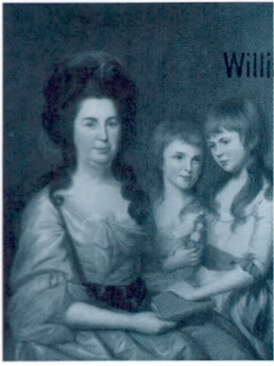


VIRGINIA:  
A FAMILY  
PORTRAIT



# AMERICANS *Becoming* TODAY

NO. 1 IN COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG



PALACE  
POSTING

See Page 2.

Summer 1774

## Newsline

- June 1774  
Caveat Court meets in private sessions on land disputes in Virginia
- June 1774  
Effigy of Lord North burned in Richmond County
- June 1774  
Prince George County Resolves and Fairfax County Resolves call for end to slave trade
- June 1774  
Grand jury reports to local session of James City County Court
- June 1, 1774  
Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer at Bruton Parish Church
- June 4, 1774  
George III's birthday
- June 13, 1774  
General Court meets for Oyer and Terminer session
- June 15-17, 1774  
Governor's Council meets; last time until 1775
- June 22, 1774  
Quebec Act passed by Parliament; extends Quebec borders to Ohio River
- June/July 1774  
Delegate elections for Continental Congress; Peyton Randolph elected
- July 10, 1774  
Lord Dunmore leaves Williamsburg to command expedition against the Shawnee in the upper Ohio Valley
- July 18, 1774  
Fairfax County Resolves call for end to slave trade
- July 26, 1774  
Albemarle County Resolution passed to halt British imports
- August 1774  
Effigy of Lord North burned in Manchester, Virginia
- August 1774  
Dunmore calls for Governor's Council to meet in November
- August 1-6, 1774  
First Virginia Convention meets in Williamsburg
- August 10, 1774  
Peyton Randolph invites inhabitants of Williamsburg to contribute generously for the Relief of Fellow Subjects in Boston

### VIRGINIA TODAY SNAPSHOT

"FAMILY VALUES"  
in COLONIAL VIRGINIA

**FREE FAMILIES**  
[circa 60% of the population]

- A Legally Binding Commitment
- Family Unit Is Protected
- Husband Is Head of Household
- Children Are Legitimate

**ENSLAVED FAMILIES**  
(circa 40% of the population)

- A Personal Commitment
- No Protection of the Family Unit
- Master Is Head of Household
- Children Are Enslaved

\*Note: It is estimated that approximately 5% of the black population was free in 1770.



## HOT TOWN! SUMMER IN THE CITY Colonial Blood Begins to Boil



The Bostonians Paying the Excise Man

Boston's cause as Virginia's own and hailed, albeit with some differences in detail, the idea of restrictions on trade. Some meetings voted funds and supplies for the beleaguered northern city and, when the Council persuaded Dunmore to convene a new assembly in early August, held elections for it as well. Again the governor inadvertently handed his opponents an advantage by [proroguing] the new session before it met. Since local meetings had generally chosen the same representatives for both the convention and the assembly—most of whom, moreover, had been members of the previous legislature—the extralegal convention gained legitimacy.

A shadow government began to form to circumvent royal authority on one issue after another until the old regime became the shadow. The assembly had established a committee to correspond with other colonies in moments of crisis, especially between sessions, but otherwise the opposition in Virginia had needed little formal organization aside from the legislature itself until the call for a ban on British trade arrived. Virginia's port towns acted first, having received the circular letter about the same day as Williamsburg. Alexandria, Dumfries, Fredericksburg, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, followed by some of the county meetings, formed committees of correspondence to communicate "their sentiments on the present . . . Alarming situation of America" and "to take such steps for . . . the establishment of the rights of the colonies, as . . . shall appear most expedient and effectual," as one committee explained. By the time the convention met, at least five counties—Dunmore, Fairfax, Frederick, Norfolk, and Stafford—had also given their committees the responsibility of enforcing a boycott as sentiment for once more adopting that strategy against the British grew.

The Virginia Convention convened in Williamsburg during the first week of August. The delegates selected Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton to represent them in Congress and formed an association whose members agreed to halt imports from Great Britain after November 1, 1774, and shipments to the mother country after August 10, 1775. The Convention issued instructions to the congressional delegates that were calmly reasoned but firm. Briefly recounting the issues of taxation and representation that were in dispute, the directions emphasized Virginia's willingness to endure the "great Inconvenience" of curtailing trade to obtain redress and concluded with the abrupt warning that enforcement of the decrees against Massachusetts would "justify Resistance and Reprisal."

John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783* (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg, 1988), 9-10.

### JEFFERSON'S A SUMMARY VIEW OF BRITISH AMERICA THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Sometime in the midsummer of 1774, a young Virginia gentleman sat, with quill in hand, to write "a draught of instructions" to direct Virginia's delegation to the Continental Congress to meet in Philadelphia in September. Having himself been elected a delegate to Virginia's Convention, which would meet in Williamsburg on August 1, the writer would soon depart his home at Monticello bound for that city. His instructions, he later admitted, "were drawn in haste with a number of blanks, with some uncertainties and inaccuracies of historical fact, which I neglected at the moment." Reasoning that his fellow delegates would correct them in debate, he rode out some days before the appointed opening. Yet Thomas Jefferson never reached the Capitol that summer to present his resolutions.

Waylaid on the road by dysentery, Jefferson "sent on therefore to Williamsburg two copies of [his] draught, the one under cover to Peyton Randolph . . . the other to Patrick Henry." The fate of Henry's copy is unknown, but Peyton Randolph's had quite a life ahead. Jefferson's resolutions had arrived too late for consideration by the Virginia Convention, but Peyton Randolph apparently made them available for perusal by its members.

Edmund Randolph later recalled "the applause bestowed on most of [the resolutions], when they were read to a large company" at his uncle Peyton's home. Soon after the Convention adjourned on August 6, Williamsburg printer Clementina Rind published copies of Jefferson's resolutions, "inaccuracies" and all, under the title *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*. The exact publishing date is unknown; it is known that the printing pro-

When . . . Lord Dunmore dismissed the assembly for declaring a day of fast in support of Boston after that city's famous Tea Party the previous December . . . again members of the House of Burgesses thwarted the governor by adjourning to the Raleigh Tavern, where they formed another association against British imports and called for an annual meeting of colonial delegates in a "general congress . . . to deliberate on those general measures which the united interests of America may from time to time require." This resolution was one of the earliest proposals for a Continental Congress. . . .

A few days after the meeting in the Raleigh Tavern, a circular letter arrived from Boston urging a halt to exports to Great Britain as well as imports. Twenty-five burgesses still in the vicinity summoned a convention to meet in Williamsburg on August 1, 1774, to consider the proposal. The call received enthusiastic response from the rest of the colony. In towns and about two-thirds of the counties meetings of "Freeholders and other inhabitants" endorsed

### WHAT'S ON PEOPLES' MINDS?

#### Summer of 1774 Challenges

- Threatening Relations with Britain
- Men Going West to Fight the Indians
- Uncertain Future
- Economic Uncertainty
- Breakdown of the Court System
- Threat of the Committees of Safety

### DAY OF FASTING, HUMILIATION AND PRAYER

On Wednesday, June 1, 1774, many Virginians observed a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer in accordance with a May 24, 1774, resolution of the House of Burgesses. June 1 was the day Parliament closed Boston Harbor until the city paid for the tea destroyed in the Boston Tea Party.



Williamsburg—The Story of a Patriot

Rind's *Virginia Gazette* reported, "Every inhabitant of this city, and numbers from the country, testified their gratitude, in the most expressive manner, by attending the worthy and patriotic SPEAKER at the courthouse, and proceeding from thence, with the utmost decency and decorum, to the church, where prayers were accordingly read, and a sermon suitable to the important occasion, was delivered by the Reverend Mr. Price, from the 103rd Psalm, and 19th verse." The 19th verse of Psalm 103 states, "The Lord hath prepared his seat in heaven: and his kingdom ruleth over all.") George Washington, still in Williamsburg, was among those present. He noted in his diary, "Went to Church and fasted All Day." *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), June 2, 1774

### VIRGINIA COUNTY RESPONSES TO THE COERCIVE ACTS

June 1774: A General Meeting of the Freeholders and Inhabitants of Prince George's County, Virginia, the following Resolves were proposed and unanimously agreed to . . .

Resolved, That the African Trade is injurious to this Colony, obstructs the population of it by freemen, prevents manufacturers and other useful emigrants from Europe from settling amongst us, and occasions an annual increase of the balance of trade against this Colony . . .

June 1774: The Fairfax County Resolves [prepared by George Mason and George Washington] Call for an End to the Slave Trade RESOLVED that it is the Opinion of this Meeting, that during our present Difficulties and Distress, no Slaves ought to be imported into any of the British Colonies on this Continent; and we take this Opportunity of declaring our most earnest Wishes to see an entire Stop for ever put to such a wicked cruel and unnatural trade.

Source: *The Papers of George Mason, 1725-1792*, ed. Robert A. Rutland, et al. (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), 1: 207.

## NEWS

## VIRGINIA COUNTY RESPONSES

## Halt Slave Trade!

Cont. from page 1

July 26, 1774

A meeting in Albemarle County adopts a resolution by Thomas Jefferson that went beyond others in Virginia in urging "an immediate stop to all imports from Great Britain" until the act blocking Boston Harbor and other objectionable acts were repealed. The resolution based its stand on natural right.

August 1–6, 1774

The first Virginia Convention meets in Williamsburg. It adopts an association based on the Fairfax resolves forbidding importation of British goods or slaves after November 1, 1774, and exportation to Great Britain after August 10, 1775. The Convention also elects Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison and Edmund Pendleton to represent Virginia in Congress.

John Selby, *A Chronology of Virginia and the War of Independence, 1763–1783* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1973).



## Palace Posting

## IS THIS "WESTERN CIVILIZATION"?

## Dunmore Raises Army

When last we reported on the disturbances in the west betwixt and between white settlers and Native Americans, Lord Dunmore had been instructed by the burgesses that he must invoke the invasion law as the basis for defense against the Indians. Not happy with this direction from the legislators—for he preferred that the Assembly provide the means for recruiting and equipping a force to go west—the governor decided on another strategy. On July 10, his lordship set his sights westward from this capital city to raise volunteers from the militia in the western counties of Frederick, Berkeley and Dunmore. Prior to taking his leave, he sent Col. Andrew Lewis, Botetourt County, and his brother Col. Charles Lewis, Augusta County, both members of the House of Burgesses, posthaste to their homes to begin raising militia in their respective counties. Similar preparations are also occurring in Fincastle County. Our governor believes that the "shortest and most effectual way" to deal with the recalcitrant natives is to send a body of armed men directly into the Shawnee country, north of the Ohio.

By July 18, Dunmore arrived at Greenway Court (Frederick County), home of Lord Fairfax, and is using Greenway Court and the neighboring town of Winchester as bases for making preparations for future operations. These preparations could well last into late August. When fully assembled, forces from the aforementioned counties will converge at a point on the Ohio River to move against the Indian tribes deemed to be hostile. Lord Dunmore has concluded that it is "necessary to go in person to Ft. Dunmore (Pitt) to put matters under the best regulation . . . and give the enemies [the natives] a blow that would break the Confederacy and render their plans abortive." **God save Lord Dunmore and success to our army!!!**

[Submitted by Nancy Milton and Phil Shultz]



Peyton Randolph House

## JEFFERSON'S A SUMMARY VIEW

Cont. from page 1

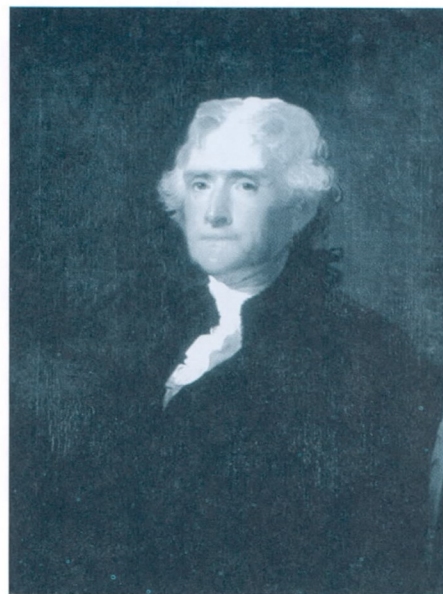
ceeded without the author's knowledge. In an October 15, 1804, letter to Jefferson, Meriwether Jones shed some light on the imprint: "Mr. Edmund Randolph informed me . . . that himself, and some other young patriots were so captivated with [the resolutions'] point and elegance, that they procured their publication by subscription."

Word of *A Summary View* spread quickly. Within a few days of its publication, George Washington entered in his accounts 3s. 9d. "By Mr. Jeffersons Bill of Rights." By the end of September, Jefferson's draft had been reprinted in Philadelphia, and by November 5, London additions had also been printed. "Written in haste," Thomas Jefferson's words most certainly made an impact on the British-speaking world, although one distinctly different from that their author intended.

[Submitted by Dan Marshall, managing interpreter of Domestic Sites]



George III



Thomas Jefferson

THE DOCUMENT  
Are You Talkin' to Me?

Jefferson begins his argument in his *Summary View* "Resolved, That it be an instruction to the said deputies, when assembled in General Congress with the deputies from other states of British America, to propose to the said Congress, that a humble and dutiful address be presented to his Majesty . . . the united complaints of his Majesty's subjects in America" and then reminding the king that "he is no more than the chief officer of the people, appointed by the laws, and circumscribed with definite powers, to assist in working the great machine of government."

Jefferson then establishes that "our Ancestors, before their emigration to America, were the free inhabitants of British dominions" who at their own risk and expense settled the colonies' and are therefore entitled to the rights of freeborn Englishmen. He then proceeds to enumerate the violations of this trust: prohibiting free trade and manufacture in the colonies causing great distress and hardship.

Before enumerating the actions of the British government from 1763 to the summer of 1774 Jefferson argues "That thus have we hastened thro' the reigns which preceded his majesty's, during which the violation of our rights were less alarming, because repeated at more distant intervals, than that rapid and bold succession of injuries which is likely to distinguish the present from all other periods of American history. Scarcely have our minds been able to emerge from the astonishment into which one stroke of parliamentary thunder has involved us, before another more heavy and more alarming is fallen on us. Single acts of tyranny may be ascribed to the accidental opinion of a day; but a series of oppressions, begun at a distinguished period, and pursued unalterably thro' every change of ministers, too plainly prove a deliberate, systematical plan of reducing us to slavery."

The document concludes with Jefferson calling on George III to understand that the colonists are "a free people claiming their rights as derived from the laws of nature, and not as a gift of their chief magistrate." After claiming that "it is neither our wish nor our interest to separate from her" he goes on to say "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time; the hand of force may destroy but cannot disjoin them. This, sire, is our last request, our determined resolution."

Source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian P. Boyd, et al. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1950), 1: 125. [Submitted by Anne Willis]



Cunne Shote, the Indian Chief, a Great Warrior of the Cherokee Nation

## EDUCATION

## EDUCATING VIRGINIANS

Education in colonial Virginia took various forms defined by a family's financial circumstances, a child's gender and race, his or her slave or free status and the position in society for which the child was to be groomed. There was no legal entitlement to or requirement for standardized instruction for all children.

For most boys and girls, learning began at home in the company of parents or other adults somewhere between the ages of three and five. If a child was lucky enough to have one or both parents be literate, he or she was likely to be taught the alphabet and a little spelling at home, using the Bible or religiously based primers as texts. Free children on the fringes of society and slave children simply worked alongside their parents or other adults as soon as they were physically able. Few learned to read or write.

By the age of 10 or so, children whose parents could afford to pay for schooling had learned to read, write and do simple arithmetic after one to three years' instruction. Teachers included parish ministers who opened small schools in their parishes, divinity students from the College of William and Mary awaiting ordination and women and other persons, some of whom advertised in the *Virginia Gazette*, who made a living teaching. Ann Wager, for example, had a dozen white students in Williamsburg—whose parents were well satisfied with her methods—before taking up her post as mistress of the Bray School. Live-in tutors often handled basic instruction for the gentry child or the offspring of well-to-do town dwellers. By the age of 7 or so, no small number of children, mostly boys, found themselves in formal apprenticeship agreements with tradesmen, whereby they received seven years' training in a trade and instruction in basic reading, writing and arithmetic.



Children's Games

Apprenticeships figured large in the lives of poor children, too. Virginia law stipulated that orphans who inherited estates should receive an education in line with what the income from their estates could sustain. Orphans with no estate or an inheritance too small to accommodate a "book education" were to bound out to learn a trade. County and parish officials could step in on behalf of free children who were orphaned and had no means of support. Instruction included basic reading and writing. The goal was to make it less likely that when grown to adulthood, they would turn to parish vestries for their upkeep.

Even poor children with living parents could be bound out to learn a trade. For this to happen, county court justices had to find parents incapable of "bringing up their child or children, in honest courses" or where "they neglect to take due care of the education" of their children "and their instruction in the principles of Christianity." For the most part, free children from the bottom rungs of society acquired some degree of know-how via chores and learning by doing. Slave children had a similar experience, picking up from adults in the house, the fields, the garden, stables, kitchen or shop the skills they would need as adults.

A few masters taught favored slave children to read or paid for basic instruction for them. Some slave and free black children in and near Williamsburg had a nearly unique opportunity when the Bray School opened in 1760. Closed in the summer of 1774 after the death of Mrs. Wager, the

Cont. on page 4

## FORUM

Letter from . . .

Margot Créviaux-Gevertz

## A SUMMER SUMMARY

. . . begins with *Jefferson's Summary* (p.1), which started innocently enough, yet ended up lighting a fire that spread from the colonies all the way to England. It was a rough draft, intended for presentation to the delegates of the Virginia Convention for their consideration. We can help our guests imagine what Jefferson might have been thinking when he learned how his document seemingly took on a life of its own. Just ask them how they would feel if they ever worked on a document and realized they sent out the draft, full of typos and unverified information in an email to EVERYONE!

Our summary continues with a thought about political manipulation. From perusing the *Virginia County Responses* (p. 1), it is clear that Virginians in 1774 were capable of putting the right "spin" on events to suit a purpose. Reacting to the perception that they were being "enslaved" by England, the colonists decried the "wicked cruel and unnatural trade" of slaves in Virginia as an evil imposed upon them by the British government. Since, in fact, the laws of slavery were created in Virginia and then approved by the king, weren't the colonists intentionally misrepresenting their role in establishing a slave economy? After all, who would understand the subtle and not so subtle mechanisms of slavery better than the slave owners? In addition to the political advantage of pointing the finger at Britain, was this also an attempt to deflect responsibility away from Virginians for exploiting a system that some recognized as morally wrong?

Shifting from politics to family life, there is plenty of information to draw on in this issue of *Becoming Americans TODAY* to help you paint a picture of how children were educated in 1774. Depending upon your station in life, you would have been taught the necessary skills considered appropriate and useful. Use this information to help engage children and their parents this summer. One thing to keep in mind is that most of our information comes from the diaries kept by the gentry. While this should indeed be the focus for some sites, it's worth remembering that most of our guests would not have been considered gentry. Therefore, focusing more on what we know about how the majority of people in the community were educated would most likely be the best hook.

Have a great summer season!



## COMMON CAUSE

If the Americans tended to overstate the role of ministerial "Conspirators" in the formulation of British policy, they were nevertheless correct in concluding that the Coercive Acts were intended to force colonial recognition of the unlimited authority of Parliament. It is not necessary to search obscure records for hints and innuendoes about the objections of the ministry. The Declaratory Act of 1766, the retention of the tea tax in 1770 and the debates in Parliament during the enactment of the Coercive Acts speak of their clarity.

In adopting the Coercive Acts the British government accepted a calculated risk which can be understood only in light of political changes that had occurred in the decade since the repeal of the Stamp Act. By 1773 the British cabinet was composed almost entirely of ministers who viewed that repeal as a major blunder and favored the adoption of a colonial policy which would recover lost ground. Convinced that an overly permissive attitude had characterized earlier British policy, these men insisted that conciliatory efforts by the mother country had encouraged the colonists to increase their demands. Foremost among the defenders of this position was King George III.

David Ammerman, *In the Common Cause: American Response to the Coercive Acts of 1774* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1974), 14–15.

## LEXICON OF PROTEST

Colonial Virginians used the past—an English past—as the medium for understanding their conflicts with the Crown and Parliament. Many of the ideas and tactics they and their peers in other colonies used had precedents in the 17th-century power struggles between the Stuart monarchs and Parliament. This short list of precedents will give you a sense of the context in which members of the "founding generation" learned and framed their thinking about how to respond to the actions of the ministry and Parliament.

**Bill of Rights**—When William and Mary were crowned co-sovereigns in 1689, Parliament presented them with a list of abuses ascribed to James II that allegedly "subverted . . . the laws and liberties of this Kingdom." Parliament then drew up a bill designed to safeguard those rights. William and Mary agreed to abide by the legislation but would not accept it as a "pre-condition" to taking the throne. The English Bill of Rights served as the model for the Virginia Declaration of Rights and the Declaration of Independence. It also contained key ideas that colonists protested the ministry of George III was violating. The Bill of Rights upheld the right of free elections to Parliament, untainted jury selection, Parliamentary consent for taxation, petitioning, frequent Parliaments, and the right to have arms "for [citizens'] defence suitable to their conditions and as allowed by law." It also forbade excessive bail, excessive fines and standing armies in time of peace without Parliament's consent.



"The Alternative of Williams-burg" depicts Virginia loyalists being forced to sign either the Association or Resolutions drawn up by the Williamsburg Convention of August 1774.

**Burning in effigy**—This time-honored means of protest had strong 17th-century roots. Catholic conspirators' supposed attempt in 1605 to kill King James I and members of Parliament by blowing up the Houses of Parliament sparked an annual commemoration known as "burning the Guy" (Guy Fawkes) and helped popularize bonfires and effigies as a means of celebration and of protest. In the 1670s and 1680s, Whig and Tory rivals would use the occasion of burning the Guy in the City of London to harass one another and voice support for or opposition to various politicians. Thus effigy burning became a familiar—and popular—means of expressing political opposition and a ready means for British-Americans to intimidate customs agents and loyalists and protest the ministry of Lord North.

**Committee of Safety**—First established by the House of Commons in 1642, the Committee of Safety was an outgrowth of the legislative committee system that Parliament had devised over the previous 60 years or so. The original committee ostensibly was created to take charge of defense of the kingdom in response to a rebellion in Ireland; the real reason was to arm county militias against forces that were beginning to gather around King Charles I near York. Forming a committee was not a novel concept, but never before had one acted in an executive capacity. The committee of 1642 was a direct blueprint for the practice adopted by every colony in North America in 1774–75—a precedent that came from Parliament itself.

**Conventions**—During the so-called Glorious Revolution (1688–89), when William, Prince of Orange, invaded England with 20,000 Dutch troops and drove James II from England and into French exile, the Houses of Parliament were called to meet but did not have royal permission to do so. They adopted the term "convention" to describe a meeting of the legislative body without royal consent. The idea, then, of a legislature meeting in opposition to royal (or

the governor's) will was another precedent established by Parliament. William and his wife, Mary, were crowned as the co-sovereigns William III & Mary II in 1689 at the behest of this convention. See also Bill of Rights.

**Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer**—The principle of days of fasting and prayer was a well-established component of the Anglican liturgy, and plenty of precedents existed in Virginia for the calling of fast days. Yet Jefferson and his compatriots looked to the precedents of fast days established during the Interregnum (1649–60), when England was governed without a monarch. The examples found in John Rushworth's *Historical Collections* were distinctly republican and therefore politically radical. Interestingly, Rushworth's accounts of the political struggles of the 17th century had a "pro-Parliament" bias, as Rushworth was not only a historian but also an eyewitness to many of these events as a clerk in the House of Commons. Jefferson, Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry knew Rushworth's work was the source to consult in order to "cook up" an appropriately provocative resolution for a fast day.

**Petitions**—A common device asking a governmental body to address a perceived wrong, large petitioning campaigns, especially in London, were routine in the political disputes of the 1640s and the 1670s. One petition brought to Parliament in 1642, the "Root and Branch Petition," was 24 yards long and contained perhaps as many as 20,000 signatures! These public petitioning campaigns were often accompanied by public bonfires, a lot of drinking and large crowds of boisterous supporters. The right to petition was guaranteed in the English Bill of Rights, and colonial legislatures frequently exercised that right with protests to Parliament about ministerial policy. Virginia's House of Burgesses, for example, petitioned Parliament regarding the Stamp Act as soon as they realized that a bill to consider such a tax was pending.

No one in the British political nation could mistake the precedents that the colonists were invoking. They were part of the common history of the Anglo-American world. In a sense, the colonists were claiming that they were the true inheritors of English liberty and that the very institution that had secured those liberties in the 17th century—Parliament—was now the agent of their destruction. The political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic were speaking the same constitutional language but interpreted the meaning of key concept in very different ways.

[Submitted by Gary Sandling, supervising coach for Historic Interpretation]

SOMERSET DECISION  
A SLAVE'S RESPONSE

In 1772, the *Somerset* Decision in England was interpreted by many that slavery was outlawed in England. Some slaves, like Bacchus, considered the decision applicable to them in Virginia.

Augusta, June 18, 1774

Run away the 16th Instant, from the Subscriber, a Negro Man named BACCHUS, about 30 Years of Age, five Feet six or seven Inches high, strong and well made; had on, and took with him, two white Russia Drill Coats, . . . blue Plush Breeches, a fine Cloth Pompadour Waistcoat, . . . neat Shoes, Silver Buckles, a fine Hat cut and cocked in the Macaroni Figure, a double-milled Drab Great Coat, and sundry other Wearing Apparel. He formerly belonged to Doctor *George Pitt*, of *Williamsburg*, and I imagine is gone there under Pretence of my sending him upon Business, as I have frequently heretofore done; he is a cunning, artful, sensible Fellow, and very capable of forging a Tale to impose on the Unwary, is well acquainted with the lower Parts of the Country, having constantly rode with me for some Years past, and has been used to waiting from his Infancy. He was seen a few Days before he went off with a Purse of Dollars, and had just before changed a five Pound Bill; most, or all of which, I suppose he must have robbed me off, which he might easily have done, I having trusted him much after what I thought had proved his Fidelity. He will probably endeavour to pass for a Freeman by the Name of John Christian, and attempt to get on Board some Vessel bound for Great Britain, from the Knowledge he has of the late Determination of *Somerset's* Case. Whoever takes up the said Slave shall have 5 l. Reward, on his Delivery to GABRIEL JONES.

Source: *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), June 30, 1774.

## FARMING



## CROPS AND LIVESTOCK

**Tobacco:** Plant and replant, weed, manure, worm, top and sucker. August—Top, gather seed, begin cutting

**Corn:** Plow and hoe ground, plant and replant, weed with plows and hoes and cart last year's crop to town

**Wheat:** Cart last year's crop to ships or town, cut, bind and stack, sell straw in town, thresh for seed, tread and sow, plow and harrow in

**Vegetables:** Sow turnips, plant peas and potatoes, sow vegetables, weed peas and pumpkins

**Orchard:** August—Make cider, gather peaches, make peach brandy

**Livestock:** June—Shear sheep, kill muttons for sale, wean calves, kill veal for sale, make butter

July—Kill beef for sale to ships, kill muttons and veal for sale, wean calves, make butter

August—Kill beef for sale to ships, kill muttons, veal and shoats for sale, sell wool, separate sheep, choose cattle for fattening, make butter, fishing

[Lorena Walsh]

HOUSEKEEPING  
GARDENING/FOOD  
PRESERVATION

**Housekeeping:** Doors and windows kept open for most ventilation. Mosquito netting added to bedsteads for protection from insects. Gauze covers to protect looking glasses and expensive pictures. Carpets and window curtains removed and stored. Furniture often moved to passage to enjoy cross ventilation.

**Gardening and Food Preservation:** Make wine, sugar-preserve fruits, dry fruits in oven because of humidity; pick and dry beans, carrots, onions, melons, artichokes, etc.

In hot weather, because raw meat spoils rapidly and must be cooked and eaten up quickly, only smaller cuts are served in summertime unless the whole animal will be eaten in a day or two.

[Robert Leath]

## BUILDING TRADES

**Brickmaking:** Making and burning brick; problem with wet weather during drying of green bricks; in rural areas bricks made in late summer.

**Bricklaying:** Good months to work; bricks needed be kept moist when laying.

**Mortar Manufacture:** Must keep mortar wetter to prevent drying out.

**Plastering:** Need to keep surfaces wet during dry season.

**Carpentry and Joinery:** If working by day, longer hours; 15 hours sun, 13 hours work

[Carl Lounsbury]

## FAMILY LIFE

### FIT FOR LIFE Williamsburg Summer 1774

Young persons in this colony prepare for adulthood in their given station in life, or perhaps for the station to which they aspire.

The Right Honorable Lord Fincastle, the Honorable Alexander Murray and the Honorable John Murray, sons of Lord and Lady Dunmore, have, by all accounts, settled themselves well at the College. It is hoped that they will make a large acquaintance there among the young gentlemen of Virginia. Among the Virginians are included John Lewis, son of Warner Lewis Esqr.; William and Samuel Boush, sons of Samuel Boush Esqr., of Norfolk; Peyton Randolph, son of Mrs. Randolph of Wilton and nephew of Mr. Speaker; Carter Page, son of the Honorable John Page; John Hill and George Carter, sons of Charles Carter Esqr., of Corotoman; and William Nelson, son of Thomas Nelson, Junior, Esqr., of Yorktown.

Lady Catherine Murray and Lady Augusta Murray are often to be seen with their governess, Francoite Galli. It is not known whether Lady Susan Murray has yet been removed from the nursery to be placed under the tutelage of her sisters' governess.

Few young Virginia ladies have the advantages of a governess as a teacher/companion. The Misses Tayloe of Mount Airy and Miss Turberville, also of the Northern Neck, are exceptions. Most young gentlewomen are taught reading, writing and arithmetic by a tutor or in a minister's school and housewifery by a female relative, usually the mother. When this process is ended at about age 16, there is no formal "coming out," as Lord Dunmore's daughters undoubtedly expect in London, but the young ladies are sent upon a round of visits to friends and relations. During this carefree time, they not only see how many other ladies manage their households but the young misses are put in the way of eligible young gentlemen. Thus, some young gentlewomen marry while still in their teens.

Young women of the middling sort seldom marry so young. Their education is finished much sooner than the young gentlewomen's, because their fathers cannot generally afford as leisurely an education as their betters, but the middling girls generally learn reading, writing and arithmetic. They marry later also because the young men of their rank must establish themselves in their trades or professions before they can wed.

Slave women often form connections while yet in their teens. Philip Dedman's mulatto wench Sall, aged about 15 years, was advertised as a runaway this summer. She was said to have run off from York County with her husband, who belonged to John Hatley Norton.

Geddy Family



Those who must work for their living, slave or free, are expected to work once they are no longer children. Apprentices learn their trades. Some find master or trade not to their liking and run away, but most serve dutifully until their time is up. Some young men serve aboard ship. Some young people, like Richard Roberts, are convict servants; aged between 17 and 18, Roberts ran away from Albemarle County recently.

Many slaves have acquired multiple skills by the time they are in their late teen years. For example, Elizabeth Martin advertised for sale this summer two Virginia-born Negro women, aged about 17, who "are good spinners and understand most Sorts of Household Work, though of late they have been employed in Plantation Business, and are reputed very good Hands." Gabriel Jones' runaway slave man Bacchus has been "used to waiting from his Infancy." Although John Tayloe's slave man Billy or Will has "for many years been used to wait on" Thomas Lawson in his travels, by the time Billy or Will ran away this year at age 20, he had also been a founder, stone mason and miller. Lawson noted in his advertisement that the runaway "from his Ingenuity, he is capable of doing almost any Sort of Business."

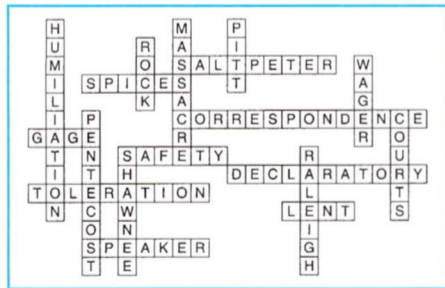
Mr. Robert Carter Nicholas, trustee of the Negro school since 1761, has closed the school due to the death of its schoolmistress, Mrs. Ann Wager, in mid-summer. Although the scholars' masters often removed them from the school as soon as they were able to work about the house, the school was a convenient place for masters to place young slave children during the day, while benefiting them with a rudimentary education.

[Submitted by Cathy Hellier, Research Department]



A Happy Family

Answers to the last puzzle



### EDUCATING VIRGINIANS

Cont. from page 2

schoolmistress, the school had students aged 3 to 10 years who learned "the true Spelling of Words" and "to pronounce & read distinctly." As their studies progressed, the boys and girls read the Bible and took instruction in the "Principles of the Christian Religion according to the Doctrine of the Church of England." On the practical side, girls learned domestic skills of use to their masters, such as knitting and sewing.

Virginians sometimes reserved funds in their wills for the establishment of free schools for the poor of the parish, often commending the oversight of the school to the local parish vestry. One such was Matthey's School on Capitol Landing Road. For a few years after 1700, Matthew (Matthey) Whaley and some of his friends received instruction in a schoolhouse built by his parents on a part of their farm. Matthey's mother later bequeathed a sum of money and the schoolhouse to the Bruton Parish vestry for instruction of the poor of the parish. Such schools reached only a small number of children in the immediate neighborhood.

Matthey's School appears to have closed in 1774, the building rented to a schoolmaster in business for himself who taught for a fee. The previous year, leading citizens of Williamsburg, "subscribers for the Establishment of a School in the city of Williamsburg," bound themselves to raise money for a school in Williamsburg.

Religion still permeated life and learning in the 1770s. As children entered their teens, they usually began instruction in the Church of England catechism. The Lenten season that ended in April was the occasion for the Reverend Bracken of Bruton Parish Church to conduct catechism lessons on Sunday afternoons. Soon he would orally examine his pupils' ability to recite the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed and to answer questions about the tenets of our Church of England.

Literacy gave a person a leg up in the 18th century—and a classical education if not college or university attendance—was practically a prerequisite for anyone headed for high position. Nevertheless, before the Revolution, the well read, the barely literate and the unlettered lived in an oral culture where literacy was not an absolute necessity for reasonable success in everyday life.

[Submitted by Linda Rowe, Research Department]

### Test Your Knowledge

#### ACROSS

- 1 Virginia's port towns create committees for this.
- 7 English Bill of Rights forbids excessive \_\_\_\_\_.
- 11 Jefferson's home.
- 12 Late \_\_\_\_\_ damages much of Virginia's summer crop.
- 13 Lady Catherine and Lady Augusta have one of these.
- 14 This lord's effigy burned in Virginia.
- 17 "Summary View" printed in this city.
- 18 Dismissed burgesses reconvene at this tavern.
- 19 Leads the Fasting Day procession from the Courthouse to Bruton Parish Church.
- 20 Americans call British ministers this.
- 22 First Virginia \_\_\_\_\_ meets in Williamsburg in August.

#### DOWN

- 1 This congress convenes in September 1774.
- 2 Prepares Virginians for their station in life.
- 3 These acts try to force British authority on colonists.
- 4 His "view" read aloud at Randolph House.
- 5 Two vestrymen who do the legwork for the parish.
- 6 Summer weather.
- 8 Residents of Prince George and Fairfax counties protest importation of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 Figures large in education of orphaned children.
- 10 This type of committee had roots in English civil wars.
- 15 English Bill of Rights forbids excessive \_\_\_\_\_.
- 16 Needs signatures.
- 21 His birthday is on June 4.

## WEATHER



June 1774

4th The day cool and agreeable. . . . The ground is very dry, the frost of the fourth of may has been much more severe and fatal here than in the northern colonies—The peaches here, except on farms lying near the Potowmack are wholly destroy'd. . . . And I am told that in Louden & other upper counties . . . wheat & rye are cut off, so interly that the owners mow it down for fodder! (Philip Fithian)

11th It is alarming to observe how hard & dusty the country is, towards evening some clouds arose & looked promising in the West, but they bring no rain—No rain has fell here since the 24th of May, & then but a scant shower, & most of the time since windy. (Fithian)

27th I am afraid this mist is nothing more than a most injurious dry weather sign in which the earth is giving up what little moisture it can supposed to have after a drowth of 34 days now running. (Landon Carter)

July 1774

29th O! it is very hot—The wind itself seems to be heated. . . . At seven I rode out to the corn-field, the sun was almost down & was hid behind a large white thick cloud where it thunders—The corn is roll'd up with the heat & Drowth! . . . While we were Drinking coffee the lightning, as it began to grow dark, began to stream, it was at some distance, but was incessant, bright & awful. (Fithian)

August 1774

5th Very dry. . . . I have heard of dry months in every year but a constant drowth without a wetting from March to this time may be called a dry year at the part of my estate. (Landon Carter)

18th Not a bird, except now and then a robin-redbreast is here to sing in this feverish month—Nature seems cheerless and gloomy! The evening is hot! (Fithian)

[Correction to Spring 1774 Edition: The General Court only heard felony cases in the spring.]

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