

Department of Historic Resources

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STATE HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER
"GOVERNOR JAMES BARBOUR"
TO BE DEDICATED

**—Orange County marker in Barboursville recalls Gov. James Barbour's
military leadership during the War of 1812—**

—The marker's text is reproduced below—

RICHMOND – A state historical marker issued by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources highlighting the War of 1812 and the military leadership of Governor James Barbour will be dedicated in Barboursville in Orange County this month.

The dedication ceremony begins at 3 p.m., Friday, April 17, at the marker's location along state route 678 (Governor Barbour Street), approximately a quarter-mile east of its intersection with Route 20 (Constitution Highway).

Speakers during the dedication will include Virginia Secretary of Agriculture Todd Haymore; Lee Frame, chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors; historian Stuart Butler, author of *Defending the Old Dominion: Virginia and its Militia in the War of 1812*; James Hare of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and Luca Paschina of the Barboursville Winery who will emcee the event.

After the dedication, a reception will be held on the grounds of Barboursville Winery, which includes the ruins of the one-time family home of Governor Barbour.

The “Governor James Barbour” sign marks another stop on a War of 1812 heritage highway route linked by historical markers created to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the war. The signs—numbering 19 approved, with 12 erected—result from collaboration between the Department of Historic Resources and the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission.

The War of 1812, fought between the U.S. and Great Britain, is called by some historians the nation’s second war of independence.

The marker recalls that Barbour served as Governor and commander of Virginia’s militia forces during the war. “Barbour planned, organized, and directed the defense of Virginia from January 1812 until December 1814,” in the marker’s words.

“Known for his oratorical skills and organizing talents, he inspired his fellow Virginians to defend the Commonwealth from relentless British incursions in Hampton Roads and the Northern Neck,” the marker states.

Barbour, who commanded militia in the field on a few occasions, later served as a U.S. Senator from Virginia and U.S. Secretary of War.

Each of the bicentennial signs commemorating the War of 1812 features on one side general information about the causes of the war and its impact on Virginia, especially the Chesapeake Bay and Tidewater regions. The signs also note that “more than 2,000 enslaved African Americans in Virginia had gained their freedom aboard British ships.”

According to the legislation enacted by the General Assembly to establish the bicentennial commission, “An estimated 70,000 Virginians served during the War of 1812. There were some 73 armed encounters with the British that took place in Virginia during the war.” The 2008 legislation also states, “The nation’s capitol, strategically located off the Chesapeake Bay, was a prime target for the British, and the coast of Virginia figured prominently in the Atlantic theatre of operations.”

The Orange County Historical Society and the Barboursville Winery have assisted in the placement of the marker and in arranging for its dedication.

A 12-page booklet that lists all the historical markers in Virginia relating to the War of 1812, including each sign's text, is available online for downloading (as a PDF) from the Department of Historic Resources' Website (www.dhr.virginia.gov). The direct link to the publication is

http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf_files/War%20of%201812%20Markers%20publicationFINAL.pdf

Virginia's historical highway marker program, which began in 1927 with the installation of the first historical markers along U.S. Route 1, is considered the oldest such program in the nation. Currently there are more than 2,400 official state markers, most maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as by local partners in jurisdictions outside of VDOT's authority.

Texts of the marker:

Governor James Barbour JJ-28

Here at Barboursville lie the ruins of the family home of James Barbour, Virginia's governor during the War of 1812. As commander of Virginia's militia forces, Barbour planned, organized, and directed the defense of Virginia from January 1812 until December 1814. Known for his oratorical skills and organizing talents, he inspired his fellow Virginians to defend the Commonwealth from relentless British incursions in Hampton Roads and the Northern Neck. On a few occasions, he took command of the militia while in the field. He later served as U.S. Senator from Virginia and U.S. Secretary of War.

Obverse side:

The War of 1812 V-53

Impressment of Americans into British service and the violation of American ships were among the causes of America's War of 1812 with the British, which lasted until 1815. Beginning in 1813, Virginians suffered from a British naval blockade of the Chesapeake Bay and from British troops plundering the countryside by the Bay and along the James, Rappahannock, and Potomac Rivers. The Virginia militia deflected a British attempt to take Norfolk in 1813 and engaged British forces throughout the war. By the end of the

war, more than 2,000 enslaved African Americans in Virginia had gained their freedom aboard British ships.

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