

# "These Boisterous Times..."

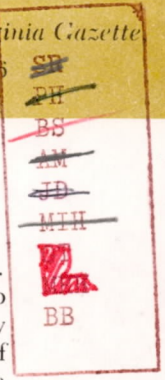
# THE WEEK IN '76



PAMPHLET FILE

Alexander Purdie, *Virginia Gazette*

January 1, 1776



## SEPTEMBER 1976

September 1-18, 1976

The times in Williamsburg during the first two weeks of September 1776 were unusually quiet. The Council met regularly and spent its time purchasing military supplies. The Navy Board also meeting in Williamsburg was contracting with workers for the newly established Chickahominy Shipyard. The York County Court did not meet at all during September. Several regiments of troops stationed at Williamsburg had little to do. Bored soldiers, probably anxious to return home for harvest, deserted from the camps around the town.

### NINE POUNDS REWARD

Deserted from my company of the 5th battalion, at College camp, Williamsburg, JOSEPH JOLLEY, 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, a stout well made man, stoops in his shoulders, has light brown hair, gray eyes, fair complexion, and large whiskers; he is addicted to strong liquor, and when drunk exceedingly talkative and troublesome. He has a family in the lower end of Henrico county, where he may no doubt be apprehended; JOHN ROBINSON, 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, slim made, dark complexion, black hair, black eyes, the whites of which are tintured yellow with the jaundice, is apt to get drunk, and when so insolent and quarrelsome; he also comes from the lower end of Henrico county. THOMAS ROBINSON, brother of John, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, swarthy complexion, gray eyes, brown hair, and is somewhat deaf. He went away with a brother that was down to see him on Saturday the 14th instant. Jolly, and his brother John, absconded the same night. Whoever will secure the said deserters, or either of them, and deliver them to the commanding officer at Williamsburg, shall be entitled to a reward of 3 l. for each.

John Pleasants.

Deserted the 17th instant, from my company of the 5th battalion, the following soldiers, viz. THOMAS HOLLAND, 5 feet 9 or 10 inches high, about 23 years old, of a fair complexion, and has light hair; had on a silver laced hat, and was very well clothed. JOSEPH PAYNE, about 5 feet 8 inches high, about 25 years old, has dark hair, and is dressed as soldiers commonly are; he listed in Bedford. JOHN FRANKLIN, about 5 feet 10 inches high, has light hair, of a fair complexion, but has a very ugly down look; wore a common soldier's dress, with a white hat, and was listed in Williamsburg, though he came from Hanover. TEN DOLLARS reward for each, if delivered at Williamsburg.

Gross Scruggs.

With so many soldiers stationed in Williamsburg, the local barbers experienced a boom in their business. James Nichols offered high wages to journeymen barbers:

Wanted immediately, Two journeymen BARBERS, who can shave and dress well, and if acquainted with wigmaking it will be more in their favour. Such persons as are capable as above required will receive extraordinary wages by applying to

James Nichols.

Nichols arrived in Virginia from London in 1772 and established his shop in Petersburg. In the fall of 1775 he moved to Williamsburg and opened his business at the Brick House Tavern. The following spring Nichols formed a partnership with Richard Charlton, another local barber, but because Charlton failed to come "up with any part of his agreement" the partnership was dissolved. Nichols continued to live in Williamsburg, where he died in 1784.

### September 17, 1776

With the impending convening of the General Assembly set for October, the Council wrote Governor Patrick Henry "representing the urgent necessity of his immediate attendance, for the dispatch of public business." Henry had been sick at the time he was inaugurated as governor and had gone home to recover his health. The Council, under the direction of its president, John Page, had been performing the executive function of the state government—it was not until September 17 that Henry attended the Council.

Compiled by Harold B. Gill, Jr.