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Virginia Biographical Gazetteer

The following sketches outline the political careers of the principal Virginia leaders. When known, their political positions are indicated (1) on the Constitution in 1787–1788; (2) in national politics after 1789.

BROWN, JOHN (1757–1837) Federalist/Republican

Born Staunton, Augusta Co. Attended College of New Jersey (Princeton University), 1776; College of William and Mary, 1778–81 (Phi Beta Kappa, 1778). Studied law under Thomas Jefferson. Moved to Kentucky, 1783, settling first in Danville and later in Frankfort. State senator, 1784–87. Active in Kentucky statehood movement. Charter member, “The Political Club,” Danville, Ky., 1786. Delegate to Congress, 1787–88. Delegate, Kentucky constitutional convention, Danville, 1788. U.S. Representative, 1789–92. U.S. Senator from Kentucky, 1792–1805. Implicated in James Wilkinson’s Spanish conspiracy.

CARRINGTON, EDWARD (1749–1810) Federalist/Federalist

Born Cartersville, Cumberland Co. Member, Cumberland Co. Committee of Safety, 1775–76. Lieutenant Colonel, 1st Continental Artillery, 1776–83; State Superintendent and Director for Repair of Arms, 1780–81; Continental Deputy Quartermaster General, and Chief of Artillery, Southern Department, 1781–83. Represented Cumberland, 1784–86, and Powhatan, 1788–90, in House of Delegates. Delegate to Congress, 1786–88. U.S. marshal for Virginia, 1789–95. Federal supervisor for collection of excise taxes on liquors in Virginia, 1791–95. Recorder, 1805, and mayor of Richmond, 1806, 1809.

CORBIN, FRANCIS (1759–1821) Federalist/?

Born Caroline Co., of wealthy Loyalist parents. Attended Cambridge University and Inner Temple. Returned to Virginia after the Revolution. Represented Middlesex in House of Delegates, 1784–95, and in state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788. Rector, College of William and Mary, 1790. Elected U.S. Representative, 1792, but declined to serve.

GRAYSON, WILLIAM (c. 1736–1790) Antifederalist/?

Born Prince William Co. Entered College of Pennsylvania, 1758, but did not graduate. Studied law at Inner Temple. Practiced law, Dumfries, Prince William Co. Member, Prince William Co. Committee of Safety, 1774. Continental Army officer, 1776–79 (aide-de-camp to George Washington, 1776). Commissioner, Virginia Board of War, 1779–81. Represented Prince Wil-

liam Co. in House of Delegates, 1784–85, 1788. Delegate to Congress, 1785–87. Delegate to state Convention, voted against ratification, 1788. U.S. Senator, 1789–90.

HENRY, PATRICK (1736–1799) Antifederalist/Federalist

Born “Studley,” Hanover Co. Farmer and storekeeper until 1760, when admitted to Virginia bar. Represented Louisa Co., 1765–68, and Hanover Co., 1769–76, in House of Burgesses; Hanover Co. in revolutionary conventions, 1774–76; Henry Co., 1780–84, and Prince Edward Co., 1787–91, in House of Delegates. Delegate to Congress, 1774–75. Commander, Virginia forces, 1775–76. Governor, 1776–79, 1784–86 (did not seek reelection in 1786). Declined appointment to the Constitutional Convention, 1787. Led opposition to the Constitution in Virginia. Represented Prince Edward Co. in state Convention, voted against ratification, 1788. Retired from public life, 1791. Moved to “Red Hill,” Charlotte Co., in 1796. Declined appointments as U.S. Senator, 1794, U.S. Secretary of State, 1795, and Chief Justice of U.S., 1796. Elected Charlotte Co. delegate to the House of Delegates in 1799, but died before taking seat.

JEFFERSON, THOMAS (1743–1826) Federalist/Republican

Born “Shadwell,” Albemarle Co. Attended College of William and Mary, 1760–62. Studied law under George Wythe, admitted to Virginia bar, 1767. Represented Albemarle in House of Burgesses, 1769–75, in all revolutionary conventions (did not attend last two), and in House of Delegates, 1776–79, 1782–83. Delegate to Congress, 1775–76, 1783–84; author and signer, Declaration of Independence, 1776; author, *Ordinance for Government of Western Territory*, 1784. Governor, 1779–81. Author, Virginia statute of religious freedom, enacted in 1786. Minister Plenipotentiary to negotiate treaties in Europe, 1784–85, and to France, 1785–89. U.S. Secretary of State, 1790–93. U.S. Vice President, 1797–1801. Author, Kentucky Resolutions, 1798. President of U.S., 1801–9. Founder, University of Virginia, 1819, and rector, 1819–26.

JONES, JOSEPH (1727–1805) Federalist/Republican

Born King George Co. Admitted to Inner Temple, 1749; Middle Temple, 1751; and English bar, 1751. Practiced law in Fredericksburg. Represented King George Co. in House of Burgesses, 1772–76, in all revolutionary conventions, and in House of Delegates, 1776–78, 1780–81, 1783–85. Member, Virginia Committee of Safety, 1775. Delegate to Congress, 1777, 1780–83. Judge, General Court, 1778–79, 1789–1805. Member, Council of State, 1785–89.

LEE, ARTHUR (1740–1792) Antifederalist/?

Born “Stratford,” Westmoreland Co. Brother of Richard Henry Lee; cousin of Henry Lee. Attended Eton. University of Edinburgh, M.D., 1764; University of Leyden, M.D., 1765. Fellow, Royal Society, 1766. Practiced medicine in Williamsburg, 1766, then switched to law. Returned to England, 1768. Studied at Middle Temple and Lincoln’s Inn, admitted to English bar, 1775. Revolutionary advocate and prolific pamphleteer beginning in 1769. Colonial agent for Massachusetts Bay and New Jersey (substitute, 1770–75), 1775–76. Correspondent to Congress’ Committee of Secret Correspondence, 1775–76. Treaty commissioner to France, 1776–79. Attempted negotiations with Spain, 1777. Signer, Treaties of Alliance and Commerce with France, 1778. Returned to America, 1781, after major dispute with fellow commissioners Benjamin Franklin

and Silas Deane. Represented Prince William Co. in House of Delegates, 1781–84. Delegate to Congress, 1782–84. Indian Commissioner, Fort Stanwix, 1784, and Fort McIntosh, 1785. Member, Confederation Board of Treasury, 1785–89. Wrote “Cincinnatus” essays, first published in New York City, 1787.

LEE, HENRY (“Light Horse Harry”) (1756–1818) Federalist/Federalist

Born “Leesylvania,” Prince William Co. Cousin of Richard Henry Lee and Arthur Lee. College of New Jersey (Princeton University), A.B., 1773. Officer of militia and Continental Army, rising to rank of Lieutenant Colonel, 1780; awarded a congressional gold medal for bravery at Battle of Paulus Hook, 1779. Represented Westmoreland in House of Delegates. 1785–86, 1789–91, 1795–99, and in state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788. Delegate to Congress, 1786–88. Governor, 1791–94. Commanded federal troops to suppress Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania, 1794. Major General, U.S. Army, 1798–1800. U.S. Representative, 1799–1801.

LEE, RICHARD HENRY (1732–1794) Antifederalist/Republican

Born “Stratford,” Westmoreland Co. Brother of Arthur Lee; cousin of Henry Lee. Attended Wakefield Academy, Yorkshire, Eng. Justice of Peace, Westmoreland Co., 1757. Organized Westmoreland Co. Nonimportation Association, 1766. Co-author, intercolonial plan for committees of correspondence, 1773. Represented Westmoreland in House of Burgesses, 1758–76, in revolutionary conventions, 1774–76, and in House of Delegates, 1777–78, 1780–81 (speaker, 1781), 1782–85. Delegate to Congress, 1774–79, 1784–85 (president), 1787; made motion for independence and confederation, 1776; signed Declaration of Independence, 1776, and Articles of Confederation, 1778. Declined appointment to Constitutional Convention, 1787. U.S. Senator, 1789–92.

MADISON, JAMES (1751–1836) Federalist/Republican

Born Port Conway, King George Co. Attended Donald Robertson’s School, King and Queen Co., 1762–67, and College of New Jersey (Princeton University), 1769–71, receiving an A.B; pursued graduate studies, 1771–72. Elected to Orange Co. Committee of Safety, 1774. Represented Orange Co. in fifth revolutionary convention, 1776, and in House of Delegates, 1776–77, 1784–87, 1799–1800. Member, Council of State, 1778–79. Delegate to Congress, 1780–83, 1787–88; to Annapolis Convention, 1786; and to Constitutional Convention, 1787 (principal author, Virginia Resolutions). One of three authors of “Publius”: *The Federalist*, 1787–88. Orange Co. delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788. U.S. Representative, 1789–97. Author, Virginia Resolutions, 1798. Presidential Elector, 1800. U.S. Secretary of State, 1801–9. President of U.S., 1809–17. Rector, University of Virginia, 1826–34. Member, Virginia Constitutional Convention, 1829–30.

MARSHALL, JOHN (1755–1835) Federalist/Federalist

Born near Germantown, Fauquier Co. Officer in militia and Continental Army, 1775–81 (inactive after 1779). Briefly attended College of William and Mary (Phi Beta Kappa, 1780). Represented Fauquier, 1782, 1784–85; Henrico, 1787–88; Richmond City, 1789–91, 1795–97, in House of Delegates. Member, Council of State, 1782–84. Henrico Co. delegate to state Con-

vention, voted to ratify, 1788. U.S. commissioner to France, 1797–98. U.S. Representative, 1799–1800. U.S. Secretary of State, 1800–1801. Chief Justice of U.S., 1801–35. Member, Virginia Constitutional Convention, 1829–30.

MASON, GEORGE (1725–1792) Antifederalist/?

Born Fairfax Co. Justice, Fairfax Co. Court, 1747–89. Board of Trustees, Alexandria, 1754–79, Represented Fairfax in House of Burgesses, 1758–61, in revolutionary conventions, 1775, 1776, and in House of Delegates, 1776–81, 1786–87 (absent), 1787–88. Author, “Fairfax Resolves,” 1774. Member, Virginia Committee of Safety, 1775. Principal author, Virginia Declaration of Rights and Virginia Constitution, 1776. Elected to Congress, 1777, but did not attend. Delegate to Constitutional Convention, 1787, refused to sign Constitution. Stafford delegate to state Convention, voted against ratification, 1788. Appointed U.S. Senator, 1790, but declined.

MONROE, JAMES (1758–1831) Antifederalist/Republican

Born Westmoreland Co. Attended College of William and Mary, 1774–76. Militia and Continental Army officer, 1775–78. Studied law under Thomas Jefferson, admitted to bar, 1786. Represented King George Co., 1782, Spotsylvania, 1787–89, and Albemarle, 1810–11, in House of Delegates. Member, Council of State, 1782–83. Delegate to Congress, 1783–86. Represented Spotsylvania in state Convention, voted against ratification, 1788. U.S. Senator, 1790–94. Minister Plenipotentiary to France, 1794–96. Governor, 1799–1802, 1811. Special envoy to France, helped negotiate Louisiana Purchase, 1803. U.S. Secretary of State, 1811–17; U.S. Secretary of War, 1814–15. President of U.S., 1817–25. President, Virginia Constitutional Convention, 1829–30.

NICHOLAS, GEORGE (c. 1754–1799) Federalist/Republican

Born Williamsburg. Entered College of William and Mary, 1772. Continental Army officer, 1775–77. Admitted to Virginia bar, 1778. Acting Attorney General of Virginia, 1781–82. Represented Williamsburg, 1778–79, Hanover, 1781–82, and Albemarle, 1783–84, 1786–88, in House of Delegates. Albemarle delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788. Moved to Kentucky, 1789. Attorney General of District of Kentucky, 1790–92, and first attorney general of new State of Kentucky, 1792. Delegate to Kentucky Constitutional Convention, 1792. Implicated in James Wilkinson’s Spanish conspiracy. First professor of law, Transylvania University.

PENDLETON, EDMUND (1721–1803) Federalist/Republican

Born Caroline Co. Admitted to Caroline Co. bar, 1741. Appointed Deputy King’s Attorney, Caroline Co., 1744. Justice of Peace, Caroline Co. 1751–77. Represented Caroline in House of Burgesses, 1752–76, in all revolutionary conventions (president, 4th and 5th), and in House of Delegates, 1776–78 (speaker, 1776–77). Member, Caroline Co. nonimportation committees, 1770, 1774–75. Original member, Committee of Correspondence, 1773. Delegate to Congress, 1774–75. President, Virginia Committee of Safety, 1775–76. Member, committee on revision of Virginia laws, 1777, 1787. President, High Court of Chancery, 1778–88, serving as president of Supreme Court of Appeals, 1779–88; president of newly created Supreme Court of Appeals, 1788–1803. President, state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788.

RANDOLPH, EDMUND (1753–1813) Federalist?/Federalist

Born near Williamsburg. Attended College of William and Mary, 1770–71. Admitted to Virginia bar before August 1774. Aide-de-camp to George Washington, 1775–76. State Attorney General, 1776–86. Represented Williamsburg in fifth revolutionary convention, 1776. Mayor, Williamsburg, 1776–77. Clerk, House of Delegates, 1778–79. Delegate to Congress, 1779, 1781–82. Governor, 1786–88. Delegate to Annapolis Convention, 1786, and Constitutional Convention, 1787, refused to sign Constitution. Henrico delegate to state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788. Represented Williamsburg in House of Delegates, 1788–89. U.S. Attorney General, 1790–94, U.S. Secretary of State, 1794–95.

STUART, DAVID (1753–c. 1814) Federalist/Federalist

Born King George Co. Entered College of William and Mary, 1771; received a medical degree from University of Edinburgh, 1777. Married in 1783 to Eleanor Custis, widow of George Washington's adopted son. Represented Fairfax in House of Delegates, 1785–89, and in state Convention, voted to ratify, 1788. Presidential Elector, 1789. Commissioner, District of Columbia, 1791–94.

WASHINGTON, GEORGE (1732–1799) Federalist/Federalist

Born Westmoreland Co. Culpeper Co. surveyor, 1749. District adjutant, 1752–53. Appointed lieutenant colonel, 1754. Commander in Chief of Virginia forces, 1755–58. Represented Frederick Co., 1758–65, and Fairfax, 1766–76, in House of Burgesses. Delegate to Congress, 1774–75. General and Commander in Chief, Continental Army, 1775–83. President-General, Society of the Cincinnati, 1783–99. President, Constitutional Convention, 1787. Chancellor, College of William and Mary, 1788–99. President of U.S., 1789–97. Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief, U.S. Provisional Army, 1798–99.

WYTHE, GEORGE (1726–1806) Federalist/Republican

Born Elizabeth City Co. Admitted to Virginia bar, 1746. Moved to Williamsburg, 1748. Represented Williamsburg, 1754–55, College of William and Mary, 1758–61, and Elizabeth City Co., 1761–68, in House of Burgesses. Temporary Attorney General, 1754–55. Author, Virginia's Remonstrance against Stamp Act, 1764. Elected mayor of Williamsburg, 1768. Clerk, House of Burgesses, 1768–76. Delegate to Congress, 1775–76, signed Declaration of Independence. Member, committee to revise laws, 1777–79. Represented Williamsburg in House of Delegates, 1777–78 (speaker). Judge, High Court of Chancery, 1778–88, became sole Chancellor, 1788. First professor of law, College of William and Mary, 1779–89. Delegate to Constitutional Convention, 1787, left before Convention adjourned. York Co. delegate to state Convention, chairman of committee of whole, voted to ratify, 1788. Moved to Richmond, 1791.

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