



Near Mechanicsville in Hanover County, Virginia — *The American South (Mid-Atlantic)*

## Studley Birthplace of Patrick Henry

**Inscription.** Only archaeological remnants of Studley survive today, but in the 18th century this was the site of an impressive two-story brick house. Studley was built by John Syme in the 1720s for his wife Sarah Winston. After his death, she married John Henry. The couple's nine children were born at the house, including their son, Patrick Henry, who was born on May 29, 1736. Patrick Henry attended a local school until the age of ten and also received instruction from his father in classics and theology. A childhood friend remembered his affinity for music and recalled that Henry could often be found "lying under the shade of some tree which overhung the sequestered stream" observing the natural world.



By Bernard Fisher, September 2, 2011

1. Studley Marker

Archaeological excavations and surviving insurance maps for Studley show that by 1796 the main 40-by-30-foot brick structure stood two stories high with a one-story brick wing and an attached porch. It was surrounded by a variety of outbuildings including a kitchen, dairy, study, stables, barn, and granary. The house burned in 1807. In 1995, Preservation Virginia purchased the property to ensure its protection and preservation.

*(sidebar)*

### Patrick

**Henry** (May 29, 1736 – June 6, 1799) was the leading Virginia statesman in defending the rights of Colonial America.

Following Henry's death, John Adams wrote to Thomas Jefferson singing his praises: "In the Congress of 1774 there was not one member, except Patrick Henry, who appeared to me sensible of the Precipice or rather the Pinnacle on which he stood, and had the candour and courage enough to acknowledge it."

Henry was the first elected governor of Virginia, a devoted father of 17 children, and the most famous orator of his day. Born in Hanover County, Henry made a name for himself as a young lawyer in the Parsons' Cause at Hanover Courthouse in 1763. His 1765 resolutions against the Stamp Act articulated the basic principles of the American Revolution. Henry is perhaps best known for his immortal words "Give me liberty or give me death," which he delivered during the Second Virginia Convention in a speech to fellow delegates George Washington and Thomas Jefferson at St. John's Church in 1775. His impassioned words helped move colonists toward American independence and they continue to inspire the cause of freedom around the world.

Known as the "Voice of the Revolution," Henry's political career included 26 years of service in the Virginia legislature and five terms as governor. He helped draft the Virginia Constitution of 1776 and its Declaration of Rights. A leading critic of the U.S. Constitution, Henry also strongly influenced the creation of the Bill of Rights. Following his death, Henry was buried at Red Hill Plantation, now the site of the Patrick Henry National Memorial.

**Erected** 2011 by The Road to Revolution Heritage Trail. (Marker Number 1.)

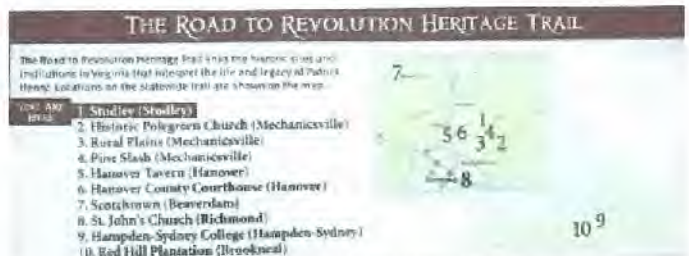
**Location.** 37° 40.145' N, 77° 17.466' W. Marker is near Mechanicsville, Virginia, in Hanover County. Marker is

A TIMELINE OF PATRICK HENRY'S LIFE	
1736	Henry was born at Studley Plantation
1748	Henry worshiped at Polegreen Church during Great Awakening period and was influenced by the oratory of the Rev. Samuel Davies until 1759
1754	Henry and Sarah Shelton were married at Rural Plains and moved into Pine Slash
1760	Henry passed bar examination in Williamsburg; opened law office at Hanover Tavern
1763	Henry argued Parsons' Cause at Hanover Courthouse
1765	Henry elected to House of Burgesses and proposed Virginia's bold Stamp Act Resolutions
1771	Henry made his home at Scotchtown
1774	Henry elected to First Continental Congress
1775	Henry delivered his "Liberty or Death" speech at St. John's Church
1775	Henry elected to Second Continental Congress
1775	Henry, along with James Madison, elected as a founding trustee of Hampden-Sydney College
1776	Henry attended Fifth Revolutionary Convention and helped draft Virginia Constitution and Declaration of Rights
1776	Henry elected first governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, served three one-year terms
1784	Henry re-elected governor, served two one-year terms
1787	Henry declined election to Philadelphia Constitutional Convention
1788	Virginia ratified U.S. Constitution by 89 to 79 vote, Henry's opposition fueled movement for a Bill of Rights, which was ratified three years later
1794	Henry made his home at Red Hill, Charlotte County
1794 through 1796	Henry declined sixth gubernatorial office

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on Studley Farms Drive (Virginia Route 700) 0.2 miles south of Studley Farms Lane (Virginia Route 1625), on the left when traveling south. [Touch for map.](#) Marker is in this post office area: Mechanicsville VA 23116, United States of America. [Touch for directions.](#)



### 3. Road to Revolution Heritage Trail

The Road to Revolution Heritage Trail links the historic sites and institutions in Virginia that interpret the life and legacy of Patrick Henry. Locations on the statewide trail are shown on the map.

1. Studley (Studley)
2. Historic Polegreen Church (Mechanicsville)
3. Rural Plains (Mechanicsville)
4. Pine Slash (Mechanicsville)
5. Hanover Tavern (Hanover)
6. Hanover County Courthouse (Hanover)
7. Scotchtown (Beaverdam)
8. St. John's Church (Richmond)
9. Hampden-Sydney College (Hampden-Sydney)
10. Red Hill Plantation (Brookneal)

**Other nearby markers.** At least 8 other markers are within 3 miles of this marker, measured as the crow flies. [Salem Church/Haw's Shop](#) (approx. half a mile away); [Early Airmail Service](#) (approx. half a mile away); a different marker also named [Studley](#) (approx. half a mile away); [Enon Church](#) (approx. 1.2 miles away); a different marker also named [Enon Church](#) (approx. 1.2 miles away); [Newmarket](#) (approx. 1.7 miles away); [Stuart's Ride](#) (approx. 1.9 miles away); [Cavalry Action At Linney's](#) (approx. 2.3 miles away).

**More about this marker.** On the left is an image of "The "Studley" known to the Henry's as described in a 1796 Mutual Assurance Society fire policy included a Dwelling House, Nursery, Kitchen, Dairy, Smoke House and Study in addition to a group of wooden barns, stables, granary and small storehouse. Courtesy Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia. Declarations and revaluations, 1796-1966, Vol. 12, Policy No. 193. Accession 30177. Business records collection, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA 23219."

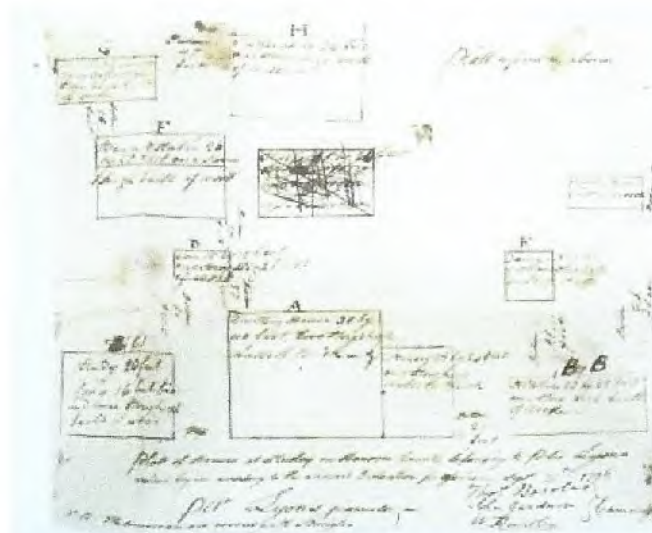
On the lower right are photos of the "Archaeological excavations at Studley completed in 2006 revealed architectural details such as this brick cellar floor", and "A large fragment of early nineteenth-century wine bottle amidst brick rubble in Test Unit 11." Also, "A selection of 18th century artifacts excavated at Studley including (starting in the upper right) brass hardware from a piece of furniture, a section of a jaw bone, pipe stems, and a variety of utilitarian and fashionable ceramic fragments" *Courtesy of James River Institute for Archaeology, Inc.*

### Also see . . .

1. [The Road to Revolution Heritage Trail](#). (Submitted on September 2, 2011, by Bernard Fisher of Mechanicsville, Virginia.)
2. [Patrick Henry \(1736-1799\)](#). *Encyclopedia Virginia* Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (Submitted on September 2, 2011, by Bernard Fisher of Mechanicsville, Virginia.)

**Categories.** • [Colonial Era](#) • [Patriots & Patriotism](#) •

term as governor of Virginia and appointments as U.S. senator, chief justice, secretary of state, and ambassador to Spain and France 1799 Henry elected to House of Burgesses but died at Red Hill before taking office



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#### 4. Studley Layout



Archaeological excavations at Studley completed in 2006 revealed architectural details such as this brick set in floor.  
Courtesy James River Institute for Archaeology, Inc.

A large fragment of early nineteenth-century brick found in Test Unit 27.  
Courtesy James River Institute for Archaeology, Inc.

A selection of 18th-century artifacts excavated at Studley including a pipe from the upper right area, a button, a piece of Spanish gunpowder, a pipe, a button, and a variety of other items and fashionable ceramic fragments.  
Courtesy of James River Institute for Archaeology, Inc.

#### 5. Studley Archaeological Excavations



By Bernard Fisher, September 2, 2011

#### 6. Studley Marker

**More.** Search the internet for [Studley](#).

**Credits.** This page was last revised on June 16, 2016. This page originally submitted on September 2, 2011, by