

Department of Historic Resources Historic Markers for Lynching Victims

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

Charles City County, dedicated April 7, 2019

Isaac Brandon Lynched, 6 April 1892

V-54

A mob of about 75 masked men dragged Isaac Brandon from a cell in the old Charles City County jail and hanged him from a tree on this hillside on the night of 6 April 1892. Brandon, a 43-year-old black man, had been held in jail on a charge of assaulting a white woman. He was married and the father of eight children. No charges were filed in connection with Brandon's murder. More than 4,000 lynchings took place in the United States between 1877 and 1950. In Virginia, approximately 100 people, the vast majority of them black men, were killed in documented lynchings. Lynch mobs terrorized African Americans and helped to maintain white supremacy.

Department of Historic Resources, 2018

Harrisonburg, dedicated September 26, 2020

Charlotte Harris Lynched, 6 March 1878

A-131

About a dozen disguised people took Charlotte Harris from the custody of jailers in eastern Rockingham County on the night of 6 March 1878 and hanged her from a tree approximately 13 miles southeast of here. This is the only documented lynching of an African American woman in Virginia, and it received nationwide attention. A grand jury that met here failed to identify any of the lynchers. Harris had been accused of inciting a young African American man to burn the barn of a white farmer. This man was later acquitted on all charges. More than 4,000 lynchings took place in the United States between 1877 and 1950; more than 100 people, primarily African American men, were lynched in Virginia.

Department of Historic Resources, 2020

Wise County, dedicated October 16, 2021

Leonard Woods Lynched

XB-27

Leonard Woods, a black coal miner from Jenkins, KY, was lynched near here on the night of 29-30 Nov. 1927. Officers had arrested Woods for allegedly killing Herschel Deaton, a white man from Coeburn, VA, and had taken him to the Whitesburg, KY, jail. On the day of Deaton's funeral, a white mob numbering in the hundreds broke into the jail and brought Woods close to this spot, where they hanged, shot, and burned him. No one was ever arrested. In the aftermath, at the urging of Norfolk editor Louis Jaffé, Norton's Bruce Crawford, and other journalists, VA Gov. Harry F. Byrd worked with the General Assembly early in 1928 to pass the nation's first law defining lynching as a state crime.

Department of Historic Resources, 2020

Essex County, to be dedicated December 18, 2021, at 11:00 a.m.

Thomas Washington Lynched

Thomas Washington, an African American man, was lynched on 23 March 1896 for allegedly attempting to assault the young daughter of a prominent white citizen. A boy found Washington's body hanging from a tree about 1/8 mile southwest of here. A coroner's jury did not identify the killers. The body, buried near the tree, was later given a proper burial by relatives. This was the only documented lynching in Essex County. The case attracted publicity across the state, but no one was ever brought to justice. More than 4,000 lynchings took place in the U.S. between 1877 and 1950; more than 100 people, primarily African American men, were lynched in Virginia.

Location: 31248 Tidewater Trail, Center Cross, VA

Other Markers and Memorials to Lynchings

Charlottesville

Equal Justice Memorial historic marker dedicated July 12, 2019 at the site of the 1898 lynching of John Henry James.

<https://ejl.org/news/charlottesville-dedicates-historical-marker-on-lynching/>

Loudoun County

Orion Anderson Remembrance Memorial for Peace and Justice, dedicated June 19, 2019.