen to its original glory.

Sponsor: Maggie Walker Civic Society

Locality: Richmond City

### **Historic Holiday Lake 4-H Club and W.P.A. Camp**

The Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center represents the history of both 1930s land management by New Deal programs and the 4-H organization in Virginia. Surrounded by the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest, and adjacent to Holliday Lake State Park, the 1937 rustic-style buildings originally housed Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) workers who built the State Park and took part in reforestation of the area. The Forest and Camp later became state property. Local interest resulted in the 4-H Club taking over the former W.P.A. Camp, with active camping as early as 1940. Holiday Lake 4-H Camp is the second oldest 4-H camp in Virginia.

Sponsor: DHR

Locality: Appomattox County

### **Richmond Exchange for Woman's Work**

On 2 Feb. 1883, women from five local Presbyterian churches formed the Richmond Exchange for Woman's Work. Adopting a successful model previously followed by women in other American cities, their goal was to help women in reduced circumstances support themselves by selling handmade goods through a consignment shop operated by the exchange. The exchange did a bustling business, eventually growing to include a bakery, a catering department, and classes in marketable skills that prepared needy women to earn a living and achieve a measure of economic security. The exchange closed in 1957 as employment opportunities for women outside the home began to expand.

Sponsor: DHR

Locality: Richmond City

### **Diamond Hill Baptist Church**

Diamond Hill Baptist Church was established in 1872, seven years after slavery was abolished. The current church, a Gothic Revival–style building, was completed in 1886. Under the pastorate and leadership of the Rev. Dr. Virgil A. Wood from 1958 to 1963, the church became central to the Civil Rights movement in the Lynchburg area as the base of operations for demonstrations, sit-ins, and rallies seeking to end segregation. The church also hosted speeches by notable figures in the national Civil Rights movement. Efforts to achieve racial equality continued under the 1964–2000 pastorate of the Rev. Dr. Haywood Robinson Jr.

Sponsor: DHR

Locality: Lynchburg

### **Mary Wingfield Scott (1895-1983)**

Richmond native Mary Wingfield Scott is credited with the transformation of historic preservation in Virginia. Through her education and vision, Miss Scott introduced a scholarly approach to the movement, inspiring generations of preservationists. She founded the William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in 1935, tirelessly documented Richmond’s historic buildings, and advocated for their protection through changes in public policy. To educate the public, Miss Scott gave lectures, published regularly, and led walking tours of historic neighborhoods. She bought and restored Linden Row, ensuring its preservation when she donated it to the Historic Richmond Foundation.

Sponsor: DHR

Locality: Richmond City

### **The Theft Case of Mary Aggie**

Mary Aggie, an enslaved woman, was convicted of theft in York County in 1730. Lt. Gov. William Gooch, impressed with Mary’s profession of faith when she sued previously for her freedom, supported her 1730 claim for “benefit of clergy,” which then allowed only white men to escape the harshest penalties for most first offenses. Gooch’s support resulted in Mary’s pardon. In 1732, the General Assembly extended a limited form of benefit of clergy to all races and women. Mary was sold out of Virginia in 1731, probably never knowing her appeal’s significant legal effect. The benefit was abolished in 1849.

Sponsor: DHR

Locality: York County

### **Grandma Moses in Augusta County**

Newlyweds Anna Mary Robertson Moses (later known as Grandma Moses) and her husband Thomas arrived in Augusta County from New York in 1887, renting several farms before purchasing Mt. Airy, a large brick Federal style house built in 1830. The

family gained renown for their butter, milk, and potato chips. The Moses family moved home to Eagle Bridge, N.Y. in 1905, where, in her late 70s, “Grandma” Moses began painting, becoming world famous for her Primitive American style. There are three known paintings titled “Mount Airy” depicting the house and farm. She died in 1961 at the age of 101.

Sponsor: DHR

Locality: Augusta County

## **War of 1812**

### **Winfield Scott (1786-1866)**

Winfield Scott, one of America’s early military heroes, was born nearby. He attended the College of William and Mary and in 1807 received a U.S. Army commission. During the War of 1812, wounded twice, he was promoted to brigadier general. He became Army general in chief in 1841. He commanded the amphibious force that captured Mexico City in 1848, ending the Mexican-American War. Scott remained loyal during the Civil War, and his Anaconda Plan—blockading the Southern coast and severing the Confederacy in the West—presaged eventual Union victory. Scott retired in Nov. 1861 and died at West Point, N.Y.

Sponsor: DHR/War of 1812 Commission

Locality: Dinwiddie County

### **Sack of Hampton**

As British Gen. Sidney Beckwith dispersed the local militia on 25 June 1813, Adm. Sir George Cockburn feigned an attack with barges at the mouth of the Hampton River. Hampton’s water battery was abandoned and the British occupied the town. Their initial march in the town became known as the Sack of Hampton. There were reports that “at little Hampton, every horror was committed with impunity—rape, murder, pillage.” These outrages became a rallying cry for the defense of the Chesapeake. By the end of June, the British left to raid elsewhere.

Sponsor: DHR/War of 1812 Commission

Locality: Hampton City

### **British Approach to Hampton**

Following the British defeat at Craney Island on 22 June 1813, Adm. Sir John B. Warren sought revenge and ordered Adm. Sir George Cockburn and Gen. Sir Sidney Beckwith to attack Hampton. This port town was defended by Maj. Stapleton Crutchfield’s 436 militiamen and a 7-gun water battery. During the evening of 24 June Beckwith’s 2,400 men landed near here at Indian Creek. The next day, Beckwith’s troops engaged Crutchfield’s command on the road to Hampton. Capt. Servant’s company of riflemen slowed the British advance until Beckwith could use artillery to force Servant’s withdrawal. Hampton was then open to British occupation.

Sponsor: DHR/War of 1812 Commission  
Locality: Hampton City

**War of 1812 Military Legacy**

After damaging British coastal attacks during the War of 1812, Pres. James Madison recognized the need to improve the nation's coastal defense and naval power. In 1816, Congress created the Board of Engineers for Fortifications and in 1818, former Napoleon aide Gen. Simon Bernard became its chief. Bernard planned a series of masonry fortifications, later known as the Third System, to defend every major U.S. harbor. Fort Monroe was the first of these forts to be constructed, beginning in 1819. Named for Pres. James Monroe, it protected the entrance to Hampton Roads and the forerunner of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, the Gosport Navy Yard.

Sponsor: DHR/War of 1812 Commission  
Locality: Hampton City (Fort Monroe)

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