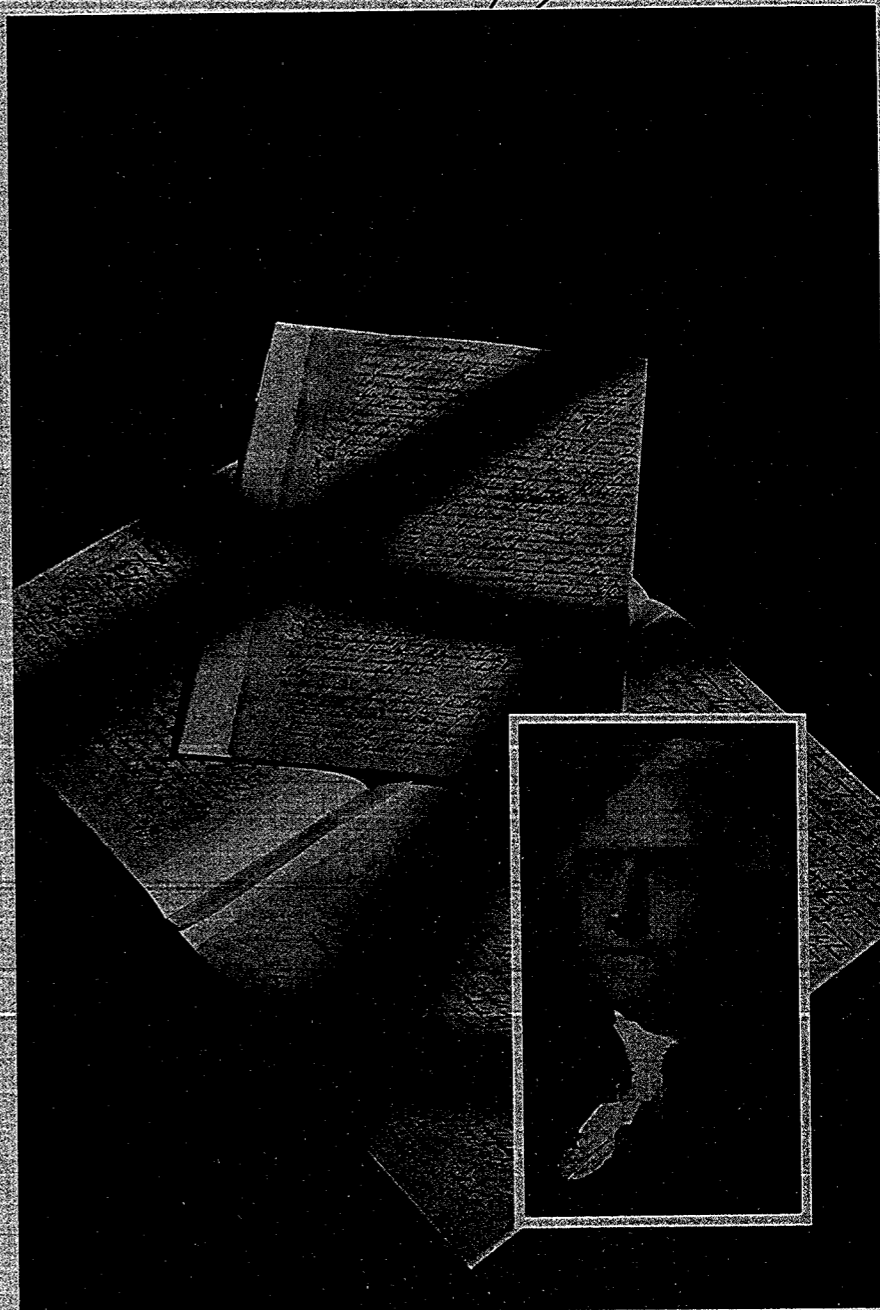


*Alma Mater of a Nation*



A Bicentennial Sampler for  
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

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1965

## WILLIAM AND MARY

### *The Alma Mater of a Nation*

*Virginia is called the mother of presidents, but the College of William and Mary, the alma mater of statesmen, is only another name for Virginia.*

--Herbert B. Adams, late professor of history, The Johns Hopkins University

This passage, from a book published in 1888 by the United States Office of Education, called attention to the vast number of early American leaders whose formal education was undertaken at the College of William and Mary. The College, the nation's second oldest, was chartered in 1693 by King William III and Queen Mary II.

In more modern times, the College has been called the Alma Mater of a Nation. This phrase has been adopted as a theme for William and Mary's observance of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution, with a wide-ranging program of participation which earned for it the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration's second "Bicentennial Campus" designation.

This booklet, prepared especially for the Bicentennial, documents thoroughly how the College of William and Mary contributed significantly to the founding and growth of the American Republic and its deals and aspirations, through its alumni; how the College itself was a part of the Revolution; and how finally, colonial America's wealthiest institution lost its endowments in the final break with England. What follows, limited and brief as it is, is served up in response to countless inquiries of a general nature; and to whet the appetite of those who would pursue further the episodes, events and personal experiences of people who responded to the call to destiny and thus helped establish our nation.

## *About the College*

The College of William and Mary in Virginia is, today, an outstanding small university. It has been supported since 1906 by the Commonwealth of Virginia. With the Commonwealth's concurrence and support, William and Mary is one of a handful of high-quality State-supported universities in America which chose in the 1960s to remain relatively small and selective.

Its enrollment has stabilized at about 4,000 undergraduates and 1,400 students in carefully chosen master's, doctoral and professional programs which are intended to reflect William and Mary's greatest strengths.

As a small, liberal and modern university, the College places emphasis, in all of its programs, on the development of the student as a whole individual. The criterion of excellence in teaching and learning, in class and out of class, is at the heart of the educational process. It is, in the words of its statement of objectives, "large enough to provide a diversity of opportunities and interactions, yet small enough to be humane, responsive and innovative. In all relationships, it seeks a sense of humanity."

Coeducational since 1918, William and Mary occupies a campus which is both part of, and adjacent to, historic Williamsburg. The Eighteenth Century portion of its campus has been restored through the generosity of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and its original building--the Sir Christopher Wren Building (1695), America's oldest academic building in continuous use--is open daily for interpretive tours sponsored by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. The other colonial buildings include the President's House (1732), occupied by every William and Mary presidential family including its twenty-fourth, Thomas A. Graves, Jr.; and the Brafferton (1732), originally a school for Indian boys and now an administrative building.

Research as an adjunct to the teaching-learning process occupies a place of prominence within the College's faculties. Through the College-related Southside Historical Sites Foundation, faculty in historical archeology are conducting a number of field investigations of important sites throughout Virginia. In cooperation with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, the College sponsors the Institute of Early American History and Culture, an eminent research and publications organization.

In liaison with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, William and Mary physicists operate the Space Radiation Effects Laboratory in Newport News, a massive tool valuable not only for space research but in the application of new discoveries in biochemistry. With the Virginia Institute of Marine Science on the York River, the College offers programs leading to the doctorate in marine science. The School of Education works closely with eastern Virginia school systems, with growing emphasis on development of new techniques for teaching exceptional children. The School of Business Administration, with fully accredited undergraduate and

master's degree programs, has developed a close liaison with Virginia and Eastern United States business enterprises and government agencies.

The nation's oldest law school--the Marshall-Wythe School of Law--will be strengthened immeasurably as the result of its developing cooperative relationship with the National Center for State Courts, which is planning its permanent headquarters in Williamsburg adjacent to the campus.

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## *A Bicentennial Chronology*

1774, *June 1.* The Virginia Burgesses observe "a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer" at Bruton Parish Church to show their disapproval of the British closing of the port of Boston. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Thomas Gwatkin, master of the Grammar School at William and Mary.

1774, *June 20.* A bursar's record indicates James Monroe, later fifth President of the United States, started to attend lectures at William and Mary. The surviving record shows Monroe was charged board until March 25, 1776.

1774, *September 5.* The First Continental Congress opens in Philadelphia with Peyton Randolph of Williamsburg, an alumnus of William and Mary, serving as president. A total of 16 members on the Continental Congress studied at William and Mary.

1774, *September 12.* A public argument between two clergymen, the Rev. John Bracken, the rector of Bruton, and the Rev. Samuel Henley, professor of moral philosophy, discourages Robert Carter, Virginia's wealthiest landowner, from sending his children to William and Mary. The Carter family tutor, Philip Vickers Fithian, records in his diary on this date that Carter believes William and Mary "is in such confusion at present and so badly directed that he cannot send his children with propriety there for improvement and useful education -- that he (Carter) has known the professors to play all night at cards in publick houses in the city and has often seen them drunken in the street!

"Two of the officers of the institution, Mr. Bracken and Mr. Henley, clergymen, are at present engaged in a paper war published weekly in the Williamsburg gazettes."

Bracken (later president of William and Mary 1812-1814) had incurred the bitter enmity of Henley who had hoped to secure the appointment at Bruton. The two men aired their grievances in a long and acrimonious controversy carried on in the Virginia Gazette.

1774, *November 8-9.* The College authorizes payment of L205:14:8½ to John Norton and Sons of London for the "new building." In September 1772 College authorities had decided to build an addition to the College building, as proposed by Thomas Jefferson, to enclose the quadrangle. Work was started, but abandoned and on June 25, 1776, the College steward was authorized to sell nails purchased for the construction and as late as September 13, 1780, the College advertised it had for sale "a considerable quantity of scantling originally intended for an additional building."

A traveler in 1778, Ebenezer Hazard, noted "there is also the foundation of a new building which was intended for an addition to the College, but has been discontinued on account of the present troubles..." Archaeological evidence of the foundations were uncovered, studied and covered up in 1950.

1775. Although exempt by law from military duty, students and faculty members of the College joined militia companies organized in the vicinity of Williamsburg.

In addition, a number of students of Loyalist sympathies and at least two faculty members left the College to return to England. One of these, the Rev. Samuel Henley, advertised in April his intent to leave the colony. Exactly when he sailed is unknown, but he left behind "scarcely and valuable editions . . . of the Greek and Roman classics," a collection of engravings and prints, "very good whiskey and harness, together with furniture and saddle-horses."

1775, *May 10*. The Second Continental Congress convenes in Philadelphia, again with Peyton Randolph as president. He withdrew from the post on May 24 and on October 22 died in Philadelphia. In November 1776 his remains were transferred to the College Chapel for internment.

1775, *May 27*. Although few old College records survive, it is curious that one of these is a long complaint signed by James Innes, head usher of the Grammar School, James Monroe and others against Maria Digges for "the grossest neglect of duty in the mistress of the College." The faculty heard the charges and "unanimously acquite the said defendant of the charges therein contained and pronounce the said bill to be frivolous, vexatious and ill supported."

1775, *June 8*. Lord Dunmore, the Royal governor, his family and his personal chaplain, the Rev. Thomas Gwatkin, the master of the Grammar School, leave Williamsburg for the man-of-war Fowey in the York River as the colony was in an open state of rebellion.

1775, *June 25*. The last session of the Burgesses is held in Williamsburg and powers of government pass to the Virginia Convention of Delegates and the Committee of Safety which appointed Patrick Henry commander in chief of all Virginia forces and which named Williamsburg as the place for troops to gather. James Innes, head usher of the Grammar School, was appointed an lieutenant colonel and put in command of the Williamsburg volunteers. Innes' militia company guarded the Powder Magazine.

1775, *August 19*. John Camm White of King and Queen was awarded the Botetourt medal for "superior skill in mathematics and natural philosophy" and delivered an oration "setting forth the advantages of education and the grateful memory of the (College) founders." During the Revolution, White, like most Virginians, was called to serve the patriot cause. His contribution was to furnish 38 gallons of brandy to the army in 1780!

1775, *September 14*. The faculty dismisses James Innes for "repeatedly absenting himself from the College for days and weeks together, without asking permission to be absent" while off recruiting and training his militia company. Innes, who for a while upset George Washington for being absent without leave during the Revolutionary War, took part in the siege of Yorktown at the time when he was Williamsburg's delegate to the Virginia General Assembly. In 1782 he was appointed to the College's board of visitors and later served as rector.

1775, *September 29*. Patrick Henry arrives in Williamsburg and a militia camp was "marked out, behind the College." The Virginia Gazette reported "tents and other camp equipage are getting ready with the utmost expedition and the troops, for the different counties, are on their march for this city."

1776, *April 22*. The Cumberland Resolutions, written by Carter Henry Harrison, an alumnus of William and Mary, were adopted. These resolutions instructed the county delegation to the Virginia Convention "to declare the independency; that you solemnly adjure any allegiance to his Britannick Majesty and bid him good night forever." The resolutions are considered the first positive instructions for independence adopted anywhere in the American colonies.

1776, *May 6*. The Virginia Convention of Delegates meet at the Capitol in Williamsburg and on May 15 direct the Virginia delegates to the general Congress in Philadelphia to declare the united colonies to be free and independent states. Many of the Virginians who formed the basic documents of democratic government were educated at William and Mary.

1776, *June 12*. The Virginia Convention approves the Declaration of Rights, written by George Mason, which became the model for the Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution.

1776, *June 29*. The Virginia Convention unanimously adopts a plan for government which has been called the first state constitution. Thus, when the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia in July, Virginia already existed as an independent state with a General Assembly. Patrick Henry was named governor.

1776, *July 4*. Congress unanimously approves the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson during June in Philadelphia. The man who studied at William and Mary and read law under George Wythe said he "turned to neither book nor pamphlet" in preparing the paper, but drew upon the prevalent "natural rights" political philosophy in asserting the right and duty of the American people to dissolve their ties to Britain and declare the united colonies free and independent states. Along with Jefferson, three other men educated at William and Mary signed the Declaration -- George Wythe, Carter Braxton and Benjamin Harrison.

1776, *December 5*. Phi Beta Kappa, the first American intercollegiate Greek letter fraternity, was founded by William and Mary students meeting in the Raleigh Tavern. In its initial period it introduced the essential characteristics of such societies -- an oath of secrecy, a badge, mottoes in Latin and Greek, a code of laws, an elaborate form of initiation, a seal and a special handclasp.

Regular meetings were held at which chief attention was given to literary exercises, especially to composition and debating such subjects as "the cause and origin of society," "whether a wise state hath any interest nearer heart than the education of the youth" and "whether anything is more dangerous to civil liberty in a free state than a standing army in time of peace."

In 1779 Elisha Parmele carried the organization to Harvard and Yale whence it spread throughout the North. The last meeting at William and Mary was held January 6, 1781, after admitting 50 men to membership. More than one-fourth of the founders served with the Revolutionary forces and nearly one-third served in the Virginia legislature.

The William and Mary chapter was revived in 1851, discontinued at the outbreak of the Civil War, and finally reestablished in 1893.

1777. The Loyalist sympathies of the Rev. John Camm, professor of divinity and College president since 1771, brought about his removal from the faculty. He returned to England where he died a year or two later. Camm was succeeded by the Rev. James Madison who was then only 28 years old. An alumnus, Madison received the first Botetourt medal in 1772 for his excellence in the classics.

During this year students formed a College company of militia with Madison as captain. Other faculty members who were militiamen were the Rev. Robert Andrews, who succeeded Henley as professor of moral philosophy, and Dr. James McClurg who later joined the faculty as professor of medicine. Nearly 30 students enlisted in the militia, including James Monroe.

1777, April 9. The Rev. John Bracken, succeeding Gwatkin in 1775 as master of the Grammar School, is named librarian. Confronted with a problem that has plagued library keepers since time immemorial, he inserted this notice in the Virginia Gazette: "It is earnestly requested of all gentlemen who have any books belonging to the College library in their possession, to return the same immediately."

1777, Spring. Two travelers whose journals have survived record their impressions of Williamsburg and the College.

Nicholas Creswell, a British Loyalist, on April 29 notes the ravages of war -- houses burnt down, others pulled to pieces for fuel, "everything in disorder and confusion and no appearance of trade." He comments on the endowment granted by King William and Queen Mary to the College and adds that "like all publick seminaries, it is much abused."

A New York bookseller, Ebenezer Hazard, in Williamsburg May 31, was unimpressed with the College. "The principal buildings are the College, the madhouse, the Palace and the Capitol, all of brick. The first is badly contrived and the inside of it is shabby; it is 2½ stories high and has wings and dormer windows. At each end of the east front is a two story brick house, one for the president and the other is for an Indian school -- no students in the divinity school for several years; there are but 18 students belonging to the College and about 30 Grammar scholars; the College has been on the decline for some years."

1777, October 30. The city celebrates the news of Burgoyne's defeat in New York with a "feu de joy" by the militia on Market Square.

1778. James Madison, the second cousin of the College president of the same name and later fourth President of the United States, stayed in the President's House while serving in the Virginia General Assembly, "a much better accommodation than I could have promised myself."

1779, February 22. David Meade Randolph, a student who left the College to join the army, noted the celebration of George Washington's birthday at the Raleigh Tavern got a little out of hand. "It was thought proper to enliven the occasion by discharge of cannon. There were two pieces at the shop of Mr. Moody that had lately been mounted . . . (James) Innes (who at this time had resigned his commission) helped bring it to the Raleigh when confronted by militia he forced them off." Innes was arrested for rioting, but the charges were dismissed.

1779, May 12. John Marshall, a militia captain, who along with other officers were attending lectures at William and Mary, was elected to membership in Phi Beta Kappa. Later Marshall attended the law lectures of George Wythe, the only formal training for the third chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

1779, June 12. The General Assembly passed an act removing the seat of government from Williamsburg to Richmond, "more safe and central than any other town situated on navigable water." The removal of governmental offices was effected in the opening months of 1780.

1779, December 4. Under the leadership of Thomas Jefferson, then governor of Virginia and a member of the College Board of Visitors, William and Mary became a university. The grammar and divinity schools were discontinued and a professorship of anatomy and medicine and the first American chairs of law and police and modern languages were established. William and Mary's curriculum was considered broader than that of any other American institution and unique in its elective system of studies.

"The students," President James Madison noted, "have the liberty of attending when they please and in what order they please, or all the different lectures in a term, if they think proper. The time of taking degrees . . . now depends upon the qualifications of the candidate."

Students who were permitted to board with some "sober and discreet male person" who would be "allowed the use of the College-kitchen and garden."

1779, December 29. Rules for the library were changed. President Madison and the faculty directed that no professor would be allowed to keep books more than six months and that all loans would be recorded properly and Bracken was told to arrange the library collection "according to the different branches of literature."

1780, January 17. Lectures in the reorganized schools commenced with President James Madison professor of natural philosophy; George Wythe, professor of law and police; Dr. James McClurg, professor of anatomy and medicine; the Rev. Robert Andrews, professor of moral philosophy, the laws of nature and of nations and of the fine arts; and Charles Bellini, professor of modern languages. Wythe, an alumnus who served on the faculty until he moved to Richmond in 1789, incorporated moot courts and moot legislatures in his instruction.

1780. Students paid tuition of 1,000 pounds of tobacco for the privilege of attending the lectures of any two professors and 1,500 pounds of tobacco to attend lectures of three professors. The faculty was paid by the College and by student fees.

1780, May 20. Charles Bellini succeeds Bracken as librarian and the faculty instructs him to loan books to professors and students for "one month only at a time." The first Monday of every month at 9 a.m. was set as the time to receive books.

1780, October 27. A student, John Brown, writes in a letter that "it is more than probable that the College will be suspended for some time. Mr. Madison talking of resigning his professorship and the students all turned soldiers and everything in the utmost confusion."

1781, January 18. College classes were suspended as British raiding parties sail up the James River. President Madison writes to his cousin "the university is a desert. We were in a very flourishing way before the first invasion . . . we are now entirely dispersed. The student is converted into the warrior . . ."

1781, March. A skirmish takes place at the College. General Graham, attached to Arnold's forces at Portsmouth, recorded the incident without mentioning the specific date:

"At Williamsburg a picket guard of the 80th was posted at a point on the high road where two roads branched off; on one side of the road was a tavern with a piazza in front, on the other a ditch from which the earth had been thrown out, forming a parapet and serving as a fence to the College garden. At the fork where the picket was posted, the ground was covered with trees except where they had been cleared away to form the road. As usual at outposts, a large fire was made, round which the soldiers not on duty as sentinels were lying. It had begun to rain, and the lieutenant in command of the 80th ordered the men to stand to their arms, and had just moved them to the shelter afforded by the piazza, when a volley was fired in the direction of the blazing fire from the brushwood under the trees -- a company of young men, students at the university, composing a volunteer corps, having managed to creep into the thicket unobserved. The lieutenant, with great presence of mind moved his picket across the road, leaping the ditch and forming them behind the parapet, he fired in the direction from which the shots came, but whether any of the young men suffered is unknown, but not a British soldier, not even any of the sentinels, who manfully kept their posts, were hurt."

1781, June 25. Lord Cornwallis entered Williamsburg and set up headquarters in the President's House where he remained for 10 days, before sailing down the James. St. George Tucker reported: "Our friend Madison and his lady (they have lost their son) were turned out of their house to make room for Lord Cornwallis. Happily the College afforded them an asylum. They refused the small privilege of drawing water from their own well . . ."

1781, September 4. Lafayette arrives in Williamsburg and the French use the College building as a hospital and erect an enormous common privy against the front of the building as a hospital, a three-story scaffolding of rough boards. Dr. James Tilton, a visiting American physician, noted "doors opened upon each floor of the hospital; and all manner of filth and excrementitious matters were dropped and thrown down this common

sewer into the pit below. The stink of nastiness perfumed the whole house . . . and all the air within the wards."

1781, September 9. Lafayette inspects and reviews troops at their camp near the College.

1781, September 14. General George Washington arrives in Williamsburg and was greeted west of town by Lt. Col. St. George Tucker of the Virginia militia, Governor Thomas Nelson and the Marquis de Lafayette and escorted into town, past the College, to the home of George Wythe which he made his headquarters.

1781, September 15. Maj. Ebenezer Denny notes "we have an elegant encampment close to town, behind William and Mary College" where Baron von Steuben drilled troops.

1781, September 23. Chaplain Evans of the American army noted "This College is three stories high and has a very good apparatus and a large library of ancient authors, but the modern authors are few."

1781, Oct. 15. Concern about the safety of the library and scientific apparatus, housed in the College building while it is being used as a hospital, is expressed to John Blair, a former bursar, in a letter to Washington. And George Wythe wrote Washington on October 25 to remind him that "in one apartment of the College a costly library and in another a valuable apparatus for making philosophical experiments" should be protected from "any injury to those articles and the places in which they are deposited." The College's library of about 3,000 volumes was the second largest academic book collection in America. The apparatus -- prisms, mirrors, a barometer, jars, syphons, tubes, microscope, etc. -- was purchased in London in 1767 by Dr. William Small. The books and equipment survived the French occupation, but were destroyed by fire in the mid-19th century.

1781, October 19. Cornwallis surrendered his forces at Yorktown and many of the leading generals on both sides move to Williamsburg where a series of dinner parties were held. British prisoners were marched off to camps and the French continue to stay in Williamsburg. The College was used as a French hospital until June 1781.

1781, November 22. The President's House, while occupied by 22 wounded French officers, was accidentally gutted by fire. "Fortunately," Baron von Cloisen noted, "the fire did not reach the main part of the building (the College itself) and all the wounded officers who were in this wing were removed in time." Madison lost a large part of his library and several very fine physics instruments -- and some of Henley's personal items he was holding until after the war! Some of Madison's furniture was saved.

Rochambeau, the French commander, reported to Washington in December after fire gutted the Governor's Palace which was also being used as a French hospital, that he had "caused the precautions to be tripled for the police of the establishment of our hospital at the College" to prevent a third fire. Rochambeau negotiated with Madison for payment of the loss to the College.

1782, June 14. The French government paid L1,532 in reparations for



damage to the President's House. Rebuilding of the structure was completed by late fall 1786.

1782, August 9. The College publishes a notice in the Richmond and Williamsburg newspapers that "the University of William and Mary is now open for the reception of students. The commencement of public lectures is postponed until the first Monday in October . . . but the professors will give instructions privately to those who attend before the above-mentioned time. Many respectable families in town will board students upon reasonable terms . . ."

1782, October. William and Mary reopens but the loss of approximately three-fourths of its revenue derived from the Crown is a serious handicap. By 1795 there were about 50 or 60 students in the Grammar School which had been reestablished and about 30 or 40 in the philosophy and law schools.

1782, December. Thomas Jefferson received an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Two other honorary degrees were awarded earlier in the year. Marquis de Chastellux received a Doctor of Civil Law in March and Dr. Jean Francois Coste, chief physician of the French army, received a Doctor of Physic degree in June. (Lafayette was honored in 1824 with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.)

1782, December 11. The Rev. Francis Asbury, bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was in Williamsburg and records that "the exterior of the College (is) not splendid and (there are) but few students . . ."

1783, May 1. A public celebration is held in Williamsburg to mark the signing in Paris of the provisional articles of peace with Great Britain. A procession of city officials and citizens marched to the courthouse and then to the College to "make (read) proclamation." The College bell and others in the city were rung and then everyone proceeded to the Raleigh Tavern to "pass the rest of the day."

1783, Autumn. Dr. Johann Davis Schoepf, a German surgeon who served with the British, notes that there are seven professors at William and Mary and about 50 students. "Some of them live in commodious rooms in the College, the others lodge and board in the town, paying 36-40 Pd. Virginia a year. The total expense of a student can be met for 100 Pd. Virginia (333 Spanish dollars).

1784. President James Madison teaches political economy and international law, the first time these subjects were taught in an American college.

1784, May 8. Title to the public lands in and near Williamsburg and Jamestown not in use by the state was vested by the General Assembly in the College. This property included the Palace grounds and the vineyard tract near Williamsburg.

1784, July 20. A "well chosen collection" of 200 volumes was presented to the College library by Louis XVI, King of France. The gift was arranged by the Marquis de Chastellux.

## *Alumni Prominent in the American Revolution*

**BLAIR, John (Jr.)**

*b. 1732, Williamsburg, Va; d. 31 August 1800, Williamsburg, Va. Wm & Mary: about 1750; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1800.*

In 1766 John Blair first entered the Virginia House of Burgesses as the representative from the College of William and Mary and served successive terms through the 1770 session. When the House was formally dissolved in 1769, Blair joined the protest meeting at Williamsburg's Raleigh Tavern that drafted the non-importation agreement binding subscribers to boycott certain British goods—a measure taken against Britain's taxation policies toward the American Colonies. He later signed the Associations of 22 June 1770 and 27 May 1774 that similarly boycotted specific British goods.

John Blair is a fine example of a man who served not only his alma mater, but also his state and his nation. Besides this position as the College's representative in colonial government, he was its bursar from 1760 to 1777. As a Virginian, he was a lawyer, a judge, a Chief Justice on the Court of Appeals, a member of the committee responsible for the plan of Commonwealth government—framing a Declaration of Rights and a new constitution in June 1776—and a member of the Privy Council. To the latter post he was elected in June 1776 and reelected in May 1777. As an American he was a delegate to the 1787 Philadelphia Convention that revised the Articles of Confederation and framed the present Constitution.

Among the members of the Virginia delegation to the 1787 convention, only Blair, George Washington and James Madison voted to adopt the Constitution. Blair again showed his firm support for the nation's guiding document during the 1788 Virginia Convention, called to consider ratification of the proposed Constitution.

In September 1789 president George Washington rewarded Blair's ability and integrity by appointing him Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

**BLAND, Richard**

*b. 6 May 1710, Va; d. 26 October 1776, Williamsburg, Va. Wm & Mary: about 1720; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1758.*

A member of the House of Burgesses from 1742 to 1775 and an effective pamphleteer, Richard Bland actively supported colonial rights. Although he zealously opposed the Stamp Act in 1764, he served as a member of the committee that drew up the address to the king, the memorial to the lords and the remonstrance to the House of Commons on the taxation of Virginia imposed by other than the Colony's own legislature. He again opposed Patrick Henry's resolutions the following year because he did not desire to break with Britain until and unless there was no recourse.

In March 1766 Bland published "An Inquiry into the Rights of the British Colonies," a pamphlet stating the Colonies' constitutional position vis-a-vis the stamp tax. Again in 1768 he was a member of the committee protesting British taxation measures to parliament. Following the formal dissolution of the House in 1769, Bland met with other burgesses at Williamsburg's Raleigh Tavern and drafted the non-importation agreement, which he was one of the first to sign.

Appointed to the Committee of Correspondence in 1773 and to the Committee of Safety in 1775 and 1776, Bland was generally prominent in the committees of the revolutionary conventions during the mid-1770s. He was elected a delegate to the first Continental Congress in 1774 and to the second in 1775. However, he declined to serve a third time after his election 11 August 1775.



**BLAND, Theodoric**

*b. 21 March 1742, Prince George County, Va.; d. 1 June 1790, NY. Wm & Mary: about 1754.*

Shortly after receiving his M.D. from the University of Edinburgh in 1763, Theodoric Bland returned to Virginia for a career in medicine. His life as a planter after his retirement in 1771 eventually gave way to his staunch support of the colonial revolt. First appointed captain of the 1st Troop of Virginia Cavalry 13 June 1776, he then became colonel of the 1st Continental Dragoons in March 1779. His retirement from the army a short time later was followed by a career in politics.

Although initially opposed to the Federal Constitution, Bland acquiesced to the majority when the document was adopted and, in 1780, was elected a Virginia delegate to Congress, the first held under the recently framed Constitution. After three years in office, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates during the 1786/87, 1787/88 and 1788 sessions.



**BRAXTON, Carter**

*b. 10 September 1736, Newington, King and Queen County, Va; d. 10 October 1797, Richmond, Va. Wm & Mary: 1753-56; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1769.*

One of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, Carter Braxton served in the House of Burgesses for most of the 14 years from 1761 to 1775. He supported Patrick Henry's Stamp Act resolutions as well as signed, as did John Blair, Jr. and Richard Bland, the 1769 non-importation agreement protesting British taxation policies toward the American Colonies.

A member of the 1769 Virginia Convention and the 1774 Williamsburg Convention, Braxton served in the last House of Burgesses convened under British royal authority. He represented King William County in the revolutionary conventions of 1774, 1775 and 1776, and during the third Virginia Convention in 1775, was appointed to the Committee of Safety, the governing body of the colony until the state government was inaugurated.

On the death of Peyton Randolph, Braxton succeeded him as a member of Congress. He later served in the Virginia legislature and in the Council until his death.



**BRECKENRIDGE, James (BRECKINRIDGE?)**

*b. 7 March 1763, near Fincastle, Botetourt County, Va.; d. 13 May 1833, "Grove Hill," Botetourt County, Va. Wm & Mary: 1785.*

During the Revolutionary War James Breckenridge enlisted as a private with a corps of Botetourt riflemen. He was an officer under General Greene in North Carolina by 1781, later attaining the rank of major-general of the Virginia militia. After the Revolution Breckenridge enrolled in academic and law courses at the College of William and Mary, graduating in 1785.

Breckenridge practiced law before entering state politics, where he was a delegate from Botetourt County to the Virginia House of Delegates for 13 sessions between 1780 and 1824 and a leading member of Virginia's Federalist Party. Not only was he a member of Congress from 1809 to 1817, but also he served in the War of 1812.

Along with Thomas Jefferson, he was instrumental in founding the University of Virginia and a member of its first Board of Visitors.



#### **BROWN, John**

*b. 12 September 1757, near Staunton, Va; d. 28 August 1837, Frankfort, KY. Wm & Mary: 1778-80*

John Brown terminated his studies at New Jersey College (now Princeton University) to fight in the Revolutionary Army. However, after the war he continued at the College of William and Mary, studying law under George Wythe. He later moved to Kentucky in 1782, established a law practice and soon became interested in politics.

Brown represented the Kentucky district in the Virginia legislature in 1787, was a representative to the Confederation Congress that produced the Federal Constitution and served as the Kentucky delegate to the 1788 Virginia Convention that was called to ratify that immortal document. Although he had been opposed to adopting it, Brown nevertheless was chosen to represent the Kentucky district in the first Congress held under the Constitution and served from 1789 to 1793. When Kentucky attained statehood in 1792, Brown became the United States Senator, continuing in office from 1793 to 1805.



#### **CABELL, Samuel Jordan**

*b. 15 December 1756, Amherst County, Va; d. 4 August 1818, Nelson County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1773-75*

When the Colonies revolted against Britain, Samuel Jordan Cabell left the College of William and Mary, raised a company of riflemen from Amherst County and entered the service as a captain in the Continental Army. His promotions came rapidly and he quickly attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel by 1779. At the fall of Charleston 12 May 1780, he was taken prisoner and held 14 months.

Politically a Republican and strong supporter of Thomas Jefferson, Cabell was a member not only of the Virginia legislature for many years, but also of the 1788 convention that ratified the Federal Constitution--voting against its adoption--and of the House of Representatives from 1795 to 1803.



#### **CABELL, William (Jr.)**

*b. 13 March 1729/30, Va; d. 23 March 1798, Va. Wm & Mary:*

Although supporting evidence is lacking, it was traditionally believed that William Cabell Jr. of Union Hill, Amherst County, Virginia attended the College of William and Mary.

During his early 20s, he held the offices of church vestryman and sheriff as well as being a planter. By 1761 his accomplishments included first lieutenant for Amherst County, first presiding magistrate of the county court, first surveyor, first coroner and a church warden. Active as a Burgess during the pre-Revolutionary era, Cabell strove for reconciliation with Britain at the time of the Stamp Act crisis in the mid-1760s. In 1769, however, he signed the non-importation agreement binding signatories to boycott certain British goods as a protest against Britain's taxation policies.

Cabell served as a delegate to all Virginia's revolutionary conventions, firmly supporting measures favoring the patriots' cause. Elected to the Committee of Safety when it was initially organized, he was reelected during its organization in January 1776. During his term of office in the Virginia Assembly at the time of the Revolution, Cabell was a member of the famous committee that drafted Virginia's Declaration of Rights and plan of government for the Commonwealth.

The first senator from his district to the assembly under state government, Cabell retired in 1781 because of Virginia's rotation rule. However, he was immediately elected a delegate from 1781 to 1783 and from 1787 to 1788. As a member of the 1788 Virginia Convention, he is on record as having voted against ratification of the proposed Federal Constitution.

Soon after 1788 he retired from political life to his plantation, but remained a trustee of Hampden-Sydney College until his death.

**CARR, Dabney**

*b. 26 October 1743, Louisa County, Va; d. 16 May 1773, Va. Wm & Mary: about 1761-62.*

The brother-in-law of Thomas Jefferson, Dabney Carr was described by the third president as a "man of sound judgment and inflexible purpose, and of a powerful eloquence." During a term in the Virginia House of Burgesses, Carr moved the resolution--adopted 3 March 1773--to appoint intercolonial Committees of Correspondence to inform one another of British encroachment on colonial rights. His death at 29 abruptly ended a promising political career.



**CARRINGTON, Paul**

*b. 16 March 1733, Va; d. 23 June 1818, Charlotte County, Va. Wm & Mary: before 1748?*

At about 17, Paul Carrington began studying law under Colonel Clement Read of Lunenburg (later Charlotte) County, and four years later opened what proved to be a very successful law practice. By 1761 he held the rank of major of the Lunenburg militia, and was made colonel in 1764. Like many other Virginians of his time, he strongly supported colonial rights while serving in the House of Burgesses from 1765 to 1775--although he did vote against Patrick Henry's Stamp Act resolutions.

Active in politics, Carrington served on the Committee of Safety for its duration and attended all the revolutionary conventions from 1774 to 1776, including the famous 1776 Virginia Convention which reported the Declaration of Rights and the Virginia Constitution--as a member of the committee he voted to approve the constitution.

Carrington supported the Virginia Convention resolutions instructing the state's delegates in Congress to propose independence from Britain. His later career included membership in the newly organized Virginia Senate, a judgeship, Chief Justice of the General Court and one of the five judges on the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals.



**CARRINGTON, Paul (Jr.)**

*b. about 1764; d. 8 January 1816  
Wm & Mary: 1783?*

Paul Carrington, the sone of Colonel Paul Carrington, served in the Revolutionary Army and, at the close of the war, completed his studies at the College of William and Mary--about 1783. During his life he was a lawyer, served on the state legislature and was appointed judge to the Superior Court of Virginia.



**CARY, Archibald**

*b. 24 January 1721, Williamsburg, Va; d. 26 February 1787, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1740*

A member of the House of Burgesses from 1756 to 1776, Archibald Cary was an active proponent of the revolutionary cause. Although he opposed Patrick Henry's 1765 resolutions against the Stamp Act, deeming them premature, Cary later signed the Embargo Associations of 1769, 1770 and 1774. He was appointed a member of the intercolonial Committee of Correspondence and served on all Virginia's revolutionary conventions--in 1774, 1775 and 1776.

Following the Revolutionary War Cary pursued his interest in planting, industry and state politics, serving as speaker of the Virginia Senate from 1776 until his death more than a decade later.



**DIGGES, Dudley**

*b. 1718; d. 3 June 1790, Williamsburg, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1758*

Interrupting his law practice after several years, Dudley Digges began his political career as a burgess from York County, serving from 1752 to 1776. During the Revolution he was not only a member of all the Virginia conventions and on the Committee of Correspondence and the Committee of Safety, but also the examiner of claims for Virginia.

After the war Digges served for many years on the board of Eastern State Hospital, the first public mental institution in America, and held the office of president of the board at the time of his death.

**EGGLESTON, Joseph**

*b. 24 November 1754, Amelia County, Va; d. 13 February 1811, Amelia County, Va.*

*Wm & Mary: 1773-76*

Joseph Eggleston left the College of William and Mary during the Revolutionary War to join the American Army. He proceeded to distinguish himself as a cavalry officer, was promoted to the rank of major while serving under Colonel Henry Lee and Greene, and earned high praise in the Battles of Guilford Court House, March 1781, and Eutaw Springs, September 1781.

At the close of the war Eggleston served several years in the Virginia Assembly and later was a member of Congress from 1798 to 1801. He became a justice of the peace in 1801, a position he retained until his death.



**FLEMING, William**

*b. 6 July 1736, Cumberland, Va; d. 15 February 1824, Va.*

*Wm & Mary: 1763*

From 1772 to 1775, William Fleming served in the House of Burgesses and later became a delegate to the revolutionary conventions in 1775 and 1776. In the fifth May 1776 Convention he was a member of the Committee on Independence. After a short period as a delegate in the Virginia Assembly, Fleming was appointed judge of the General Court in 1788. Several years elapsed before he became a judge on the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, a position he held till his death.



**HARDY, Samuel**

*b. about 1758, Isle of Wight County, Va; d. 17 October 1785, New York City, NY*

*Wm & Mary: 1778*

On 30 July 1778 Samuel Hardy was initiated into the Phi Beta Kappa Society, founded at the College of William and Mary in 1776. Years later he was responsible for obtaining the charters for the Harvard and Yale Societies from the original chapter.

Hardy's rich career includes service as a lawyer, state legislator, member of the Privy Council--appointed 1781--and Virginia delegate to the Continental Congress from 1783 to his death in 1785.



**HARRISON, Benjamin**

*b. 5 April 1726, Berkeley, Charles City County, Va; d. 24 April 1791, Va.*

*Wm & Mary: about 1745; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1773.*

The father of William Henry Harrison, ninth president of the United States, Benjamin Harrison left the College of William and Mary without graduating after a misunderstanding with a professor. His active and celebrated political life began with his election to the House of Burgesses in 1749, a position he retained until 1775. Although he was opposed to the Stamp Act, Harrison could not agree to support Patrick Henry's Stamp Act resolutions.

Appointed to the Committee of Correspondence, which coordinated colonial resistance to British encroachment on colonial rights, Harrison also served as a member of the 1774, 1775 and 1776 Virginia revolutionary conventions. He was chosen as delegate to the first Continental Congress in 1774 and returned to each session until he resigned in October 1777.

Harrison presided not only over the initial debates on the Articles of Confederation, but also over the Congressional debates on the Declaration of Independence. His nickname as 'The Signer' originates with his signing of that historic document.

Soon after returning to state government, Harrison was chosen speaker in the newly organized House of Delegates, the first under the new Virginia Constitution, and served for three years, from 1778 to 1781. In November 1781, he became Governor of Virginia, serving until November 1784--three years being the maximum a person was allowed to serve, under the Virginia Constitution. Again elected to the Virginia House of Delegates, Harrison was a member of the 1788 Virginia Convention that ratified the United States Constitution--although he himself opposed it as presented. Once the Constitution was ratified, however, he gave it his full support.

**INNES, James**

*b. 1754, Caroline County, Va; d. 2 August 1798, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: 1770-72; Rector of the Board of Visitors, about 1783.*

James Innes' controversial career began at the College of William and Mary when his appointment as usher was recalled by the primarily Loyalist faculty because of his activities at the outset of the Revolution. Involved in several major battles, Innes held the ranks of captain of a group of Williamsburg volunteers, lieutenant colonel of the 15th Virginia Regiment and aide to General George Washington. Before resigning his commission, he fought at Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth.

In 1778 Innes again was involved in the war effort as navy commissioner, and in 1779 he served as president of the board of war for Virginia. His turn toward politics at this time with his election to the Virginia Assembly from 1780 to 1782 was again interrupted when Washington requested he raise a local regiment. Innes complied, commanding the regiment at the Battle of Yorktown.

A distinguished lawyer, Innes surprised many by refusing the position of the army's judge-advocate, a post to which he was elected by the Continental Congress 9 July 1782. His ability as an orator was well-known to his contemporaries, some considering him as effective as Patrick Henry. In fact, during the 1788 Virginia Convention called to consider ratification of the proposed U.S. Constitution, proponents chose him to make the final appeal for the Constitution's adoption without amendment.

From 1785 to 1787 he again served in the Virginia Assembly. Then, in November 1786, he was elected Virginia's attorney general, succeeding Edmund Randolph. It is believed that ill health made him decline President Washington's later offer of the post of United States Attorney General.



**JEFFERSON, Thomas**

*b. 2 April 1743, "Shadwell," Goochland (now Albemarle) County, Va; d. 4 July 1826, "Monticello," Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1760-62; Honorary LL.D. conferred, 1782*

Thomas Jefferson began his long and illustrious career studying law under Judge George Wythe and was admitted to the bar in 1767. While a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses from 1769 to 1775, he joined Patrick Henry, Dabney Carr, Richard Henry Lee and Thomas Lightfoot Lee in 1773 to suggest intercolonial Committees of Correspondence to inform the American Colonies of British encroachment on colonial liberties. He himself was a member of that committee when the suggestion was accepted.

In 1774 Jefferson's famous "Summary View of the Rights of British Americans" was published. The following year he was elected by the Virginia convention to serve in Congress as alternate to Peyton Randolph.

Jefferson and four others were chosen to draw up a declaration of independence after a resolution calling for the independence of the Colonies was introduced in Congress 7 June 1776 by Richard Henry Lee, a Virginia delegate, at the insistence of the earlier Virginia convention. Primarily the creation of Jefferson, the document was adopted 4 July 1776, with Jefferson among the signers.

In September 1776 Jefferson retired from Congress and entered the Virginia House of Delegates, helping to revise the laws of Virginia during his term of office. Shortly after, he was elected Governor of Virginia, serving from June 1779 to 1781.

Jefferson's return to Congress in 1783 marks a turning point in his career, with service as foreign diplomat, secretary of state under President Washington from 1790 to 1793, second United States vice-president and third United States President from 1801 to 1809. In 1819 he founded the University of Virginia.



**JONES, Walter**

*b. 18 December 1745, Va; d. 31 December 1815, Westmoreland County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1760-63;*

After receiving his M.D. from Edinburgh in 1770, Walter Jones returned to Virginia, settling in Northumberland County. His reputation as physician and scholar earned him the appointment as physician-general of the hospital in the middle department by Congress in April 1777. A delegate to the 1788 Virginia Constitutional Convention, Jones also served in Congress from 1797 to 1799 and again from 1803 to 1811.



**McCLURG, James**

*b. about 1746, near Hampton, Elizabeth City County, Va; d. 9 July 1823, Richmond, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1756-63*

In 1770 James McClurg received his M.D. from the University of Edinburgh, with subsequent study in Paris and London. While in the British capitol he published "Experiments upon the Human Bile and Reflections on the Biliary Secretions" in 1772, an essay shortly thereafter translated throughout Europe.

McClurg returned to Virginia about 1773 to practice medicine in Williamsburg. He served as surgeon in the Virginia militia during the Revolutionary War and official records often refer to him as physician-general and state director of hospitals. In 1779 he was appointed Professor of Anatomy and Medicine at the College of William and Mary, a position which was, however, discontinued in 1783. It is believed that by this date McClurg had moved to Richmond.

In 1782-83 James Madison tried unsuccessfully to have him appointed United States Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Chosen a member of the Virginia delegation to the 1787 Philadelphia Convention that framed the United States Constitution, McClurg advocated a strong executive branch of government, with life tenure for the president, and federal veto power over state laws. He continued in state government later in life as a member of Virginia's Executive Council.



#### MADISON, James

*b. 27 August 1749, near Staunton, Va; d. 6 March 1812, Williamsburg, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1770-72*

James Madison, the son of John Madison and the cousin of President James Madison, graduated from the College of William and Mary with honors. He continued law studies under George Wythe, and although admitted to the bar, did not initiate a practice. Instead, two years after graduating, Madison became Professor of Natural Philosophy and Mathematics at the College.

In 1775 Madison took a leave of absence for further study in Britain, where he was ordained a minister in the Anglican Church. Shortly after returning to Williamsburg to resume his professorship, he was chosen President of the College in 1777, although he failed to satisfy the minimum age requirement by two years. He held the prestigious position until his death.

Madison kept the spirit of the College alive during the difficult later years of the Revolution. In the early 1780s when the war front moved south, he

was forced to suspend classes; he also saw the College buildings occupied, in turn, by the British, French and American forces. When classes were finally resumed after a year and a half, he helped revive the College by holding chairs in various departments in addition to maintaining his duties as chief administrator. By 1784 there were sufficient faculty members for him to relinquish his professorship of mathematics, but he retained the chair of professor of natural and moral philosophy.

Madison's support of the Colonies in their dispute with Britain had its humorous dimensions. It is reputed that he once spoke, in obvious disdain of Britain, of Heaven as a republic rather than as a kingdom! Militarily, he was commissioned captain 18 August 1777 of a militia company comprised of William and Mary students, who fought on several occasions during the war.

His talents also included surveying and he was not only a member of the commission that established the boundary between Pennsylvania and Virginia, but also responsible for the preliminary surveys on which an 1807 map of Virginia was based--the standard for many years.

After the Revolutionary War Madison played a prominent role in reorganizing the Episcopal Church in Virginia. In 1790 he became the first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, but his responsibilities at the College prevented him from playing a larger role in church affairs. He was awarded the honorary degree of D.D. in 1785 by the University of Pennsylvania.



#### MARSHALL, John

*b. 24 September 1755, near Germantown, Prince William (now Fauquier) County, Va; d. 6 July 1835, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: about 1780; Member of Phi Beta Kappa Society.*

Active involvement in the Revolutionary War began for John Marshall with his appointment as lieutenant in a regiment of Minutemen from Culpeper, Orange and Fauquier Counties in 1775. The following year he joined the Continental Army in the 3rd Virginia Regiment and was promoted to captain in 1777. Marshall's service in many of the principal battles of the war including Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth culminated after a winter with General Washington at Valley Forge.

After his regiment's term of enlistment expired earlier in the year, Marshall returned to Virginia in the winter of 1779-80 to await a new

command. That spring he enrolled at the College of William and Mary for a series of law lectures under George Wythe, who occupied the chair of law at the College. It is notable that this was the first chair of law in North America, created by then Governor Jefferson of Virginia by diverting funds originally intended for a chair in theology. Before his term at the College, Marshall had only studied with private tutors; yet despite this lack of formal education, he was admitted to the bar 28 August 1780.

When Virginia was invaded by General Alexander Leslie in October, Marshall rejoined the army under Baron Steuben and remained until his resignation January 1781. In 1782 he was elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses and by fall he was a member of the Virginia Executive Council. He resigned that position early spring 1784.

While a member of the Virginia convention that ratified the United States Constitution in the fall of 1787, Marshall gained recognition as an eloquent advocate of that historic document and was gradually accepted as a leader of the Federalist faction in Virginia. Elected a member of Congress in 1799, he was appointed Secretary of State in 1800 and Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court early in 1801. His 34 years of service and the judicial opinions he handed down have left an unmistakable imprint on the American system of constitutional law.

It is worth noting that Marshall also presided over the Aaron Burr treason trial in Richmond, Virginia, along with Judge Cyrus Griffin.



#### MASON, Stevens Thomson

*b. 29 December 1760, "Chippawamsie," Stafford County, Va; d. 10 May 1803, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: 1780*

By the time he was 20 years old, Stevens Thomson Mason had earned the rank of colonel in the Revolutionary Army. His military career was followed by membership in the Virginia House of Burgesses during the 1783 session and in 1787 he was elected a senator from Virginia. He served at the 1788 Virginia Convention that was called to consider ratification of the proposed Federal Constitution and ended his career as a United States senator, elected in 1794.

Popular among his contemporaries, Mason was known for his quick wit, biting sarcasm and debating ability. A consistent opponent of Federalism, he strongly supported Thomas Jefferson and his Republicanism.

#### MASSIE, Thomas

*b. 22 August 1747; d. 2 February 1834, Level Green, Nelson County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1759/63, Grammar School*

A captain in the Revolutionary Army from 1775 to 1778, Thomas Massie was promoted to major during the northern campaign. As aide-de-camp to General Nelson, he served with him from the winter of 1780-81 to the fall of Yorktown. In 1808 he became one of the first magistrates in Nelson County.



#### MERCER, James

*b. 26 February 1736; d. 31 October 1793, Richmond, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1752*

Although he was active in the military during the French and Indian War, James Mercer turned his attention exclusively to politics during the Revolutionary War. First elected to the House of Burgesses in 1762, he served on the Committees of Correspondence and of Safety, which governed Virginia after the colonial system declined and until state government was inaugurated in 1776.

A member of every Virginia convention during the Revolutionary period, Mercer was active on the committee assigned to draft a declaration of rights and a new plan of government for Virginia in 1776. After serving as delegate to the 1779-80 Continental Congress, he was appointed judge of the General Court in 1779 and later of the first Court of Appeals. In 1789 he became one of the five judges on the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals.



#### MERCER, John Francis

*b. 17 May 1759, "Marlborough," Stafford County, Va; d. 30 August 1821,  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: 1774-75*



John Mercer, the half-brother of James Mercer, played an active part in the Revolutionary War, initially enlisting as a lieutenant with the 3rd Virginia Regiment early in 1776. Promoted to captain in 1777, he became aide-de-camp to General Charles Lee in 1778 and resigned in October 1779 when Lee was disgraced at the Battle of Monmouth.

Mercer returned to Virginia and re-entered the war late in 1780 as lieutenant-colonel of the infantry. He served both with various brigades and under Lafayette, and was present at the Battle of Yorktown, including the surrender of Cornwallis.

While in Virginia during the winter of 1779 and until he returned to active duty, Mercer studied law in Williamsburg under Thomas Jefferson, then Governor of Virginia. In 1782 and again in 1785-86, he was a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses; and in December 1782 he was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress replacing Edmund Randolph, who had resigned. Mercer was returned to the Congress the following year.

A Maryland delegate to the convention that framed the Federal Constitution in 1787, Mercer strenuously opposed what he saw to be its centralizing character. His later career included membership in Congress from 1792 to 1794, in the Maryland legislature from 1788 to 1789, 1791 to 1792, 1800 to 1801 and 1803 to 1806, and the governorship of Maryland from 1801 to 1803.



#### MONROE, James

*b. 28 April 1758, Westmoreland County, Va; d. 4 July 1831, New York City, NY*

*Wm & Mary: 1774-76*

James Monroe, the fifth president of the United States, left the College of William and Mary to join the Revolutionary Army at the age of 18. At first a cadet in Mercer's regiment, he later enlisted as a lieutenant in a Virginia regiment of the Continental line. By 1777 he was a major, and his record included service in the Battles of Harlem, White Plains, Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth.

In 1780, toward the close of the war, he began studying law under Thomas Jefferson, then Governor of Virginia. After a short term as military commissioner for Virginia, Monroe began his rich political career in 1782 as a member of the Virginia legislature, later serving on Virginia's Executive Council.

Monroe returned to the Virginia legislature in 1786 after serving three years as delegate to the Confederation Congress from 1783 to 1786. In 1788 he was a delegate to the Virginia convention that voted on ratifying the Federal Constitution, to which he was opposed. His steps to the presidency include United States senator from 1790 to 1794, minister to France 1794, Governor of Virginia from 1799 to 1802 and again from January to December 1811, and finally Secretary of State under President James Madison, who appointed Monroe to the prestigious post in 1811.



#### NELSON, Roger

*b. 1759, near Point of Rocks, Frederick County, Md; d. 7 June 1815, Frederick, Md.*

*Wm & Mary: about 1775*

On 15 July 1780, Roger Nelson was commissioned a lieutenant in the 5th Regiment of the Maryland line and immediately sent south to join the army under General Gates' command. Wounded and taken prisoner at the Battle of Camden, he spent several months of hardship on British prison ships before being exchanged and then transferred to a cavalry regiment under Colonel William Washington. Nelson saw fighting at Guilford Court House and Eutaw Springs and was present at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. By the close of his military career, he had attained the rank of brigadier-general.

After returning from the war Nelson studied law, was admitted to the bar about 1785 and became a very successful lawyer. Politically a Democrat, he served in the Maryland legislature for many years, was a member of Congress from 1804 to 1810 and held the post of judge in the 6th judicial circuit in Maryland from 1810 to his death.



#### NICHOLAS, George

*b. about 1754, Williamsburg, Va; d. June 1799, Ky.*

*Wm & Mary: 1772*

The son of Robert Carter Nicholas, George Nicholas entered the service at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War and served with distinction, attaining the rank of colonel. He studied law after the war and soon became involved in politics as a leading member of the House of Delegates. During the 1788 Virginia Convention, he proved an ardent advocate of the Constitution.

In 1790 Nicholas moved to Kentucky, retained his interest in politics and was largely responsible for drafting the state constitution in 1792. When Kentucky attained statehood, he served as its first attorney general. His leading role in framing and supporting Thomas Jefferson's 1798 anti-Federalist resolutions made him one of the main actors in the rise of the Republican Party in Kentucky.



#### NICHOLAS, Robert Carter

*b. 28 January 1728, Va; d. 8 September 1780, Hanover County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1745; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1761.*

After graduating from the College of William and Mary, Robert Carter Nicholas studied law and was soon recognized as the authority of the provincial bar. First elected in 1756, he was a leading member of the Virginia House of Burgesses for nearly two decades.

Politically Nicholas opposed the revolutionary measures, aligning himself with the conservatives. Yet he was against complete submission to British rule. During his career in colonial government, he opposed Patrick Henry's Stamp Act resolutions in 1765, was instrumental in exposing fraud in the state treasury in 1766, and helped frame the resolutions to Parliament protesting Britain's attitude on taxing the Colonies and on transporting criminals to England for trial in 1769.

A member of the Committee of Correspondence in 1773 and treasurer of the Virginia Colony from 1766 to 1777, Nicholas also found time to publish. In 1774 appeared his pamphlet, "Considerations on the Present State of Virginia Examined,"--a reply to Attorney General John Randolph's criticism of the Virginia Assembly's defiance of royal authority.

When the revolutionary movement started gathering momentum, Nicholas kept apace, being elected a member to every Virginia revolutionary convention and chosen president *pro tempore* at the July 1775 convention. He was appointed to the committee charged with drafting a declaration of rights and a new plan of government for Virginia in 1776 and elected a member of the House of Delegates when the new state government was organized the following year. In 1779 he became a judge of the High Court of Chancery and later sat on the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals.

Nicholas was the father of George Nicholas, John Nicholas, Wilson Cary Nicholas and Philip Norborne Nicholas, all four of whom were educated at the College of William and Mary.



#### NICHOLAS, Wilson Cary

*b. 31 January 1761, Williamsburg, Va; d. 10 October 1820, Albemarle County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1779*

Wilson Cary Nicholas, one of four sons of Robert Carter Nicholas, withdrew from the College of William and Mary in 1779 to join the Revolutionary Army. As an officer he commanded Washington's Life Guard until it was disbanded in 1783. The following year he was elected to the House of Delegates and remained a member until 1789.

A member of the 1788 Virginia Convention that considered the proposed Federal Constitution, Nicholas staunchly supported the historic document. Politically aligned with the Jefferson administration and Republicanism, he served the country with honor during his term of office in the U.S. Senate from 1800 to 1804 when he replaced Henry Tazewell.

After his resignation in 1804, Nicholas became collector of the ports of Norfolk and Portsmouth from 1804 to 1807. He returned to Congress from 1807 to 1809 but was forced to retire from public life for a brief period because of ill health. In 1814 he was elected Governor of Virginia and served till 1817. During his term as governor, he collaborated with Thomas Jefferson in founding the University of Virginia.



#### PAGE, Carter

*b. 1758, North End, Gloucester (now Mathews) County, Va; d. April 1825, Cumberland County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1771-76*

The cousin of Governor John Page, Carter Page left the College of William and Mary in 1776 to join the Revolutionary Army. During his period of service he not only achieved the rank of major, but was aide-de-camp to General Lafayette in the campaign against Cornwallis at Yorktown.

**PAGE, John**

*b. 17 April 1743, "Rosewell," Gloucester County, Va; d. 11 October 1808, Richmond, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1756-63; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1764*

The ingenious and imaginative John Page began his political life as a member of the House of Burgesses, representing the College of William and Mary. Later a member of the colonial council, he also saw service on the Committee of Public Safety, as Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth under Patrick Henry and as a militia officer for Gloucester County.

When requested to raise a militia regiment from Gloucester County to repel a British invasion, Page eagerly complied, even contributing lead for musket balls from the window casements of his plantation home, "Rosewell"!

In 1776 Page participated in the convention that framed the Virginia Constitution, and after the war, represented Gloucester County in almost all sessions of the Virginia Assembly until 1789. That year he was elected to Congress, where he served for nearly a decade from 1789 to 1797. Toward the end of his career, he was chosen as Governor of Virginia from 1802 to 1805.

A man of diverse interests, Page studied astronomy and conducted scientific experiments, at one point serving as president of Williamsburg's Society for the Advancement of Useful Knowledge, modeled after the Royal Society of London.



**PAGE, Robert**

*b. 1764, "North End," Gloucester (now Mathews) County, Va; d. 1 January 1840, Clarke County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1776*

As his brother, Carter, did before him, Robert Page left the College of William and Mary at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War to join the army, eventually attaining the rank of captain of infantry. Toward the close of the war, he became a member of Congress from Virginia, serving from 1799 to 1801.

**PLATER, George**

*b. 8 November 1735, "Sotterley," near Leonardtown, St. Mary's County, Md; d. 10 February 1792.  
Wm & Mary: 1751-53*

George Plater began his long career of public service in Maryland as a lawyer. In 1757 he was appointed justice of the peace, an office he held till 1771, and became a delegate to the lower house of the Maryland Assembly, serving until 1766. For three years, from 1771 to 1774, he also served on Maryland's Executive Council.

Plater's supportive role in the revolutionary effort began in February 1776 when he was appointed by Maryland's Council of Safety to collect funds for a military operation against Canada. The following month he was chosen by the same council to help coordinate the construction of beacons on opposite banks of the Potomac River, a task done in cooperation with Virginia commissioners. Approximately 20 beacons were built, standing five miles from one another.

In May 1776 Plater received an appointment to the Council of Safety and by the fall was a member of the committee called to draft a declaration, charter of rights and plan of government for Maryland. He later represented Maryland at the Continental Congress from 1778 to 1780.

After the Revolution, Plater's public service included state senator, presiding officer at the 1788 Maryland Convention that ratified the United States Constitution, judge on the Maryland Court of Appeals and sixth governor of Maryland, elected in November 1791. Unfortunately, Plater died soon after taking office.



**PRENTIS, Joseph**

*b. 24 January 1754, Williamsburg, Va; d. 18 June 1809, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1777*

After attending the Virginia revolutionary convention in December 1775, Joseph Prentis was appointed one of three commissioners in the admiralty in 1776. The following year he became a Williamsburg delegate to the first Virginia Assembly held under the new state constitution.

For a decade, beginning 1778, Prentis represented York County in the Virginia House of Delegates, eventually becoming the speaker of the house in 1788. He served on Governor Patrick Henry's Privy Council in 1779 and sat on the General Court from 1789 until his death in 1809.

#### **RANDOLPH, Beverly**

*b. about 1754, "Chatsworth," Henrico County, Va; d. February 1797, "Green Creek," Cumberland County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1770-72; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1784.*

A member of the Virginia Assembly during the Revolutionary War and an active supporter of American independence, Beverly Randolph was elected president of Virginia's Executive Council in 1787. The following year he succeeded his relative, Edmund Randolph, as governor of Virginia.



#### **RANDOLPH, Edmund\***

*b. 10 August 1753, "Tazewell Hall," Williamsburg, Va; d. 13 September 1813, Clarke County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1770*

Edmund Randolph distinguished himself at the College of William and Mary and, at 18, was chosen to read an oration during a ceremony commemorating the college's royal founders and benefactors. His education included the study of law under his father, John Randolph, an extremely able lawyer, and he was shortly thereafter admitted to the bar.

When the Revolutionary War erupted, Randolph's loyalist father disinherited him for supporting the colonial cause, but young Randolph persisted in the struggle for independence. He became aide-de-camp to General Washington on 15 August 1775, but was soon called to Williamsburg on the death of his illustrious uncle, Peyton Randolph.

In the spring of the following year Randolph served as the youngest delegate at the Virginia convention called to frame Virginia's Constitution and pass its bill of rights. In July 1776 he became attorney general of Virginia, the first to serve under the new state constitution. He not only represented Virginia for three years in the Continental Congress, from 1779 to 1781, but participated in the Annapolis Convention that persuaded Congress to call the Constitutional Convention in 1787. There he headed the Virginia delegation and introduced the "Virginia Plan" of government.

Although Randolph voted against the constitution framed at the Annapolis convention because he considered it insufficiently republican, he did vote to ratify it during the 1788 Virginia Convention. He reasoned that

ratification by a ninth state was necessary to secure the Union and that changes in the document could be effected later.

After being elected Governor of Virginia in 1786 and serving a full term, Randolph accepted Washington's appointment as attorney general of the United States upon the retirement of Jefferson in 1789. He later held the post of United States Secretary of State from 1794 to 1795, then resigning to return to his law practice. Aaron Burr was among his clients, Randolph serving as senior counsel at Burr's treason trial in Richmond, Virginia.

\*Edmund Randolph originally had the middle name Jenings (also spelled Jennings) but he did not customarily use it in public life.



#### **RANDOLPH, Peyton**

*b. about 1721, "Tazewell Hall," Williamsburg, Va; d. 22 October 1775, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: about 1739; Member of the Board of Visitors, about 1758.*

Upon completing his general education at the College of William and Mary, Peyton Randolph journeyed abroad to study law in the Middle Temple in Great Britain, where he was later admitted to the bar. He returned to the Colonies to begin a law practice and in 1748 was appointed the king's attorney general for the province. Because he spoke for the rights of the Virginia Colony as well as for the crown, he gained favor with other colonists and in that same year became a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses from Williamsburg. From 1752 to 1758 he represented the College in the House and from 1758 to 1775 again represented Williamsburg. While a member of that august body he headed the committee charged with the monumental task of revising the colonial laws.

In 1760 Randolph and his brother, John, signed the license of Patrick Henry to practice law after others had refused, on the grounds that Henry was not well enough versed in legal points.

Although Randolph was responsible for drawing up the address from the House of Burgesses to the king protesting the threatened passage of the Stamp Act in 1764, he deplored Patrick Henry's radical Stamp Act resolutions the following year. In 1766 he resigned his post as king's attorney general when elected speaker of the House of Burgesses replacing John Robinson, who had died.

Prominent in the opposition to oppressive British measures against the Colonies, Randolph chaired the Committee of Correspondence in 1773, a body instrumental in bringing about the first general congress in