

Francis Lightfoot Lee  
Research Report  
Sarah L. Jones  
Summer 2003

*Menokin Foundation  
Summer 2004  
Research Report*

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## Summary of Research

During the course of my 2004 summer internship with The Menokin Foundation, I focused on the continuation of my research on Francis Lightfoot Lee. I continued to critically examine Lee's correspondence in the Virginia Historical Society's holdings, which I transcribed during Summer 2003, as well as materials which I acquired during the Spring semester of 2004 as part of my research project on Lee at Yale University.

Although my research is not complete at this time, I have written an article on Francis Lightfoot Lee, his beliefs, and his work in the Second Continental Congress. I submitted a "working copy" of this article to the Virginia Historical Society, and was told that, with revision, it could be submitted to outside readers. I plan to revise the article and resubmit it to VHS, as well as write another piece to submit to the Northern Neck Historical Society for possible publication. I expect to complete both articles by late September 2004.

While researching Lee's involvement in the Second Continental Congress, I came upon Edmund C. Burnett's *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress*. I have included copies of those documents pertaining to Lee in this report. From this source, I discovered Lee was actively involved with the Board of War, but have, at this point, been unable to conclude that Lee was an actual member of the Board. I do, however, know that he was a member of a committee comprised of the members of the Board of War and three other congressmen whose purpose was to secure supplies for the Continental Army. Other interesting facts I came upon include Lee's presence at a meeting with Lafayette, Lee's involvement with the signing of an "Engagement of Members to Meet Punctually, Etc.," and John Harvie's expectation that Lee would succeed John Hancock as president of the Continental Congress in 1777 (Lee did not become president, however). One letter that is particularly interesting and a fairly rare example of Lee's sarcasm is found on page 551 of Volume III and is regarding what would later become known as the Silas Deane Affair. I intend to use this information to further my research and writing on Lee.

While researching at the Library of Virginia, I copied and recorded all occurrences of Francis Lightfoot Lee's name in the Journals of the House of Burgesses from 1758-1776. I have also included this information in this report.

During my internship I also prepared an introduction to Francis Lightfoot Lee and the "Engagement of Members to Meet Punctually, Etc." for the Menokin Foundation website. I also performed various archival tasks for the Foundation, including the archiving of historic and current photographs of the Menokin house and property, and newspaper articles. I organized and labeled the current contents of the Menokin archives.

Other tasks included aiding LaToya Ball-Tate in the organization of the Menokin files, writing a draft of a grant proposal introduction to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and attending the Small Museums Conference with the Menokin staff in Baltimore, MD.

It is still my belief that a great deal more can be learned from the correspondence and life work of Francis Lightfoot Lee, when read in its historical context. Thus, I intend to continue to research Lee and his times. I will be making an in-kind contribution to the Menokin Foundation of all past and future hours spent researching Lee and Menokin.

Once I have exhausted the resources for my research, I plan to complete a manuscript on Francis Lightfoot Lee, his character and the times in which he lived, for submission for publication. I hope to bring Francis Lightfoot Lee out from under the shadow of his more famous brother, Richard Henry, and recast Frank Lee not as the "inconspicuous" man that Mark Twain described him as, but rather as the active patriot he was.

Respectfully Submitted,

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August 18, 2004  
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Abstract for paper on Francis Lightfoot Lee:

The purpose of this article is to bring Francis Lightfoot Lee out from under the shadow of his more famous brother, Richard Henry, and recast Francis Lee not as the “inconspicuous” man that Mark Twain described him as, but rather as an active patriot. The primary source for this paper is Lee’s correspondence with Landon Carter (Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society), as well as a number of documents written by Lee’s contemporaries. Lee’s involvement as an early opponent of the British and later in the Second Continental Congress, his committee work as a leader of the Board of War, his use of the rhetoric of conspiracy and corruption, and his advocacy of American self-reliance are discussed in order to provide a more accurate view of Francis Lightfoot Lee.

This article was written under the guidance of Dr. David W. Blight of Yale University.

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## Francis Lightfoot Lee: Patriot of the American Revolution

*“This man’s life-work was so inconspicuous, that his name would now be wholly forgotten, but for one thing- he signed the Declaration of Independence. Yet his life was a most useful and worthy one. It was a good and profitable voyage, though it left no phosphorescent splendors in its wake.”* –Mark Twain on Francis Lightfoot Lee, 1877<sup>1</sup>

Francis Lightfoot Lee (1734-1797) is what one might call a “forgotten revolutionary.” Although described by his niece as the “sweetest of all the Lee race” and as possessing a temper “as soft as the dove’s,” Lee was far from being the inconspicuous man Twain claimed he was.<sup>2</sup> Lee, his memory now nearly hidden beneath the rubble of his Virginia mansion, had a life that was “most useful and worthy,” the life of a patriot of the American Revolution. Yet Lee has not been granted his proper place in history, for his involvement with the founding of the country lies not only in his signature on the Declaration of Independence, but with over thirty years of active political service. During these years Lee actively opposed British measures, sought independence, and served the emerging nation through a number of committees as a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, the Second Continental Congress, and the Virginia State Senate. Lee was certainly not an “inconspicuous” man, nor was he merely “soft as a dove.”

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Twain in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 1, no. 3 (1877). Reprinted in Charles

Neider, ed., *Mark Twain: Life as I Find It* (New York, 1961).

<sup>2</sup> Ann Hume Shippen Livingston, “Sonnet” c. 1781, Shippen Family Papers, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford Hall, VA

Rather, Lee was a true patriot, not only according to standards held by his contemporaries, but also to his own.

One of the first notable actions of Francis Lightfoot Lee on the Virginia political stage was his support of the Westmoreland Resolves, signed February 27, 1766.<sup>3</sup> Drafted by his brother, Richard Henry, the Westmoreland Resolves protested the Stamp Act. The document began powerfully with the words “Roused by danger and alarmed at attempts, foreign and domestic, to reduce the people of this country to a state of abject and detestable slavery by destroying that free and happy condition of government under which they have hitherto lived...”<sup>4</sup> The Resolves proclaimed the allegiance of the signers to Britain, but at the same time protested the taxation of the colonies without proper representation, declaring that anyone who attempted “to deprive this Colony [Virginia] of these fundamental rights, we will immediately regard him or them, as the most dangerous enemy of the community.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, the Resolves put forth that the signers would “exert every faculty, to prevent the execution of the said Stamp Act in any instance whatsoever within this Colony [Virginia].”<sup>6</sup>

As a supporter of the Westmoreland Resolves, Lee placed himself in opposition to the British Crown. His signature on a document so vehemently opposed to British law included Lee in the group of Virginians who would continue to support resistance to British measures, and eventually advocate the independence of the colonies. Yet such independence would not be popularly supported throughout the 1760s. In fact, as historian Edward Countryman notes, “not until after the war actually broke out did more

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<sup>3</sup> The Westmoreland Resolves are also known as the Leedstown Resolutions.

<sup>4</sup> “Westmoreland Resolves”, <http://www.ragerlaw.com/leedstownresolutionspage.htm>, 11 August 2003, 2.

<sup>5</sup> “Westmoreland Resolves,” 2.

<sup>6</sup> “Westmoreland Resolves,” 2.

than a tiny number of them [colonists] begin thinking that rather than being Britons in America, they were not Britons at all.”<sup>7</sup> Further British oppression ensued, and as a result, the colonists, including Francis Lightfoot Lee, tailored their reactions to respond to the apparent British threats.

With the year 1767 came a British attempt to raise revenue through the passage of the Townshend Acts (or Duties), requiring colonials to pay a tax on imported items. Colonists, already angered by previous taxes such as the Stamp Tax, responded negatively, organizing boycotts of imported goods, as well as the merchants who sold them in order to demonstrate colonial resistance to such British measures.

During the tumultuous years following the passage of the Acts, Francis Lightfoot Lee remained active in political life, and offered his opinion of British-American relations to his friend and neighbor Landon Carter. On 9 April 1770, Lee writes:

“[The British will] never think that the collecting the duty (laid for the [s]ole purpose of raising a revenue) in England or the Colonies [m]akes any difference with regard to American claims, for since the Parliament of Great Britain in the first place obliges us to take from them what we consider as the conveniences, & necessaries [of] Life, if we have them at all, then to lay a duty upon them is equally a tax, collected in Britain or America, in either [ca]se it is optional in us to take them, in either case we [pa]y a tax not laid by our representaves [sic] ...”<sup>8</sup>

Here, Lee succinctly conveys the colonial stance, offering his own ideological complaint against the Townshend Acts. He points out that at the same time Britain claims she does not place an internal tax upon Americans, she also requires the colonies to purchase goods solely from Great Britain. Many colonists resented this trade system, for it not only restricted the price and variety of goods imported into the colonies, but also limited what could prove to be a profitable colonial trade with other countries.

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<sup>7</sup> Edward Countryman, *The American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985, 2003), 33.

<sup>8</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 9 April 1770, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.



British imports were important to many colonials, particularly to Virginians of the gentry class, of which Lee was a part. After the 1750's, as historian T.H. Breen notes in Tobacco Culture, men of Lee and Washington's generation "insisted on importing goods from the mother country that their fathers and grandfathers could not have afforded, perhaps not even obtained."<sup>9</sup> This increase in the number of imports, particularly in Virginia, when considered with the failing tobacco economy, posed a problem for the planters. British restrictions in the tobacco market prevented both planters and merchants from seeking other, more profitable markets. This in turn, began, for many Virginians, a spiral into debt.<sup>10</sup> The threat of indebtedness, combined with Virginia planters' (such as John Tayloe II of Mt. Airy, Francis Lee's father-in-law) love of British finery did not mix well with increasing British tax impositions and limited markets.

As a tobacco planter, Lee himself was certainly affected by this system. With such a background, it is no wonder that Lee found the Townshend Duties not only a nuisance, but also a threat. As Lee explained, because the colonists could not obtain many imported goods from other sources, they were forced to either pay the import tax, or do without the goods. Lee recognized that the colonists had two choices: to purchase the goods and pay the tax, or to boycott the goods. Boycotting the goods meant doing without what many Virginians of the gentry class had become accustomed to, goods that helped defined their own social status. But with tobacco prices such as they were, and an ever increasing debt looming over their account books, it is no wonder many planters

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<sup>9</sup> T. H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 129.

<sup>10</sup> By the end of the Revolution, Americans owed British citizens £3 million. Virginians alone owed £1.4 million of this sum. Breen, 127-128.

chose to protest the system that was sure to send Virginians and other colonists hurtling further into debt. The tone of his writing demonstrated Lee's support of a boycott.

Lee deemed the Townshend Duties a threat to colonial interests, yet not merely because of the lack of goods. Rather, Lee pointed to the ever-vexing colonial problem of taxation without representation when he writes: "in either case, we [pa]y a tax not laid by our representatives...."<sup>11</sup> This theme recurred in his later correspondence, as he complained about postal taxes and other political measures enacted by Parliament.

Lee did not merely leave his opinion sealed in his letter to Landon Carter, but he carried it with him as he served in the Virginia House of Burgesses. Two months after Lee's letter to Carter, members of the Virginia House of Burgesses and Virginia merchants put forth a resolution concerning the boycotted imports that would be affected by the Townshend Duties. Among sixteen other Burgesses and over one-hundred merchants, Lee signed the resolution which enacted a boycott of the importation of slaves, a vital part of the Virginia economy, and other taxed goods of the British Empire.<sup>12</sup><sup>13</sup><sup>14</sup> Lee's signature on this document not only further defined his devotion to colonial rights, but also placed him in opposition to the British Crown.

Yet Lee's distrust of and distaste for British policies extended beyond the Townshend Acts, for in October 1775, Lee is again found writing to Landon Carter from Philadelphia where he served in the Second Continental Congress, this time making a

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<sup>11</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 9 April 1770, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>12</sup> John Pendleton Kennedy, *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1770-1772* (Richmond, VA: The Colonial Press, 1907) xxxi, 3-4.

<sup>13</sup> By this time, the Townshend Acts had been repealed, save the tax on tea, because of the extensive colonial boycotts and the difficulty in collecting taxes. Countryman, 46.

<sup>14</sup> Slaves were particularly important at this crucial economic time, because with tobacco prices down, planters turned to production expansion to keep up with what Breen describes as the "consumer revolution." Increased production meant an increase in laborers, enslaved laborers. Breen, 131-132.

note about the Post Office. Lee writes, “I received your Letter with great pleasure tho contrary to your expectation it paid postage to the hated Post Offices[.] as the constitutional post now goes regularly, we may with a safe conscience say how d’ye to each other.”<sup>15</sup> Lee equates one’s actions that supported the British with not only physical, public consequences, but also with a negative effect on one’s own conscience. He writes of a “safe conscience” to be had only through the patronage of the constitutional, and thus, American, post. Lee extends the question of British support beyond political matters and into one’s most personal sphere, the conscience, proposing that one should be filled with guilt for acting in accordance with unacceptable British policy. This proposal reveals Lee’s patriotic devotion, something which prior historians have questioned.<sup>16</sup> Lee did not half-heartedly approach the political scene, but rather dedicated himself to Revolutionary politics by physically removing himself to Philadelphia, and mentally devoting himself to patriotism, even in the small events of life such as mailing a letter.

Lee’s hatred of the Post Office had deeper roots than the political scene of 1775. Rather, its origins can be found nearly ten years earlier. When a colonist took a letter from the post office, he paid a tax on the service provided. For Lee, this tax, having been laid without colonial representation, was unconstitutional. Lee did not keep his abhorrence of the Post Office to himself, but rather made it widespread through the publication of a notice in The Virginia Gazette, one of the most widely read newspapers in Virginia at the time. On 16 May 1766, the Gazette printed the following:

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<sup>15</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>16</sup> Such skepticism can be seen in Alonzo Dill, *The Incomparable Signer* (Williamsburg, VA: Virginia Independence Bicentennial Commission, 1977).

The subscriber requests it as a favour of all his acquaintances, that they will never take any LETTER directed to him out of the POST-OFFICE, as he is determined never willingly to pay a farthing to any TAX laid upon this COUNTRY, in any unconstitutional manner. –Francis Lightfoot Lee.<sup>17</sup>

In publicly publishing this notice, Lee puts himself at the risk of being reprimanded by British authorities. Not only does he request his “acquaintances” never to take a letter addressed to him out of the Post Office, but he also implies that the tax laid upon letters dispatched through the Post Office is unconstitutional. Although it did not occur, such an act had the potential of placing Lee in danger of being accused of treason for speaking out against the British crown and its policies.

Difficulties in British-Colonial relations extended far beyond taxes. In the mid-1770s, the British governors dissolved many of the colonial governments; the Virginia House of Burgesses did not escape this fate. In 1775 Governor Dunmore dissolved “the whole civil government,” according to Lee. Dunmore’s ruling was an outrage to colonials, for they were left with no means of governing themselves to any extent sanctioned by the Crown. Virginia reacted similarly to other colonies that had faced such an outcome: their governmental bodies continued to meet, but under a different name and at a different meeting place. Francis Lee was one of those who supported such action. In a letter to Landon Carter dated 12 December 1775, Lee writes: “Is it not necessary that the Convention should [sic] establish some kind of Govern-ment as L.D. [Lord Dunmore] by his proclamation has utterly de-molished the whole civil government.”<sup>18</sup> Lee is obviously unwilling to accept such treatment from the British, and in suggesting that a government be established, Lee further promotes the idea of American Independence. To

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<sup>17</sup> 16 May 1766. *The Virginia Gazette*.

<sup>18</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 12 December 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

establish another government without British sanction was to defy the law and the governor, representative of the Crown to the colonies. In essence, such an act was a demonstration of the colonists' progression towards a government independent of British rule.

Yet British attempts to establish greater control were not seen by colonists as merely oppressive measures. In many of his letters, Lee uses words that pertain to many of his contemporaries' suspicions about Britain; he uses the language of conspiracy and corruption. It is exactly because of the widespread acceptance of the belief in corruption that makes Lee's use of this language important, for his correspondence provides a clear example of contemporary thought. In The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution, Bernard Bailyn argues that "the ideological origins of the American Revolution had been rooted not merely in a general fear of power but specifically in the belief that liberty could not survive where corruptible men wielded the apparatus of a powerful nation state."<sup>19</sup> Like others of his day, Francis Lightfoot Lee subscribed to this belief.

The rhetoric of conspiracy and corruption pervaded colonial political life, as well as the whole of society. For colonists of the 1760s and 1770s, the idea of corruption was directly correlated with conspiracy. The connection between corruption and conspiracy was a theory which had its foundation in Radical Whig philosophy, and was based on the principle that actions by the conspirators were not merely misguided policies, but rather deliberate assaults launched by corrupt enemies of liberty.<sup>20</sup> It was believed that it was in

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<sup>19</sup> Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967, 1992) 330.

<sup>20</sup> Rebecca Tannenbaum, American Revolution Lecture, Yale University, 9 February 2004.

human nature to form conspiracies in the constant quest to retain power and control. In the eyes of colonials, Britain made multiple attempts to gain more power at the colonies' expense. It is this belief, or paranoia, which propelled colonists forward towards Revolution. The Stamp Act, as well as the Townshend Duties, played a distinctive role in the narrative of the conspiracy theory. The Stamp Act was merely one British attempt to oppress and take control of the colonists' rights as Englishmen, rights that were dear to the colonials. Many colonists saw the Stamp Act as a sudden intrusion in their lives. It was thus deemed the first strike of the conspirators.<sup>21</sup> The foundation for a British conspiracy having been laid with the Stamp Act, colonials saw future acts, such as the Townshend Duties, which proclaimed Parliament's power as further steps in the plot of the conspirators.

Lee used language that coincided with the conspiracy theory applied to British relations with the colonies. He believed "it has always been evident that abilities of what [litt]le virtue remains in England have been with the minority."<sup>22</sup> Lee thus implies that lack of virtue has pervaded Britain by such an extent that few were left to be trusted. On 2 April 1775, Lee writes to Carter explaining his fear of the opportunity arising for "the Ministry to exercise all their arts of corruption [sic] & deception, which, no doubt will be the next method, & which I have always fear'd."<sup>23</sup> Lee indicates that a conspiracy lay within the Ministry in their actions towards the colonists. Yet he takes the issue a step further by implying that the Ministry has already become corrupt and ridden with deceit. For Lee, the Ministry is not merely on the road leading to corruption; the ministry

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<sup>21</sup> Rebecca Tannenbaum, American Revolution Lecture, Yale University, 9 February 2004

<sup>22</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 9 April 1770, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>23</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 2 April 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

embodies the word. Lee, like others of his day, obviously viewed the events preceding 1775 as serious enough to merit the Ministry the description of corrupt.

As seen through Lee's correspondence and the opinions of many other patriots, a strong conviction emerged that it was necessary for the colonists to take action to secure their liberties and rights that the British government was supposed to guarantee, but had failed in doing so. Lee involved himself in the politics of the day, serving as a member of the House of Burgesses, as well as a Virginia delegate to the Continental Congress. In his correspondence to Landon Carter, Lee comments on political happenings and offers his critique of them, as well as his own opinions on how the colonists should act in response to the British opposition.

### **“That infernal Demon”**

Francis Lightfoot Lee deemed Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, the greatest threat to Virginians, and focused many of his letters on what he believed should be done about Dunmore, as well as his opinion of this British governor. October 1775 found Lee writing to Landon Carter: “Your good friend L. Dunmore is endeavouring [sic] to raise all the powers on earth to demolish poor Virginia?” This remark, with a hint of sarcasm in the use of “good friend,” relays the fears of Lee and many other Virginians, fears that Dunmore would completely disband civil government within Virginia, and even going so far as to threaten the lives of Virginians. Lee explains this fear when he writes: “We have advice, that at his [Dunmore] [illegible] a fleet may be expected this fall to ravage our defenceless [sic] plantations & burn our little Towns.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

Yet a British fleet was not the only concern Lee had, for there was another concern that proved to be more daunting: a British-Native American alliance. This fear was shared by colonials across America. Such an alliance combined the two “enemies” of the colonists, for many believed that Native Americans posed a serious threat to those living on the edges of the colonies, as well as those who ventured further to settle in the wilderness.<sup>25</sup> Virginia, having already witnessed the wrath of angry Native Americans in 1774 during Lord Dunmore’s War, was wary of another such attack upon their people and supplies.<sup>26</sup> In his letter, Lee speaks of the latest “schemes” of the British, writing of what Congress has recently been informed:

[A] plot of his [Lord Dunmore] & Conolly’s [Colonel John Connolly]... Conolly [sic] dispairing [sic] of getting up the Country through Virg. or the Carolina’s, is to go to St. Augustine from thence to the Creeks & Cherokees, and through all the tribes to Detroit...he has Captains commissions from Dunmore for Cornstalk [Shawnee leader] WhiteEyes [sic] [ Delaware leader].<sup>27</sup>

White Eyes and the non-militant Delaware remained on a thin line between neutrality and support for the Americans throughout the war for independence.<sup>28</sup> Although in 1775 most Indian tribes were neutral towards the war, the anxious anticipation of an alliance

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<sup>25</sup> Since the establishment of the colonies, a fear of Native American uprising pervaded the majority of the colonies. Although Lee does not reference it in his letter, this fear was exacerbated by the possible threat of Native-Americans and slaves joining their forces to demolish the colonies, particularly those in the South where the population of slaves outnumbered the population of whites.

<sup>26</sup> Cornstalk, a Shawnee leader, could particularly be perceived as a threat because of his previous involvement in acts against Virginia. The year 1774 marked the conflict between the Shawnee nation and Virginia over disputed territory in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania. In 1774, Cornstalk proposed a territorial compromise with Virginia. His compromise, however, was met by a militia campaign against the Shawnee ordered by Dunmore. Colonel John Connelly led the Virginia militia, while Cornstalk led the Shawnee. After the Shawnee had been defeated, a peace treaty was signed, and a temporary peace was established on the Ohio-Pennsylvania frontier.

<sup>27</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, in Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA

<sup>28</sup> White Eyes was a rising leader of the Delaware Indians who lived in Ohio Country. Unlike Cornstalk, White Eyes had not been involved in Lord Dunmore’s War, and neither had the Delaware. White Eyes was willing to cooperate with the Americans, and the Delaware remained neutral during the war.

Gregory Evans Dowd, “There Was No Winning Strategy for the Indians,” in *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution*, ed. Richard D. Brown ( Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000) 240.



expressed in Lee's letter proved not to be unfounded, for by Fall 1777, nearly all Upper Ohio country Indians had taken arms against the Americans.<sup>29</sup> Such a threat of a British-Native American alliance provided Lee with good reason to fear the acts of Lord Dunmore and his desire to hasten the "demon's" career to an end.

Lee certainly believed that one of the most important and immediate goals for Virginia was to remove Lord Dunmore from power if Virginia was to maintain some sense of safety. "In my opinion, our safety depends upon an immediate, & effectual stop being put to that infernal Demon [Dunmore], and his tory associates at Norfolk."<sup>30</sup> Safety, not only of one's self, but also of one's property and livelihood, were of great importance to Lee throughout his correspondence with Carter. 12 February 1776 found Lee writing to Carter from Philadelphia, warning Carter that "I find L.D. [Lord Dunmore] is endeavouring to persuade [sic] the settlers on the Rivers to remain quiet, & not remove their stocks & provisions, no doubt till he enabled to come & ease them of them all."<sup>31</sup> Lee was not unfounded in his suspicions, as British raid throughout the war proved. It is indisputable that the British army required a wealth of provisions. The numerous British soldiers faced great difficulty in receiving supplies from Britain due to the large distance between the colonies and England. As a result, the British often resorted to living off the land around them, or in other words, plundering the colonists' crops and provisions.

With such abuses occurring throughout the war, and indeed, during the events leading up to the outbreak of war, it is no wonder that Lee marvels at British expectations

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<sup>29</sup> One Native American group that did remain peaceful with the Americans throughout most of the War were the polygot cluster of villages near Coshocton. Their leaders were Delaware Indians (like White Eyes), and these villages were comprised of non-militant Shawnee and Delaware. Dowd, 238.

<sup>30</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 12 December 12, 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>31</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 12 February 1776, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

of support from the colonists. “[T]is strange,” he writes, “that this monster [Dunmore], & the rest of his infernal tribe should expect to be credited by a single person; after the innumerable instances of cruelty, rapacity & pes[illeg.]ed fresh in every ones mind, which they have exhibited in every part of the world.”<sup>32</sup> As the months, and even weeks, passed by, Lee became not only increasingly fearful of the threat Dunmore carried, but also more angry. Lee became embittered toward the treatment of colonists and Virginia by Dunmore, and ever more impassioned at Dunmore’s lack of morality, which Lee indicates through the inciting speech he uses when referring to Dunmore in his correspondence to Carter. In the same letter in which he refers to Dunmore as a “monster,” Lee asks, “Is it possible that any one can expect any thing good from such abandoned Villains: [illegible; from?] their hellish plots Good Lord deliver us.” His reference to “abandoned Villains” suggests the abandonment of morality by not only Dunmore, but also by the British. Such references underscore that Lee could not, and did not, wish for reconciliation with Great Britain. Lee saw no “good” that could be expected from the British, whether through diplomacy or on the battlefield. By his 12 February 1776 letter, and indeed much earlier, Lee had abandoned any prospect of agreement with the British and had instead entirely devoted himself to the American cause, seeking independence from the “villains” and “monsters” he portrayed as having pervaded America.

**“The interests of Britain [are] as a feather in the scale”**

As a result of the British offenses such as the dissolution of the government by Dunmore, Lee increasingly came to see himself more distinctly as Virginian and

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<sup>32</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 12 February 1776, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

American and less British. This transformation not only pertained to his desire for American independence, but also to his view of his own personal loyalty. No longer did Lee view himself as a loyal subject of the British, or even as a British subject at all. Rather, through his correspondence, even in the 1760s, Lee conveyed himself first and foremost as a Virginian and then as an American. The significance which lay behind Lee's beliefs is more thoroughly understood when considering how Lee's contemporaries viewed themselves. Many men who would become a part of the Continental Congress and support independence, up until 1776, still considered themselves British subjects, and sought a reconciliation between the colonies and Britain.<sup>33</sup> Lee's early recognition of himself as a Virginian and not as a British subject distinguishes him as a member of the more "radical" group that would be found in the Second Continental Congress or the Virginia House of Burgesses, a group which included Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Patrick Henry. Even Lee's main correspondent, Landon Carter, remained loyal to his British heritage longer than did Lee and others.

Lee's shift towards viewing himself increasingly as a Virginian and American can be seen throughout many of the aforementioned letters. His early hatred of the Post Office and willingness to exploit his own name in the Virginia Gazette as an opponent of British offenses through unconstitutional matters and his devotion to a constitutional, American-run post, rather than one established by the British, indicated his loyalty to the colonies and not to the royal government. Lee's 1770 belief that "It has always been evident that abilities of what [litt]le virtue remains in England have been with the minority," his devotion to "American claims," and his doubt of the fairness and effectiveness of the British Parliament all serve as indications that Lee considered the

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<sup>33</sup> Such men included John Dickinson.

British government, as well as its people, as inferior in some degree to the American colonists. Indeed, as the war continued, Lee's devotion to reporting British acts against the state of Virginia, as well as his great concern with his home and fellow Virginians, indicated his own recognition of himself as a Virginian and not as a British subject. Furthermore, Lee's devotion to his role as a member of the Second Continental Congress and his lack of hesitancy to support patriotic American measures signaled Lee's attest of his status as an American and not as a subject of the British Crown. April 1776 found Lee writing, "I feel myself deeply interested in the security and happiness of America, compared with which, the interests of Britain, is as a feather in the scale."<sup>34</sup> Perhaps most importantly, Lee's signature on the Declaration of Independence clearly established his support of America and his desire for a complete, irreversible break with Great Britain. Lee's signature is a sign of his positive belief in the Americans' ability to defeat the British in the war for independence, for by placing his name very clearly on this important document to be sent directly to King George III, Lee signed his own death warrant for high treason were the colonists to lose the war. Such willingness to risk his life for the sake of what he considered to be his nation and his state of Virginia was a statement of Lee's powerful, unhesitant view of himself as not British, but rather as a Virginian and an American.

**"Let us at least endeavour to prevent all the mischief in our power."**

Having increasingly come to see himself as an American rather than as a British subject, Lee devoted a great deal of attention to American actions in politics. Through

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<sup>34</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee, "Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, Philadelphia April 9, 1776" in Edmund C. Burnett, ed. *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921) 417.

his letters to Landon Carter, Lee's ever contemplative mind can be viewed. Lee addresses not only specific incidents throughout his letters, but also focuses on the general action that should be employed by Americans for success in not only the war, but also in the government in general.

Lee believed there was a need for effective political leaders and patriots, a desire shared by many of the more radical members of the Second Continental Congress. In his letter to Carter, Lee writes:

“It gives me concern to hear that you are withdrawing from public business; upon my word, this is not a time for men of abilities with good intentions to be only spectators, if we can't do all the good, we cou'd wish, let us at least endeavour to prevent all the mischeif [sic] in our power.”<sup>35</sup>

Lee does not call upon all people, but rather only those with “good intentions.” Thus, in light of his views conveyed in previous correspondence, he refers only to patriots. This call coincided with the need for good leadership, as well as for active community support within the colonies. Such a need proved to be a fairly commonplace belief among most prominent patriots, including George Washington and John Adams.

Lee first and foremost believed that in order to be successful, the colonists, especially those involved in government, needed to act, hold strong to their convictions, and remain attentive to the political situation. Lee's letter of 3 August 1775 to Carter is particularly revealing when he speaks of the Convention being held in Williamsburg:

“There must be a great many idle speaker, who waste the time most shamefully; or to be sure all the business before them might have been done by this time.”<sup>36</sup> Here Lee provides a small window into his opinion of the political proceedings of his day, as well

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<sup>35</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>36</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 3 August 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

as a glimpse at his own attitude towards politics: time was not to be wasted, and to do so was shameful for it kept the political body from accomplishing the business it was called upon to address.

Perhaps one of the best ways to ensure American success, argued Lee, was to remain attentive. In his above letter to Carter, Lee asserts that men need to remain active in public business, yet equally important, or perhaps more so, men need to be attentive to both the matters of Congress and British movements. In multiple letters Lee addresses the inattention of some individuals and even whole colonies or sections of the country. 15 September 1776 found Lee declaring: "I cannot think the apprehensions of our Council, without foundation, for whether the Enemy is successfull [sic] or not at N. York, there is reason to believe, they will make some attempts upon some of the southern states."<sup>37</sup> With such possible attacks looming in the near future, what Lee feared most was the knowledge that "we know that our people, upon the least removal of danger, are too apt, to relapse into supineness [sic] & inattention."<sup>38</sup> It was in cases such as this that Lee believed danger was highest, for once the colonies lapsed into inattention, they became more susceptible to British defeat. Rather than pay attention to only the immediate dangers, Lee believed it was important to stay on guard for those yet unseen threats.

Four months later, in January 1777, Lee again found the occasion upon which to comment on such inattention: the British advancement towards Philadelphia. In the winter of 1776, the British army neared Philadelphia. In response to this threat, the

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<sup>37</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 15 September 1776, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>38</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 15 September 1776, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

Second Continental Congress removed itself from Philadelphia, meeting in Annapolis, Maryland instead. Lee writes: “nothing else cou’d awaken the whigs of that State to a sense of danger. the lethargy of the middle States was really alarming; thank God! it is removed.”<sup>39</sup> Lee deemed such “lethargy” a threat to the very existence of the patriot cause. Lee believed the colonials needed to pay attention to, and react quickly to, the British threat. By the standards of Lee, the “whigs” of Pennsylvania should have responded long before they were under the immediate threat of the British. Lee was not suffering from paranoia when he directed his frustration towards the middle Colonies and Pennsylvania in particular. Rather, he held a firm belief that no British victory should be achieved as a result of the colonists lapsing into an unwarranted state of inattention. Lee warned that fatal consequences might someday arise if the colonists did not remain attentive to both immediate dangers and those that might threaten their future safety.

When news of the Boston Port Act, a measure to close the port of Boston in June 1774 in response to the Boston Tea Party, reached the Virginia House of Burgesses, Francis Lightfoot Lee met with a few other members of the House at Raleigh Tavern. Resulting from the meeting was the Fast-Day Resolution. Thomas Jefferson records the event, writing:

The lead in the house on these subjects being no longer left to the old members, Mr. Henry, R. H. Lee, Fr. L. Lee, 3. or 4. other members, whom I do not recollect, and myself [Jefferson], agreeing that we must boldly take an unequivocal stand in the line with Massachusetts determined to meet and consul on the proper measures in the council chamber, for the benefit of the library in that room. We were under conviction of the necessity of arousing our people from the lethargy into which they had fallen as to passing events; and thought that the appointment

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<sup>39</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 14 January 1777, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

of a day of general fasting and prayer would be most likely to call up and alarm their attention.<sup>40</sup>

Jefferson's account of the meeting and the beliefs of the attendants concur with Francis Lightfoot Lee's hatred of "lethargy," for the meeting sought to rouse the colonies from the inattention that Lee claimed they were want to do. The resolution brought British offenses to the forefront of public attention in Virginia. The resulting resolution also confirmed Lee's support of unity, for it called upon the colonies to support one another in the deterrence of British oppression.

Related to his opinion on idleness in politics is Lee's belief in the importance of the political participation of patriots. This theme recurs in many of his letters, including the aforementioned letter dated 21 October 1775 in which he encourages Landon Carter to "at least endeavour [sic] to prevent all the mischeif [sic] in our power."<sup>41</sup> Here Lee calls upon Carter personally to return to "public business," while at the same time establishing Lee's own strong conviction that all those who had "good intentions" (for Lee, patriots), should take an active part in the events of the day and not merely leave the work for others to perform. Lee encourages all patriots to give of themselves as much as possible in order to aid the patriot cause, each drawing upon his own ability to "prevent all the mischeif [sic] in our power."<sup>42</sup> Or, in other words, prevent the British from gaining even the slightest victory or advantage.

Lee's emphasis on remaining in "public business" coincides with another of his beliefs, this one not relating merely to the individual, but to the governmental body. In

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<sup>40</sup> Julian P. Boyd, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Volume 5, 25 February 1781 to 20 May 1781* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952) 106.

<sup>41</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>42</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.



the same letter in which he castigates the idle speaker, Lee also stresses the importance of unity. When in 1775, the House of Burgesses nearly imposed a loyalty oath, an oath declaring one's loyalty to the American cause and not to support any measures that would be beneficial to the British, Lee was rather alarmed. On 3 August 1775 Lee writes to Carter, saying: "It really gave me concern when I heard of the Test [loyalty oath]." Lee's greatest concern was that "it [the oath] wou'd occasion a considerable division among us." It was not that Lee was unpatriotic; indeed, as can be seen from the preceding discussion, he was quite devoted to patriotic goals. Rather, it was his belief that unity was important, if not essential, to victory over British oppression. "I think a seeming unanimity, at present," Lee writes, "is of more advantage; than that of knowing, who are certainly our friends."<sup>43</sup> Agreement resting within the governmental body would allow the body to act more effectively, while a division caused by a loyalty oath would most certainly delay the actions necessary for American success. The loyalty oath requirement did not pass through the House, much to Lee's satisfaction.

Lee was also opinionated in regard to what governmental actions should be. First and foremost, Lee believed that plans should be feasible; lavish, grand plans would inevitably fail. "I like their [House of Burgesses] plans very well, tho [sic] I think they are rather on too large a scale. there is reason to apprehend, the expense [of enacting the plans] will occasion great discontent."<sup>44</sup> Designing plans that were on "too large a scale," whether in the desired accomplishments of the plan or the monetary expense, would be more likely to end in defeat. Lee mentions the expense of lavish plans particularly.

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<sup>43</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 3 August 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>44</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 3 August 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

Although Virginia was a fairly wealthy colony, and certainly many of the large planters themselves were, inflation wreaked havoc on currency in the new United States, creating a monetary problem.<sup>45</sup> The paper currency issued by the colonies was not backed by gold and silver specie. As the war progressed, Americans became even further removed from the British source of hard specie. As a result, rampant inflation continued to inflict the new country. Although Lee does not mention this inflation, he does make the important observation that funds should be retained for future use, rather than spent on what he would consider infeasible plans.

**“With plenty of powder, the Victory is surely ours.”**

America needed more than merely help in establishing an effective government. The immediate problems facing the colonists were an ineffective army and a lack of supplies, namely in the form of weaponry. At the beginning of the war, the American military force was comprised of an ineffectual militia and regular troops, who, although they were more skilled, were severely undersupplied.<sup>46</sup>

Lee recognized the difficulty the militia posed. On 15 September 1776 Lee is found reporting the latest military movements to Landon Carter. In his letter he writes of the “efforts of the Enemy at N. York.” If the British attempted a sudden attack on New York State, Lee laments that “we must depend upon the Militia to impede their progress, till untill [sic] they can be opposed by some regular troops.” Lee believed that “the Militia is not only ineffectual, but bey[on]d measure, expensive.” Like many, including General George Washington who called for a larger, more effective continental army,

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<sup>45</sup> Countryman, 120.

<sup>46</sup> Countryman, 134-137.

Lee agreed that “such a number of regulars will therefore be raised, for the next campaign, that we shall not have recourse to the militia.” Because the militia responded mainly to local events, trained little, and its soldiers deserted more often than the regulars, establishing a larger, more effective regular army would prove essential to the Americans.<sup>47</sup>

Yet even a larger army of regulars would not bring great success, for without an adequate supply of firearms and powder, the regular army too would prove to be ineffective. As Lee says, “we either fight to a disadvantage or surrender for want of provisions.”<sup>48</sup> Before the war, powder and firearms had not been major manufactures in the colonies. Most gunpowder had been imported through British-Colonial trade. As a result of the rebellion, the British placed a blockade along the Eastern coast, making it difficult for the Americans to import an adequate supply of gunpowder, as well as guns, from another nation such as France.<sup>49</sup> As early as October 1775, the lack of powder weighed heavily upon the losses of the Americans. Lee writes: “Our military occupations this campaign have been very languid, from the want of powder...”<sup>50</sup> Lee saw the lack of powder as one of the most important obstacles facing the colonies during the war, believing that “with plenty of powder, the Victory is surely ours.”<sup>51</sup>

While in the Continental Congress, Lee actively worked on a committee, comprised of the members of the Board of War and three other delegates, that was established to secure provisions for the army of General Washington. December 1777

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<sup>47</sup> Countryman, 136.

<sup>48</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 15 September 1776, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>49</sup> Countryman, 137.

<sup>50</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>51</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

found Lee appealing to both the president of Pennsylvania and the governor of Maryland for army supplies. He urged expediency in the compliance of Pennsylvania with the committees wishes, writing: “An instant Supply must be procured from this State for the Support of the Army until the Supplies expected from the neighbouring [sic] States arrive.”<sup>52</sup> Maryland was one of the states whose supplies would be arriving. In his letter to Governor Johnson of Maryland Lee writes, “The committee rely strongly on the Exertions of Maryland and Virginia in laying up Magazines for future supply as well as obtaining present relief.”<sup>53</sup> In the meantime, “The Committee request you [President Wharton of Pennsylvania] will be pleased to inform them whether the Proclamation ordering the Inhabitants of York and Cumberland Counties to thresh out their Grain has been issued.”<sup>54</sup>

As a result of the inadequate supply of weapons and other important articles, Lee began to advocate that Americans produce their own supplies. This position served as a signal that the dependency of colonials on Britain for goods was coming to an end. By supporting American-made products Lee grew to support a growing American identity, a new dependency upon themselves and not on Britain. Lee urged that if the army failed “in being supplyd from abroad, every man shou’d exert himself in making salt petre [sic][.] your [Carter’s] several plantations wou’d furnish a good deal, & you know the process is easy.”<sup>55</sup> This suggestion was not merely an offhand suggestion to Carter, for in Lee’s letter to Robert Wormeley Carter dated November 1775, he writes: “There are

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<sup>52</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee, “Francis Lightfoot Lee to the President of Pennsylvania” in Edmund C. Burnett, ed. *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921) 603.

<sup>53</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee, “Francis Lightfoot Lee to the Governor of Maryland” in Edmund C. Burnett, ed. *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921) 604.

<sup>54</sup> Lee, *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress*, vol. 2, 603.

<sup>55</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

small guns in several parts of Virginia...The furnaces should be set to casting them.”<sup>56</sup>

Although his encouragement may at first seem insignificant, Lee’s recognition that America could not rely upon outside sources for supplies is important, for it served as a sign of Lee’s increasing recognition of a new American identity.

**“I have seen some of the rum, very good.”**

Francis Lightfoot Lee’s support for American-made goods lay not only with army supplies. Rather, it extended to some luxury items, including sugar, molasses, and rum. In years preceding the Revolution, there was a difficulty in acquiring such items, because all three of the items were imported from the British West Indies. To avoid high tariffs that had been placed on ships carrying these cargoes, Americans began to smuggle molasses and rum into the colonies. Once the war had begun, molasses and rum became increasingly difficult to come by because of the British blockades. Lee encouraged the production of molasses, sugar and rum within the colonies, using local supplies, as well as avoiding the costly price that accompanied West Indies imports.

In a letter dated 14 January 1777 to Landon Carter, Lee mentions a Doctor Bond who had “promised to procure for you [Carter], a certain method of granulating sugar.”<sup>57</sup> Several months later, in September 1777, Lee provides Carter with “The Method of Making Sugar from the Cane-Juice.” Once the process has been thoroughly described, Lee writes: “The writer of the within was a long time Manager of Estates in Jamaica &

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<sup>56</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Robert Wormeley Carter, November 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

Robert Wormeley Carter was the son of Landon Carter. At this time, Robert W. Carter was a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses from Richmond County.

<sup>57</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 14 January 1777, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

Barbadoes.”<sup>58</sup> Although the process referred to by the Manager was meant for sugar cane, Carter intended to attempt to use the process to make sugar from the cornstalks which were abundant in Virginia. Lee writes, “It may...be doubted whether the young Corn stalks will make sugar at all; but from the infor-mation I have rec’d, I think it is worth while to try the[e] stalk in its more advanced state.”<sup>59</sup> Most interesting about this letter is Lee’s mention that “A Farmer in this State [Pennsylvania], says he last year made half a barrel of very rich melases [sic], as he called it, from a load of stalks, after he gather’d the corn.”<sup>60</sup> Clearly, Lee is suggesting to Carter that the use of cornstalks to make molasses might prove to be successful. Such success would free the Americans from being dependent on the British West Indies for the future trade of molasses. Were the cornstalks a satisfactory replacement for sugar cane, Americans would become more independent by producing both sugar and molasses as new American products, both of which are key ingredients in the making of rum. A few months later, in December 1777, Lee writes Carter a report on the making of molasses: “The making of molasses, Sugar, & Rum from Cornstalks has a considerable progress in the Estern [sic] States. An acre of the tops yields a hogs head of Molasses. I have seen some of the rum, very good.”<sup>61</sup> Apparently such use of cornstalks had already taken hold in at least one section of America.

Although sugar and molasses seem trivial compared to what was at stake in the war for independence, Lee’s advocacy of their production is significant, for production of

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<sup>58</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 22 September 1777, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>59</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 22 September 1777, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>60</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 22 September 1777, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>61</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 7 December 1777, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

such materials was a step towards further independence. Furthermore, such production was a precursor of what would come after the war, as the new states became dependent upon themselves rather than other countries for many items that had been previously imported.

### **“The real friends of America”**

As an advocate of American production and manufacturing, Lee furthered his support of the American Revolution and seemingly acted patriotically. Yet the question remains as to what Lee believed a patriot to be, and whether or not he met his own standards of patriotism. Although Lee does not provide a full description of a “patriot,” his correspondence with Carter creates an image from which one can begin to piece together Lee’s “patriot.” For Lee, patriots not only remained devoted to the American cause for independence, but were also involved in political and/or social matters, and were most certainly attentive and watchful. When Lee speaks of the Ministry and its exercise of “corruption and deception,” he declares “he [any man] will be consider’d a true patriot instead of a disturber of the public repose, who shall watch every invidious step, and point out the consequences to his country; as well as to warn this against the unprovided state, on which we have at present found ourselves.”<sup>62</sup> Combined with his distaste for the “lethargy” of states in response to a British threat, Lee’s description of “a true patriot” establishes the basis for his idea of the patriot; Lee placed great value on alertness. Yet, for Lee, personal alertness was not enough to be considered a patriot. Instead, when a possible plot or threat to the state or new country was discovered, Lee

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<sup>62</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 2 April 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

believed the patriot would bring this to the public eye in order to “warn” the states and country in advance of what difficulties they might face. Such a person was not to be considered a disturber, or one who tried to stir up public action. Instead, those who were watchful and alert were to be considered true “friends” of the patriotic cause.

Tied to this concept of watchfulness is Lee’s aforementioned statement to Landon Carter: “...upon my word, this is not a time for men of abilities with good intentions to be only spectators, if we can’t do all the good, we cou’d wish, let us at least endeavour to prevent all the mischeif [sic] in our power.”<sup>63</sup> Watchfulness and warning the proper authorities in advance of threats to the patriotic cause would fall into the category of preventing “mischeif.” Yet endeavoring to prevent “all the mischeif in our power” could extend further than warnings. Rather, it could include actions such as refusing to support unconstitutional British measures, abstaining from purchasing British goods in response to the Townshend Acts, or perhaps even devising ways to provide the proper provisions for the army. For the common man, this might have included entering the Continental Army to serve against the British forces.

Lee refers to what he calls “the real friends of America” in two of his letters. In November 1775 he writes to Robert Wormeley Carter: “this intelligence [of British plans] gives great concern to all the real friends of America; & subjects your Countrymen to the sneers of its disguised Ene-mies & the lukewarm [loyalists].”<sup>64</sup> One month later, in a letter to Landon Carter, Lee again writes: “The real friends of liberty are under great concern, & your delegates are mortified of the sneers & deflections of the lukewarm but

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<sup>63</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775<sub>1</sub> Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>64</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Robert Wormeley Carter, November 1775<sub>2</sub> Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.



that is trifling to the uneasiness we suffer, from the apprehen-[s]ion of the consequences, that may follow, from L'd. Dunmore's being allowd [sic], to get to such a head."<sup>65</sup> Lee made the distinction between patriots, or "real friends," loyalists, and those who remained indifferent to the war.

**"I seldom knew him wrong eventually upon any question."**

Despite Lee's talk of patriotism and the American Revolution, the question remains as to whether or not Lee was a "patriot" by his own standards. Lee's theme "this is not a time for men of abilities with good intentions to be only spectators" is consistent throughout his correspondence. If he was not imploring Landon Carter to remain in "public business," Lee was recommending that Virginia planters make salt petre or molasses, and generally endeavoring "to prevent all the mischeif [sic] in our power."<sup>66</sup>

Some historians imply (in brief references to Lee) that Francis Lightfoot Lee is rightfully overshadowed by his older brother Richard Henry in the political scene.<sup>67</sup> The most common passage quoted to defend this argument is taken from a letter of 17 July 1770, written by Francis Lightfoot Lee to his brother William in which he writes: "the people are so vext at the little attendance I have given them, that they are determin'd it seems to dismiss me from their service; a resolution most pleasing to me, for it is so very inconvenient to me."<sup>68</sup> This dismissal of involvement with serving in governmental positions for Loudoun County holds true to the eighteenth-century political style of

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<sup>65</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 12 December 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

<sup>66</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter, 21 October 1775, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA

<sup>67</sup> See Dill, *Francis Lightfoot Lee: The Incomparable Singer* for example.

<sup>68</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee to William Lee, 17 July 1770, Lee Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA

“being selected,” of downplaying one’s role in politics. Yet besides political ideology, Lee had other material, common matters that may have influenced his feelings towards serving Loudoun County. At the time this letter was written, Lee was residing in Richmond County, having recently married Rebecca Tayloe of that county. Loudoun County and Richmond County are at least one hundred miles apart; today it takes over two hours to drive between the two counties by car. By eighteenth-century standards, this distance would have taken days to travel by horse, making the distance, as Lee points out “very inconvenient” for a Virginia planter. This is not to mention that Lee had recently begun his service as a Burgess of Richmond County and later, as a justice of the peace in Richmond County, while still holding the office of justice of the peace in Loudoun County. Thus, were he to be dismissed from his seat in Loudoun County, Lee would not be removing himself from politics and public interest for he would remain not only a Burgess of Richmond County, but also a justice of the peace.<sup>69</sup>

The inconvenience to which Lee referred did not apply solely to his own position. Rather, as T.H. Breen argues in Tobacco Culture, many tobacco planters shared Lee’s feelings. Tobacco was important not only to the economic life of planters, but also to their social life. “The staple [tobacco] provided the Lees and Carters of mid-eighteenth-century Virginia with a means to establish a public identity, a way to locate themselves within a web of human relations.”<sup>70</sup> Because tobacco was a time-sensitive crop that depended upon careful watchfulness and cultivation that was most often overseen by the planter himself, for Lee to be not only the owner of lands distant from one another, but also serve in political roles for two counties, was to place an overwhelming amount of

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<sup>69</sup> Lee ceased to serve as a Burgess for Loudoun County.

<sup>70</sup> Breen, 22.

pressure upon Lee.<sup>71</sup> Not only was he expected to serve his constituents well, but his status in society also required him to be attentive to his tobacco crops and their success. As Breen writes, "...quite literally, the quality of a man's tobacco often served as the measure of the man."<sup>72</sup> Added to this is the fact that the schedule for tobacco growth "contained few slack periods, no time during which the grower could be completely free of anxieties about the state of his crop."<sup>73</sup> With such intense pressure in the economic and social, as well as the political arena, it is no wonder that Francis Lightfoot Lee found serving Loudoun County an "inconvenience."

Despite this "inconvenience," Lee did not fail to assume political responsibility in the State of Virginia for Richmond County. While in the House of Burgesses, Francis Lightfoot Lee was considered one of the group of progressives. Lee, his brother Richard Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and Dabney Carr came together in March 1773 when the House of Burgesses reconvened in Williamsburg. At the forefront of the assembly's business was the *Gaspee* affair. In June 1772, the *Gaspee*, a British ship employed along the coast of Rhode Island for the purpose of enforcing revenue laws, ran aground and was attacked by a mob. Eventually, the ship was set ablaze. The British Government began an investigation and eventually declared that all Americans accused of crimes were to be taken out of the colonies and tried in England. This, of course, set off a protest in the colonies, especially among the Virginians. They believed that the right to a trial by jury on American soil was one that was to be guaranteed. As a result of the *Gaspee* affair, the aforementioned group of progressives came together in resistance to

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<sup>71</sup> Francis Lightfoot Lee was also in charge of his brother William's affairs, including the shipment of tobacco, while William was in England.

<sup>72</sup> Breen, 23.

<sup>73</sup> Breen, 53.

this British position, with the intention of developing a plan for inter-colonial correspondence.<sup>74</sup> Jefferson describes the meeting, writing:

Not thinking our old & leading members up to the point of forwardness & zeal which the times required, Mr. Henry, R.H. Lee, Francis L. Lee, Mr. Carr & myself agreed to meet in the evening in a private room of the Raleigh [tavern] to consult on the state of things...We were all sensible that the most urgent of all measures was that of coming to an understanding with all the other colonies to consider the British claims as a common cause to all, & to produce an unity of action...We therefore drew up the resolutions.<sup>75</sup>

As a result of the meeting at Raleigh Tavern, a standing committee of correspondence was established; it was to be the first of the inter-colonial committees of correspondence. As historian Oliver Chitwood explains, “The organization of intercolonial committees of correspondence was the most important step up to that time taken by the colonies toward effective unified opposition to the British.”<sup>76</sup> Francis Lee was involved in this organization from the beginning.

Thomas Jefferson’s brief excerpt illuminates many aspects of Lee’s character: Lee was a progressive, patriotic man, and not one of the “old & leading members” who were not “up to the point of forwardness & zeal” that Jefferson described. Furthermore, Lee’s presence at this meeting provides further evidence of his devotion to unity, for the meeting was called specifically to discuss colonial unity. Clearly, Lee believed, as he stressed in his letters to Carter, that unity and cooperation were essential to the Revolutionaries. From the names of those men present at the meeting, particularly Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson, both recognized as two of the more radical revolutionaries, it can be further ascertained that Lee himself was of the more radical

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<sup>74</sup> Oliver Perry Chitwood, *Richard Henry Lee: Statesman of the Revolution* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Library, 1967) 53-4.

<sup>75</sup> Chitwood, 54.

<sup>76</sup> Chitwood, 55.

group that desired a clear break from Britain, rather than a hesitant Burgess hoping for reconciliation between Britain and the colonies.

The opinions of Lee's friends and fellow patriots further prove that Lee was, in fact, a patriot by his own standards. John Adams went so far as to describe Lee as one of "that band of brothers, intrepid and unchangeable, who, like the Greeks at Thermopulae, stood in the gap, in the defense of their country."<sup>77</sup> Although obviously a bit of an exaggeration, Adams captures the essence of Francis Lightfoot Lee's political spirit. He was a fervent supporter of independence and remained a political servant for almost thirty years of his life, and, as Adams noted upon meeting Lee in 1775, Francis was "sensible and patriotic."<sup>78</sup>

Fourteen years after Lee's death, Benjamin Rush, fellow signer of the Declaration of Independence and renowned doctor, wrote to John Adams:

How is it that the old Tories love him [Washington] exclusively of all the Whigs of the Revolution? The names of the Adamses, Hancock, the Lees and Franklin are all more or less disliked or hated by them. ... There was a time when these things irritated and distressed me, but I now hear and see them with the same indifference or pity that I hear the ravings and witness the antic gestures of my deranged patients in our Hospital.<sup>79</sup>

Rush's very inclusion of Francis Lightfoot Lee in this group of men who helped to shape the nation and its founding documents speaks to Lee's success as a patriot, for Rush was an ardent supporter of the Revolution and its ideals. Rush had a very high opinion of Francis Lightfoot, and believed him to have "a more acute and correct mind" than his

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<sup>77</sup> cited in Paul C. Nagel, *The Lees of Virginia: Seven Generations of an American Family* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 97.

The four brothers, Francis, Richard Henry, William and Arthur all served the American colonies during the Revolutionary War. William was a merchant in London and Arthur, a diplomat.

<sup>78</sup> Chitwood, 10.

<sup>79</sup> Benjamin Rush to John Adams, 10 July 1811, in L.H. Butterfield, ed., *Letters of Benjamin Rush: Volume I: 1761-1792* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951) 1090.

brother Richard Henry Lee and claimed that he “seldom knew him [Francis Lightfoot] wrong eventually upon any question.”<sup>80</sup> Even amongst the Lees, according to George Washington, Francis Lightfoot was believed to possess the soundest judgment of all six of the Lee brothers.<sup>81</sup>

At the end of his sketch of Francis Lightfoot Lee, Mark Twain commented:

He [Lee] did no brilliant things, he made no brilliant speeches; but the enduring strength of his patriotism was manifest, his fearlessness in motives was unquestioned, his unpurchaseable honor and uprightness were unchallenged.<sup>82</sup>

It is not that Lee “did no brilliant things” but rather that he is not remembered for having done “brilliant things.” He like, Thomas Jefferson, was not an outspoken man, but Lee’s influence in both the Virginia House of Burgesses and the Continental Congress, as well as his avid pursuit of independence have certainly earned him a rightful place in American history; not as the “inconspicuous” man Twain described him to be, but as a truly devoted patriot who, at the very least, endeavored “to prevent all the mischief [sic]” in his power in order to aid in the establishment of these United States of America.

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<sup>80</sup> Chitwood, 10.

<sup>81</sup> The two remaining brothers were Philip Ludwell Lee and Thomas Ludwell Lee. Nagel, *The Lees of Virginia*, inside cover.

<sup>82</sup> Twain, *Mark Twain: Life As I Find It*, 2.

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## Introduction to Francis Lightfoot Lee on Menokin Website

*Thou sweetest of all the Lee race  
That ever adorned our shore,  
O with us do fix thine abode  
And leave Philadelphia no more.*

*Thy temper's as soft as the dove's  
When she warbles aloft the air,  
And thy converse enchantingly sweet,  
When engaged in discourse with the fair.*

*But when learning engrosses thy thought  
Then thy genious shines brighter and best,  
And shows that thou shurely wilt be  
An adornment to all in the West.*

*O that thou mayest chuse but to live  
Where I thy sweet friendship may prove,  
I will smooth the remains of my life  
Until I shall meet thee above.*

*And there if our happy lot's cast  
In those blessed regions to stay,  
No gloomy dark night shall we know  
But one clear and bright, perfect day.*

Sonnet addressed to Francis Lightfoot Lee, written by Ann Hume Shippen Livingston, his niece. c.1781.<sup>83</sup>

*“This man’s life-work was so inconspicuous, that his name would now be wholly forgotten, but for one thing- he signed the Declaration of Independence. Yet his life was a most useful and worthy one. It was a good and profitable voyage, though it left no phosphorescent splendors in its wake.”* –Mark Twain on Francis Lightfoot Lee, 1877<sup>84</sup>

Francis Lightfoot Lee is what one might call a “forgotten revolutionary.”

Described by his niece as the “sweetest of all the Lee race” and as possessing a temper

### **Introduction to Francis Lightfoot Lee on Menokin Website (continued)**

“as soft as the dove’s,” Lee was far from being the inconspicuous man that Twain claimed he was. Lee, his memory now nearly hidden beneath the rubble of his Virginia mansion, had a life that was “most useful and worthy,” the life of a patriot of the American Revolution. Over one hundred years after Twain wrote his sketch of Francis Lightfoot Lee, Lee has nearly become “wholly forgotten,” and, as Twain was correct to note, Lee is solely remembered for his signature on the Declaration of Independence. Yet Lee has not been granted his proper place in history, for his involvement with the founding of the country lays not only in his signature on a document, but with thirty years of an active political life, a life in which he opposed British measures, sought independence, and served the nation through a number of committees as a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, the Second Continental Congress, and the Virginia State Senate. Lee was certainly not an “inconspicuous” man, nor was he merely “soft as a

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<sup>83</sup> Ann Hume Shippen Livingston, “Sonnet” in Shippen Family Papers, Jessie Ball DuPont Library, Stratford Hall, VA, c. 1781.

<sup>84</sup> Mark Twain in The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 1, no. 3 (1877). Reprinted in Charles Neider, ed., Mark Twain: Life as I Find It (New York, 1961).

dove.” Rather, Lee was a true patriot, not only according to standards held by his contemporaries, but also to his own.

Francis Lightfoot Lee was born in 1734 to Thomas and Hannah Ludwell Lee at the Stratford Hall Plantation in Westmoreland County on the Northern Neck of Virginia. Like most male children of the Virginia planter class, Lee was educated by a private tutor at Stratford Hall and was well read in Classical literature, history and law.<sup>85</sup> In 1758, he took his seat as representative of Loudoun County to the Virginia House of Burgesses,

**Introduction to Francis Lightfoot Lee on Menokin Website (continued)**

having moved there to maintain his lands inherited from his father. During his time as a Burgess, Lee remained attentive to the political scene of not only Virginia, but also of the colonies. He became an opponent to taxation without representation and other British offenses, which he protested not only through personal letters, but also in signing his support to important documents, including the Westmoreland Resolves of 1766. As a member of a committee appointed to protest British policies toward the colonies in 1768, Lee maintained an active role in opposition to the British. In 1769, Lee was married to Rebecca Tayloe, daughter of planter John Tayloe II, and moved to Richmond County to the Menokin Plantation.<sup>86</sup> Having settled at Menokin, Lee was elected representative of Richmond County to the House of Burgesses.

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<sup>85</sup> Paul C. Nagel, The Lees of Virginia: Seven Generations of an American Family (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980) 49.

<sup>86</sup> Camille Wells, Notes on the Chronology of the Revolution, in Menokin Foundation holdings, c. 1996, 19.

Lee continued to serve as a Burgess from Richmond County until elected as a Virginia delegate to the Second Continental Congress in August 1775. Lee fully supported American Independence throughout most of his political career, signing the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Lee remained a member of Congress until 1779, serving on a variety of committees including the Board of War, Committee of Secret Correspondence, and other ad-hoc committees. In 1779, Francis Lightfoot Lee retired from the Second Continental Congress due to the three-year limit that had since been imposed by the Revolutionary Government. In 1780, Lee again entered Virginia politics, having been elected to serve as a member of the Virginia Senate, until 1782 when he retired from politics. He did, however, remain interested in the political scene,

**Introduction to Francis Lightfoot Lee on Menokin Website (continued)**

and is purported to have supported the ratification of the Constitution. In a letter to James Madison, George Washington wrote:

Francis L. Lee on whose judgement the family place much reliance, is decidedly [sic] in favor of the new form [the Constitution] under a conviction that it is the best that can be obtained, and because it promises energy, stability, and tht [sic] security which is, or ought to be, the wish of every good citizen of the Union.<sup>87</sup>

Lee remained at his home, Menokin, until both he and his wife passed away in January 1797 due to illness.

-Excerpted from introduction to “Francis Lightfoot Lee: Forgotten Revolutionary” by Sarah L. Jones, Yale University, 2004.

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<sup>87</sup> Wells, 19.

### ***Engagement of Members to Meet Punctually, Etc. on Menokin Website***

Francis Lightfoot Lee was an active member of the Second Continental Congress. He was the first to sign the following resolution, indicating his devotion to both the task of the Congress and expediency in completing that task. Scholars believe Lee amended the resolution by crossing out the word fifteen and replacing it with ten. Scholars also believe Lee penned the endorsement at the end of the document which reads, "Signed in the handwriting of the Members April 12<sup>th</sup>. 1778." This is indicative of Lee's active participation in the drafting of this resolution. -SLJ

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#### Engagement of Members to Meet Punctually, Etc.

We the subscribers of Congress pledge our honor to each other that we will meet punctually at the hour of adjournment, that on any subject in debate (except in committee of the whole house) we will not speak more than Ten minutes, seldom more than once, never more than twice, and that we will unite in supporting order and preserving decency and politeness in debate  
April 12. 1778.

Francis Lightfoot Lee	Va.
Samuel Chase	Md.
Wm. Duer	N. Yk.
J Banister	
Wm. Hy. Drayton	

Jas. Smith	
William Ellery	
James Forbes	Md.
James Lovell	
Fra. Dana	
Edward Langworthy	
Sam'el Huntington	
John Henry	Md.
Nathl. Scudder	
Corn's Harnett	
E Gerry	

“Engagement of the members to meet punctually at the hour of adjournment, to support order and preserve decency and politeness.”

“Signed in the handwriting of the Members April 12<sup>th</sup>. 1778.”

### **Notes on the *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1761-1776***

Kennedy, John Pendleton. *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1761-1765*. (Richmond, Virginia: The Colonial Press, MCMVII)

#### **House of Burgesses Journals- 1758-1761**

1758

p. 20-21      Saturday 23 September 1758- appointed to committee to consider petition of John Smith, who had been a captatin in the “unfortunate Expedition agaisnt the Shawnee Indians in the Year 1756”

p. 36-37      Wednesday 4 October 1758- appointed to committee to consider petition of Thomas Gibbs who had furnished blacksmith tools for the building of Fort Cumberland in 1754 that had not been returned to him

1759

p. 57      Friday 23 February 1759- appointed to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

p. 93      Wednesday 14 March 1759- “A *Bill* To enable the Inhabitants of the County of *Loudoun* to pay their public Dues and Officers Fees in Money, was read a second Time, and committed to *Mr Francis Lightfoot Lee, Mr Hambleton, and Mr Walker.*”

p. 97 Saturday 17 March 1759- appointed to committee to consider petition of Adam Stephen in behalf of the surviving part of a detachment of the Virginia Regiment that was engaged in a skirmish before Fort DuQuesne...were required to retreat and suffered the loss of their shirts and blankets

p. 98 Saturday 17 March 1759- “*Mr Francis Lightfoot Lee* reported, That the Committee to whom the Bill To enable the Inhabitants of the County of Loudoun to pay their public Dues and Officers Fees in Money, was committed, had made several Amendments thereto, which he read in his Place, and then delivered the Bill, with the Amendments, in at the Table, where the Amendments were again twice read, and agreed to by the House.”

p.100 Monday 19 March 1759- “An engrossed *Bill* intituled [sic], *An Act to enable the Inhabitants of the County of Loudoun to pay their public Dues and Officers Fees in Money, and for other Purposes therein mentioned*, was read the third Time, and the Blanks therein filled up.

*Resolved*, That the Bill do pass.

*Ordered*, That *Mr Francis Lightfoot Lee* do carry up the said Bill to the Council for their Concurrence.”

#### **Notes on the Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1761-1776 (continued)**

p. 109 Monday 26 March 1759- “A *Bill* For encouraging Arts and Manufactures was read a second Time, and committed to *Mr Charles Carter, Mr George Johnston, Mr Francis Lightfoot Lee* and *Mr Bland*.”

p. 142 Friday 9 November 1759- petition of Daniel M’Neil which stated that he had received a wound in 1758 in a skirmish with the Enemy at Fort Ligonier which has rendered him incapable of procuring a livelihood for himself and his family- wife and 3 small children. prays the consideration of HOB, given to FLL and *Mr Washington*.

p. 215 Tuesday 17 March 1761- FLL added to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

#### **Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia 1761-1765**

p. lxxiii 27 February 1766- FLL signed Westmoreland Resolves/Leedstown Resolutions

1762

p. 69 Thursday 4 November 1762- FLL appointed to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

p. 230 Wednesday 31 October 1764- FLL appointed to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

p. 325 Monday 6 May 1765- “A *Petition* of sundry Inhabitants of the County of *Frederick*, praying that an Act may pass for giving a greater Reward for killing Wolves in that and the neighboring Counties on the Frontiers of this Colony.  
*Ordered*, That a Bill be brought in agreeable tot he Prayer of the said Petition, and it is referred to *Mr Mercer* and *Mr Francis Lee* to prepare and bring in the same.

p. 355 Monday 27 December 1765- Petition of Peter Pelham regarding his repair of the organ in Williamsburg, given to FLL, Archibald Cary, and John Fleming.

### **House of Burgesses, Journals- 1766 -1769**

James Hamilton and FLL are burgesses from Loudoun County.

p. 3 Thurs. November 6, 1766 – committee to examine the state of the treasury passed. this committee was directed to reort in full on all matters appertaining to the treasury. Members; Bland, Landon Carter, RHL, Archibald Cary, Fleming, Henry, Blair, Carrington, Wythe, Tabb and Francis Lee

### **Notes on the *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1761-1776 (continued)***

p. 14 Friday 7 Nov. Geo. III 1766- committee of privileges and elections ... to examine in the first Place all Returnes of Writs for Electing Burgesses to serve in this present General Assembly, and compare the same with the Form prescribed by Law; and to take into their Consideration all such Matters as shall or may come in Question touching Returns, Elections, and Privileges and to report their Proceedings, with their Opinions thereupon, from Time to Time, to the House. And the said committeee is to have power to fend for Persons, Papers, and Records, for their Information.

FLL, RHL, and Landon Carter are members of committee

p. 15 Friday 7 Nov. Geo. III 1766- Committee of Propositions and Grievances. to take into their Consideration all Propositions and Grievances that shall come legally certified to this assembly, and to report their Proceedings....

FLL, RHL, and Landon Carter are members

p. 53 Thurs. 4 Dec. 1766- “*Ordered*, That a Committee be appointed to prepare Inscriptions for the Obelisk intended to be raised to express the Gratitude of this Colony to the several noble and worthy Patriots who distinguished themselves, in both Houses of the Parliament of *Great Britain* in procuring the Repeal of the Stamp Act; and it is referred to ....to prepare the same”

20 members, incl. RHL, FLL, LC, Henry

1767



p. 95 Wed. 25 March 1767- "On a *Motion* made, A *Bill*, to dock the intail of certain Lands, whereof *Kendall Lee* is seized and for settling other Lands and Slaves to the same Uses, was read the second time, and committed to *Mr. Richard Lee, Mr. Richard Henry Lee, Mr. Benjamin Harrison, Mr. Thomson Mason, Mr Francis Lee*, and the Members of *Northumberland, Lancaster, Accomack and Northampton*.

p. 118 Wed. 8 April, 1767- "*Ordered*, That a Committee be appointed to examine the enrolled Bills; to consist of the following Persons:"  
incl. FLL

1768

p. 143 Thurs. 31 March 1768- appointed to Committee of Privileges and Elections again

p. 145 Sat. 2 April 1768- FLL on a committee to consider of petition of John Henry, who had surveyed the Virginia Colony and needed more money to print the map, he had been encouraged by members of the HoB and other gentlemen

p. 147 Mon. 4 April 1768- FLL on a committee to examine the State of the Clerk's Office of this house

### **Notes on the Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1761-1776 (continued)**

p. 158 see copies

p. 159 Fri. 8 April 1768- FLL on committee to consider petition of Edward Westmore, keeper of the public Gaol to have the Garden repaired to make a more comfortable provision for the poor prisoners. (jail??)

p. 164 Wed. 13 April 1768- FLL on committee to examine the enrolled bills

November 1769- FLL Burgess from Richmond County, not listed as a Burgess in 1769 until Nov. Session

p. 228 November 1769- appointed to committee of Privileges and Elections

p. 229 November 1769- appointed to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

### **Journal of the House of Burgesses, 1770-1772**

1770- FLL not shown by the Journal as having been present at the Assembly

p. xxxi FLL signs the Association, column 8.

p. 3-4 FLL and Association- 1 of 16 burgesses, RHL did NOT sign or Richard Lee. it was an agreement w/ merchants, etc.

1771

p. 114 not shown by the Journal as having been present at the Assembly

1772

p. 173 Tuesday 18 February 1772- added to committee of Religion and Committee of Privileges and Elections, and p. 174 Committee of Propositions and Grievances

p.190 Wed. 26 Feb. 1772- added to those who were to prepare a bill in regard to a petition of the magistrates and others in Surry County regarding disputed titles to land

p. 206 Tuesday 3 March 1772- one of those to draw a bill up in regard to land of William Booth

p. 275 Fri. 27 March 1772- FLL and RHL given leave until the end of session

### **Notes on the *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1761-1776 (continued)***

#### **Journals of the House of Burgesses, 1773-1776**

p. xiv-xv 1774- May 27 FLL signs association w/ 89 members of HOB in session in the old Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg- a broadside from the Libr. of Congress

xi- Lee met with Jefferson at Raleigh Tavern to discuss committee of correspondence- Ford's Jefferson, vol. i, pp. 7,8

1773

p. 10 Friday 5 March 1773- FLL on Committee of Privileges and Elections

p. 29 Friday 12 March 1773- FLL given leave to be absent for the remainder of the session

1774

p. 75 Friday 6 May 1774- FLL appointed to Committee for Religion (for religion and morality) and Committee of Privileges and Elections

p. 76 Friday 6 May 1774- FLL appointed to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

1775

p. 176-177 Fri. 2 June 1775- FLL on Committee to draw up an address to the Governor in response to the several important matters in the Governor's speech to the Council and the House

p. 177 Fri. 2 June 1775- on Committee for Religion, Committee of Privileges and Elections

p. 178 Fri. 2 June 1775- appointed to Committee of Propositions and Grievances

p. 189 Mon. 5 June 1775- appointed to Committee "to inspect the public Magazine in this City [Williamsburg] and inquire into the Stores belonging to the same and make report thereof to the House"

p. 207 on committee to draw up an address to the Governor regarding the Governor's removal from the Palace

p. 217 Sat 19 June 1775- on committee to "inquire into the Causes of the late disturbances and commotions" in regard to petition of Thomas Edwards

## *Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress*

# *Edmund C. Burnett, editor*

## **Notes on David McCullough's *John Adams* re: Lee and the Board of War**

- p. 120 1776- John Adams is president of the "Board of War and Ordnance"  
-Board met every morning and evening
- p. 122 Adams and Board of War knew of Washington's distress  
-shortage of arms, lead flints, medicines, etc.
- p. 140 Adams did not want to be head of the Board of War  
-Board of War Members: Adams, Harrison, Rutledge, Sherman and Wilson  
-(note: Francis Lee was not a member, but was one of three members of the House of Burgesses who combined with the Board of War to form a committee that addressed Washington's supply problems)
- p. 141 concern over Continental currency
- p. 142 scare over smallpox and inoculations in Boston area  
-origins of inoculation

(Lee talks about small pox)

p. 144 late July 1776- Hancock has gout (reason for resigning his position?)

1760- King George III to power

picture of Comte de Vergennes, the French Foreign Minister

(Francis Lee has contact with him)

p. 144 Foreign Ministers

p. 160 plan issued by the Board of War

### **Mellon Grant Proposal Draft**

Menokin is the home of Francis Lightfoot Lee, signer of the Declaration of Independence. It is both a registered Virginia and National Historic Landmark.

Menokin is owned by the Menokin Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to honor the memory of Francis Lightfoot Lee, to preserve and interpret the Menokin ruin, and to develop and operate a center for the study of the culture, history, archaeology, and architecture of the Chesapeake region of colonial Virginia.

Since its incorporation in 1995, the Menokin Foundation has arrested the deterioration of the Menokin ruin, exercised stewardship of the land, overseen the construction of a protective structure for the ruin, basic stabilization of the ruin, preliminary documentation of the ruin, and the construction of a conservation and visitors center scheduled to open in Fall 2004.

In Fall 2003, with the help of John Milner Associates and Oak Grove Restoration Contractors, we extracted, recorded, catalogued and stored architectural elements and artifacts from one quadrant of the Menokin ruin. This was a pilot project to help establish a careful, workable set of processes and procedures and future work on the remaining quadrants. A major part of this project was to build a database that links descriptions, photographs, and other pertinent data to each artifact that is removed so that students and researchers may have an effective source for a better understanding of the structure.

The Foundation believes it is important, and necessary, to proceed with its current primary goals: the continued extraction and documentation of fallen timbers and stone within the ruin, and the proper stabilization of the remaining structure, a need that qualified preservationists have verified.

Once the fallen timbers have been properly documented, it is important that they be transported to an on-site storage building properly equipped to protect them from further deterioration. We currently do not have such a building. The Menokin Foundation expects the construction of such a building to cost approximately \$40,000. Our request to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is for \$350,000 to aid in the stabilization and preservation of the Menokin ruin, as well as the construction of a storage building. Each of these needs are important to not only the preservation of the ruin, but also to further study of the ruin by students and professionals.

Menokin is a treasure to the American public, particularly to those studying colonial architecture and archaeology. James C. Wheat called the evolving Menokin project “the last great preservation adventure in Virginia.” The Menokin Foundation hopes to enable historians, preservationists, students and the general public to embark on this adventure. Support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation would aid the Foundation in this goal.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

**Small Museums Conference Notes, August 2, 2004, Baltimore, MD**

## **DOCENT WORKSHOP**

### **General Rules for Docents**

- realize that people learn differently (all ages) and tailor your presentation accordingly
- ask questions, get the visitor engaged and involved, don't just talk to them
- remember that by 2020- the baby boomers will be the older generation and they do not like to be talked at, they like to be engaged

### **USE:**

#### **Artifact Contemplation**

(can find more information on National Archives website)

- go from the simple to the complex
  - 1) Describe Object
  - 2) Ask “who” questions
  - 3) look at the object's purpose
  - 4) how was this object important to people
- use packets with laminated sheets for children groups in a “lecture”
  - conserves materials, easy to use

#### **Storytelling**

- call your “stories” *experiences* instead, makes it more real
- can use oral history (probably wouldn’t work for Menokin, unless you have archaeologists/architectural historians)
- connect the “experience” to something the visitors can grasp

### **Demonstration**

- convert any measurements to contemporary measurements to help people understand better
- make modern day comparisons

### **Small Museums Conference Notes, August 2, 2004, Baltimore, MD (continued)**

#### **Role Play**

- use a script and have visitors (children and adults) play characters
- use pictures to help give your audience a better understanding
- start with a power-point or video to introduce visitors to the activity
- explain their roles to them thoroughly
  - example: planning and exhibition for a museum
  - kids have different items that they can use for their exhibit
  - have to justify everything they do in their role as the designer (such as why they use the artifacts that they use)
  - works best for kids grades 7 and up
  - best as a 45-60 minute activity, then have kids display their exhibits
- have visitors step into the roles of professionals (perhaps an archaeological dig or cataloguing and removing boards from a “basement” to learn importance of accuracy??)
- keep groups small

#### **STORYTELLING WORKSHOP**

- see handouts