



VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Story of Virginia

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Firearms Gallery at Virginia Historical Society To Be Named For Cecil R. Hopkins

Richmond, VA— The Virginia Historical Society (VHS) is proud to announce that its new firearms gallery will be named the Cecil R. Hopkins Gallery, in recognition of a major grant from the Cecil R. and Edna S. Hopkins Family Foundation and in memory of Mr. Hopkins, who established Green Top Sporting Goods in Hanover County, Virginia, in 1947.

“The Hopkins Family Foundation is known for its generosity and civic engagement. They have been great supporters of the VHS over the years. Their philanthropic efforts have focused on preservation and collections storage. That they have chosen to name our new firearms gallery is just one example of the depth of their commitment to future generations understanding how firearms and the firearms industry have shaped American society,” said VHS President and CEO, Paul Levensood.

The VHS owns an extensive array of weaponry and accoutrements dating from the late eighteenth century to more recent times. This new gallery will house many of these rarities and will use representative items to demonstrate the unique blend of eighteenth-century craftsmanship with nineteenth-century industrialism that is both characteristic of the history of militaria in Virginia and characteristic of the VHS collection as a whole.

The new exhibition, *Firearms in Virginia*, will open in July 2016 and draw heavily from two discrete collections at the society. Each tells a story about the man who assembled it and the men who carried the firearms.

Richard Steuart, a Baltimore journalist and collector, spent more than forty years amassing a trove of firearms, weapons, and accoutrements used by the Confederate military during the Civil War (1861–1865) and also by the U.S. Army before the Civil War. Numbering 800 pieces, it is considered the largest single collection of Confederate-made firearms in the world and is especially valuable because of the emphasis on weapons and equipment carried by soldiers.

The second largest and historically significant weapons collection at the VHS is the Virginia Manufactory of Arms Collection, which was assembled over many years by Giles Cromwell, well-known firearms collector and historian. It is considered to be the most complete collection ever assembled, representing the entire history of the Virginia Manufactory of Arms. With significant private funds, the VHS purchased the 111 pieces from Mr. Cromwell in 2000.

The Hopkins Family Foundation’s grant is a part of the society’s \$38 million Story of Virginia Campaign, of which more than \$35.2 million has been committed.

The Virginia Historical Society (VHS)—a privately funded nonprofit organization—collects, preserves, and interprets the commonwealth’s history, linking past with present to inspire future generations. The VHS is located at 428 North Boulevard in Richmond’s Museum District. Hours are Monday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. for the galleries and museum shop, Monday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. for the library. For more information about the VHS call (804) 358-4901, visit vahistorical.org, or connect with the VHS on Facebook and Twitter.

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