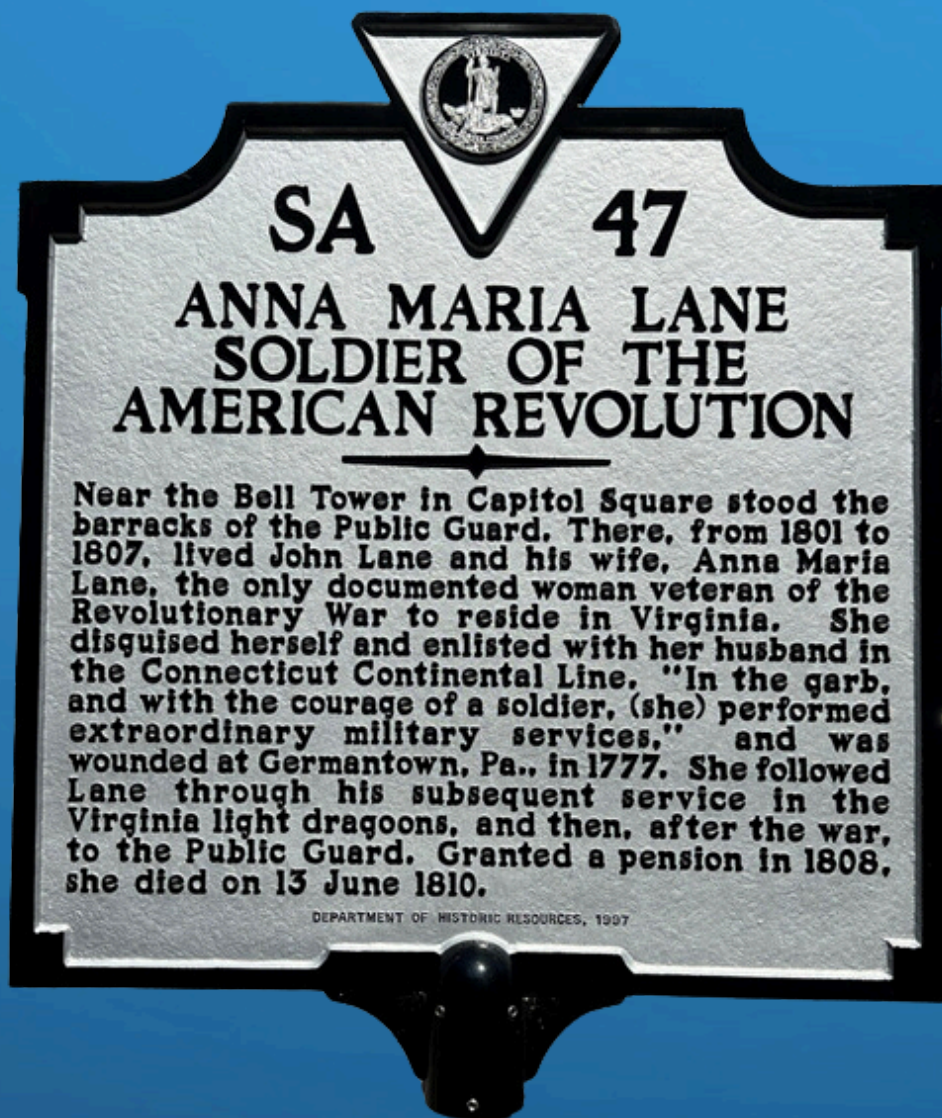




AMERICAN REVOLUTION 250TH ANNIVERSARY LESSON

How are women during the American Revolution represented on Virginia's Historic Highway Markers?



Task Overview:

During this learning experience, or series of learning experiences, students will explore how women from the American Revolution Era are represented on Virginia's Historic Highway Markers.

Targeted Course(s): Virginia Studies (4th/5th grade) & United States History I

Students Will:

Students will know (facts)	Students will understand (concepts)	Students will be able to (Do) (skills)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Artifacts, primary sources, and secondary sources help us learn about the past● Diverse groups played important roles in the Revolutionary War Era● Varied experiences included the following: Women took on more responsibilities to support the war effort; African Americans fought for both sides in their bid for freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● We must critically examine historical records to determine whose stories are missing or incomplete● Many people, from diverse backgrounds contributed to Virginia's history	<p>The student will demonstrate skills for historical thinking, geographical analysis, economic decision-making, and responsible citizenship by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) analyzing and interpreting artifacts and primary and secondary sources to understand events in Virginia history.j) investigating and researching to develop products orally and in writing.

Instructor Directions

Teacher Background Information:

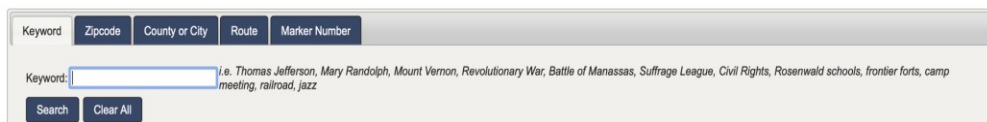
As a part of this learning experience, students will investigate sources related to Virginia's Historical Marker Program to learn about how different groups of people are represented. The readings below will support you to learn about this program:

- [Virginia's Historical Marker Program- Encyclopedia Virginia excerpt](#) Of note from this entry, "Early in the twenty-first century, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, which administers the highway marker program, led a special effort to fund and create new markers honoring African Americans, Virginia Indians, and women, as well as significant places and events related to their accomplishments, in order to represent the scope of Virginia history more completely."
- [Highway Markers- Virginia Department of Historic Resources](#)

Part 1: Hook – Gallery Walk

- Go to the [Department of Historic Resources Website](#) and pull images for 5-6 Highway Markers close to your school community. You can search by county, city, or zipcode.

Welcome! Please use the search options below to find property. Information is provided as-is and any use of this data is at user's own risk.



- Print the images and the markers' text and put them on large poster paper around the room.
- Show students an image of a Virginia Historical Highway Marker and engage students in a discussion. Some questions to ask:
 - Have you ever seen one of these before?
 - Have you ever read one?
 - What do you think the purpose of these are?
- Explain to students that the image is of a Virginia Historical Highway Marker and that they will be trying to determine the purpose of the markers by analyzing a set of 5-6 markers from within or near their community.
- Have students engage in a Gallery Walk where they rotate and look at each of the printed markers with a small group. After students look at each marker, have them sit and collaboratively write an answer to this question, "What do you think the purpose of the Virginia Historic Highway Marker Program is?"
- Next provide students with the following text and have them compare and contrast their answer with the stated purpose from the Department of Historic resources:

The Highway Marker Program identifies and documents Virginia's significant historical persons, events, and places. Our focus is on educating the public and providing accurate historical information, rather than on honoring, memorializing, or commemorating individuals or events. These markers, placed along state highways and roads, serve as a valuable resource for residents and visitors alike, providing a deeper understanding of the state's rich history and cultural heritage.

Part 2: Exploration – Secondary Sources

WHOLE GROUP:

- Share with students that these markers exist to educate people about Virginia's rich history. There are over 300 historic markers dedicated to the Revolutionary War Era throughout Virginia. We will work on answering the question, "How are women during the American Revolution represented on Virginia's Historic Highway Markers?"
- Explain to students that they will take on the role of a historian and that they will analyze, or look at various photographs, transcriptions, and charts that will help them answer that question!

SMALL GROUP/PAIRS:

- Place students into small groups or pairs and provide each group with the collection of historic markers (can be found at the end of this lesson). You can print the sources and place them in an envelope/folder or provide students with digital copies. Provide time for students to explore the artifacts, photographs, transcriptions, etc. Note – this is only a selection of the markers that mention women.
- While exploring the sources, you can decide to analyze some in a whole group setting, or provide small groups of students one source to analyze and report back to the group on.
- As students examine the artifacts, circulate the room and ask them in what ways they see women represented and what roles they played in the American Revolution.

WHOLE GROUP:

- Debrief with the whole class.

- Ask students, “In what ways are women portrayed on Virginia Historic Highway Markers during the Revolutionary War Era?” Have students name the roles they saw referenced in their sources. Record their responses somewhere (large poster, class smartboard, etc.) so everyone can follow along.
- Other ways to ask this question are “What do these markers tell us about how women contributed to the war? What do these markers tell us about the lives of the women?”

Part 3: Analysis - What Do the Primary Sources Tell Us?

WHOLE GROUP: Now that students have learned about some of the historic markers, they have the opportunity to do some research about women’s roles in the Revolution. Tell students, “Let’s look at what the primary sources can tell us about other roles women played in the war!”

- Example 1: Clementina Rind
 - <https://virginiahistory.org/learn/clementina-rind>
 - Note the document that says “Printed by Clementina Rind”
- Example 2: VMHC Museum Collection Items (three total)
 - See images at the end of this lesson
- Example 3: Sarah Osbourne
 - <https://shec.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/862> ; <https://american-revolution-experience.battlefields.org/people/sarah-osborn-benjamin#osborn-audio>
 - Note – while this narrative is a secondary source, it incorporates many primary source images and quotes
- Example 4: Anne Harrison Randolph
 - See image at the end of this lesson. Information provided by the Wilton House Museum.
 - Anne publicly joined the Virginia Association in 1769 to boycott English goods in response to the Townsend Act.

SMALL GROUP/PAIRS:

- Place students into small groups or pairs and provide each group with one of the examples above. You can print the sources and place them in an envelope/folder or provide students with digital copies. Provide time for students to explore the artifacts, photographs, transcriptions etc.

- Have students record what they learn. Students could do this digitally on a google doc, a piece of large post-it paper, paper/pencil etc. Let students know that they should be prepared to share answers to the following questions:
 - Who/what did you learn about?
 - What role did she/they play in the Revolutionary War?
 - Why was this role important?

WHOLE GROUP:

- Have pairs/groups share about what they learned about their chosen person/source and record their responses. Does this change what they thought before they examined primary sources?

Optional: Extension

- In order to further probe into the representation of diverse people on Virginia's Historic Highway Markers you could replicate the "Exploration" activity above for other underrepresented groups such as enslaved peoples, and free African Americans. The next part of this lesson could be a culminating activity after a unit of study or after this one learning experience.

Optional: Taking Informed Action

- During this section of the activity students engage in taking informed action which will allow students to choose from varied opportunities to make their voices heard.

WHOLE GROUP

Explain to students that based upon their source analysis in Parts 2 and Parts 3 of the lesson they have an opportunity to choose an action to take. They have just analyzed many sources (e.g., highway markers, photographs, written accounts, artifacts, etc.) that are related to a group that is often underrepresented in history: women. For each option, students will work towards making sure that Virginia's Historic Highway Markers tell more complete stories of women's roles during the Revolutionary War Era.

**Note: These options were created using the Taking Informed Action approach championed in the C3 Framework and Inquiry Design Model. Learn more about these at [C3Teachers.orghttps://c3teachers.org/](https://c3teachers.org/).*

Task Option 1:

- Understand - Collect data on the number of times a specific group (e.g. women, indigenous peoples, enslaved peoples, or free African Americans) is mentioned on Virginia's Historical Highway Markers.
- Assess- Determine the ways in which the selected group/s are portrayed and the roles they played in the Revolutionary War according to the markers.
- Act - Email the Department of Historic Resources with your findings and suggestions for increasing representation of these groups on Virginia's Historic Highway Markers.

Task Option 2:

- Understand - Collect data on the number of times a specific group (e.g. women, indigenous peoples, enslaved peoples, or free African Americans) is mentioned on Virginia's Historical Highway Markers.
- Assess- Determine the ways in which the selected group/s are portrayed and the roles they played in the Revolutionary War according to the markers.
- Act - Collaborate with classmates to write text for new highway markers that more fully encapsulate the varied role that women played in the Revolutionary War and send the suggested marker language to the Department of Historic Resources. (Ex: Clementina Rind does not have a marker)

Suggested Scaffolds

- Provide students with sample letters so that they can see the components of a professionally written email.
- Provide students with sentence frames and word banks to support them in their writing.
- Provide students with selected articles/videos/images about the roles of diverse groups during the Revolutionary War Era.

Task 2 – Exploration Source Images & Text

List of Sources:

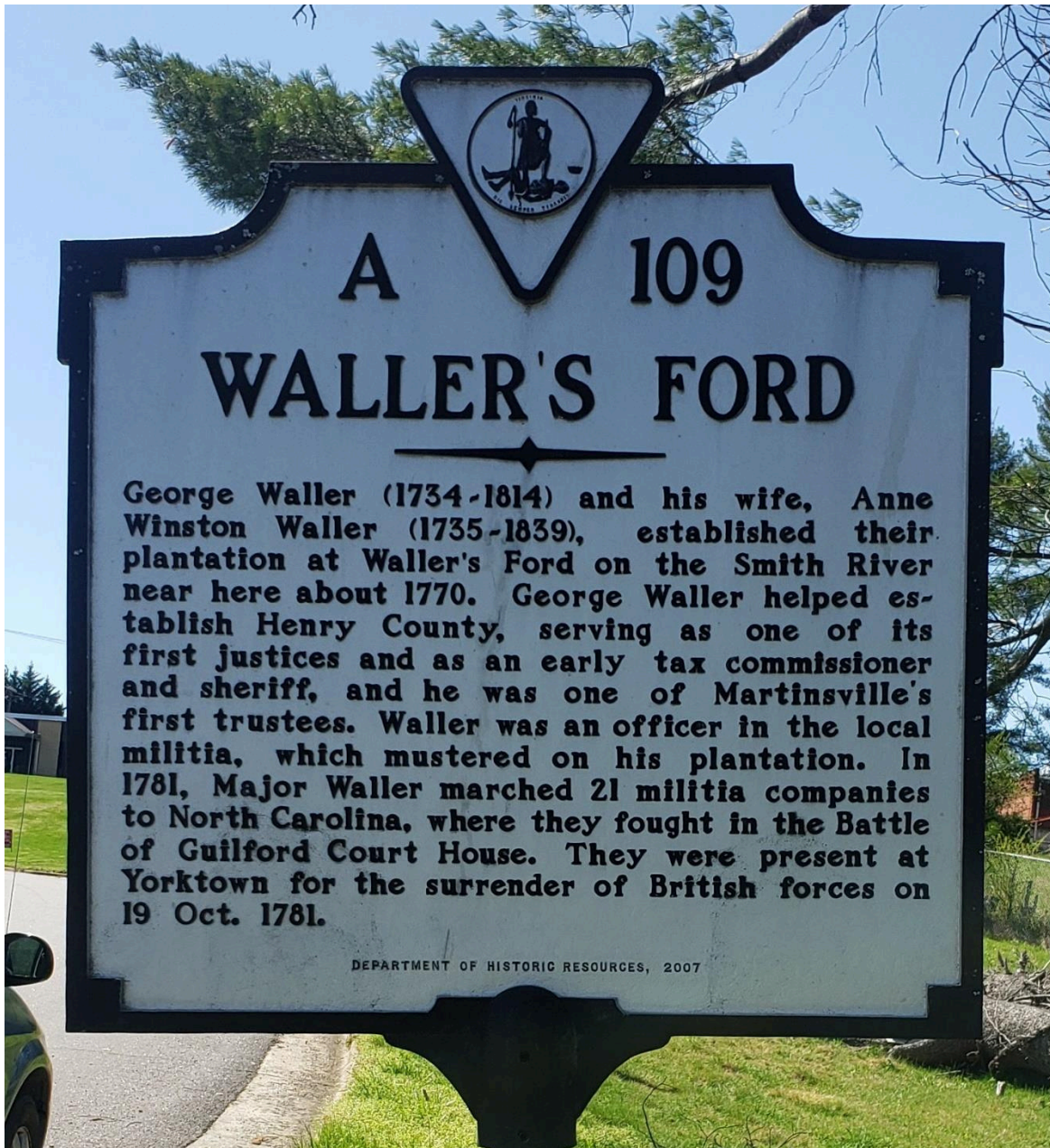
- Source A – Waller's Ford Marker
- Source B – Bowman Family Marker
- Source C – Betty Washington
- Source D – Anna Maria Lane, Soldier of the American Revolution Marker
- Source E – Bar Graph
- Source F – Pie Chart

Task 3 – Analyzing Primary Sources

List of Sources:

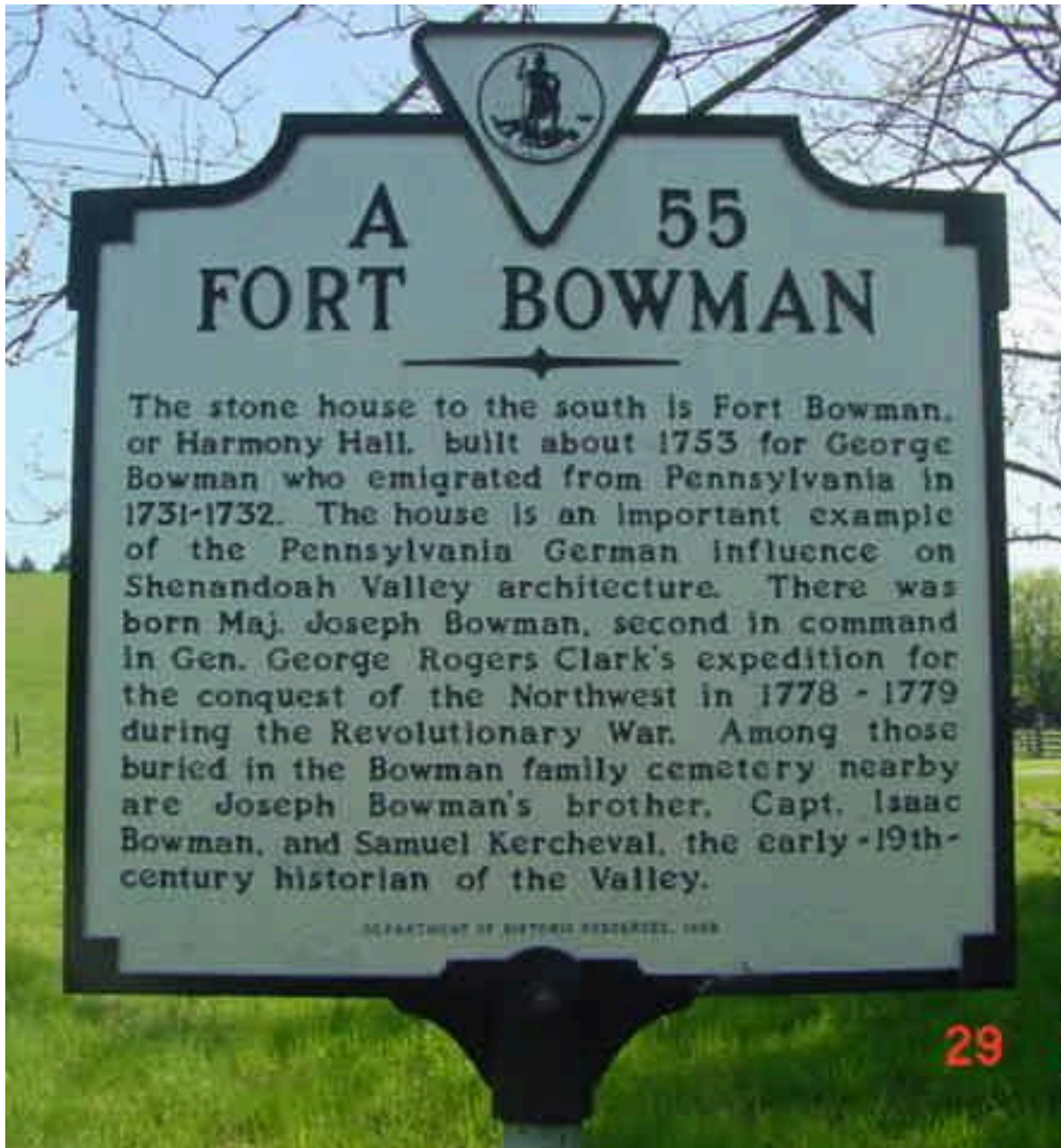
- Source 1 – A Summary View of the Rights of British America (RARE E211 J45 1774)
- Source 2 – Slave Register (Mss5 5 B6387:1)
- Source 3 – Stockings (1985.69.A-B)
- Source 4 – Molly Pitcher Postcard (2004.104.63)
- Source 5 – Virginia Gazette Newspaper Clipping (image courtesy of Wilton House)

Source A: Waller's Ford Marker



George Waller (1734-1814) and his wife, Anne Winston Waller (1735-1839), established their plantation at Waller's Ford on the Smith River near here about 1770. George Waller helped establish Henry County, serving as one of its first justices and as an early tax commissioner and sheriff, and he was one of Martinsville's first trustees. Waller was an officer in the local militia, which mustered on his plantation. In 1781, Major Waller marched 21 militia companies to North Carolina, where they fought in the Battle of Guilford Court House. They were present at Yorktown for the surrender of British forces on 19 Oct. 1781.

Source B: Bowman Family Marker

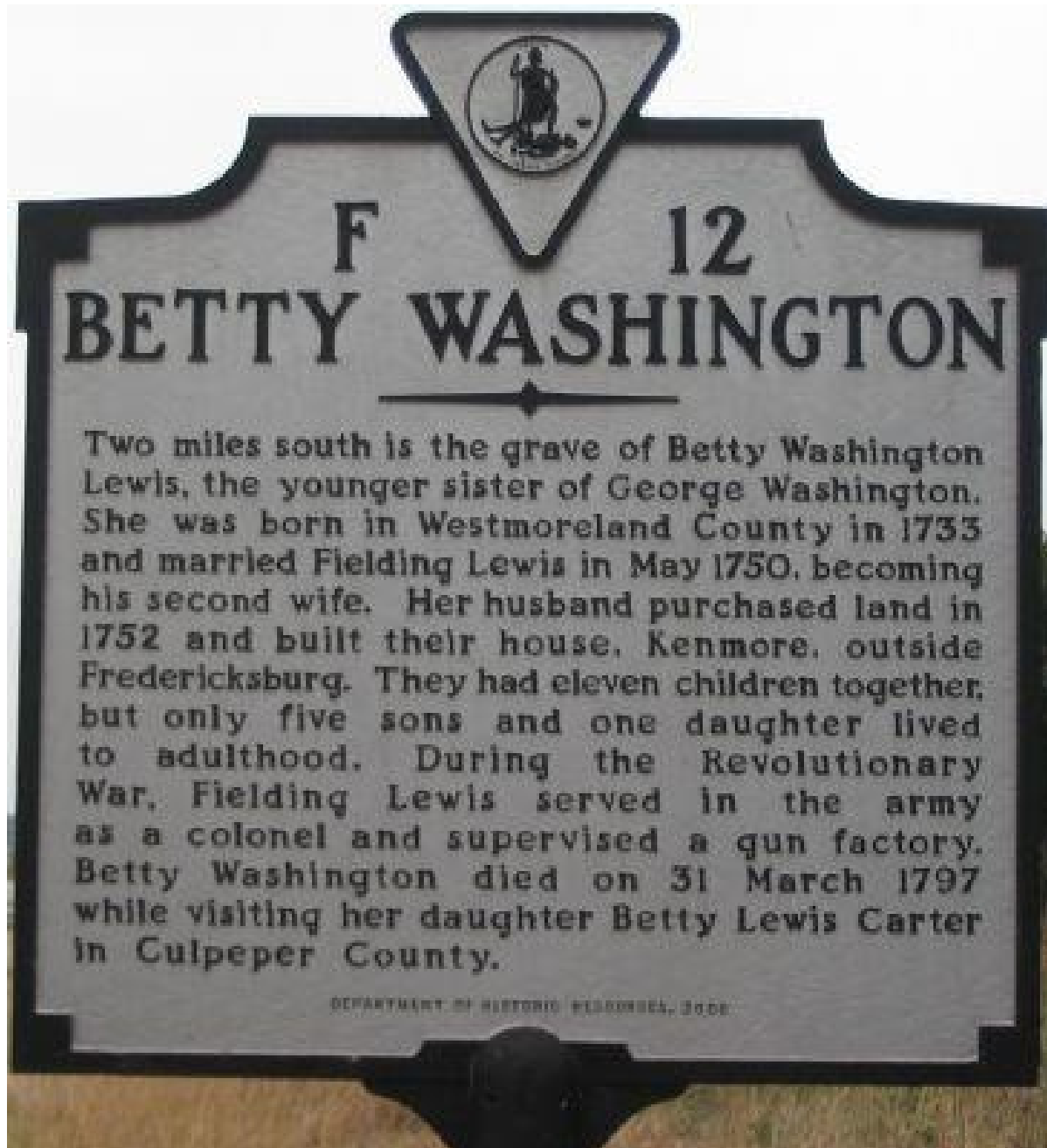


To the east is Fort Bowman, built ca. 1771 for the family of George and Mary (Hite) Bowman. The house exemplifies the merging of German and English architectural styles in the Shenandoah Valley.

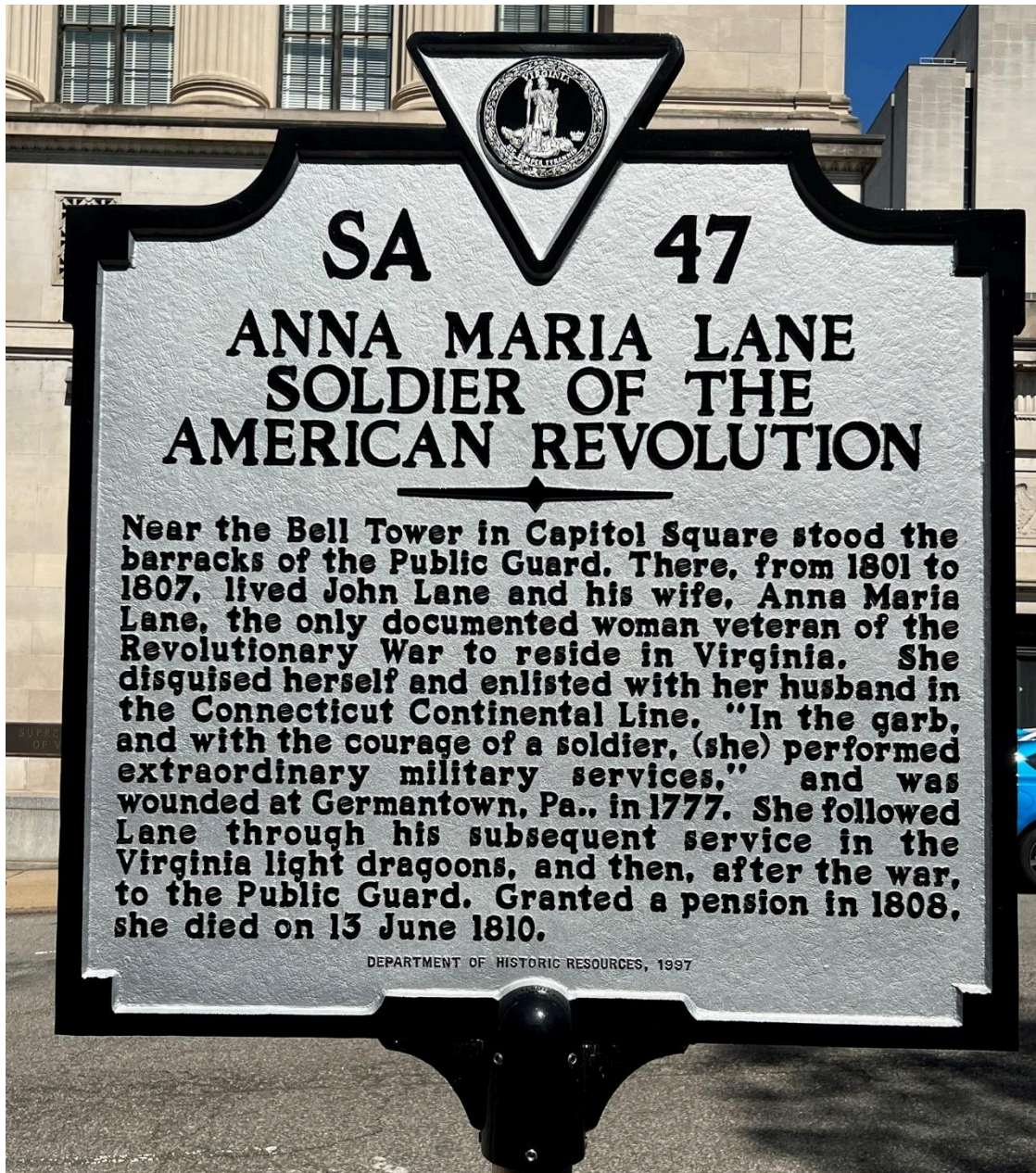
The Bowmans, with others of German and Scots-Irish origin, had moved to this area from Pennsylvania in the 1730s and had become slaveowners. Their son Maj. Joseph Bowman was second in command in Lt. Col. George Rogers Clark's Vincennes Campaign during the Revolutionary War.

Second- and third-generation family houses preserved nearby include Isaac and Mary Bowman's Mount Pleasant (1812), Col. George and Elizabeth Bowman's Long Meadow (1848), and Charles and Rebecca Hite's farmhouse (1850s).

Source C: Betty Washington Marker

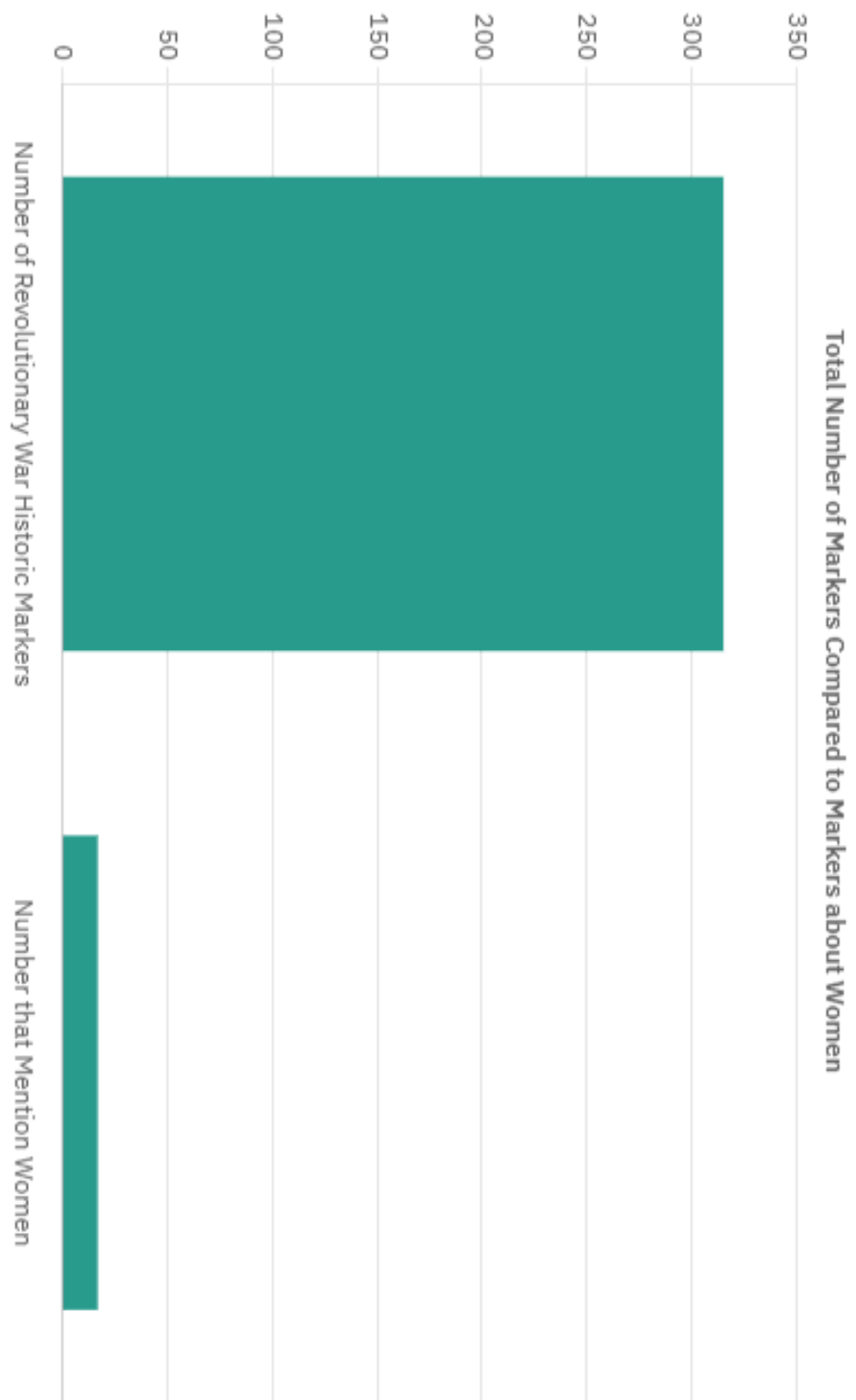


Two miles south is the grave of Betty Washington Lewis, the younger sister of George Washington. She was born in Westmoreland County in 1733 and married Fielding Lewis in May 1750, becoming his second wife. Her husband purchased land in 1752 and built their house, Kenmore, outside Fredericksburg. They had eleven children together, but only five sons and one daughter lived to adulthood. During the Revolutionary War, Fielding Lewis served in the army as a colonel and supervised a gun factory. Betty Washington died on 31 March 1797 while visiting her daughter Betty Lewis Carter in Culpeper County.



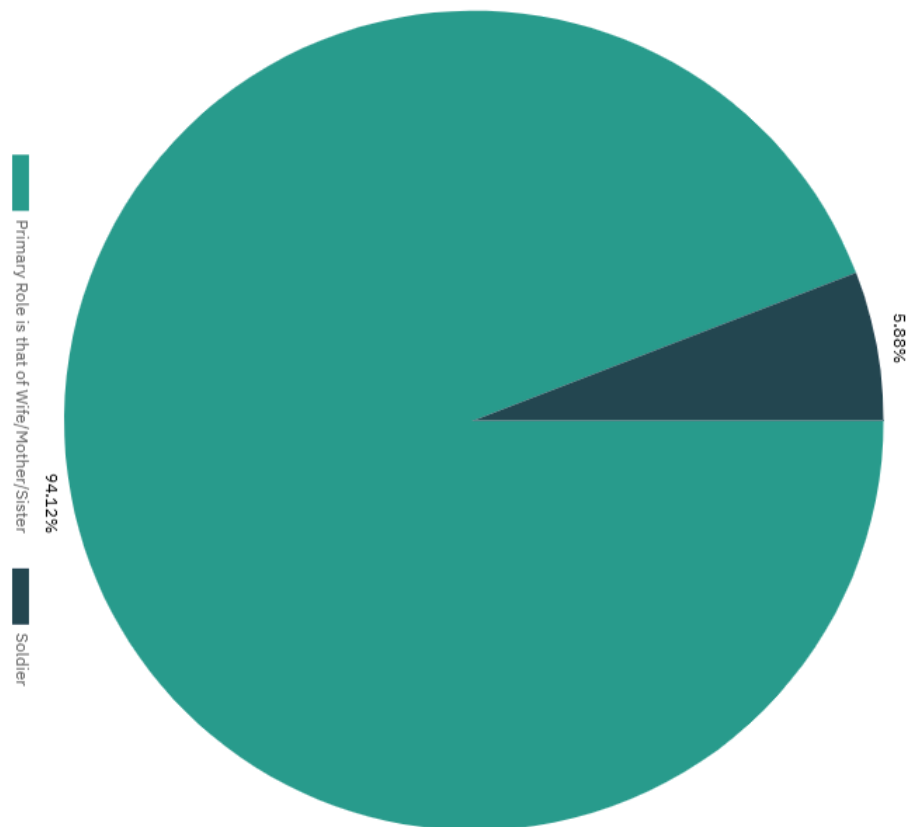
Near the Bell Tower in Capitol Square stood the barracks of the Public Guard. There, from 1801 to 1807, lived John Lane and his wife, Anna Maria Lane, the only documented woman veteran of the Revolutionary War to reside in Virginia. She disguised herself and enlisted with her husband in the Connecticut Continental Line. "In the garb, and with the courage of a soldier, (she) performed extraordinary military services," and was wounded at Germantown, Pa., in 1777. She followed Lane through his subsequent service in the Virginia light dragoons, and then, after the war, to the Public Guard. Granted a pension in 1808, she died on 13 June 1810.

Source E: Bar Chart



Note: There are 315 total markers and 17 that mention women

Source F: Pie Chart



Note: Only one of the 17 markers mentions a woman having a role as anything other than a wife/mother/sister

A
SUMMARY VIEW
OF THE
RIGHTS
OF
BRITISH AMERICA.
SET FORTH IN SOME
RESOLUTIONS
INTENDED FOR THE
INSPECTION
OF THE PRESENT
DELEGATES
OF THE
PEOPLE OF VIRGINIA.
NOW IN
CONVENTION.

BY A NATIVE, AND MEMBER OF THE
HOUSE OF BURGESSES.

WILLIAMSBURG:
PRINTED BY CLEMENTINARIND

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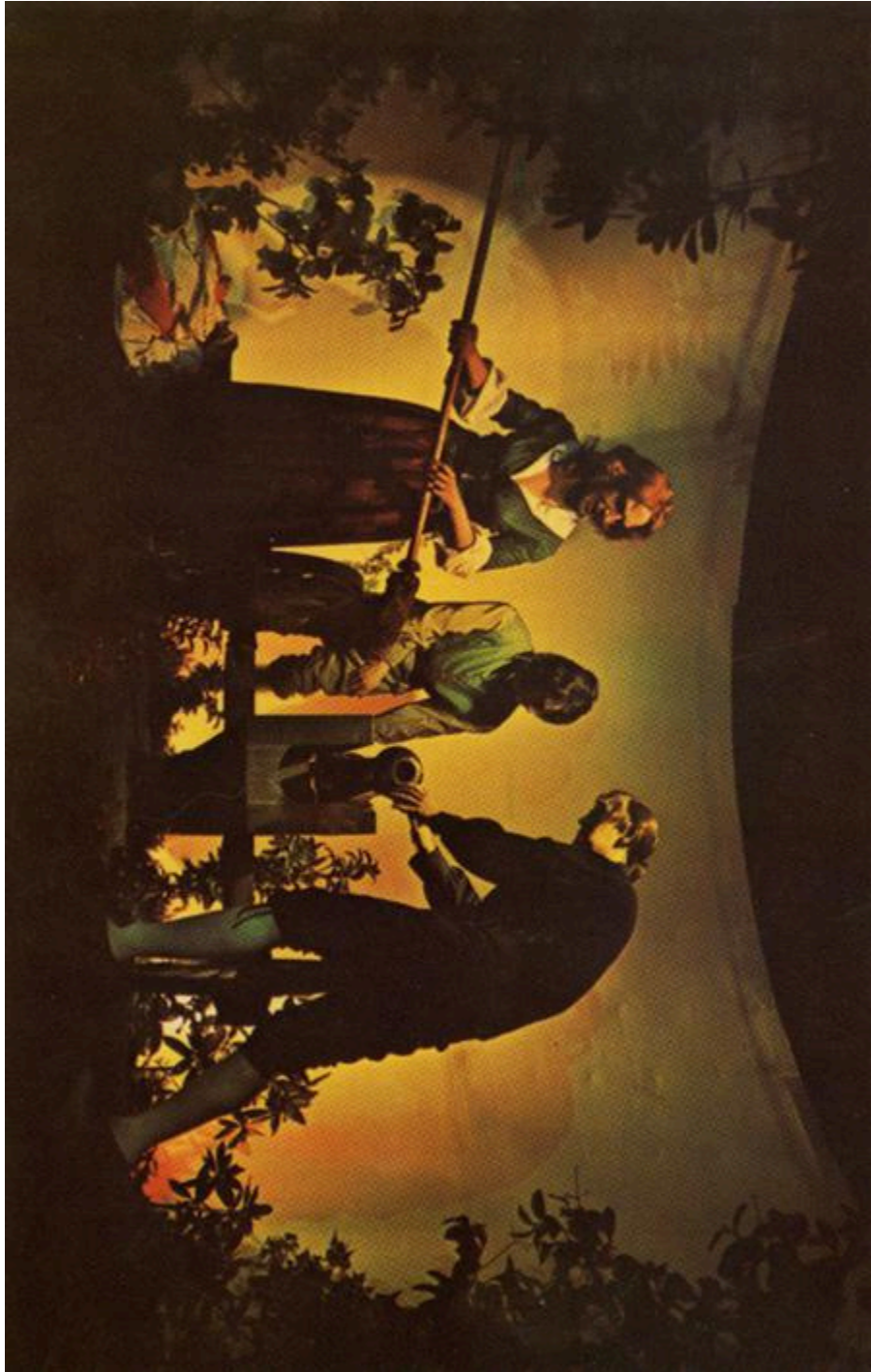
Note: One of the greatest hypocrisies of the American Revolution was the emphasis on freedom while the practice of slavery existed. William Bolling lived in Goochland County, Virginia and his register includes names of his enslaved workers along with their dates of births and names of mothers, dates of death, purchases and names of sellers and prices. The left page shows Betty's children born during the American Revolution.

Source 3 – Stockings

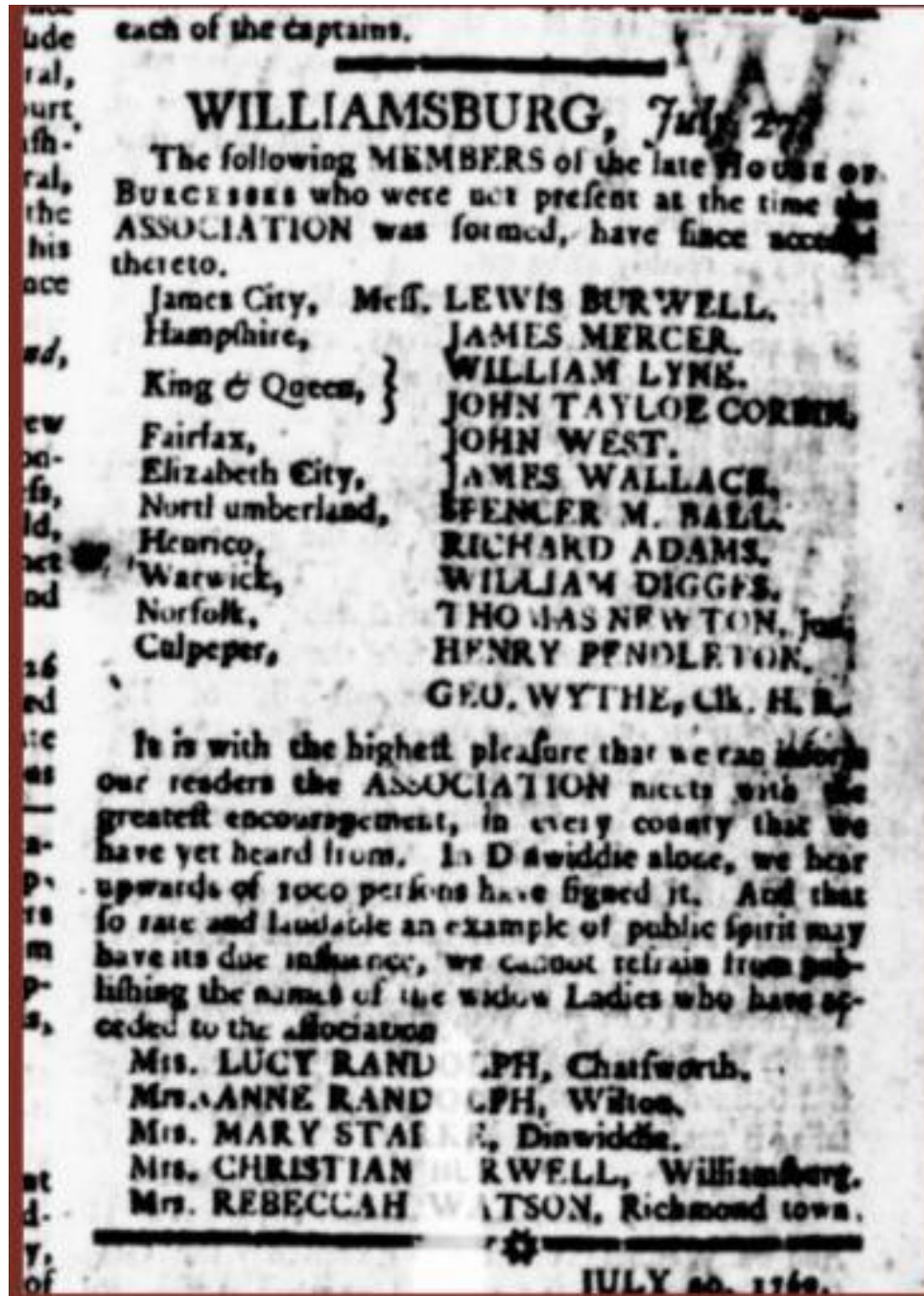


Note: Women often supported the war effort by making supplies for soldiers. The note with these stockings in our collection reads: "Miss Sallie Talbott knitted these stockings during the Revolutionary War. Her eldest brother, Richard, was an officer in the Revolutionary War. / Dictated by Adele Talbott Armistead."

Source 4 – Molly Pitcher Postcard



Note: Some women served as nurses and cooks in the soldiers' camps. One example is a woman known as Molly Pitcher. Historians are not sure if Molly was a real person or if her story is the combination of many different women. It is said that during the Battle of Monmouth, Molly brought water in a pitcher to the soldiers on the battlefield (hence the name "Pitcher"). When her husband fell due to heat stroke, Molly took over his position and fought the rest of the battle in his place.



Note: Anne publicly joined the Virginia Association in 1769 to boycott English goods in response to the Townsend Act. She hosted numerous militia units during the revolution, and prominent individuals like George Washington, and the Marquis de Lafayette. Anne lived into her 70s, surviving both her husband and all her children. For over 30 years Anne was the matriarch of Wilton as she managed it through financial turmoil, revolution and the birth of a nation.

CREDITS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Virginia Museum of History and Culture Marketing Department, Maggie Creech

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture's Education team thanks the many people and departments who contributed their time to this project. Special thanks to our 2023-2024 Teacher Advisory Council member Vicki Hobson for her time designing this lesson.

IMAGE CREDITS

All objects are from the Virginia Museum of History & Culture collections except the Virginia Gazette Newspaper Clipping (courtesy Wilton House). All markers can be found here:

<https://vcris.dhr.virginia.gov/HistoricMarkers/>