



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

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

**JULY 1976**

July 18–24, 1976



PAMPHLET FILE

**July 18, 1776**

The Executive Council was probably surprised when one minuteman attended the session and requested a discharge from military service:

William Wood, a minute man in Captain Nicholas Lewis's Company applied to this Board, & desired that he might be discharged & permitted to return home; and upon examination it appears that the said William Wood is Sixty five years old, and that he had entered into the service from a motive of serving his Country; It is ordered, that he be discharged from doing any further duty in the said Company; & that he be permitted to return home to his Family.

At the beginning of the war there was an enthusiastic display of patriotism by men volunteering for service and forming military companies. But enthusiasm quickly dried up when men discovered that military service had its drawbacks such as long marches and dull camp life. The state soon found it necessary to resort to drafts to fill the ranks.

Four Pounds Reward. Strayed, or Stolen, on the 5th of this Month, a Light Bay Horse, 14 Hands and an Inch high, with a Switch Tail, Blaze Face, a Blemish on his right Eye, and I think his right hind Foot is white; trots and gallops. Whoever will deliver him to Mr. Richard Timberlake in King William, or the Subscriber in Williamsburg, shall have Twenty Shillings Reward, and if Stolen, Three Pounds on Conviction of the Thief.

James Craig.

James Craig, a silversmith, arrived in Williamsburg about 1747. He carried on a successful business at his shop, the Golden Ball, on Duke of Gloucester Street. Craig evidently retired from business in 1779 but remained in Williamsburg where he died in 1794.

**July 20, 1776**

On this day the Executive Council recorded in its journal a payment to Robert Andrews:

Ordered, That a Warrant issue to Mr. Robert Andrews for One hundred & forty nine [pounds] twelve shillings & six pence in full of his own Account & that of his assistant for making a survey & Draught of the Posts of Williamsburg, York, Hampton, &c.

Andrews, who had served as a tutor to the children of Mann Page of Rosewell, later became professor of mathematics at the College of William and Mary. In February 1776 he drew plans for a boat for the state and as mentioned above, he made plans for military posts on the peninsula. He later served on the commission to define the Pennsylvania-Virginia line and he also served in the General Assembly. He died in Williamsburg in 1804.



July 25-31, 1976

**July 24, 1776**

The Council was still involved at this time in preparing the Palace and its grounds for the reception of Patrick Henry, the new governor. The house had already been refurnished and now the governor wanted to remove some agencies that had occupied the outbuildings.

Ordered, That the Commanding Officer at this Station be requested to order the Quarter Master, to remove the Waggon, Horses &c. from the Palace as soon as possible and that he finish without delay the Fence agreed by the Governor to be the division of the Park between that part wanted for his own use and that allotted for the use of the Public supposed to contain two hundred Acres of Land.

Ordered, That the Commanding Officer at this Station be requested to give orders to the Commissary of Provisions immediately to remove himself and Effects from the Palace and that he clean out, and leave the Houses in the same condition in which they were, at the Time of his taking possession of them.

**July 25, 1776**

On July 22 the Council ordered: "That the Declaration of Independence be solemnly proclaimed at four o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday next at the Capitol in the City of Williamsburg also at the Court of Hustings, and at the Palace." The mayor of Williamsburg was requested that the corporation "give their attendance."

On July 26 the *Virginia Gazette* reported:

Yesterday afternoon, agreeable to an order of the Hon. Privy Council, the DECLARATION of INDEPENDENCE was solemnly proclaimed at the Capitol, the Courthouse, and the Palace, amidst the acclamations of the people, accompanied by firing of cannon and musketry, the several regiments of continental troops having been paraded on that solemnity.

Many years later a veteran recalled: "In July 1776 the regiment marched to Williamsburg where the Declaration of Independence was read to the troops by Benjamin Waller, Clerk of the General Court."

*Compiled by Harold B. Gill, Jr.*



The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation