

REVOLUTIONARY CITY™



See p.2

AMERICANS  
*Becoming*  
TODAY

COLLAPSE OF ROYAL GOVERNMENT: 1774 TO 1776

HISTORIC AREA

P. O. Box 1776  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187

See p. 4



January to May 1776  
**Newsline**

**January 1:** British ships open fire on Norfolk. Virginia soldiers riot and burn a large number of houses in Norfolk.

**January 27:** Lord Dunmore initiates peace negotiations.

**February 6:** Americans abandon Norfolk by order of the Committee of Safety. Most of the remaining houses are destroyed to prevent the British from using it as a base.

**February 19:** Virginia Committee of Safety rejects Lord Dunmore's offer to negotiate.

**March 29:** Major General Charles Lee arrives in Williamsburg and establishes quarters in the Governor's Palace. He has been sent south by Congress to counter Sir Henry Clinton's invasion of the southern colonies. During his stay he attempts to improve discipline among the Virginia troops.

**April 6:** The Continental Congress, in effect nullifying the British Navigation Acts and Prohibitory Act of December 1775, opens ports of United Colonies to trade of all nations except Britain and her domains. An exception is made for the importation of slaves.

**April 10:** Virginia Committee of Safety orders evacuation of Norfolk and Princess Anne counties.

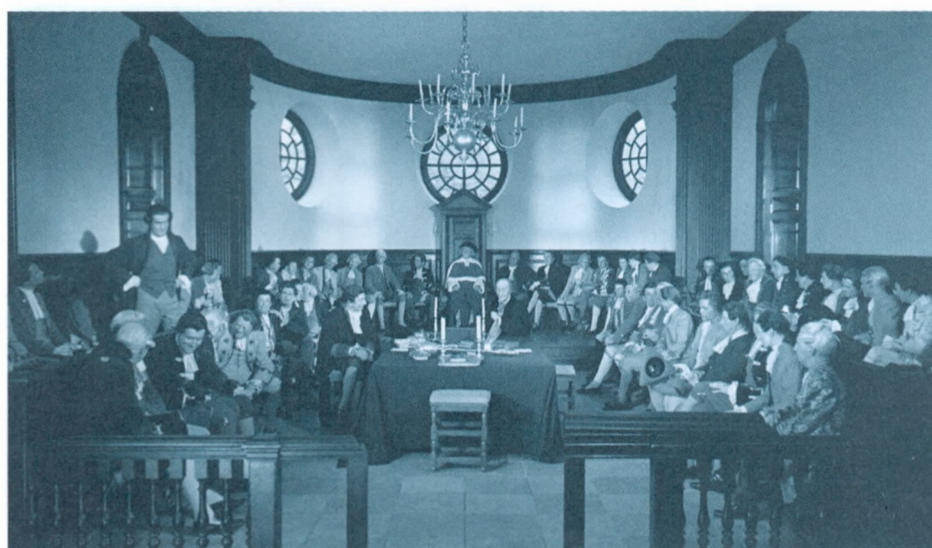
**May 15:** Congress recommends that all colonies adopt new forms of government.

**May 15:** Virginia becomes the first colony to direct its delegates to introduce a motion for independence when, after two days of vigorous debate, the Virginia Convention adopts a resolution calling for the same. The convention also appoints a committee to draft a declaration of rights and a state constitution for Virginia.

**June 12:** The first Declaration of Rights adopted in America is passed by the Virginia Convention. It is drafted by George Mason and emphasizes individual liberty and self-government.

**June 29:** The fifth Virginia Convention adopts the new state constitution.

REVOLUTIONARY CITY™



The Hall of the House of Burgesses from Williamsburg—The Story of a Patriot.

VIRGINIA PREPARES FOR WAR!

The Virginia Convention that met in December of 1775 realized that the military establishment had to be greatly enlarged since it had become clear that the war would last another year. General Washington's requests for support were increasing, and from Great Britain came frightening rumors of an expedition being prepared against the South. After some debate over the number required, the delegates opted for seven new regiments to join the two already in service. One regiment was to be recruited entirely of German settlers in the western part of the colony. The convention ordered two regiments stationed on each side of the three Tidewater peninsulas, two in the Southside, and one on the Eastern Shore. The convention designated all the new troops as regular, that is, on the Continental payroll. With the enlistment of seven additional regiments the convention decided to relieve the minutemen, who were a charge to the colony, on standby duty. With the exception of the regiment on the Eastern Shore, the convention increased the size of both the new and old units to ten companies of 68 men each, thus qualifying them in contemporary terminology as "battalions" although technically the term could be, and was, used interchangeably with "regiment" at the time. In addition, the delegates provided a number of commanders: a major general, two brigadier generals, a quartermaster general, and adjutant general, each with appropriate deputies, aides, or secretaries.

Congress posed an unexpected obstacle to the plan, however. It refused to accept more than six regiments because of the expense, and worse, sought to exclude the original two because their enlistments were half-finished, thereby jeopardizing the seniority of those who had fought against Dunmore. Veteran morale crumbled and, in the ensuing scramble for positions that Congress would recognize, some rank-and-file felt that "the Convention seems very desirous of serving themselves, Cousins or Friends." Convention leaders appealed to the Virginia congressional delegation, but failed to persuade Congress to accept more than six regiments; they succeeded in having the 1st and 2nd regiments included among that number. If every colony could decide by itself how many troops to charge the Continent, Benjamin Harrison pointed out to the convention, the expense would be limitless.

To round out the delegates' chores, the lengthening war necessitated expanding the Committee of Safety's powers. The convention reaffirmed the committee's supremacy in military affairs and assigned it greater economic power than any Virginia government had ever known by granting it authority to establish public powder mills, let contracts for the manufacture of munitions, and ration saltpeter and sulfur. In addition, to ensure that the county committees were "the face of the Law," as Mason had previously described it, the convention ordered those counties that, because of weather or for some other reason, had not held elec-

tions as directed by the August session to do so at once and every October thereafter. The convention authorized county committees to appoint sheriffs who, before the war, had been named by the governor from a list submitted by the respective county court. The delegates also provided for the arbitration of debts payable in tobacco, particularly clergymen's salaries, since the laws for public inspection of tobacco had expired. Appointing commissioners to settle accounts arising from Dunmore's Indian campaign caused the convention the most difficulty. . .

Gradually the accelerating pace of war compelled the convention to abandon short-term expedients and to assume greater responsibility for functions of government that royal authorities had long ceased to exercise. Slowly and pragmatically the course of events drove the delegates toward the point of no return. Finally, on the last day of their session, in response to Dunmore's blockade and depredations round Norfolk, they resolved to open Virginia ports to ships of all nations except Great Britain, Ireland, and the British West Indies and called on Congress to do the same for the entire continent. The effect was to reject the imperial economic system under which the mother country had monopolized the tobacco trade and which Virginians had previously sworn that they had no intentions of overturning. The resolution anticipated Congress in a major step toward independence by several months. Yet the delegates continued to remain ambivalent. Their ordinances prescribing the new operations of government carefully left open the possibility of restoring the crown's authority. They extended the Committee of Safety for only one year and permitted it to issue contracts for only six months to one year at a time. The authority of the counties to appoint sheriffs lasted only until "executive powers of government. . . are restored to their proper channel." Virginians were still not ready to leave the empire.

[Source: John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia: 1775-1783*, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, pp. 77-79]



The Alternative of Williamsburg (See p. 3)

IMMIGRATION AND DIVERSITY 1774 to 1776  
PEOPLES IN THE MAINLAND COLONIES

Colonization brings together people of diverse backgrounds and often of unequal status. The population of the British North American colonies in the early 17th century was made up largely of American Indians and Englishmen, but by the 1760s many American Indians had been displaced from their lands and pushed west while the number of Africans had greatly increased, both through forced migration and natural increase. After 1750 many Europeans had immigrated to the colonies, making for greater diversity.

**Middle Colonies**  
**New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania**  
English Settlers in New York: 45%  
New Jersey: 40%  
Pennsylvania: 30%

**New York's 1760s Population**  
English: 52,000  
Germans and Dutch: 22,000  
Africans: 16,000  
Scots, Scotch-Irish, and Irish: 15,000

**Pennsylvania's 1760s Population**  
Germans and Dutch: c. 63,000  
English: c. 63,000  
Scots, Scotch-Irish, and Irish: 42,000  
Africans: 4,500

**Southern Colonies' 1760s Population**  
Africans were the region's most numerous people slightly outnumbering the English  
Scot, Scotch-Irish, and Irish: 15%

**Maryland and North Carolina**  
English 45% (the least diverse of southern colonies)

**Virginia**  
African Americans: 42%  
Non-English Europeans: 23%  
English 35 %

**South Carolina:**  
Africans outnumbered the English by a ratio of 2 to 1  
(In South Carolina's rural counties the ratio was 10 to 1)

[Source: Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution before 1776*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2000.]

VIRGINIA'S MINUTEMEN

The 1,000 places in the regular army were filled quickly, for the army promised poor farmers a living wage at a time when nonexportation prevented them from selling their produce. The minuteman battalions were another matter. George Gilmer, who, as captain of an Albemarle County minuteman company, was responsible for recruiting soldiers, feared that when he marched off to battle, he would look back to find no one following: "I know not from what cause, but every denomination of the people seem backward" in enlisting in the service, Gilmer said. . . . All over the province, farmers refused to join the minuteman battalions. "Virginia is in the greatest confusion," Fielding Lewis wrote George Washington in November 1775, with "only one Battalion of Minute Men compleat, and little prospect of the others being so, a convention is daily expected to regulate it."

The minutemen battalions were unattractive to smallholders for precisely the same reason that they appealed to gentlemen: their purpose, celebrated by George Gilmer and lamented by common soldiers, was to replace the democracy of the independent volunteer companies with "proper subordination." Where the officers of the independent volunteer companies had been chosen by the troops they commanded, minuteman officers were selected to by special district committees chosen by the county committees. Several of the district committees' appointments were considered "Improper,"

[Continued on Page 3]

VIRGINIA TODAY  
SNAPSHOT

Population of Colonial Cities

Boston, Massachusetts	[1700] 6,700	[1765] 15,500*
Newport, Rhode Island	[1708] 2,203*	[1774] 9,100*
New York (city and county)	[1700] 5,480*	[1771] 19,800*
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	[1722] 10,000	[1769] 28,000
Baltimore, Maryland	[1752] 100	[1775] 5,900*
Charleston, South Carolina	[1705] 3,000	[1775] 14,000
Williamsburg, Virginia	[1775] 1,880*	

\*Based on census reports

[English Historical Documents, Oxford University Press, 1969]



# PROTESTS AND ACTIONS

## DIVIDING . . .



The Scene: April 15, 1775

### A House Divided!

Ariana Randolph, a loyalist mother, warns her daughter Susannah that her father's loyalty to the British king may require the family to leave the colony for England if American protests grow more violent.

Ariana Randolph to daughter Susannah:

Dear heart, I did not think to laud your scruples only because they are unquestionable to me. Besides, these rumors are intended to discredit the Governor, not you. That your reputation is compromised by the spread of them is an unfortunate consequence. Lord Dunmore's enemies hope that by questioning his loyalty to his family they might cause his loyalty to the colony to become suspect.

Susannah Randolph was the subject of a rumor about an affair with Governor Dunmore. Circulating in the town during the spring of 1773, prior to the arrival of Lady Dunmore in February 1774, the "alleged" rumor is exposed in a letter written by James Parker of Norfolk to Charles Steuart of England. Parker writes:

"... Thers terrible [paa?] stories at Wmsbg about the G\_\_\_\_\_ & the Atys daughter Sukey, & what is worst they say Jack & mother know all about it, but pay for his fun there, if Im not greatly mistaken indeed he has paid & is security for something considerable already, not a word of this god bless you to any created thing. I have always considered Jack as a D\_\_\_\_\_ villain, this connexion augers no good for us if he can prevent it.

However, this is the only written mention of this rumor. Is it just a gossipy man sharing stories with his friend in England or is there a modicum of truth to it? We may never know for sure. Some may have believed that the liaison between Susannah and the governor was political in nature. Others (especially the Randolph family) denied any truth to it. Dunmore did have a reputation as a philanderer, which may have fed the rumor.

During the time of the Revolution, the Randolph family did indeed become "a house divided" on two fronts. John Randolph was a dedicated loyalist to the king and governor while his older brother Peyton held the office of speaker of the house and was elected President of the Continental Congress. In addition, John's only son, Edmund, sided with his uncle and supported the patriot cause.

John Randolph, attorney general for the colony, was "a pillar of the colony's intelligentsia... Randolph had taken a pro-British stand in an exchange of pamphlets with Robert Carter Nicholas. Dunmore, a member of the College of William and Mary Board of Visitors, used his position to have Randolph returned as the college delegate to the House of Burgesses to ensure that there would be at least one imperial spokesman in that body. The close collaboration between the two officials invited retribution from the populace... The night after the Randolphs fled, a mob ransacked their home in Williamsburg."

[Selby, John. *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783*. Pg. 47]

Peyton Randolph, the first Virginian to be dubbed "father of our country", was a Virginian to the core. His service to the colony in the years leading up to the Revolution included Chairman of the Virginia Committee of Correspondence (1773). He presided over the Virginia Convention (1774-75). He was reelected to the House of Burgesses and chosen as delegate to the Continental Congress

Dividing . . . Continued on page 3

## COERCING . . .



The Scene: September 3, 1775

### A Court of Tar and Feathers

"The Liberty Pole will stand—as a dire warning indeed to all reprobates, all refractors, who gaze upon her unforgiving arms."

Day 1 of Revolutionary City" programming portrays the town's most notorious instance of revolutionary vigilantism, the raising of the Liberty Pole in front of King's Arms Tavern on Duke of Gloucester Street in late 1774. No one in Williamsburg was ever actually subjected to a coat of tar and feathers like the one Boston customs official John Malcolm received in January 1774. Yet such a thing almost happened in Virginia's capital in November of the same year.

When news of the British reaction to the Boston Tea Party of December 16, 1773, reached Williamsburg in January 1774, Virginians felt outrage. The Virginia burgesses staged a colony-wide day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer on June 1, 1774, the date the British Navy closed the port of Boston. In August, Virginia's elected representatives, meeting in convention, formalized an association to curtail trade with Britain. The next month, Virginians made their case for the embargo at the first Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Congress mandated elections for local committees of safety to enforce the Continental Association's moratorium on imports after December 1.

The committees made it clear to merchants who hesitated to sign the embargo agreement that there would be consequences. Shopkeepers suspected of violating the agreement were subjected to searches of their premises and faced a range of reprisals. A coat of blistering hot tar and feathers—a sometimes fatal remedy Americans employed during the tax protests of 1760—was among the worst. On November 27, 1774, Norfolk loyalist merchant James Parker wrote to merchant Charles Steuart in London, "I would willingly hope the Patriotic fever here is at the height [sic] as we have lately had some of the most extravagant proceedings you have heard of."

Parker referred to the turbulence of the second week of November, which began with Virginia's own tea party on November 7 at Yorktown. Citizens of the port assembled that Monday and boarded the ship *Virginia* at ten o'clock after learning it contained two half- chests of tea imported by John Hatley Norton, Yorktown agent of the John Norton and Sons of London, for merchant John Prentis of Williamsburg. When members of the Gloucester County committee arrived on the scene just after noon, they found that the "Tea had met with its deserved fate." The men of York had cast it into the river. Parker wrote that the committees "intended to have burnt the Ship, but that could not be done where the Ship lay." Prentis had to print a public apology in the *Virginia Gazette*: "News of the Yorktown tea party circulated in Williamsburg as nearly five hundred merchants arrived in the capital for a meeting on that Wednesday, November 9, where they were expected to sign the Continental Association. Most complied, and Peyton Randolph and other Virginia delegates to Congress gathered at the Capitol to accept the document. The effect of the incident at Yorktown, combined with the reluctance of some merchants to sign, next prompted the incident on which we base "A Court of Tar and Feathers" program. Parker wrote: "At Wmsbg there was a Pole erected by Order of Col. Archd. Cary, a strong Patriot, opposite the Raleigh tavern upon which was hung a

large mop & a bag of feathers, under it a bbl [barrel] of tar."

Conservative but irascible, Burgess Archibald Cary was just the man for such bold action. No stranger to controversy, Cary is remembered in Baptist histories as a persecutor of that denomination in his own county of Chesterfield, where as chief magistrate he imprisoned itinerant ministers in 1772 and 1773. Highly respected by his contemporaries, Cary would become president of the Virginia Senate during the Revolution.

Two unfortunates mentioned by name in this correspondence were Southside merchants Anthony Warwick and Michael Wallace of Milner's Crossroads in Nansemond County, whom the Norfolk Committee of Safety had reported for having "imported a little tea" for a store in North Carolina. Word of their transgression had preceded Warwick and Wallace to Williamsburg as they arrived for the meeting of the merchants. Though Williamsburg would not elect its Committee of Safety until December, what Parker called an "Occasional Committee," chaired by Cary assembled to consider their case. Warwick and Wallace were "Complained of & a very insolent and formal Charge wrote out against them," Parker would write to Steuart. A committee member, "Young Nicholas (the comptroller-to-be) spoke very violently against them & asked how they durst insult the Majesty of the People." The young Nicholas he mentioned was undoubtedly George, son of colonial treasurer Robert Carter Nicholas.

Parker's letter implies that the men were nearly tarred and feathered. "It was intended to have used them very ill," he wrote, "but the Treasurer [Robert Carter Nicholas], Speaker [Randolph], Mr. Pendleton, and some others interfered." Pendleton was Edmund Pendleton, who would become leader of the Committee of Safety the next month. Another cool head, Colonel Robert Munford, addressed Cary's committee, saying that "such proceedings was more arbitrary than any the Americans were complaining of & tended to destroying their Cause." Munford suggested that Warwick and Wallace had done nothing to violate the Continental Association, which allowed them "to import as usual till the first of Decemr." The committee ordered the two merchants to retrieve the tea from North Carolina and to deliver it to the Committee of Safety in Nansemond, and "here the matter ended."

The incident on Duke of Gloucester Street unnerved gentlemen who had come to Williamsburg on personal and public business. Parker wrote that when townspeople got word that many of the gentlemen were planning to leave the capital—a blow to the commerce of the season—they "removed the tar & feathers & Cary was generally blamed." Nevertheless, after all the "preaching up the terrible consequences of refusal . . . the Association was signed by almost everybody." A report of the Nansemond Committee published December 1 said Warwick and Wallace "this day voluntarily signed the association agreed to by the general congress, and declared they were well pleased therewith . . . and seemed sorry that their intentions should be misconstrued, as they never did intend to secret the said tea." Though he escaped unscathed in Williamsburg that November 1774, Warwick was less fortunate in August 1775, when he was taken up in Smithfield by citizens of Isle of

Coercing . . . Continued on page 3

## RESOLVING . . .



The Scene: May 15, 1776

### Virginia Convention Calls for Independence

"... Resolved unanimously that 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 allegiances to or dependence upon the crown or parliament of Great Britain and that they give the assent of this Colony to such declaration..."

With these words the Revolution was culminated. We say culminated and not begun since, for such notables as Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, the real revolution was in the change of sentiments and attitudes in the hearts and minds of the populace between 1765 and 1776. The Declaration of Independence and military actions were but the end results.

Since August 1774, elected delegates from across Virginia had gathered in a series of meetings called conventions to wrestle over the continuing dispute with Great Britain. Virginia governor Lord Dunmore dissolved the House of Burgesses in May 1774 for officially supporting the city of Boston, whose port was to be closed by the British ministry in retribution for the destruction of East India Company tea the previous December. It was obvious to these burgesses that Lord Dunmore would not allow the House to become an arena to actively contest the king's policies; thus were born the Virginia conventions. These conventions performed a variety of functions; they elected representatives to the general congresses that met in Philadelphia, arranged economic embargos of British goods, organized military preparations (first promoted by Patrick Henry's famous "Give me liberty or give me death" speech at the Second Convention in Richmond) and generally provided for unified action in the impending crisis.

The Fifth Virginia Convention met on the heels of a House of Burgesses that had been adjourned in October 1775 and never reconstituted due to lack of a quorum. About mid-morning on Monday, May 6, 1776, the remains of the House of Burgesses, about 45 men, filed into the house chamber to formalize the adjournment order. The "Several Members met, but did neither proceed to Business, nor adjourn, as a House of Burgesses." Edmund Pendleton stated simply that they "let that body die."

This body of men filed out of the room, joined with a second group waiting outside the building, and reentered as the Fifth Virginia Convention. Over the next several days these delegates, presided over by Edmund Pendleton of Caroline County, saw to the administration of Virginia and deliberated the fate of loyalists and other such business, but their real purpose in meeting was to discuss and vote on a motion to declare independence from Great Britain.

The convention periodically resolved itself into a committee of the whole, whereupon Archibald Cary, delegate from Chesterfield County, took the chair and the 120-man body debated the question. The debate was not so much over the question of independence as it was over what form it would take. The convention considered three separate resolutions and, on May 15, unanimously approved a version cobbled together by Pendleton that incorporated portions of each. Only treasurer Robert Carter Nicholas is known to have taken the floor in opposition to the resolutions, openly questioning the "competency of America in so arduous a contest." In the end, he added his support for the sake of unanimity. The resolution was delivered to Philadelphia by Thomas Nelson Jr., and on June 7 Virginia's senior delegate, Richard Henry Lee, presented it for the consideration of the Second Continental Congress.

Resolving . . . Continued on page 3



## FORUM



## Letter from Robin Reed

As we begin our transition into fall programming, we should take a moment and reflect on what has been accomplished so far in 2006. In January and February, we created a new interpretive program called *Revolutionary City*. This new program initiative was not produced in a vacuum. The production of *Revolutionary City* would marshal resources from every division of the Foundation and every department and unit of the Historic Area division. It truly required "all hands on deck." The fruits of our labor were realized with the March 20 launch of *Revolutionary City* with overwhelming positive guest feedback (although there were critics as well) and increased visitation.

Since that time, we have improved every aspect of the two-hour managed access program. But that is not all the Historic Area has been working on. Just as exciting are the other projects going on in all of the departments of the Historic Area; e.g., the arrival of a new carriage, the great strides made at the Peyton Randolph and Great Hopes properties, and our very successful family and children program initiatives, just to name a few. It has been a long, hot summer and everyone has been working at full throttle. More heat and more visitors made the spring and the summer a challenge that was met with professionalism and a determination to carry the day. Huzzah to all of us!

With fall approaching, and as we embrace the cooler weather, we prepare ourselves for the new challenges for the rest of 2006. We also begin to steel ourselves for the challenges of 2007, which should prove to be an interesting year for all of us. The voyage of the *Godspeed* and the Foundation's support of its six ports of call gave us a glimpse of how exciting and demanding 2007 has the potential to be.

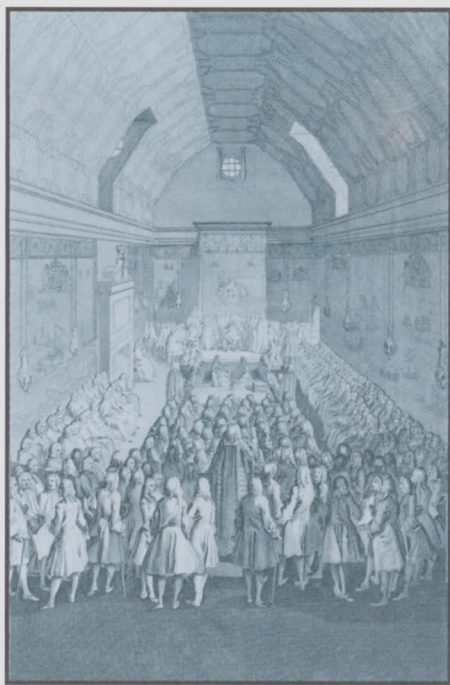
We have a full plate for the fall including two special event weekends: Prelude to Victory and Brothers-in-Arms. We will continue with *Revolutionary City* in the afternoon from 2:30 to 4:30 and the *Revolutionary Citizens* programs at identified sites. These programs, along with our solid base of interpretation from all of our units, will make for an educationally enriched experience for our guests.

Resolving . . . *Continued from page 2*

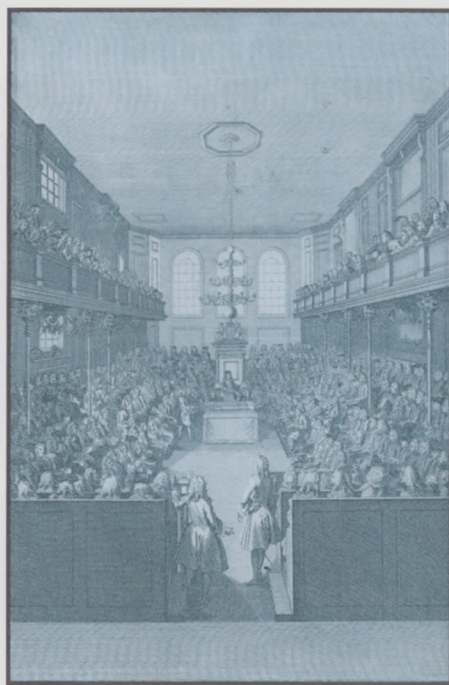
The Declaration of Independence was the result.

But the work of the convention was not yet finished. During the next month, under the guidance of Fairfax County delegate George Mason, that body created the first Declaration of Rights to be adopted in America. It contained ringing statements of individual liberty and the right to self government, as well as a pioneering statement of religious freedom that owed much to James Madison, delegate from Orange County. The Virginia Declaration was to influence such future documents as the Federal Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen, issued in the early days of the French Revolution, and was a partial basis for the Statement on Human Rights in the charter of the United Nations.

By the time the Fifth Virginia Convention had dispersed on July 6, it had also adopted a constitution for the soon-to-be-commonwealth, over the objections of an absent Thomas Jefferson who felt that the freeholders of Virginia should vote on the final form of the document. Besides establishing a republican form of government, the convention chose Patrick Henry as Virginia's first elected governor. A new state, soon to be joined by others united under a congress against a common foe, had been born.



House of Lords



House of Commons

## Lexicon of Protest

As interpreters, we help our guests understand the importance and meaning of the varied experiences of 18th-century Williamsburg. Those interpretations provide a basis for reflections upon contemporary circumstances and events. The past is an important medium for understanding the present. This premise holds equally true for how 18th-century 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 used by colonists in Virginia, as well as in the other colonies, had precedents in the events involving the power struggles between the Stuart monarchs and parliament in 17th-century England. Thus, let us follow the injunction offered by Patrick Henry in March of 1775 at the Second Virginia Convention: "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and this is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging the future but by the past." What follows are the 17th-century origins of some of the key ideas and strategies that were adapted by colonists in the years leading to the War for Independence.

**Bill of Rights:** When William and Mary were crowned co-sovereigns in 1689, the English parliament presented them with a list of abuses ascribed to James II that aimed to "subvert...the laws and liberties of this Kingdom." The parliament then drew up a bill designed to safeguard those rights that William and Mary agreed to abide by but would not accept as "precondition" to taking the throne. The English Bill of Rights was one of the influential documents in the formulation of the grievances that Jefferson penned in the Declaration of Independence and also contained key ideas that colonists protested were being violated by the Ministry during the reign of George III. 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 their 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 Bill of Rights served as a model not only for the Virginia Declaration of Rights but also for the Declaration of Independence.

**Burning-in-effigy:** This time-honored means of protest had strong roots in the 17th century. The supposed attempt in 1605 on the lives of King James I and members of parliament by a group of Catholic conspirators by blowing up the houses of parliament sparked an annual commemoration of "burning the Guy" (Guy Fawkes was one of the leading conspirators, and was executed upon arrest) and helped popularize bonfires and effigies as a means of popular celebra-

## Dividing . . .

(1774) where he was elected as president. Peyton died in Philadelphia on October 22, 1775, probably from a stroke.

Edmund Randolph was born into the elite Randolph family of Virginia in August of 1753. Edmund sided with the American cause from the very beginning, opposing his father's views. Edmund served as aide-de-camp to General Washington in 1775. He was mayor of Williamsburg (1776-1777) and justice of the peace for James City County (1777). He was selected as governor of Virginia in 1786-1788. Edmund served in Washington's first cabinet as attorney general and later as secretary of state.]

A year after Peyton's death in Philadelphia, Edmund accompanied Peyton's body back to Williamsburg in 1776 where it was

tion but also of protest. In the 1670s and 1680s, rival supporters of the Whigs and Tories would use the occasion of burning the Guy in the city of London to harass one another and voice support or opposition to various politicians. Thus effigy burning became a familiar—and popular—means of voicing political opposition. Thus American patriots had a ready means of intimidation and protest to use upon customs agents, loyalists, and the Ministry of Lord North.

**Committee of Safety:** The committee was first established by the House of Commons in 1642 to take charge of defense of the kingdom. The ostensible reason concerned a rebellion in Ireland but the real reason was to begin arming county militias against forces who were beginning to gather around King Charles I near York. The committee was an outgrowth of the legislative committee system that parliament had devised over the previous 60 years or so. Forming a committee was not a novel concept but never before had a committee acted in an executive capacity. It was a direct blueprint for the practice adopted by every colony in North America in 1774-75 and the precedent had come from parliament itself.

**Conventions:** During the so-called Glorious Revolution (1688-89), when Prince William of Orange invaded England with 20,000 Dutch troops and James II was run out of 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 the meeting of the legislative body without royal consent. The idea, then, of a legislature meeting in opposition to royal will (or governor's will) was also a precedent established in the struggles between the Stuart monarchs and parliament. William and his wife Mary would of course be crowned as the co-sovereigns William III and Mary II in 1689 at the behest of this convention. See also **Bill of Rights**.

Hopefully this short list of precedents gives you a sense of the historical context which the "founding generation" had learned and helped frame their thinking about how to respond to the actions of the ministry and parliament. 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 its destruction. The political leadership on both sides of the Atlantic were speaking the same constitutional language, but interpreted the meaning of the key concept in very different ways.

[Reprint by Gary Sandling]

## Continued from page 2

buried beneath the Wren Chapel at the College of William and Mary. Incidentally, John later requested that he be brought back "home" after his death in England, and he, too, is buried at the Wren Chapel. The brothers were united once again.

Father and son were not so lucky. In a letter from John to Edmund written in August of 1775, father admonishes son "... For God's Sake return to your Family & indeed yourself. Abandon not your Sisters, who are wretched about you. Come back & Heaven will prosper all your Undertakings. I am your affectionate and afflicted Father, J. Randolph."

[John Randolph to Edmund Randolph, August 12, 1775,

[Submitted by Rose McAphee]

## NEWS

STAFFORD County, AQUIA, Nov. 2, 1775.

RAN away last Night, from the Subscriber, a Negro Man named Charles, who is a very shrewd sensible Fellow, and can both read and write; and as he always waited upon me, he must be well known through most of Virginia and Maryland. He is very black, has a large Nose, and is about 5 Feet 8 or 10 Inches high. He took a Variety of Clothes which I cannot well particularise, stole several of my Shirts, a Pair of new Saddle Bags, and two MARES, one a darkish, the other a light Bay, with a Blaze and white Feet, about 3 Years old. From many circumstances, there is Reason to believe he intends to Attempt to get to Lord Dunmore; and as I have Reason to believe this Design of going off was long premeditated, and that he has gone off with some Accomplices, I am apprehensive he may prove daring and resolute, if endeavoured to be taken. His Elopement was from no Cause of Complain, or dread of a Whipping (for he has always been remarkably indulged, indeed too much so) but from a determined Resolution to get Liberty, as he conceived, by flying to Lord Dunmore. I will have 5 l. to any Person who secures him and the Mares, so that I get them again.

ROBERT BRENT.

Virginia Gazette (Dixon & Hunter),  
November 18, 1775.

Minutemen *Continued from page 1*

and they provoked "many disorders." Smallholders also objected to the convention's decision to exempt anyone that paid taxes on more than three slaves (or other workers) from militia duty and thus also from service as minutemen and slave patrollers. As Gilmer paraphrased the soldiers' view of the slaveholders' exemption, "It is calculated to exempt the gentlemen and to throw the whole burden on the poor."

[Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia*,

Coercing . . . *Continued from page 2*

Wight County on suspicion of violating the Association. The *Virginia Gazette* reported his punishment:

"The populace very deliberately led him to the stocks, and having prepared him for the purpose, gave him a fashionable suit of tar and feathers, being the most proper badge of distinction for men of his complexion. They then mounted him on his horse, and drove him out of town, through a shower of eggs, the smell of which our correspondent informs us, seemed to have a material effect upon the delicate constitution of the motley gentleman."

In February 1775, London publishers Robert Sayer and J. Bennett printed a mezzotint satire, "The Alternative of Williams-Burg," our only graphic depiction of the Liberty Pole incident, which depicts Virginia merchants being forced to sign the Association. In the upper left corner, the statue of late Virginia Governor Botetourt identifies the setting as the Capitol courtyard. For a writing surface, patriots have laid a plank across two tobacco barrels. One barrel is labeled as a gift for John Wilkes, newly elected Lord Mayor of London, who campaigned on a platform of sympathy with the colonial cause. Some of the gentlemen merchants appear loath to conform, but a liberty pole sporting a barrel of tar, bag of feathers, and the inscription "A CURE FOR THE REFRACTORY" suggests the alternative. Despite the turmoil of the fall of 1774, James Parker clung to false optimism in his last letter of the year to Steuart. December 28, he wrote:

I should be as sorry as you to See the Constitutional authority of Government over America given up, it is not for our intent it Should, & if the Colonies prevail (of which I cannot entertain the least Idea) Insolence, Contempt, & Confusion will long predominate here . . . I am still of the opinion, notwithstanding all the noise of arming, & mustering, the Colonists never will attempt fighting.

[Submitted by Bob Doares]



## LIFE

## Autumn 1774 and 1775

Autumn in Virginia was a demanding time for everyone. With 98 percent of Virginians living in the countryside, depending on agriculture, it was critical for families to secure the harvest, slaughter beeves and hogs, preserve foods, cut firewood, and prepare their homes and fields for the coming winter. The autumns of 1774 and 1775 posed daunting challenges to all Virginians against the backdrop of increasing conflict with Britain and an uncertain political future and fear of war.

Weather was a challenge in every season. In 1774 many crops had suffered from the late-spring frosts. Landon Carter recorded in his diary, "May 5 I said yesterday there would be a frost...the ice was hard enough for a dog to walk on it, hard down 6 inches deep and icicles 5 or 6 out of the ground. All the fruit killed, Apples, peaches, everything and abundance even black jacks turned quit black with frost."

The late spring and summer brought a severe drought. As Phillip Fithian describes in his diary on June 11: "it is alarming to observe how hard and 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 24 of May,"... and on July 14: "After school with Ben I rode out the day is warm, & the ground grows to be very dry—I was not a little surprised to see corn out in tassel—but the tobacco looks dismal, it is all poor, much of it is dead with drouth" and again on July 29 "the corn is roll'd up with the heat and Drouth!"

The dry weather continued into the autumn of 1774. Carter records on October 9, "that without rain soon a great deal of wheat sown will be destroyed," on October 11, "rode out this day. It is inconceivable how detrimental the dry weather has been to almost everything," and on October 20, "As to rain, it is agreed on all hands there never was a drier time, even the mills hardly go round but a very few hours in the day."

In addition to the poor harvests, farmers had to adjust to the Continental Association which would take affect on December 1, 1774 prohibiting the importation of all goods and wares (including slaves) from Great Britain and Ireland. Virginians were aware that the association would be enforced as "a committee [was] to be chosen in every county, city and town by those who are qualified to vote for representatives in the legislature, whose business it shall be attentively to observe the conduct of all persons touching the association."

The autumn of 1775 brought still greater challenges. Farmers were not only faced with the difficulty of marketing their crops (since exporting to Britain was disallowed by the association after December 1774), but the fear of losing slaves to Dunmore and the actual bloodshed in Virginia increased anxiety. Some families were affected by the men enlisting and leaving the farms at a crucial time. High prices and shortages of goods like hoes and axes also had an impact. These were increasingly difficult times for all Virginians.

[Submitted by Anne Willis]

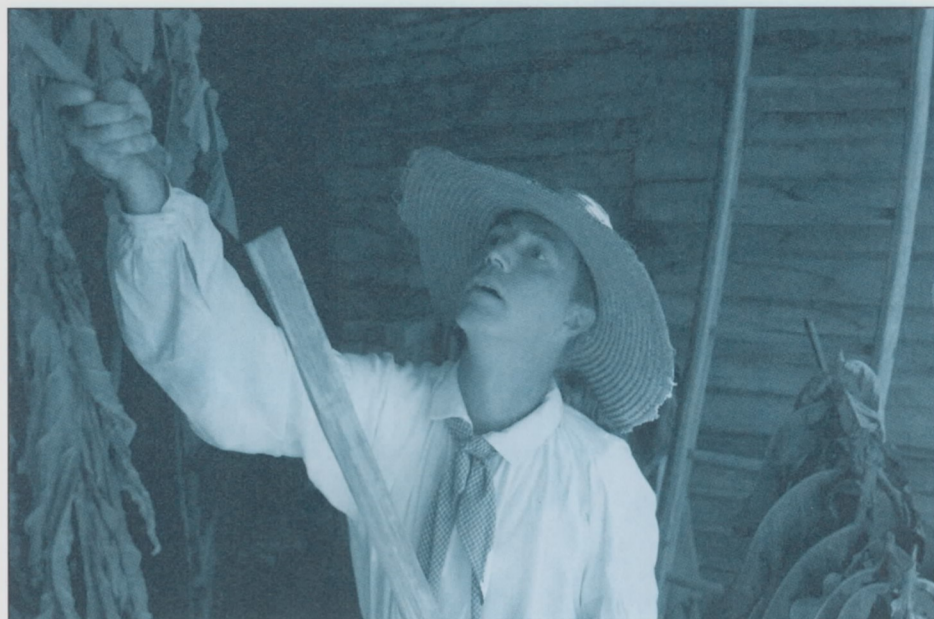
## GETTING READY FOR FALL! Housekeeping/Gardening/ Food Preservation

Mosquito netting and gauze covers from the summer removed. Chimney boards removed and fireplaces become active for wood and/or coal burning. Carpets and window curtains reinstalled for more warmth. Additional blankets and rugs added to bed coverings.

Second sowing of cool-weather crops like greens and peas. Apples gathered and stored in cellars, sliced and dried, or made into cider or jelly.

Depending on the humidity of the particular year, air-drying of beans, etc. may go on into the fall. Some years the garden will continue producing food for the table well into December. Supply of firewood brought to town and stacked for winter use.

## INTERPRETATION



Wayne Randolph

## TRADES

### Building the Tobacco Barn at Great Hopes

This summer and autumn the tobacco barn at Great Hopes Plantation is being reconstructed. We have asked Garland Wood to describe the construction process and Wayne Randolph to discuss why tobacco barns were crucial in the process of curing tobacco. We hope many of you will have an opportunity to watch this exciting reconstruction.

#### Construction

The Great Hopes Plantation tobacco house is 32 by 20 feet, built on a four-foot framing system to accommodate the four-foot-long tobacco sticks which go inside. It is a post-in-the-ground building, so we started its construction by locating and hewing ten massive black locust posts. Black locust is noted for its durability as an earth fast post. Locust is also famous for being a heavy and hard wood; we were dismayed to find the edges of our axes rolling and blunting. In one case we actually broke the steel out of the edge of the iron felling axe. As any 18th-century carpenter would do, we took the broken axe to our friends in the blacksmith shop and had a new piece of steel welded in place. We were back in the hewing business that very same day!

There are five locust posts in each wall, on eight-foot centers, crowned with a 32-foot continuous pine plate, the uppermost horizontal beam in a long wall. We located 27 beautiful pine logs near Rosewell Plantation in Gloucester, and had them delivered to Great Hopes. Unlike the black locust, the pine hewed beautifully. We will also use pine for the pitsawn joists and rafters for the barn, as well as the thin strips of one- by three-foot shingle lath that will be nailed across the finished roof frame.

The tobacco house will be sheathed in oak riven clapboards for the walls and a

long board, side-lap oak shingle roof. The clapboard carpentry crew has been turning out many shingles and clapboards for the buildings at Great Hopes and the Peyton Randolph site, and the blacksmiths working on the nails for the same jobs. Side lap shingles are very different from the wooden roofs seen in the city of Williamsburg; they are rough-split in appearance, 40 inches long, and lapped sideways from left to right as well as lapped over each other as the courses run up the roof. They are nailed at the bottom right-hand corner with the nails exposed to the weather.

The hand-wrought nails easily split oak shingles, so we built a machine for punching a square nail hole through each shingle as we finished them. The construction of this machine is copied from a shingle punch currently on display at the Mercer Museum in Pennsylvania.

The barn has three doors: a small door on one gable end and a large ventilation door on each long wall. Air also circulates under the sills, which stand about one foot above the ground, and through the open eaves.

Inside the barn will be a latticework of peeled poplar and pine poles, stretching from about four feet above the ground all the way up to the roof. The tobacco sticks will be hung on these "tier poles." We will also be building an open-walled shed on one side of the tobacco house to use as storage space for the farm cart and a place for visitors to watch work in bad weather. The tobacco house should be finished this winter.

[Submitted by Garland Wood]

#### Curing Tobacco

The critical transformation of tobacco leaf from a green, virtually useless plant into a soft, fragrant, and valuable raw material of chestnut brown, occurs in the tobacco house. Through the month of

## MONEY

August into early September the leaves finish growing and begin to dry in the field. Certain signs indicate that the plant is ripe and ready for harvest, which is done by splitting the stalk down its middle and severing it at the base. Once wilted the split plants are hung on a stick and transferred to the house.

The first tobacco sticks are taken high up to the roof peak and hung across poles that cross the house interior. The house is loaded from top to bottom by "rooms." Each room is four feet wide, so our 32-foot-long house of eight rooms could cure up to about five acres of tobacco. Vents in the house allow air to circulate through the hung tobacco, slowly taking leaf moisture away to affect the cure. The leaf color will change from dark green to yellow to a deep brown. If this sequence does not occur (as when the conditions are too hot), the leaf will stop at a khaki-green color, and will not complete its color shift. Planters often moved their hanging tobacco from higher tiers to lower ones to help with this problem.

Another threat to curing tobacco is too much moisture in the air. This condition over two to three days will cause mold spores to begin growing on the leaves. Planters facing this critical threat would remove all of the tobacco from the house, dry it outdoors, and reload the house to help prevent mold formation. Another solution was to set small, controlled fires inside the house to drive the moisture out.

In four to six weeks, when the tobacco is fully cured, it is taken down on a day when the humidity makes the leaves soft and flexible (in "case"). The cured leaves are stripped from the stalk, sorted by quality, and tied into small bundles called "hands." These hands of tobacco leaves are piled up until all the tobacco is processed. This completes the work done in the house.

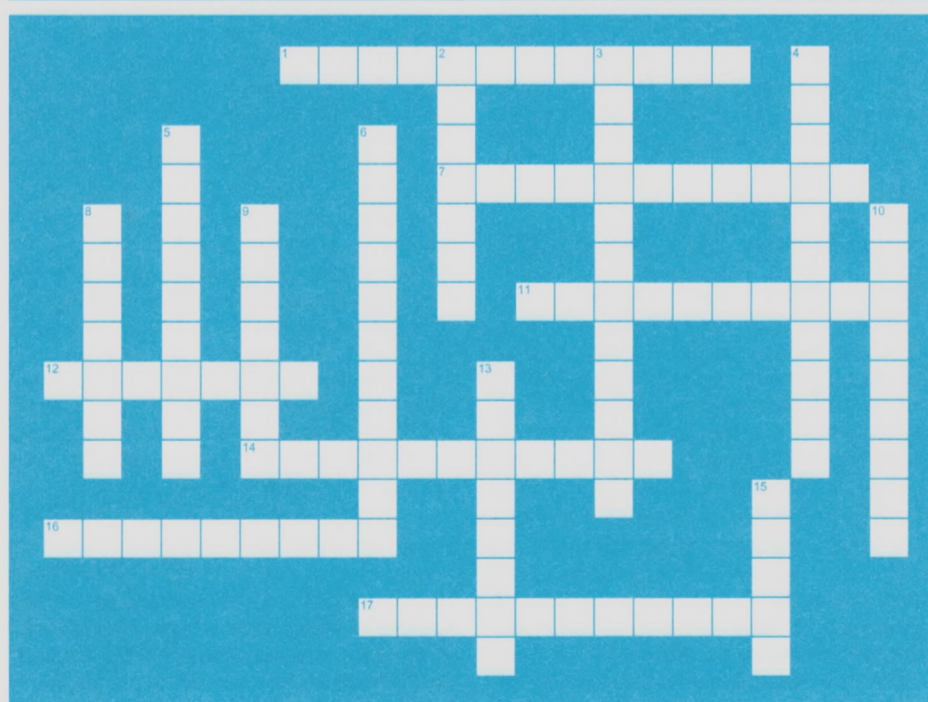
The final preparation for shipment occurs outdoors. Prizing, or pressing the hands into shipping casks called tobacco hogsheads, is accomplished with a large lever press. It takes several days or a week to complete each hogshead. The hogsheads are then taken to an inspection warehouse and, if they pass inspection, loaded on board a ship with hundreds of others for transportation to England or Scotland.

[Submitted by Wayne Randolph]



## AUTUMN FARMING

- Tobacco: Worm, sucker, top, cut, and hang  
Strike and strip at night  
Tie in hand at night  
Pack and prize  
Hoe hills for next year and sow seed
- Corn: Gather tops and blades for fodder  
Cart corn to town  
Gather and husk corn  
Clear new fields  
Plow fields for next year
- Wheat: Tread, thresh, and clean wheat  
Sow and harrow in winter wheat  
Cart wheat and straw to town  
Plow and sow other grains
- Vegetables: Gather peas and beans  
Dig potatoes, carrots, and turnips  
Pull pumpkins
- Orchard: Make cider and peach brandy  
Cart cider and brandy to town  
Gather apples and grapes  
Plant grapes and sow apple seeds
- Livestock: Fatten hogs and beeves  
Build shelter for cattle  
Sell mutton, hogs, and steers  
Butcher hogs (December)
- Other: Overseers hired for next year (September)  
Cut firewood and cart to town  
Ditch fields, grub, and fence



## ACROSS

- 4 Liberty Pole helped force compliance with this  
7 Patrick Henry becomes this in June 1776  
11 General Charles Lee's headquarters in May 1776  
12 Home county of Archibald Cary  
15 Political cartoon  
17 Revolutionary militiaman  
18 Synonym for "resistant, obstinate"

## DOWN

- 1 Drafted Virginia Declaration of Rights  
2 State of Virginia

- 3 Family divided  
5 Virginia adopts this in June 1776  
6 Most populous colonial city  
8 Influenced language of VA Declaration of Rights  
9 Patrick Henry disappointed not to become this in February 1776  
10 Southern colonies' predominant ethnic group  
13 Virginia Convention and Congress disagreed over expansion of this  
14 Instrument of redress  
16 Nickname for Susannah