

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin	
Name of Property	LISTED ON:
Mecklenburg, Virginia	
County and State	NRHP 11/28/2012
N/A	
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)	

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Introduction

The Patrick Robert “Parker” Sydnor Civil War-era log cabin site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register<sup>1</sup>. The argument for an upgrade of the site to state-wide significance presented in this “Appeal” is based on the log cabin's association with Patrick Robert “Parker” Sydnor (1854-1950). Parker Sydnor was an African American tombstone maker who lived in the log cabin recurrently during the first half of the 20th century.

Born in slavery on the William Sydnor plantation in Halifax County, VA, Sydnor is associated with the log cabin site and significant historical events through the 19<sup>th</sup> century plantation system, Reconstruction, inter-plantation marriage, the onslaught of segregation laws in the 1880s; through the Depression of the 1930s and the WW II years of the 1940s in Virginia. He lived a long life. Patrick Robert Sydnor and a number of the people that he made gravestones for were members of the “First Generation”—formerly enslaved women and men who experienced freedom through the Emancipation Proclamation. As newly freed people regardless of their age, those African Americans were the first generation to experience U.S. citizenship ratified in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the U. S. Constitution.

The Sydnor log cabin qualified for the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register under Criteria A, because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history: slavery and the era of the Civil War, 1861-1865; Criteria B, the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past, Patrick Robert Sydnor; and Criteria C, because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction: the Civil War-era log cabin construction is documented for its significance within the broader context of the community of the “slaves’ quarters” on Prestwould plantation in Mecklenburg County. The original Virginia Landmarks Register application documented that the now historic Sydnor log cabin site had been a part of Prestwould plantation in its outlying slave quarters called Cabin Point.

The argument presented here emphasizes Criteria B; the property is associated with the “lives of persons significant in the past” for upgrade to state-wide significance. In this instance, the log cabin site is remarkably associated with the persona of Parker Sydnor. Association criteria require the presence of features that convey significance to the broad patterns of American history. Thus, the persona is associated with survival skills, perseverance, education, determination, and unique craftsmanship all of which are features that exemplify the NPS definition of integrity associated with a historic site.

Documented Evidence that Attributes Additional Tombstones Crafted by Patrick Robert Sydnor<sup>2</sup>

The extant ca. 1935-1940 *Halifax Gazette* advertisement publicizes Parker Sydnor as a maker of “tomb stones and grave markers.” (Figure 4 and Attachment 3) The term tombstone is a generic term used to incorporate the category of funereal headstones and gravestones that are made from various kinds of rock or cement.

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There are very few written records available that can document the work of African American tombstone carvers during the first half of the twentieth century. In *Sticks and Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers*, Little describes the cast cement work of Issiah McEachin, an African American stone mason and several anonymous folk craftsmen who worked in North Carolina. So far, for Virginia there remains evidence about tombstone carver William Henry Jefferson (c. 1840-1865) and the gravestones that he carved, which are located in the Old City Cemetery, Lynchburg. Jefferson worked a generation before Sydnor and he carved for both enslaved and free blacks.

We can document the tombstone making craft and occupation of Patrick Robert Sydnor in Virginia for its state-wide significance. The following primary and secondary source materials are identified:<sup>3</sup>

- a newspaper photo of Sydnor, an advertisement for his work in the Halifax Gazette that indicates he had been in business for 40 years (attachment 3)
- identified headstones marked in Spanish Grove Baptist church cemetery (photos are part of attachment 1)
- identified headstones marked in St. James Baptist church cemetery (photos are part of attachment 1)
- identified headstones marked in White Oak Fork Baptist church cemetery (old church cemetery) (photos are part of attachment 1)
- videotaped interviews of 3 oral history informants who witnessed Parker Sydnor's tombstone business in Halifax and Mecklenburg Counties, VA (on accompanying CD)
- videotaped interview of individual who was one of Sydnor's assistants in carrying "slabs" of stones from the quarry (on accompanying CD)
- 3 extant headstones with marked initials, "PRS" (photos are part of attachment 1)
- an early black and white photograph of Patrick Robert Sydnor as an adult (attachment 2)

As requested by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the above documentation confirms that the extant tombstones are attributed to Parker Sydnor during the identified time period. The documentation of oral history informants also asserts the importance of oral history-telling in the context of public history and African American ethnic culture. There are African American living octogenarians in Halifax and Mecklenburg counties who knew Parker Sydnor from mutual church affiliations and at least one of them was his helper with tombstone carving.

Are there any surviving records from Sydnor's tombstone business? In the broader context of business, receipts, ledgers, account books and the paper inventory of business transactions, record storage was not always possible in communities that

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did not engage consistently with those raw tools of literacy. While Sydnor was literate and even poetic with some of his headstone inscriptions, his entrepreneurship is viewed through the lens of the time period and documented through alternative methods. Thus the narratives of oral history informants are also valid as a collective supplement to the evidence of conventional primary documentation.

Parker Sydnor first appeared in the U.S. Census as a full citizen in 1870—the first census to enumerate newly freed women and men. And he could read and write. That attainment would be confirmed throughout subsequent decades of census enumeration during his lifetime. Sydnor was literate at a time when few adult African American men and women had the opportunity for schooling. He produced funereal objects that would resonate in the broader realm of folk traditions and cultural legacies. Known examples of his work and his place of residences in Virginia for forty years of production do seem significant because of the singularity of knowing that he, indeed, was the craftsman of the identified gravestones.

Funerary<sup>4</sup>

Funerary rites are paramount in the ethos of all human cultures. The use of decorative domestic objects (i.e. shards of pottery, glass, buttons, and sea shells), simple footstones and wood markers that served as surface material markers on the graves of enslaved people were directly influenced by many different African funerary traditions that circulated during the early colonial period. By the time of nineteenth-century emancipation, however, African Americans embraced a syncretism of African, Native American and Euro-American funerary rites, beliefs and practices. Sydnor’s expansion of a worthy and recognized tombstone business was remarkable because he began his craft during the process of the First Generation’s ownership, albeit brief, of social and economic reconstruction. We can only wonder what made him so dedicated to the making of gravestones.

The post-bellum years witnessed the early stages of a few public cemeteries that allowed African American burials. Aside from scattered family plots for burial at their home places or former slave graveyards, African Americans were buried in church owned cemeteries. A very religious group, African Americans continued to be buried in their church cemeteries, which was emblematic of family identity in plain view of the home place (Figure 1). After Emancipation, First Generation people had more opportunities and skills with which to transform as well as synthesize African and Euro-American funerary rites.

No matter how simplistic, tombstones not only function within the rites of passage for the dead, but they authenticate human identity and dignity in death through the words and symbols of the living. Undoubtedly, tombstone inscriptions continue to make substantial contributions to scholarship, public history, genealogy research and popular culture. Historically, African American churches and schools were vibrant sites of social change through learning and literacy, but ironically, so were cemeteries. African American cemeteries became sites that embodied material funereal objects that also signified reading, writing and traditions.

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Background Significance of Literacy for African Americans after the Civil War<sup>5</sup>

During the forty years of his making tombstones and grave markers, Parker Sydnor chiseled with the raw materials of literacy. The meaning of literacy can be expressed in many different ways. For example in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we recognize computer or digital literacy as a necessary and integral part of everyday living—global access to the World Wide Web closes the digital divide and enables inclusive participation in the digital world; or cultural literacy through interdisciplinary learning qualifies a more informed understanding of the diverse human experience. The myriad definitions and features of literacy are indicative of social transformation and economic development.

Stone masonry inscription was a worthy skill in the 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-centuries that required acumen, masonry skills, and physical agility. The following section contextualizes the unique association of Parker Sydnor to the historic site as a literate craftsman-laborer following the 19<sup>th</sup> century years of Reconstruction and the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. First, we highlight the fact of illiteracy among African Americans following Emancipation and Reconstruction. Then we highlight the unique role of tombstone carving and its relationship to literacy for African Americans within the immediate memory of slavery.

As population enumeration evolved into a congressional mandate by 1840, questions about literacy “can the person read” and “can the person write” became an important feature of the U. S. Census. Literacy evolved into an advancement that could further characterize the face of the nation. For example, in 1890 the U.S. Census Bureau defined as “illiterate any person 10 years of age or over who is not able to read and write, either in English or in some other language.” To be able to both read and write became the consolidated census question that defined *literacy*, and oftentimes qualified privilege through opportunity and freedom.

In most antebellum states laws forbade enslaved women and men to learn how to read and write. We know that many of them, however, did acquire literacy under the cover of secrecy and the fear of brutal punishment if their skills were exposed. Famous once-enslaved African Americans who learned to read and write during their enslavement include William Wells Brown, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, and Nancy Prince. After slavery African Americans viewed literacy as progress in their potential social transformation and definitive personal empowerment. When viewed as the means through which to “write” oneself into humanity that had been denied during bondage, literacy was a remarkable accomplishment. Out of the four million newly emancipated women, men and children, ninety-six percent were illiterate. By the time of the Ninth U.S. Census of 1870, 81.4% of the “Negro population” was still illiterate.

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The following table summarizes the comparable high percentage of illiteracy among African Americans through significant decades of Parker Sydnor’s life.

Census Year	All classes of illiteracy 10 years and over	Negro illiteracy	White male illiteracy	Negro Male illiteracy	Virginia Negro illiteracy
1890	4.8%	57.1%	7%	54.4%	29.57%
1920	6%	22%	4.1%	23.5%	25.2%
1930	4.8%	16.3%	2.7%	17.6%	19.2%

*Report on the Population Report of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890; 1920; 1930.*

The data illustrates the extent to which Sydnor was unique in being literate as indicated by U.S. Census data from 1890-1930.

This time frame includes the forty years of his tombstone work. While Sydnor was literate, the high percentage of illiteracy among African Americans speaks for history and communities. Many people of the First Generation sought the ability to “cipher” and to “read the title [land deed] clear.” Sydnor was among the fortunate few who could read, write, and eventually own land for farming. Literacy also enabled Sydnor to be a kind of chronicler in the community. His inscriptions, indeed, were not just epitaphs to honor the dead. Gravestone inscriptions are recognized by historians, anthropologists, archeologists, genealogists, religious institutions, and even legal systems as sites for valuable biographical and cultural information in the broader context of society and Virginia history.

Sense of Place: Inventory of Sydnor’s Extant Gravestones

Sydnor was a member of Spanish Grove Baptist Church and lived near the church in Halifax County. He also lived in Mecklenburg County. The stone carving supplemented his farming, which included growing tobacco and raising chickens to sell. The following information charts three church cemeteries where some of Sydnor’s extant headstones are located.

Name of Cemetery	Headstones	Representative Photos	Readable Family Names	“PRS” Headstones
Spanish Grove Baptist Church 5004 MacDonald Road Scottsburg, VA 24589	27	7	Bessie Jeffress, Carden	1
St. James Baptist Church 1033 Green Level Road Scottsburg, VA, 24589	19	12	Emlia Sydnor, Angelia Sydnor, Carrie Venable, Elvira Williams, James Branch, Louis Jeffress, ___ Lee, Roberts, Coleman, Sydnor, Watkins, Muir, Leigh, Bouldin, Venable	2
White Oak Fork Baptist Church <sup>6</sup> 1186 White Oak Fork Church Rd Virgilina, VA 24598	5 (does not include collapsed headstones)	8	Arthur Chandler, Rosa, Chandler, Amanda Chandler	n/a

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In addition to the above three cemeteries, there are Sydnor headstones at St. Matthew Baptist Church (Mecklenburg County), Millstone Baptist Church, North Fork Baptist Church and Piney Grove Baptist Church cemeteries (Halifax County).

There were various possibilities for learning the trade of stone masonry before and after the Civil War for young African American men. Sydnor most likely learned stonecutting as an apprentice during Reconstruction. According to Mr. Frank Tune (b. 1937) of Scottsburg, VA who, during his youth was one of Sydnor’s helpers, Sydnor got the slabs from a nearby quarry and using his well-known “white horse,” he transported the stones to the worksite at his house on Dryburg Road (Figure 2).

Gravestones generally are not signed making it difficult to assign specific gravestones to individual carvers. But at some point in his craftsmanship, Sydnor began to sign his work (Figure 3). The fact that Sydnor “signed” some of the headstones indicates that he viewed his work as craftsmanship like a skilled carpenter, not like a laborer. Even today, highly polished and technically created or factory-produced marble tombstones are usually not signed by the craftsman or technician. The key to Sydnor’s role and entrepreneurship lay in his securing a relationship with the raw tools of the trade that are located in community, reverence for the dead, funereal practices, cemeteries and clearings in the woods that provided workshop space.

Archeologist Dr. Lynn Rainville, curator of “African American Cemeteries in Albemarle & Amherst Counties” attests to the biographical status of epigraphs on gravestones. Dr. Rainville confirms how gravestones are often indicative of “family networks, gender relations, religious beliefs, local *neighborhoods, and material culture.*” Furthermore, Sydnor’s gravestone inscriptions are in sync with historic association because, “Epitaphs can reveal aspects of the deceased's identity that don't appear in census records or city directories, thus making them an invaluable source of historic information.”<sup>7</sup>

We don’t have any extant paper transactions from Sydnor’s tombstone business as it is advertised in the *Halifax Gazette* (Figure 4). To reiterate, that lack is understood in the context of a community of people who were more often technicians of the spoken word with business transactions. Furthermore, because of that historical context, Sydnor was an exceptional stone mason chronicler. He chiselled biographical information in the form of epitaphs about deceased individuals who did not and for the most part, could not while living leave behind their own *autobiographical* signatures. In other words, the inscriptions that Sydnor wrote on many of his headstones do just that: they tell us about identities of African Americans that don’t appear in census records or that the deceased individuals could not *write* about themselves. The varying headstone inscriptions that Sydnor crafted are tremendous assets to Virginia families, regional popular cultural and the comprehensive range of academic research.

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Examples of Patrick Robert Sydnor Gravestone Inscriptions

The following are representative examples of Sydnor headstone inscriptions in the St. James Baptist Church cemetery that provide biographical information and funereal reverence:

....WE LOVE YOU BUT GOD  
LOVE YOU BEST  
SLEEP ON AND  
TAKE YOUR REST  
ARTHUR CHANDLER

EMLIA SYDNOR  
BORN 1805  
DIED 1898  
GRANDMOTHER OF ANGLIA AND  
GREAT AUNT OF PR SYDNOR  
BY THE ORDER OF THEM

AMSS [?]  
BORN 1904  
DIED JAN 9 1921  
SLEEP ON BROTHER  
AND TAKE YOUR REST  
WE LOVE YOU BUT  
GOD LOVES YOU BEST  
ORDER OF ALLEN

----LEE  
BY THE ORDER OF  
MRS ELVIRA WILLIAMS

There is the recurrence of the phrase “by order” on readable Sydnor gravestones. Sydnor often used this unusual homage to show that the decessor’s family “commissioned” him to carve the headstone. On the other hand, the Rev. Freddie Jeffress of Scottsburg, VA, stated that Sydnor also made headstones of his own accord without pay from the decessor’s families when he wanted a particular grave site to be marked. Again, we can conclude from such information, that Sydnor was really in the business of marking graves so that individuals could be honorably remembered by the living.

The “business” was both work and dedication to a funereal belief through the craft of stone masonry. Keep in mind that Sydnor had been born into a plantation community where enslaved African Americans did not generally have inscribed headstones that would have marked their individual graves. Literate African Americans vastly contributed to this transitional era of their culture and to the broad patterns of American history. The next section pays attention to some characteristics of Sydnor’s carving and crafting style.

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Style and Characteristics of Sydnor's Headstones

The DHR asks the question "Is there a consistency in the style of the text?" Yes, there is a consistency in Sydnor's style. Sydnor's folk or vernacular oriented style in carving gravestones was undoubtedly influenced by the funereal style of Euro-American stone masonry.

Foremost, Sydnor's style of carving letters is distinct with its block letters. Sydnor used the basic rectangle shape with ninety-degree angles for his gravestones. The gravestones are all carved from concrete blocks or green stone. By the nineteenth century many tombstone carvers were using wooden molds to impress elaborate letters, numbers and designs into the concrete mixture before it hardened. Sydnor carved each letter by hand directly on the stone, the same way it was done in colonial times. While words are often indiscriminately hyphenated and continued on the next line, we detected no misspellings. At a time when many African Americans didn't have birth certificates, Sydnor consistently included birth dates along with the dates of death. For the First Generation people, knowing their date of birth was a mark of humanity and therefore an honorary feature to include on the gravestone.

There are approximately 51 presently identified headstones attributed to Parker Sydnor. Others have collapsed on the ground. Among the ones still erect, some remain nicely intact with completely readable inscriptions despite the weathering effects of erosion and age against the stone.

Although most eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century African American gravestones were not inscribed with writing, a significant number survive with inscriptions, symbols and social data that are still legible and that offer as well as confirm interesting biographical information. Sydnor's headstone inscriptions are characterized by both bereavement and secular biographical information and expressions. Sydnor's bereavement inscriptions include phrases such as "RIP," "REST IN PEACE," "AT REST," and "GOD LOVES YOU." Sydnor had a tendency to include the names of the deceased persons' relatives on the headstones, which was indicative of familial connections or his own affection for the deceased.

Again, funereal objects such as gravestones may seem normal in today's rural cemeteries. But during the era of Sydnor's production, many African Americans were only in the beginnings of economically being able to commission cemetery gravestones that would also include extensive written homage to the dead person. Gravestones lasted longer than wood markers and rudimentary fieldstones often didn't have the abundance of written information and carving. From a historical perspective, Sydnor was advancing social transformation in the context of African American funereal practices.

Summary

Evidence is scarce on how many First Generation people commissioned inscribed cemetery headstones during the immediate years of post-emancipation. Nevertheless, African Americans in Virginia could commission gravestones from Parker Sydnor

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since he was in the business of carving and crafting epitaphs.<sup>8</sup> In this way, Parker Sydnor became part of a core group of the First Generation who used their exceptional skills of writing and being schooled in funerary memory for the living in honor of the dead. Sydnor generated enough work to make an impact in Virginia counties and he became recognized as an indisputable, skilled and literate stonemason.

The tombstones that Sydnor carved continue to stand in church cemeteries. Local informants identified several of his recognizable headstones in the cemetery of Spanish Grove Baptist church in Halifax County. The chiseled block writings attest to Sydnor's industry and versatility. He was a once-enslaved individual who lived into the mid-twentieth century (d. 1950) and had the remarkable asset of literacy; he traveled the counties and people knew him because his business connected him to the innumerable sites of death—church cemeteries. Through a publically visible craft, Sydnor contributed to a rich cultural heritage that was both African and *American* in the memorializing of the dead.<sup>9</sup>

African American gravestones are not just funereal objects. African American funereal headstones have become important textual contributions to culture and history and further illuminate the lives of the people and the broader patterns of American life and history. Parker Sydnor's literacy skills aided the African American community of sharecroppers, day laborers, farmers, farm hands, domestics, carpenters, newly established undertakers and teachers in their funerary observances. Moreover, his tombstone carving business enabled him to enter the free labor market as an artisan-laborer working for self and family—as opposed to being in an enslaved workforce or sharecropping.

Additional Materials (included with this submission)

CD containing the videotaped/oral interviews of the three informants who witnessed Parker Sydnor's tombstone business in Halifax and Mecklenburg Counties, VA; and the individual who was one of Sydnor's assistants in carrying "slabs" of stones from the quarry

Attachment 1: Photo documents showing indentified headstones in the Spanish Grove Baptist Church Cemetery, St. James Baptist Church Cemetery, and White Oak Fork Cemetery

Attachment 2: Copy of an early photograph of Parker Sydnor taken in Scottsburg

Attachment 3: Copy of a ca. 1935-40 advertisement showing Sydnor's business in Scottsburg

Attachment 4: Copy of the Death Certificate for Patrick Robert Sydnor

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Rainville, Lynn. "Grave Matters: African-American Cemeteries in Virginia." *The Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies Newsletter*. January 26, 2010. <http://news.clas.virginia.edu/woodson/x16458.xml>.

*Report on the Population Report of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890.*  
[http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1890a\\_v1p2-02.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1890a_v1p2-02.pdf).

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Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Angelita D. Reyes, "Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form," Archives File No. 058-5076, (Virginia Department of Historic Resources: Richmond, VA, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> The following section includes information supported by bibliographical references: M. Ruth Little, *Sticks and Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1998); Barbara Rotundo, "A Modern Gravestone Maker: Some Lessons for Gravestone Historians," *Markers: The Annual Journal of the Association of Gravestone Studies*, (14:1997), 86-109.

<sup>3</sup> All rights reserved. The photographs and interviews are for the exclusive use for documentation in the "Appeal." No part of the photographs or interviews may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission in writing from Dr. Angelita D. Reyes.

<sup>4</sup> The following section includes information supported by bibliographical reference: Ross W. Jamieson, "Material Culture and Social Death: African-American Burial Practices," *Historical Archaeology*, (29(4):1995), 39-58.

<sup>5</sup> The following section includes information supported by bibliographical references: *Census of Population and Housing: 1930 Census*, <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1930.html#general>; *Report on the Population Report of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890*, [http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1890a\\_v1p2-02.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1890a_v1p2-02.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Although the church is located on Highway 794 near High Hill, the older cemetery is on Highway 601.

<sup>7</sup> Lynn Rainville, "Grave Matters: African-American Cemeteries in Virginia," *The Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies Newsletter*, (January 26, 2010), <http://news.clas.virginia.edu/woodson/x16458.xml>.

<sup>8</sup> An African burial ground was discovered in New York City in 1991. The site is now dedicated as the African Burial Ground National Monument sponsored by the National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior: < <http://www.nps.gov/afbg/index.htm> > and <[http://www.africanburialground.gov/ABG\\_Main.htm](http://www.africanburialground.gov/ABG_Main.htm)> Accessed on April 18, 2010. Such recognition could only develop out of the ongoing social transformation of ideas, policies and values arising out of the national consciousness (the principles of the federal National Park Service). The Old City Cemetery in Lynchburg, VA is a cemetery that was established as a public burial in 1806 where enslaved, free African Americans and whites were interred. The Cemetery was the only burial ground in Lynchburg open to African Americans until 1885: <<http://www.gravegarden.org/history.htm>> Accessed on March 1, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Patrick Robert Sydnor is buried in the Spanish Grove Baptist Church cemetery, Halifax, Virginia. Considering that his life work was making inscribed tombstones, it's ironic that his grave site is unmarked and lost. Local informants, nevertheless, know that he is buried at Spanish Grove Baptist, the church in which he had a life time membership.

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Figures



Figure 1: Uncovering an early 20<sup>th</sup> century family burial plot in Scottsburg, Virginia.



Figure 2: One of Patrick Robert Sydnor's worksites on Dryburg Road, Scottsburg, Virginia.



Figure 3: "PRS" Signature initials carved by Patrick Robert Sydnor in the lower right corner of the headstone.

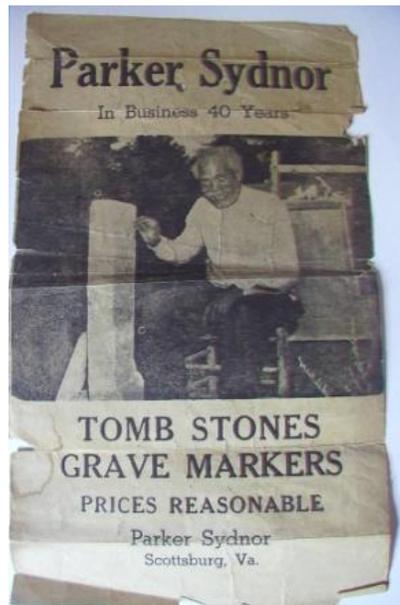


Figure 4: Parker Sydnor business advertisement in the *Halifax Gazette* from ca. 1935-40.

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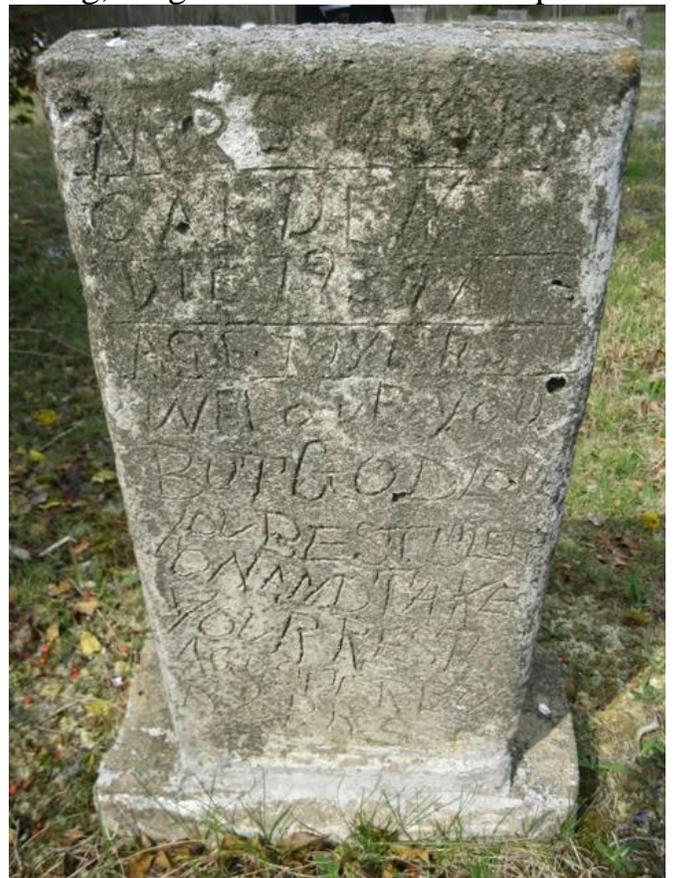
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Spanish Grove Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia – Headstone Examples



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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 2



Spanish Grove Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia – Headstone Examples



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

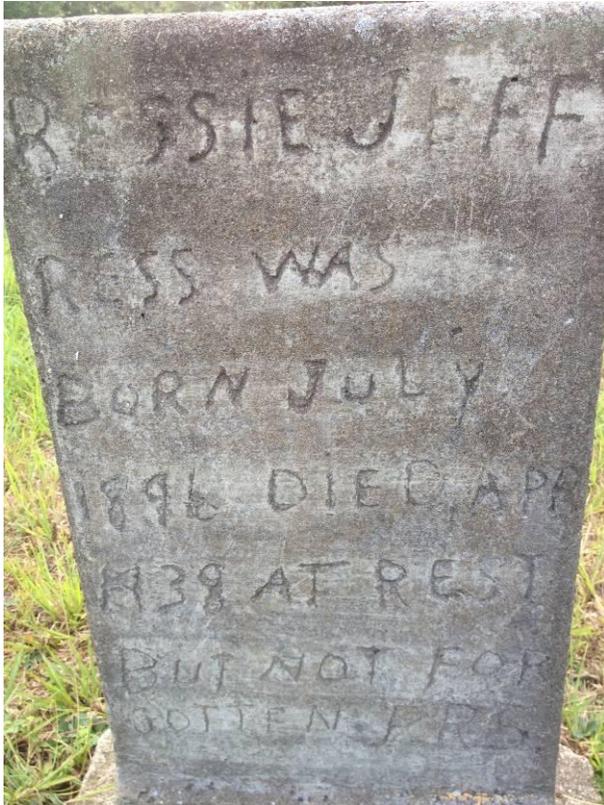
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 3

Spanish Grove Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia  
Bessie Jeffress Headstone and PRS Initials



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 4



St. James Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

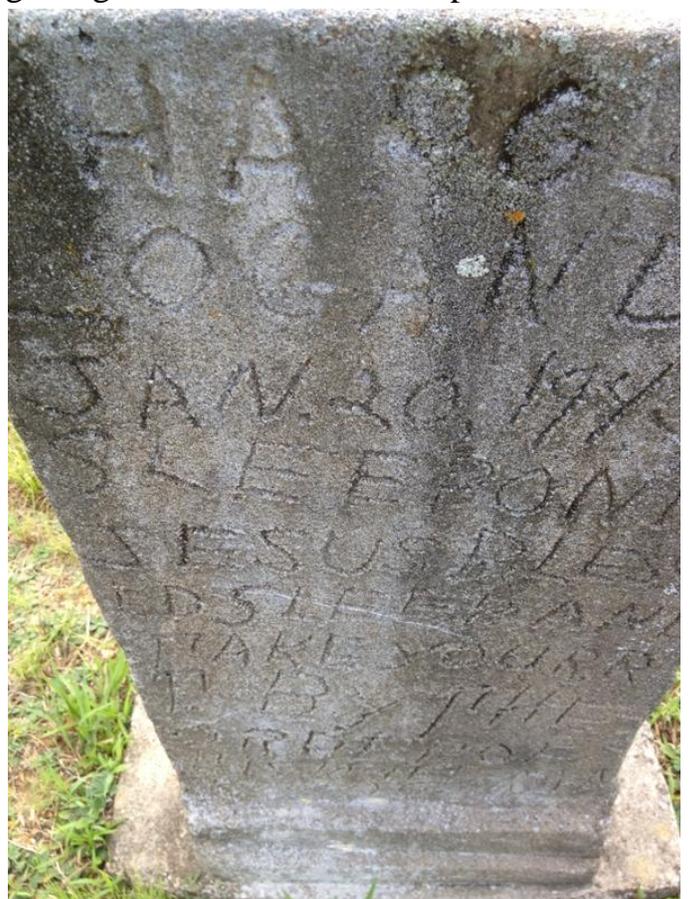
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 5



St. James Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia –Headstone Example for Lee



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 6

St. James Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia  
Headstone Examples for James Branch and Louis Jeffress



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

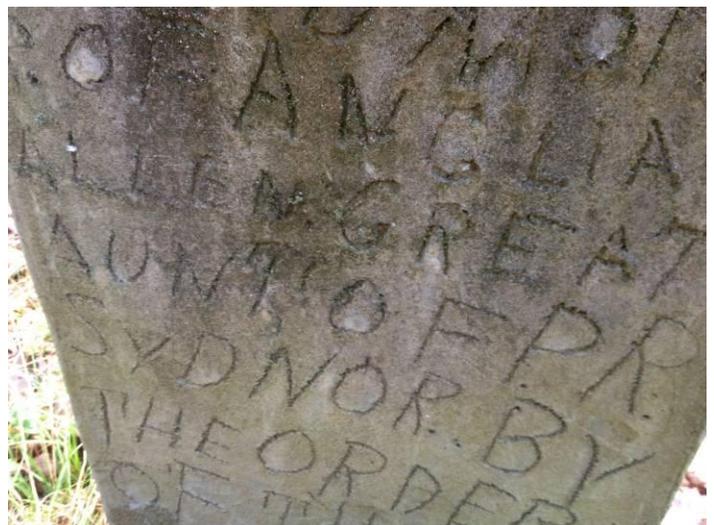
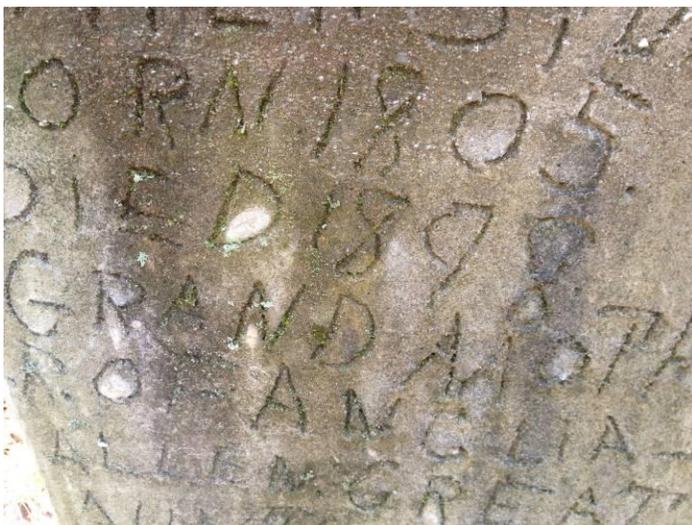
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 7



St. James Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia  
Headstone examples for Emlia Sydnor and Anglia



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 8



St. James Baptist Church and Cemetery, Scottsburg, Virginia  
Headstone and PRS Initial examples



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

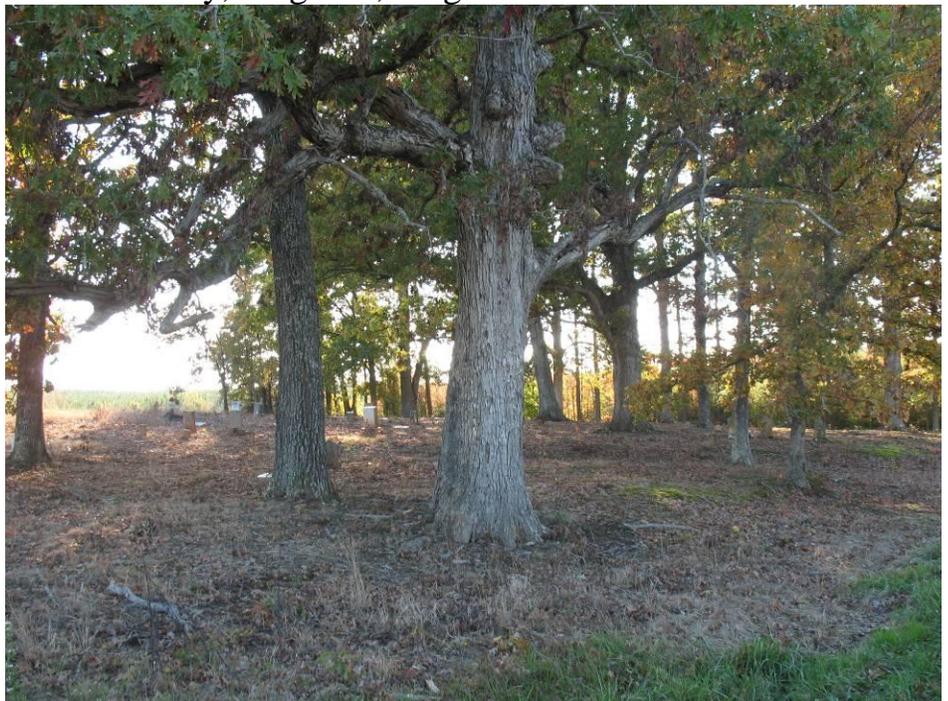
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 9



White Oak Fork Baptist Church and Cemetery, Virgilina, Virginia



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 10

White Oak Fork Baptist Church and Cemetery, Virgilina, Virginia  
Headstone Examples for Amanda Chandler



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Attachment 1 Page 11



White Oak Fork Baptist Church and Cemetery, Virgilina, Virginia - Headstone Examples



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Attachment 2

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

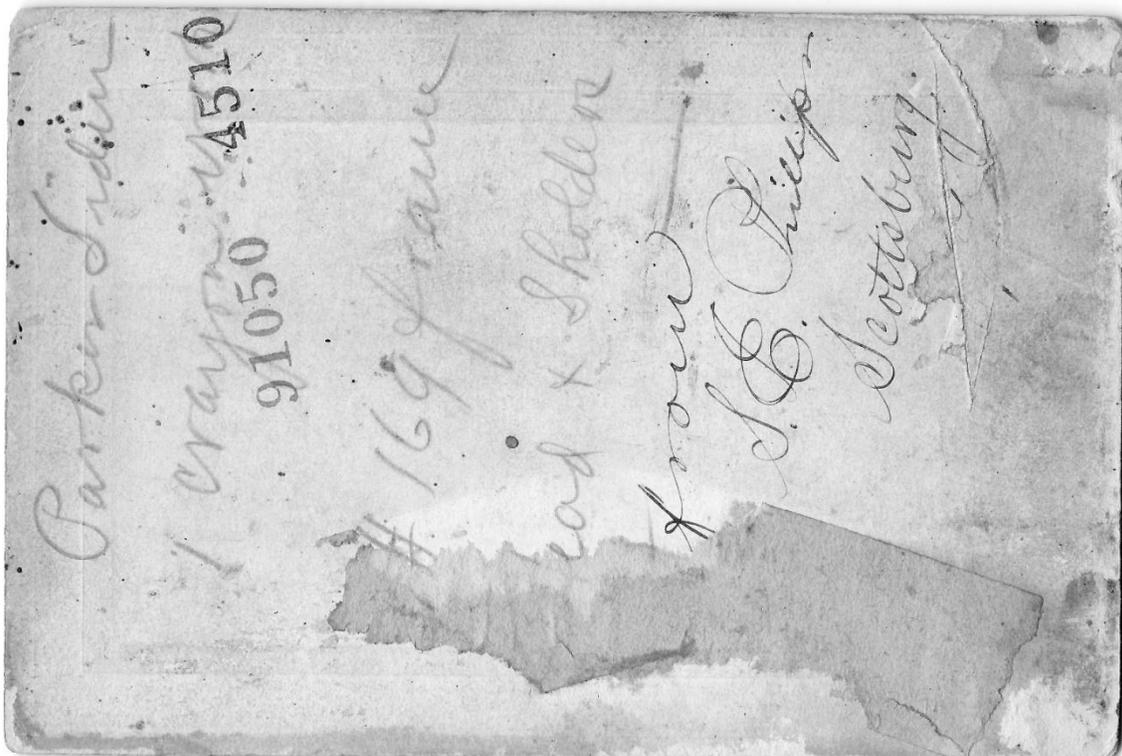
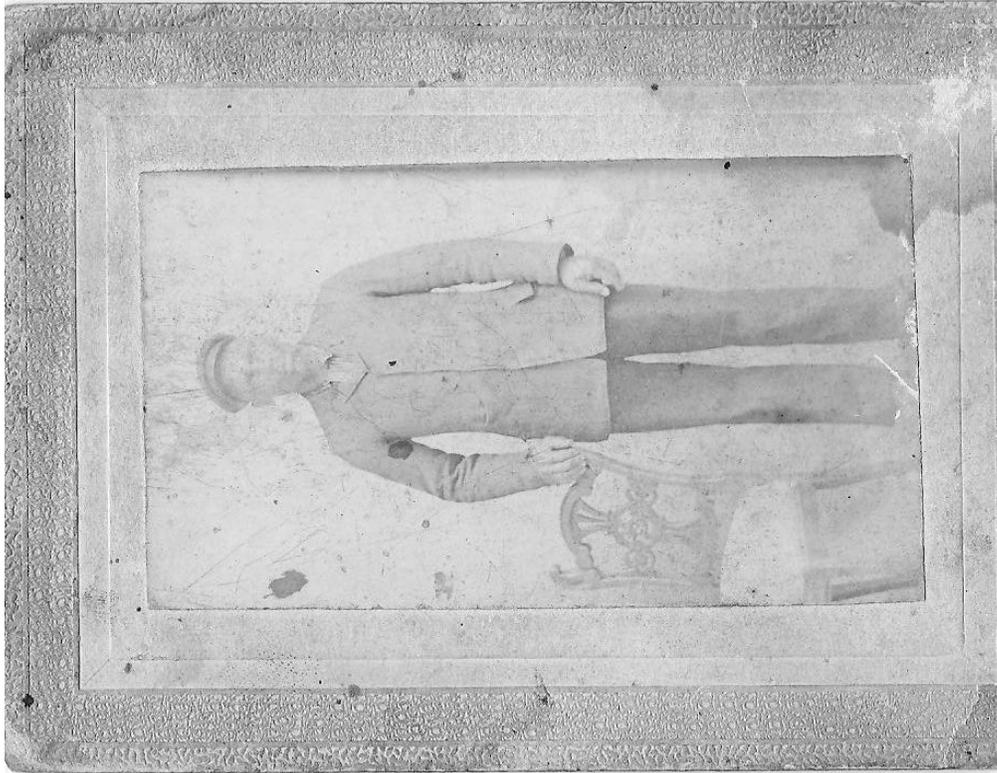
Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Patrick Sydnor*

*1 Crayon 4510  
91050*

*# 169 frame*

*head x. Sholders*

*from*

*S. E. Phillips*

*Scottsburg*

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Attachment 3**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin

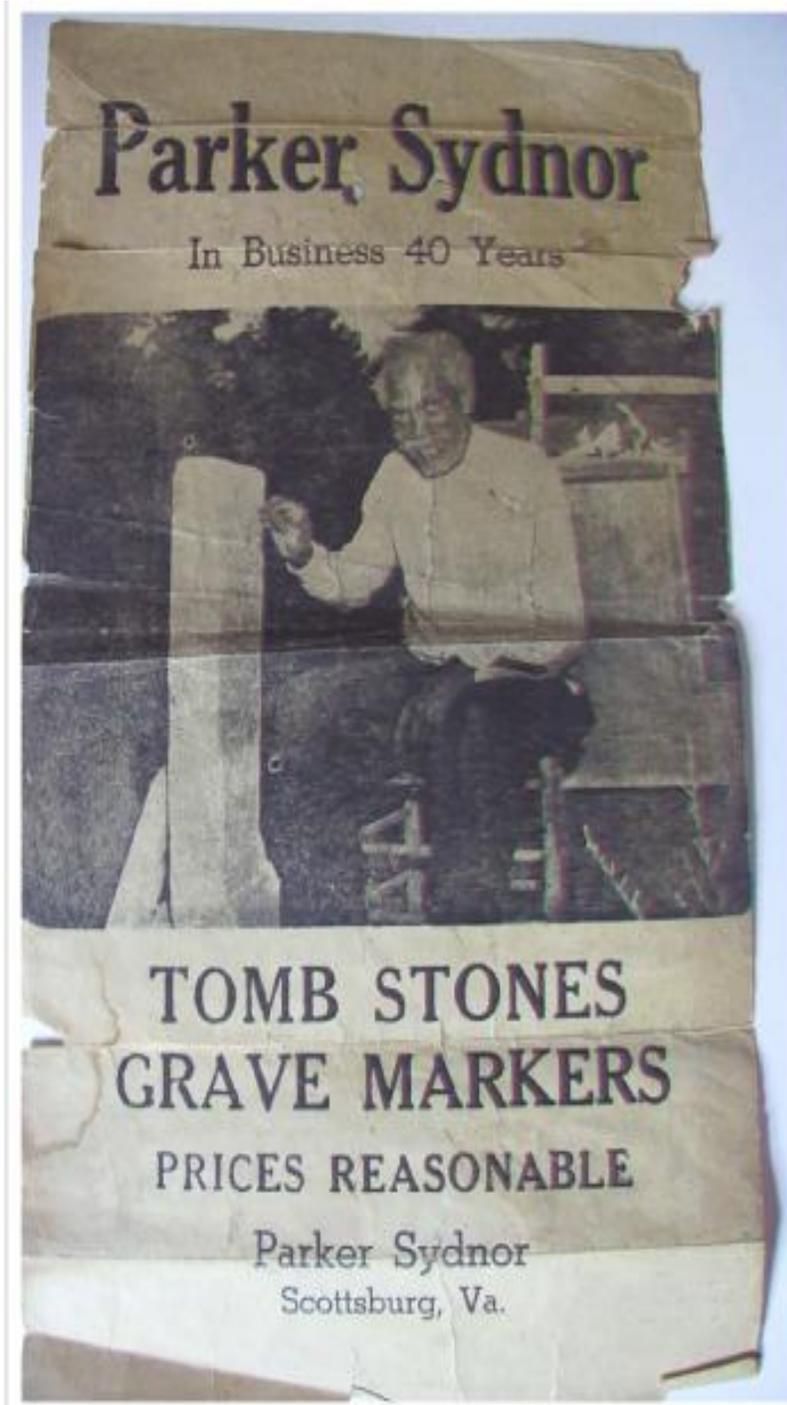
Name of Property

Mecklenburg, Virginia

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Attachment 4

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin  
Name of Property  
Mecklenburg, Virginia  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**CERTIFICATE OF DEATH**  
**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - DIVISION OF VITAL RECORDS

Page No. 2048  
State File No. 2, 1731  
Page No. 2

**PLACE OF DEATH**  
1. CITY OR TOWN: Mecklenburg  
2. COUNTY: Mecklenburg  
3. ZIP CODE: Clarksville

**DECEASED**  
4. NAME: Patrick Robert Sydnor  
5. SEX: Male  
6. RACE: Caucasian  
7. MARRIAGE STATUS: Married  
8. DATE OF BIRTH: 76  
9. AGE AT DEATH: 76  
10. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.: None  
11. PLACE OF BIRTH: Virginia  
12. CITIZENSHIP: U.S.A.  
13. FATHER'S NAME: Seath Sydnor  
14. MOTHER'S NAME: Katie Cottau  
15. MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE NO.: None  
16. SIGNATURE OF DECEASED: None  
17. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR: None  
18. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. OF DECEASED: None  
19. SIGNATURE OF WIFE OR DECEASED: Betsy Sydnor  
20. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION: Bronchial pneumonia 12 hrs  
21. ANTECEDENT CAUSES: 491  
22. OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS: Senility  
23. DATE OF OPERATION: None  
24. ACCIDENT OR OTHER CAUSE: None  
25. TIME OF DEATH: None  
26. I hereby certify that I attended the decedent from Dec 28, 1949 to Jan 25, 1950 that I last saw the decedent alive on Jan 25, 1950, and that death occurred at 9:15 AM from the causes and on the date stated above.  
27. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR: Steven Judy M.D.  
28. ADDRESS: Clarksville, VA  
29. SERIAL NUMBER: 2048  
30. DATE: 1-27-50  
31. NAME OF HUSBAND OR WIFE: Spanish House  
32. ADDRESS: Clarksville, Va.  
33. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR: Clarksville, Va.  
34. SIGNATURE OF WITNESS: Clarksville, Va.

This is to certify that this is a true and correct reproduction or abstract of the official record filed with the Virginia Department of Health, Henric, Virginia.

DATE FILLED  
NOV 13 2000

Richard Little-Bowser  
Deputy Registrar

Do not present this on security paper with seal of Vital Records clearly embossed. Section 12 F-212, Code of Virginia, 1950-1951.



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Attachment 5**

Patrick Robert Sydnor Log Cabin
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Name of Property
Mecklenburg, Virginia
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County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Meeting Minutes, Department of Historic Resources Evaluation Committee, September 28, 2012, Richmond, VA**

**Parker Sydnor Cabin, Mecklenburg County, DHR File Number 058-5076**

The Parker Sydnor Cabin was listed in the VLR and NRHP in 2007 at the local level of significance **under Criteria A (Social History; Ethnic Heritage: African American), B (Parker Sydnor), and C (Architecture)** with a period of significance of **1865-1950**. The evaluation committee has reviewed additional information regarding Parker Sydnor and his work as a craftsman of grave markers. The additional documentation included photographs of Sydnor, a copy of his death certificate (listing his occupation as grave marker), an undated broadside advertisement of Sydnor's services, photographs of examples of his work at three cemeteries, as well as a detailed historic context explaining the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century social history and historic patterns in Virginia history with which Sydnor's career is associated. The evaluation committee noted that DHR has very little documentation of non-white tombstone carvers, and that fact that Sydnor is a known African American carver with an associated and locally-sited body of work is very important. As a result, the evaluation committee recommended that the **Parker Sydnor Cabin** is significant at the **statewide** level. The committee did not recommend changes to the criteria, areas, or period of significance for the historic property.