

Style Guide:

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation has established certain stylistic guidelines for inscriptions to assure readability and clarity of the markers approved by the Foundation. These guidelines were developed to maintain a level of consistency across the Foundation's various marker programs and are meant to help the average visitor to one of our markers, who may be unfamiliar with the surrounding historical context of the inscription, understand what the marker is meant to commemorate. We aim to make our inscriptions accessible to a 4th/5th grade reading level. Also, keep in mind that some visitors may be tourists from other states or countries who are unfamiliar with your region's history.

A historical marker is a limited introduction to the person, place, thing or event featured in the inscription. Due to the limited marker text, not everything can be included. However, markers approved for funding will receive a webpage on the Foundation's [online marker map](#), where a more detailed narrative will be provided. When choosing the proposed marker text, focus on what is being commemorated. Consider the educational component of a marker; what should the reader *learn* by reading the inscription?

Title:

- Title should be related directly to the person, place, thing or event being commemorated.
- Unless part of a recognized official title, the title should not include a date (i.e., SCHOOL 1914, 1814 CEMETERY.)
- If the recognized title of an organization or entity doesn't fit in the 15 character limit, find a suitable description of what is being commemorated.
 - For example, for a school building that has been repurposed as a historical society, "FORMER SCHOOL" might be an acceptable title. Details about the school, such as the district number, may be included in the marker text.

Inscription:

- Due to the limited space on the marker, we encourage the use of incomplete sentences. Leave out words such as THE or A when not needed for clarity.
- Inscriptions must include a date or dates in order to place the subject in historical context.
- Lines of text in the body should not start with a number, symbol or punctuation mark carried over from the previous line. However, life dates at the start of the first body text line are acceptable, as is starting a sentence with an abbreviation.
- When using abbreviations or acronyms, consider whether readers unfamiliar with the subject of the marker will know what it means.
- A text line should not end with an abbreviation that includes a period unless the period also indicates the end of the sentence.
- Use of semicolons and colons is not allowed.
- An inscription should not simply be a list names or dates.
- The text should also have some connection to the site where it will be placed. ("CHILDHOOD HOME," "LIVED HERE," "BORN IN," etc.)
- Consider what information will help a reader understand the inscription without assuming background knowledge. For example, mentioning a battle occurred in 1863 implies it was during the American Civil War, but a reader unfamiliar with the date range of the conflict might not make the connection. Including, "IN CIVIL WAR" would make the text more accessible.