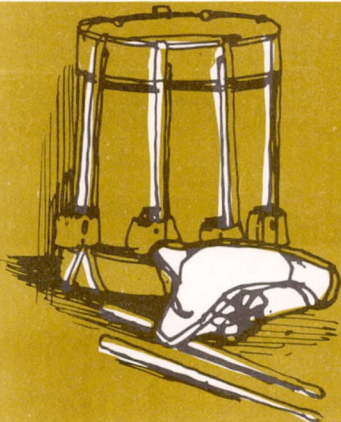


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“These Boisterous Times...” THE WEEK IN '76

*Alexander Purdie, *Virginia Gazette*.
January 1, 1776

JUNE 1976

June 20-26, 1976



PAMPHLET FILE

June 21, 1776

Wanted, for the use of the Continental Hospital in Virginia, a quantity of Old Linen proper to make lint and bandages. All persons who have any such to dispose of are desired to apply to the subscriber, in Williamsburg.

William Rickman.

William Rickman, a former surgeon on a British man-of-war, settled in Charles City County about 1770. He married Betsey Harrison, daughter of Benjamin Harrison of Berkeley, in 1775. Possibly through the influence of his father-in-law, the Continental Congress elected Rickman “director and chief physician” of the Continental Hospital in Virginia on May 18, 1776. Dr. Rickman immediately set up his headquarters in Williamsburg and in October 1776 announced in the *Virginia Gazette* that the construction of the Continental hospital near Williamsburg would be “let to the lowest bidder.”

In December 1777 Dr. Rickman was accused by several Virginia and North Carolina officers of negligence “in not giving proper attendance to the officers and soldiers under inoculation at Alexandria.” Congress suspended the doctor and ordered him to answer the complaints before the Medical Committee. The Committee found Rickman entirely innocent of the charges, and he was ordered back to his post.

Dr. Rickman resigned his position in 1780 and returned to his estate, Millford, in Charles City County. He died there in 1781.

June 25, 1776

The Commissioners appointed by Convention to lease the Lands of Lord Dunmore within the County of York, and to sell his Slaves and personal Estate within this City, and the Neighbourhood thereof, will, at the Palace, on Tuesday the 25th Instant, proceed to expose the said Slaves and personal Estate to Sale, by Way of Auction; the Purchasers to be allowed a Year's Credit on giving Bond and Security. They also give Notice, that they will attend at Porto Bello on Monday the first Day of the next Month, at 10 o'clock in the Morning, to execute the other Part of their Commission.

On June 15, 1776, the Convention, meeting in Williamsburg, appointed Thomas Everard, Robert Prentis, Edmund Randolph, John Blair, and James Cocke commissioners to sell Lord Dunmore's personal property and rent his real estate in the Williamsburg area. The money arising from the transactions went to the state treasury.

Porto Bello was an estate on Queen's Creek, York County, acquired by Dunmore in 1773. The farm was rented by the Commissioners to Dr. James Carter of Williamsburg, who in turn rented it to the state to be used as a military hospital. The house at Porto Bello was destroyed by fire in 1915. The site is on the Camp Peary property.

June 27-30, 1976

June 28, 1776

John Moody, smith and farrier, from Philadelphia, but late from Norfolk, begs leave to inform the publick, that he has opened shop in this city, opposite to mr. Charles Taliaferro's, near the church, where he professes to shoe horses in all the different methods practised in Europe and America, and cures them of most prevailing disorders. He also undertakes smiths work in general, for all kinds of carriages, house work, farmers work, edge tools, &c. and shall be much obliged to all those who favour him with their custom.

After the destruction of the city in January 1776, many Norfolk craftsmen tried to reestablish their businesses farther from the coast. John Moody settled in Williamsburg possibly on the site of the present Armistead House next to Bruton Parish Church. The business prospered and when he died in 1779, Moody's personal estate sold for over £1,300.

June 29, 1776

After a little more than a month's debate the Virginia Convention adopted a constitution for the new commonwealth. The task of preparing a constitution was entrusted to the same committee that had drawn up the Declaration of Rights. On May 24 Edmund Pendleton, who was not a member of the committee, wrote Thomas Jefferson that "the Political Cooks are busy in preparing the dish." Jefferson, at the Continental Congress, thought that a special convention should write the constitution. He sent several drafts that arrived too late but were of influence in the preamble and the sections on the judiciary and western lands. George Mason submitted his draft of a plan of government in mid-June. It underwent a few changes, but most of Mason's ideas were retained when the convention gave its unanimous approval to the document on June 29.

The Constitution established a republican government for Virginia, composed of a governor with little power elected annually by the legislature, an executive council, a bicameral legislature, and a separate judiciary.

The Convention immediately set out to elect a governor. Patrick Henry was elected with 60 votes. Thomas Nelson received 45 votes, and John Page 1.

Compiled by Harold B. Gill, Jr.