

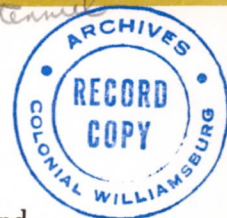
“*These Boisterous Times...*” *
THE WEEK IN '76

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

American Revolution Bicentennial

MAY 1976

May 1—8, 1976



PAMPHLET FILE

May 6, 1776

The fifth Virginia Convention met at the Capitol in Williamsburg on May 6 and elected Edmund Pendleton president. One of the most important legislative assemblies in Virginia's history, the Convention ordered the colony's delegates to the Continental Congress to recommend that Congress "declare the United Colonies free and independent states." Virginia was the first colony to direct its representatives to take the initiative in introducing a resolution for independence. On June 12 the Convention also adopted the Declaration of Rights, which contains ringing statements of individual liberty and of the right of self-government. Drafted by George Mason, the Virginia Declaration influenced similar constitutional provisions in other states and the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution. It also influenced the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in the early days of the French Revolution and was a partial basis for the Statement on Human Rights appended to the charter of the United Nations.

In addition, the Convention took the risky step on June 29 of declaring Virginia independent of Great Britain before the Continental Congress voted on the question of independence.

May 9—15, 1976

May 11, 1776

Williamsburg, May 11, 1776

All Persons in my Debt, for Shaving, Dressing, etc. contracted before I entered into Partnership with Mr. Wylie, are once more requested to discharge their Accounts (some of which have been standing for Years) that I may be enabled to pay those Debts which I have been under a Necessity of contracting for the Support of my Family through their Neglect. If this Application proves ineffectual, and the Law should not be open to force Compliance, those who are deficient will have their Names exposed in the Gazette. Gentlemen who pay me punctually may rely on my constant Attendance, and utmost Endeavours to give Satisfaction; others can expect no more of my Services.

George Lafong

George Lafong, a "French Hair-Dresser," was a long-time resident of Williamsburg where he owned a thriving wigmaking, hair dressing, and barbering business, which he claimed to carry on "in the cheapest manner, and TOUT A LA MODE." He could count among his customers George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Nathaniel Burwell of Carter's Grove. In order to "carry on the Business more extensively," Lafong formed a partnership with Alexander Wylie, who claimed to possess "great abilities in Hair - Dressing." Lafong's threat to expose those who failed to pay their debts must have worked because no such announcement appeared in the *Virginia Gazette*.

During the Revolution Lafong acted as interpreter in several court-martial cases and for the governor. He died a pauper in 1799.

To be SOLD by the Subscriber, at his Store in Williamsburg, the following Articles, for ready Money only. Broadcloths, Thread and Silk Breeches Patterns, black Silk Lasting, Serge Dusoy, Damascus, Loretto, Tobine, *India* Persians, Lustrings, Muslins, Gauze, Cambrick, Lawn and Gauze Handkerchiefs and Aprons, black Minionet and Blond Lace, Ditto lace Hats, plain Ditto, Women's Hats and Bonnets, Gloves, Ribands, Fans, Necklaces, Cap Wire, Paste Combs, gilt Shoe and Knee Buckles, large Dressing Glasses, black Walnut Tea Chests. Do. Candlesticks, Japan Waiters, painted Chimney and Table Covers, Decanters, Wine Glasses, Stands and Castors,

Ticklers, Window Glass, Spanish Brown, red and white Lead, Saws, Scythes, Two-Shilling Nails, a Variety of China Cups, Saucers, and Teapots, Guns and Gun Locks, a large Quantity of Grubbing and Hilling Hoes, broad and narrow Axes, Steelyards of all Sizes, *Dutch Ovens*, Brass and Iron Skillets, Tea Kitchens and Kettles, Sheep and Tailors Shears, Scissors, Razor Straps, Combs, Fish Hooks, Cork Screws, Shoemakers and Saddlers Tools, Saddles, Bridles, and a considerable Number of other Articles too tedious to enumerate.

William Pitt

William Pitt was the son of Dr. George Pitt, a merchant and apothecary in Williamsburg at the Sign of the Rhinoceros. Dr. Pitt also served as keeper of the Public Magazine. In 1776 Dr. Pitt, loyal to the king, returned to England with one of his sons. William remained in Williamsburg and continued his father's mercantile business. He later moved to a plantation, Lilliput, about four miles from Williamsburg, where he conducted a boarding school. He died there in 1786.

May 15, 1776

The Virginia Convention unanimously adopted a resolution instructing the colony's delegates in Congress to introduce a motion for independence.

Resolved unanimously, The delegates appointed to represent this colony in General Congress be instructed to propose to that respectable body to declare the United Colonies free and independent states, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence upon, the crown or parliament of Great Britain; and that they give the assent of this colony to such declaration, and to whatever measures may be thought proper and necessary by the Congress for forming foreign alliances, and a confederation of the colonies, at such time, and in the manner, as to them shall seem best: Provided, that the power of forming government for, and the regulations of the internal concerns of each colony, be left to the respective colonial legislatures.

Compiled by Harold B. Gill, Jr.

