

Philadelphia. In August 1774 and again in 1775 he presided over the Virginia revolutionary conventions and was the first choice of that body for delegate to the initial session of the Continental Congress, held from 5 September to 26 October 1774 in Philadelphia. Not only was he elected the Congress's first president, but in March 1775 he served as president to the second Continental Congress.

Two weeks later, however, Randolph returned to Williamsburg to preside over the General Assembly. He did resume his congressional seat in September, but died one month later. He is buried in the Wren Building chapel on the College of William and Mary's campus.



#### RANDOLPH, Thomas Mann

*b. 1741, "Tuckahoe," Goochland (now Albemarle) County, Va; d. 19 November 1793, "Tuckahoe," Goochland (now Albemarle) County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1761*

When his father died, Thomas Mann Randolph, as a child, was given into the care of Peter Jefferson, the father of Thomas Jefferson. His son, also named Thomas Mann, later married Thomas Jefferson's daughter Martha, further solidifying ties between the two families.

Randolph's political career included membership in the Virginia House of Burgesses, participation in the 1776 Virginia revolutionary convention and service on the Committee of Safety, the governing body in Virginia during the interim period between the breakdown of colonial government and the organization of the new state government.



#### READ, Thomas

*b. about 1735/40, "Bushy Forest," Lunenburg County, Va; d. 4 February 1817, "Ingleside," Charlotte County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1763-68*

Like George Washington and many other of his contemporaries, Thomas Read began his career as a surveyor. He served as deputy clerk of Charlotte County for five years, becoming county clerk in 1770 and holding the office until his death.

An ardent advocate of American independence, Read supported Patrick Henry during his term in the 1775 Virginia Revolutionary Convention. The following year he was again a member of the convention and appointed to the committee responsible for framing the Virginia Declaration of Rights and the state constitution.

As county lieutenant during the Revolutionary War, Read supplied the quotas of Charlotte County, collected recruits, marched with the county militia against Cornwallis and even supplemented the county's needs out of his own resources.

Continuing in politics after the war, Read strongly supported the policies of Jefferson and Madison and served in the 1788 Virginia Convention that ratified the United States Constitution.



#### SHORT, William

*b. 30 September 1759, "Spring Garden," Surry County, Va; d. 5 December 1849, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: about 1777-81*

While enrolled at the College of William and Mary, William Short served as president of the Phi Beta Kappa Society from 5 December 1778 to its suspension in 1781. His long career includes service on the Executive Council in the Virginia government from 1783 to 1784, assistant to Jefferson during his mission to France, charge d'affaires in France on Jefferson's return to the United States and commissioner in Madrid in 1793 to negotiate a treaty with Spain covering boundaries, navigation and commercial privileges in Florida and Mississippi.



#### SMITH, Daniel

*b. 29 October 1748, Stafford County, Va; d. 16 June 1818, "Rock Castle," Sumner County, Tn.  
Wm & Mary: about 1765*

During the Revolutionary War years, Daniel Smith frequently interrupted his career as a surveyor to serve in local militia units. He was made major in one unit he helped organize in Washington County in 1777. As a surveyor he and Thomas Walker, also an alumnus of the College of William and Mary, represented Virginia on the commission that extended the boundaries between Virginia and North Carolina. The following year 1780 he was appointed county sheriff.

Smith participated in the Battle of King's Mountain and in 1781 was a colonel in Washington County's militia. Toward the close of the war, in 1783, he moved to Cumberland and became an early settler of Tennessee.

Under the direction of the North Carolina legislature, Smith was appointed director of town planning for Nashville in 1784, a trustee of Davidson Academy in 1785, a county commissioner for Sumner County, Tennessee in 1787, a county commissioner for Sumner County, Tennessee in 1787 and Brigadier General of the Mero District militia in 1788.

In 1789 Smith served at the North Carolina Convention that ratified the United States Constitution. He later became secretary to the territory southwest of the Ohio River under Governor William Blount and was acting governor when Blount was absent from the territory. Also a member of the convention that framed the Tennessee constitution in 1796, Smith served as United States senator from Tennessee, succeeding Andrew Jackson. His terms were from 1798 to 1799 and from 1805 to 1809. Smith has the distinction of publishing the first map of Tennessee.



#### STUART, Archibald

*b. 19 March 1757, near Staunton, Va; d. 11 July 1832, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1778; 1780-81*

While studying at the College of William and Mary during the Revolution, Archibald Stuart was vice-president of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, founded at the College in 1776. He was offered the professorship of mathematics, but declined.

Stuart saw action in the war under his father's command at Guilford Court House and again in the Yorktown campaign in 1781. At the close of fighting, he resumed his education, reading law under Thomas Jefferson and soon beginning his own practice.

Stuart's political career started in 1783 with his election to the Virginia House of Burgesses, where he soon rose to prominence. Along with Madison

and others, he championed measures to reform the state court system, pay British debts, establish religious freedom, open the James River to navigation and reorganize the state and federal governments. And in 1788 he supported the effort in the Virginia convention to ratify the proposed federal constitution.

Stuart withdrew from politics for almost a decade before becoming state senator in the 1790s. He was instrumental in persuading the Virginia Assembly to pass the Virginia Resolutions. For many years a staunch supporter of the conservative faction of Virginia's Jeffersonian Democrats, Stuart served as a judge on Virginia's General Court from 1800 until shortly before his death.



#### TAYLOR, John

*b. 19 December; Orange/Caroline County, Va; d. 21 August 1824, Caroline County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1770-72*

An orphan, John Taylor was left in the care of his father's cousin, Edmund Pendleton, under whom he studied law after two years at the College of William and Mary. He received his license to practice in 1774.

At the outbreak of the Revolution, Taylor joined the Continental Army, serving in the Virginia, New York and Philadelphia campaigns. He had attained the rank of major by the time he resigned in 1779. However, he was appointed lieutenant colonel in the Virginia militia in 1781, and concluded his military career fighting alongside Lafayette against the Hessians. The year that Taylor resigned from the Continental Army, he was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates and served until 1785--except for the year spent in the Virginia militia.

A United States senator on three different occasions, Taylor was chosen to fill posts left vacant by death and resignations in the Virginia delegation to Congress. Politically he aligned himself with the Jeffersonian Democrats, supporting religious freedom, a wider franchise, a more equal system of representation in government and the rights of the individual and the state government. His political writings reflect a concern to preserve the old agrarian order and the security of the freeholder on which it was based.

**TAZEWELL, Henry**

*b. 27 November 1753, Brunswick County, Va; d. 24 January 1799, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: about 1770*

Henry Tazewell was admitted to the bar after studying law with his uncle, John Tazewell, and soon began a career in politics. Elected to the House of Burgesses in 1775, he attended the Virginia revolutionary convention in June of the following year and was appointed to the committee charged with framing the state's constitution and declaration of rights. He later served in the House of Delegates, representing Brunswick County and then Williamsburg, until 1785 when he was appointed a judge on the old General Court.

When the General Court was reorganized in 1788, Tazewell was reappointed and subsequently became chief justice on that court. In 1793 he sat on the Supreme Court of Appeals, and the following year became a United States senator and served until his death. An advocate of religious freedom, separation of church and state and abolition of primogeniture and entails, Tazewell advanced his ideas while serving on the committee that revised Virginia's laws.



**TUCKER, St. George**

*b. 29 June 1752, Port Royal, Bermuda; d. 10 November 1827, Edgewood, Nelson County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1772*

During his late teens St. George Tucker came to Virginia from Bermuda and enrolled at the College of William and Mary. After graduating he studied law and began his practice in Williamsburg. When the Revolution began, however, he interrupted his profession to join the fighting. He not only distinguished himself as a colonel of a Chesterfield County militia unit at the Battle of Guilford Court House, but commanded a regiment at the Battle of Yorktown, where he was severely wounded.

Tucker resumed his law practice after the war and soon became interested in politics, serving as a state legislator, a member of the committee that revised Virginia's laws and a delegate to the 1786 Annapolis Convention. That convention recommended another to frame the federal constitution, resulting in the 1787 Philadelphia Constitutional Convention. For a time, Tucker also taught law at the College.

Tucker's judicial career, which began in 1788 on the Virginia General Court, spanned nearly four decades and included the posts of judge on the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals from 1803 to 1811 and justice on the United States District Court from 1813 to 1828, when he was forced to resign because of ill health.

Known as the "American Blackstone," Tucker received an honorary LL.D. from the College in 1790.



**TYLER, John**

*b. 28 February 1747, York County, Va; d. 6 January 1813, Charles County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1760-65*

After completing his studies at the College of William and Mary, John Tyler took law for five years under Robert Carter Nicholas. An early advocate of colonial independence and a strong revolutionary leader in Virginia, he was appointed to the Charles City County Committee of Safety in 1774. The following year he raised a group of volunteers and accompanied Patrick Henry on his march to protest the British-appointed governor's unauthorized removal of gunpowder from the magazine in Williamsburg.

By 1776 Tyler was appointed a judge on the newly organized High Court of Admiralty for Virginia. A member of the Virginia Assembly for many years, he was first elected in 1777 and succeeded Benjamin Harrison as speaker in 1781. Tyler was the man who presented the resolution in 1785 calling for a federal convention at Annapolis in 1786, which eventually resulted in the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

Tyler opposed the adoption of the Constitution at the 1788 Virginia Convention that finally ratified the historic document. His full career included the governorship of Virginia from 1808 to 1811 and a judgeship on the United States District Court. It should be noted that he was the father of John Tyler, the 10th President of the United States, also an alumnus of the College and a governor of Virginia.



**WALKER, John**

*b. 13 February 1744, Castle Hill, Albemarle County, Va; d. 2 December 1809, Orange County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: 1754-55; 1762-63*

Prior to the Revolutionary War John Walker was a planter at "Belvoir," near Jefferson's residence in Albemarle County, Virginia. When the war broke out, he served as an aide to General Washington and eventually earned the rank of colonel.

In 1777 both Walker and his father, Thomas Walker, were members of a commission to encourage the Indians at Fort Pitt to maintain their friendly relations with the colonists during the war.

Walker was appointed United States senator in 1790, filling the vacancy left by the death of Will Grayson. He served in Congress from May to December of that year.



#### **WALKER, Thomas**

*b. 25 January 1715, King and Queen County, Va; d. 9 November 1774, Castle Hill, Albemarle County, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1730-35*

When his father died, Thomas Walker moved to Williamsburg to live with his sister and her husband, Dr. George Gilmer, Sr. Under the doctor's able tutoring, Walker became skilled in medicine and opened his own practice in Fredericksburg some years later. A man of diverse talents, he also kept a general store and was active in exporting and importing. His marriage to Mildred Thornton in 1741 brought him property in present-day Albemarle County, which was the foundation of his wealth.

In the ensuing years Walker's interests broadened into land speculation. His journeys included a 1750 expedition to the western frontier of Virginia, where he was probably the first white man to enter what is now Kentucky--preceding Daniel Boone by 13 years. The Walker Mountains in southwestern Virginia are named after him.

Although elected to the House of Burgesses in 1752, Walker resigned to fulfill his duties as surveyor of Augusta County. When the French and Indian War erupted, he served as commissary general of Virginia troops under George Washington and was present at Braddock's defeat. He returned to the House of Burgesses from 1756 to 1761 as the representative of the frontier county of Hampshire.

Charged with fraud in his commissary accounts in 1759, Walker was later absolved. In 1761 he was again a member of the House of Burgesses, this time as the representative from Albemarle County. That same year he served on the commission which negotiated a treaty in November at Fort Stanwix,

New York with the Six Nations of the Iroquois and related tribes. By its terms vast tracts of land along the Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York frontiers were made available for settlement.

Walker's involvement in the revolutionary movement began in 1769 when he signed the non-importation agreement binding signatories to boycott certain British goods. By 1775 he returned to the House of Burgesses for a third time. Later that year he chaired a commission, on which his son, John Walker, also served, to negotiate with the Ohio Indians at Pittsburgh. Its intent was to persuade the Indians to remain neutral and to refrain from attacking American settlements south of the Ohio River in exchange for guarantees that the Americans would not attack them in the north.

In 1776 Walker served on the second Virginia Committee of Safety and, when the new state government was organized, was chosen a member of the Executive Council. Towards the close of the war he became president of the board of commissioners which determined the western extension of the boundary line between North Carolina and Virginia. Throughout his life he was a close friend of George Washington and the guardian of Thomas Jefferson.



#### **WASHINGTON, Bushrod**

*b. 5 June 1762, Westmoreland County, Va; d. 26 November 1829, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Wm & Mary: about 1775-78*

The nephew of George Washington, Bushrod Washington was initiated into the Phi Beta Kappa Society while a student at the College of William and Mary. After graduation he enlisted in the Continental Army as a private and was present at Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown.

When the Revolutionary War ended, Washington went to Philadelphia to study law under James Wilson, and eventually returned to practice law in Westmoreland County, Virginia. His political career began in 1787 with his election to the House of Delegates and the following year he took part in the 1788 Virginia Convention that ratified the United States Constitution. He advocated the adoption of that historic document and supported Madison's and John Marshall's efforts in that direction.

In December 1798 Washington was appointed to the United States Supreme Court and remained a justice until his death.

## WYTHE, George

b. 1726, Back River, Elizabeth City County, Va; d. 8 June 1806, Richmond, Va.  
Wm & Mary: about 1746; Member of the Board of Visitors, 1761.

The first professor of law in the United States, George Wythe studied law as a young man under Stephen Dewey in Prince George County and was admitted to the bar at 20. Subsequently he practiced with John Lewis, a prominent attorney in Spottsylvania County and whose sister Wythe married.

Politically, his career began in 1754 when he was elected to the House of Burgesses as a representative from Williamsburg. On the death of his brother the following year, he legally acquired the considerable estate of his parents and was spurred to renew his study of law. In 1757 he was admitted to the bar of the General Court, and by 1758 he was a prominent member of the House, representing the College of William and Mary for a number of years.

Although it was greatly modified in its final form, the Virginia Assembly's protest to the British Parliament against the Stamp Act was drafted by Wythe in 1764. However, when Patrick Henry introduced his more radical Stamp Act resolutions the following year, Wythe and others opposed them, urging the Assembly to wait for Parliament's response to the protest before proceeding.

For a time, from 1768 to 1769 Wythe assumed the duties of mayor of Williamsburg. From 1769 to 1775 he served as clerk to the House of Burgesses.

As a delegate to the Philadelphia Continental Congress, Wythe not only signed the Declaration of Independence, but supported the resolution for independence advanced by another Virginia delegate, Richard Henry Lee. In November 1776 he was appointed to the committee charged with the monumental task of revising Virginia's laws. The final report was submitted to the General Assembly in 1779, with most of the 126 bills recommended by the committee passed in 1785 under Madison's leadership.

After serving as speaker of the House of Delegates in 1777, Wythe was appointed one of three judges of the High Court of Chancery of Virginia—a post which earned him the nickname "Chancellor."

On 4 December 1779, the College of William and Mary's Board of Visitors established the first chair of law and police in an American college, with Wythe serving as the first professor for over a decade, from 1779 to 1790. While in that post, he also was a member of the 1788 Virginia Convention that ratified the Constitution and not only presided over the committee of the whole, but offered the resolution for ratification.

When the state judicial system was reorganized in 1788, Wythe became the sole Chancellor from that date to 1801. In 1790 he was awarded an honorary LL.D. from the College. Termed the "American Aristides" by some Virginians for his impartiality, strong sense of ethics and wide learning, he delivered one of his most significant legal opinions in *Commonwealth vs*

*Caton*, perhaps the earliest and most complete formulation of the doctrine of judicial review.

Wythe met a rather untimely death from arsenic poisoning, the result of a conflict between two men he named in his will. The Wythe inheritance was to go to a servant and to a grand-nephew, George Wythe Sweeney. When the grand-nephew discovered he had to share with the servant, he put arsenic into the poor man's coffee. Unfortunately, Wythe also imbibed some of the deathly liquid. However, he survived long enough to change his will, disinheriting Sweeney. Sweeney was never punished in the courts, since the prime witness was a black cook whose testimony was not admissible as evidence at that time.



