



# Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission

## December 8, 2014 Meeting

### **Update: Monument to Virginians at Fort Meigs, Ohio**

#### Project Overview

The Advisory Council to the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission discussed and recommended at its December 8<sup>th</sup> 2010 meeting the placement of a historic marker at Fort Meigs to commemorate the role of Virginians in the construction and defense of the fort during 1812 and 1813. The Commission considered an earlier draft report at its July 9, 2014 meeting, and supported the concept in principle, but concluded that it needed more specific cost and design information before proceeding any further.

The current standing of the project is outlined below.

#### Historical Background

Following serious military setbacks along the northwestern frontier in the summer of 1812 – especially the surrender in August of a force of over 1000 men under the command of US General William Hull at Detroit – the newly appointed commander of the Army of the Northwest, US General William Henry Harrison, requested additional troops be raised quickly for defense of the frontier. The US Secretary of War requested of Virginia Governor James Barbour that a brigade of Virginians be raised to be sent to the Northwest. Barbour commissioned Revolutionary War veteran Joel Leftwich of Bedford County to serve as General of the Virginia Brigade, this army to be raised mostly from Virginia's westernmost counties seated along the Ohio River. By late October the Brigade was assembled at Point Pleasant, Virginia, from where it crossed that month into Ohio. Marching up from eastern Virginia at this time were the Petersburg Volunteers under Captain Richard McRae, who would eventually join with the Virginia Brigade and begin arriving together at their destination on the Maumee River in northwestern Ohio on 2 February, 1813. The Virginians served alongside troops from Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania at this snowbound and wind-blasted post through the remainder of the winter of 1812/1813. Under direction of West Point engineers, they constructed what would become the largest wooden palisade fort in North America: Fort Meigs. Named for

the wartime governor of Ohio, Fort Meigs was built not only under the duress of the winter weather but with minimal supplies and under the constant threat of attack by the British and their Indian allies. General Joel Leftwich commanded Fort Meigs and oversaw the continuation of its construction in the absence of General Harrison for most of February and all of March. The Virginia Brigade began leaving at the beginning of April at the conclusion of their service. The Petersburg Volunteers would remain in service at Fort Meigs, continuing to serve under General Harrison's command, fighting the British and their Indian allies during the two sieges of Fort Meigs in the spring and summer of 1813. Both sieges failed, and the Petersburg Volunteers would be part of the subsequent invasion of Canada under Harrison, with Fort Meigs serving as the staging area for that offensive. During the campaign through Ohio and the subsequent construction and defense of Fort Meigs many of these Virginians died of disease, wounds and in battle. Those who perished at the fort are buried together just outside the earthen walls of the fortification. As men were buried by their state of origin, the Virginian gravesite is well known to the contemporary site managers at Fort Meigs.

#### Published Resources on Virginians at Fort Meigs

Butler, Stuart L., *Real Patriots and Heroic Soldiers; General Joel Leftwich and the Virginia Brigade in the War of 1812*, Heritage Books, 2008

Ryan, James H and Lee A. Wallace, *Duty and Honor; Petersburg's Contributions to the War of 1812*

#### Monument Precedent at Fort Meigs

In 1908 the citizens of the Maumee River Valley erected a 100 foot tall stone obelisk in the center of the fort site in preparation for the annual convention of the Grand Army of the Republic, the primary Civil War veteran organization for Union soldiers, which was to be held in nearby Toledo, Ohio that year. In 1922 the State of Pennsylvania erected a monument of stone with bronze tablets on the burial site of Pennsylvanians who died during duty at the fort. This marker is located just outside the earthen walls of the fort. In recognition of the fort's significance to their state's history, the Ohio Historical Society reconstructed the wooden palisade fort in the late 1960s, opening it to the public as a state historic site in 1974. In 2013, as part of the Kentucky commemoration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812, a monument was erected at Fort Meigs by the State of Kentucky honoring its troops who served there.

#### Virginia Monument Location

The Director of Fort Meigs, Scott Lonsdale, has requested that a Virginia monument be installed outside the Fort structure, on the grounds of the state historic site. The location would be near the Kentucky monument and the entrance to the Fort, so would be in a prominent location.

### Virginia Monument Design

Working with A.P. Grappone & Sons, Inc. a prominent monument company in Richmond which has designed and created stone monuments for over a century, a design of a Virginia monument has been developed (see Exhibit A) which is very respectable, but cost-effective.

The proposed monument will be a respectable- sized granite monument--5 feet tall sitting on a 10- inch base, sitting on a concrete foundation so about 6 feet tall overall, and a little over 3 feet wide, with the seal of the Commonwealth carved into a black granite inset on the front, and the names of the 44 soldiers in the Virginia Brigade who died in Ohio under General Leftwich listed. On the back of the monument, the names of the 15 soldiers in the Petersburg Volunteers who died in Ohio under Captain McRae would be listed. The names have been compiled by Stuart Butler, and he is comfortable with their accuracy. The attached rendering only lists the first few names as examples, but this design and size allows room for inscription of every name. There will be a granite base, doveled with metal bars into the monument, to ensure stability and prevent vandalism.

A very deep foundation will be installed (see Exhibit A) to ensure that the monument will not shift even if there is significant deep freezing and thawing of the soil (a problem in the Fort Meigs area).

The full text of the inscriptions on the monument is attached as Exhibit B.

### Virginia Monument Cost

Grappone's comprehensive price quote for this monument--including all design work, stone, carving and lettering, shipment to Ohio, and foundation and installation work by a local monument company there-- is \$7170.46.

A copy of the quotation is attached under Exhibit C.

### Site Approval

The Fort Meigs Historic Site in Perrysburg, Ohio is apparently owned by the State of Ohio, controlled by the Ohio History Connection (formerly the Ohio Historical Society) and operated by the Fort Meigs Association.

The Director of Fort Meigs sent the initial plans for the Virginia Monument for architectural review by the Ohio History Connection, which requested a more substantial foundation and a different font for the monument inscriptions. Grappone has addressed both concerns to the apparent satisfaction of Fort Meigs Association. The deeper foundation and exact monument placement are still under review by a site archaeologist, but no significant problems are envisioned.

### Timeline

It will take two months after the order is placed to allow for fabrication, shipping and installation of the monument. Installation before April is not recommended due to frozen soil. Since the Virginia Bicentennial Commission will expire June 30, 2015, installation should occur before then.

Memorial Day weekend is apparently the time of the best attendance at Fort Meigs each year, with good public participation and re-enactor groups present. Fort Meigs Association would therefore like to have a dedication ceremony of a Virginia monument as part of its Memorial Day celebrations (though if that date is not convenient for a Commission representative, there possibly could be two dedication or unveiling ceremonies – one on Memorial Day and another event on another date).

### Recommendation

We would recommend that the Commission approve the fabrication and installation of the Virginia monument at Fort Meigs based on the attached design and the \$7,170.46 price quotation, as a lasting memorial to the Virginians who served and died at Fort Meigs or elsewhere in Ohio during the Ohio campaign of the War of 1812.

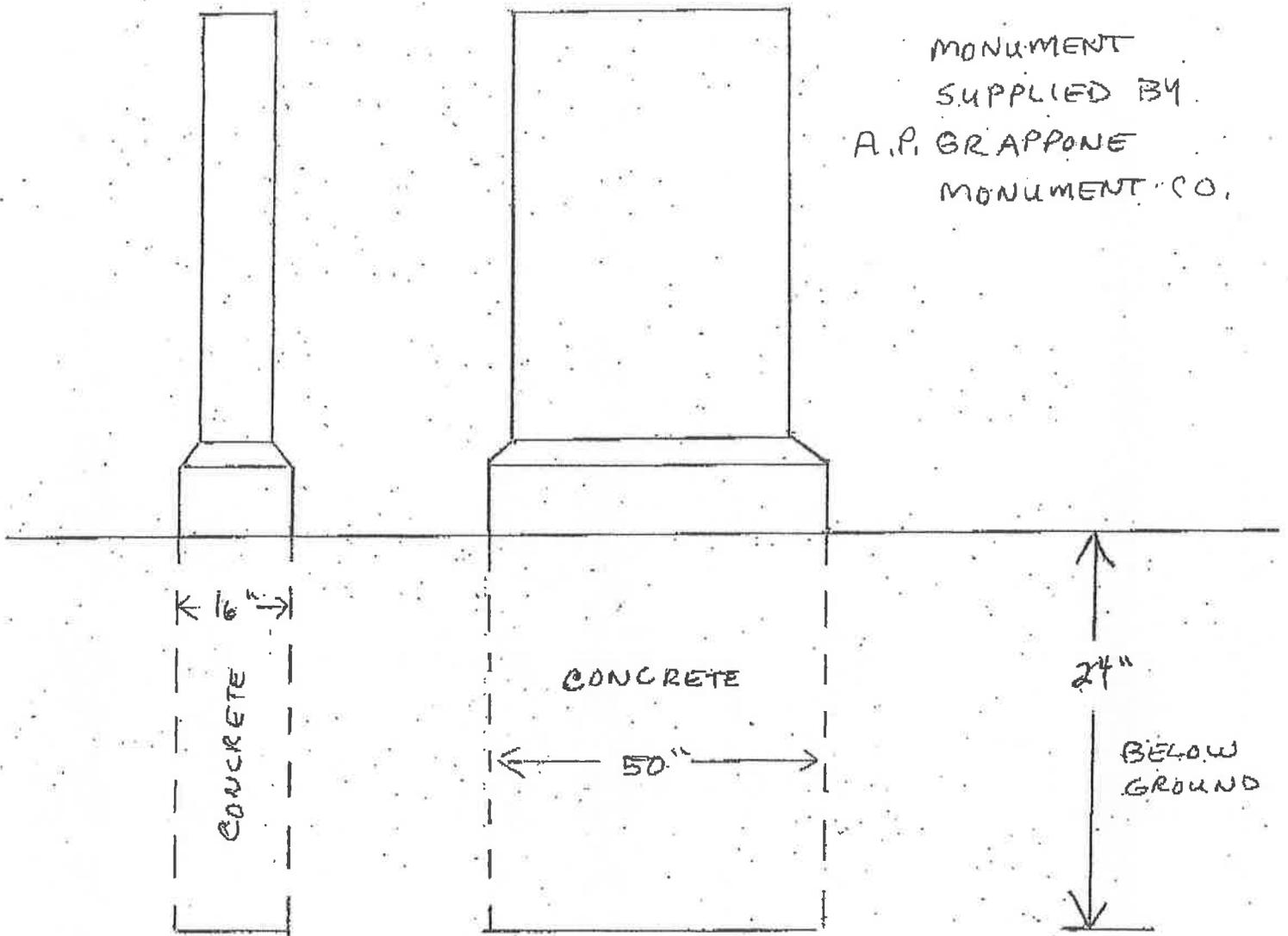
Respectfully submitted,

Peter E. Broadbent, Jr.  
Commission Member

Patrick Farris  
Member, Citizens' Advisory Council



11/28/14



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## Virginia Soldiers who died at Fort Meigs or in Ohio During the War of 1812

## SEAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Virginia Brigade under the command of Brig. Gen. Joel Leftwich

James Adare  
John Anderson  
Stephen Archer  
George Arnold  
Jacob Brewer  
Isaac Bockover  
Patrick Burk  
William Carder  
Richard Carson  
John Clutter  
Thomas Craig  
Mathias Cullen  
Edward Davis  
Andrew Davison  
Jesse Davson  
William Dixon  
Absalom Elkins  
John Evans  
George Fleming  
Isaac Forman  
Jonathan Grindstaff  
Peter Haught

James Holbert  
James Huffman  
Nimrod Lancaster  
Thomas Lewis  
Archibald McCarty  
Alexander McClain  
David Molsby  
Rawley Morgan  
Timothy Murphy  
James Queen  
Benjamin Rogers  
Samuel Ruckman  
Henry Six  
Samuel Spivy  
Andrew Stalkniker  
John Steed  
Simeon Stevens  
William Taunibill  
Fielder Wilcoxon  
Henry Wiscoff  
David Woollum  
Jesse Yoakum

Petersburg Volunteers under the command of Capt. Richard McRae

Andrew Andrews  
George Booker  
George Clough  
John Cureton  
Edmund Gée  
William Lacy  
William Lanier  
Nicholas Massenburg  
Samuel Miles  
John Perry  
William R. Rawlings  
George P. Raybourne.  
John Shore  
James Stevens  
Samuel Williams

Erected 2015 by the Virginia Bicentennial of the War of 1812 Commission

#1633279

**A. P. Grappone and Sons, Inc.**

**1104 South Randolph Street**

**Richmond, Va. 23220**

December 3, 2014

Re: Fort Meigs memorial

Mr. Broadbent,

The following is the adjusted price for the Fort Meig memorial from Virginia.

\$6,370.46	stone with lettering from quarry including shipping
800.00	foundation and installation on site

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\$7,170.46 total price, as is now, without additional changes

If you have any further questions, please let me know.  
Thank you,

Gordon Grappone  
A. P. Grappone and Sons, Inc.