

RICHMOND 05: Virginia Patriot

- 01: The Virginia Independent Chronicle (1786-1789)
 - 02: The Virginia Independent Chronicle and General Advertiser (1789-1790)
 - 03: The Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser (1790-1809)
 - 04: The Virginia Patriot (1809-1816)
 - 05: The Virginia Patriot and Richmond Mercantile Advertiser (1816)
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The fifth journal published in Richmond was the first there to serve as an avowedly political paper. Begun in the midst of the debate over creating a new federal government, and so a vital supporter of the 1787 Constitution, the sheet became the capital city's chief Federalist voice in the 1790s, and then the only such voice after 1803. Its later demise presaged the realignment of the national political parties in the 1820s.

The Virginia Independent Chronicle was closely identified with its founder, Augustine Davis (119), though it was often edited by others over its thirty-six-year life and two alterations in its title. Davis began his print-trade career as an apprentice in the famed Williamsburg office of Alexander Purdie (345) and John Dixon Sr. (140); when the partnership of Purdie & Dixon expired at the end of 1774, he joined Purdie's new printing office there, and so became his master's successor – with partner John Clarkson (093) – upon Purdie's death in April 1779. Their new firm did not survive the government's removal to Richmond in early 1780, as they were trapped in Williamsburg by ravaged finances; Davis continued alone as a job printer there, and so was saved by work he did for French regiments encamped at nearby Yorktown after the British surrender. With monies gained through that windfall, Davis was finally able to relocate the old Purdie press office to Richmond in the summer of 1783. Yet with three other presses then operating in the capital, and with each of those offices issuing a weekly paper, Davis chose to remain focused on job printing in the short-term; in doing so, he was given work the incumbent public-printer, James Hayes (207), had been unable to complete according to a schedule set by the state government; as a result, Davis became a candidate for that post when Hayes was dismissed in May 1786. While Davis lost the ensuing election to his old master, John Dixon Sr., the dismissal opened the way for him to offer Richmond a new weekly, knowing that Hayes would soon be obliged financially to close his paper.

Beginnings

Davis issued the first number of his *Virginia Independent Chronicle* on July 26, 1786, just ten weeks after Hayes was fired – though his *Virginia Gazette or American Advertiser* continued until that December. It seems that Davis chose that particular moment with an eye toward the future; the Annapolis Convention was about to meet in Maryland at the suggestion of George Washington, among others, which then led to the calling of the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia; among Virginia's three representatives in Annapolis were two

with Williamsburg connections: Edmund Randolph (1753-1813), the soon-to-be governor of the Commonwealth (and later U.S. Attorney General), and St. George Tucker (1752-1827), professor of law at the College of William & Mary; both were acquaintances of Davis and shared his nationalistic views – opinions that found a home in his *Independent Chronicle*.

Over the next two years, Davis's weekly became Richmond's principal advocate for the new federal system fashioned at the Philadelphia convention. Most notable was his being the first Richmond publisher to print *The Federalist Papers*, purportedly with the assistance of Washington. That outlook meant that when Virginia finally held its long-awaited ratifying convention in June 1788, Davis was chosen as the convention's printer; thus his *Chronicle* provided the fullest accounts of the debates therein before book-length collections of the proceedings were published in the winter of 1788-89; but more importantly, his presence at the convention led to life-long relationships with pro-federal leaders such as John Marshall, the future chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, who later became an important financial backer of his newspaper.

Once the new federal government assumed power in early 1789, Davis was engaged by the state government to publish items generated by the newborn national authorities; these non-newspaper imprints gave him a federal identity that other Richmond printers lacked. In May of that year, Davis altered his journal's title to the *Virginia Independent Chronicle and General Advertiser*, apparently in order to draw advertisers to a weekly that had grown to be the paper with the greatest circulation in Virginia because of public interest in federal events. Then in August 1790, he went a step further and changed the weekly's title to *The Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser*, and so laid claim to its being an official government gazette, just as had the pre-Revolutionary *Virginia Gazettes*, only now as a vehicle for the federal government and not just the Commonwealth. He reinforced that claim in early 1791 by securing the commission as Postmaster for Richmond following passage of the country's initial Post Office acts; it did not hurt that those acts made the exchange of newspapers between the nation's various publishers both free and obligatory, so enhancing the content of his journal.

The status that Davis had realized over these years was recognized by the state government in May 1791 when he was named as "printer to the Commonwealth" following the death of the incumbent, John Dixon Sr., his one-time employer. That appointment made his *Virginia Gazette* into the journal of record for the state, legitimizing the claim that he had made the summer before. But it also limited the space available for commercial advertising, as he was now required to publish the government's official notices before all else. Nonetheless, Davis appears to have seen this change as an opportunity rather than a problem. Dixon's death had quickly destabilized his weekly paper, despite being continued by his like-named son, while the fast-aging *Virginia Gazette and Weekly Advertiser* of Thomas Nicolson (315) was failing to keep pace with political events. Consequently, Davis decided to invest in a second newspaper to accommodate the growing demand for advertising in the city while fulfilling his role as the voice of the state and federal governments with his original paper.

That second journal proved to be the city's first daily paper. In mid-1792, Davis convinced James Carey (080), the ne'er-do-well brother of Philadelphia publisher Mathew Carey, to

come to Virginia to conduct *The Virginia Gazette and Richmond Daily Advertiser* for their mutual benefit. The journal's first number appeared on October 1, 1792, the first day of that year's Assembly session. But the daily foundered quickly from a combination of Carey's incompetence and Davis's over-reach; Richmond, it seems, just was not yet ready for a daily paper, especially one being mismanaged by Carey. So on December 7th, Carey trimmed his publication frequency from daily to thrice-weekly, plainly in recognition of the futility of the venture. Yet that reduction did little to stem the bleeding and the new *Advertiser* was finally closed on January 2, 1793, after just 70 numbers, five days after the Assembly rose. Carey promptly left Richmond, going south to Charleston to start a new daily there that March.

Davis was not deterred by the failure; rather, he now determined to finance a twice-weekly adjunct to his weekly *Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser*, this one conducted by his reliable shop foreman, Samuel Pleasants Jr. (331). The twenty-three-year-old printer was a York County native raised among the Quakers of Henrico County and probably trained in the Davis office after he moved it to Richmond in 1783. The two partnered to produce the replacement paper, one where Pleasants was the titular owner and Davis was the financial power – Samuel Pleasants & Co. Their new *Virginia Gazette and Richmond & Manchester Advertiser* first issued April 15, 1793, "in consequence of Mr. Carey's removal from the city." Yet, while Davis likely thought he had started an allied paper in setting up Pleasants as a journalist, what he had actually done was create a formidable competitor. That year was a pivotal one in the development of partisan factions in the country, largely a consequence of the execution of Louis XVI of France and the activities of the minister sent to America by the new revolutionary government. With long-established connections to Washington and his cabinet, Davis was disposed to follow a pro-administration course in his weekly paper; at the same time, Pleasants was inclined to follow an opposition track, reflecting his Quaker ties to James Madison, among others. Accordingly, Davis and Pleasants became estranged politically, though not professionally; with the issue of October 16, 1794, Pleasants became sole proprietor of his twice-weekly *Gazette*, leaving Davis to conduct his weekly *Gazette* as he saw fit; a year later, Pleasants embraced a new name for his paper, the *Virginia Argus*, a title identifying the most widely-read paper in the state over the ensuing two decades.

After their parting, the former partners' papers found solid footing at the center-left (*Argus*) and center-right (*Gazette*) of the local partisan spectrum, forcing the older journals of John Dixon Jr. (141) and Thomas Nicolson into permanent retirement. But neither publisher was an accomplished polemical writer; the Richmond chronicler Samuel Mordecai would later describe their editorial work thusly:

"Mr. Pleasants was, like his rival [Davis], more expert in wielding the scissors than the pen. The two editors did not draw their weapons on each other sanguinarily, though espousing opposite parties, and seldom came in collision in their editorials, unless when represented by champions under their masks..."

By largely choosing to reprint items from the principal party journals in Philadelphia, rather than engage directly in partisan combat, both of their journals faced challenges from short-lived newspapers that embraced the opposing ends of the political spectrum.

Transitions

Much of Davis's editorial reticence lay in his paper's responsibility to reflect the attitudes of the men then in power, which were changeable throughout the 1790s. Eventually, however, Davis's hold on his public office slipped. His successive publishing ventures evince a gradual withdrawal from the everyday work in his printing office to a managerial role that allowed him to pursue other business ventures in Richmond. Those activities undermined his public credibility, for by investing in banks and property, while publishing a Federalist paper, Davis was someone who now both promoted and benefitted from the economic programs of the Federalist administration of John Adams. In early 1798, the Council of State, now headed by Governor James Wood of Frederick County, reacted to complaints from western legislators about the lack of public documents in their distant districts by launching an investigation of Davis and his press. Councilor Meriwether Jones (242) conducted a thorough study of the public-printing commission and determined that, during his tenure, Davis had produced unvarying quantities of the annual session laws, even as the number of counties grew; this constancy caused a decline in the number of imprints distributed per county, so confirming the complaints. With the Jones report in hand, the Council asked Davis to increase the scale of his production; when he refused to do so without greater compensation, he was fired.

His termination as public printer ended the advertising subsidy that Davis received for his *Virginia Gazette* as well, undermining its financial foundation; it also invalidated any claims he might have still asserted for the legitimacy of his paper as the true voice of government. But more ominous was the appearance of two stridently partisan journals in Richmond in the weeks after his dismissal – first a Republican one, then a Federalist one. The first was the new "official" journal of record for the state published by Meriwether Jones, who had been named to succeed Davis; he partnered with John Dixon Jr. (141), now publisher of the twice-weekly *Observatory*, to produce the public work for him, and together they converted Dixon's faltering paper into *The Examiner*; Jones immediately made that sheet into the most vitriolic anti-Federalist journal in Virginia; its first number appeared on December 3, 1798, the opening day of the Assembly session that confirmed Jones's appointment. That session is best remembered for its passage of the so-called "Virginia Resolution" over the objections of Federalist delegates led by Speaker John Wise; those delegates then decided to start a new political paper that would help them regain control of the General Assembly with the ensuing session; they designated the Clerk of the House of Delegates, John Stewart (401), as editor and proprietor of the new journal. Stewart recruited William Alexander Rind (359), the son of the Revolutionary-era Williamsburg printers, as his tradesman; their new *Virginia Federalist* made its first appearance on May 25, 1799, openly challenging Davis's *Gazette* as the voice of the state's Federalists, and immediately engaging in editorial combat with the Republican *Examiner*.

Davis reacted to the challenges by doubling the pace of his *Gazette's* production to twice-weekly on January 1, 1799, matching the frequency of all three competitors, and increasing the available advertising space in his paper to enhance his revenues. Still, the effect of the new partisan journals on the *Virginia Gazette* (Davis) and the *Virginia Argus* (Pleasants) was, in business terms, seemingly negligible, as both readily survived the onslaught. It was the

turn of public opinion against the Federalists in 1799 and 1800 – resulting from the heavy-handed enforcement of the Alien & Sedition Acts – that was more of a problem for Davis. Trust in his *Gazette* began to wane, especially after he defended the sedition trial of writer James Thomson Callender (075) in Richmond's Federal District Court in the spring of 1800. It seems that Davis survived the year only because the *Virginia Federalist* of Stewart & Rind relocated to the District of Columbia that September, just before Jefferson's victory over the incumbent Federalist president, John Adams.

Even so, events after that election proved even more difficult for Davis's *Virginia Gazette*. In January 1802, a new Federalist weekly emerged to take the place of the departed Stewart & Rind journal; started the preceding July by a British émigré named Henry Pace (319), *The Recorder or Lady's and Gentleman's Miscellany* was in mortal danger when James Thomson Callender offered to convert the staid literary paper into a raucous political one for Pace. After Jefferson's inauguration, Callender had been denied "compensation" for his services to the Republican cause that resulted in his sedition conviction in 1800; determined to show that Jefferson and his associates were hypocrites, he employed *The Recorder* to mock the state's Republican leaders, particularly public printer Jones, who now became for him the epitome of corruption in office. The Pace & Callender journal immediately drew readers and dollars away from Davis's *Gazette*, a situation that was aggravated the following month when Jefferson's Postmaster General, Gideon Granger, relieved Davis of his position as the city's postmaster in favor of John Guerrant, a Republican member of the Council of State (Guerrant eventually declined the position in favor of Marks Underhill).

Now deprived of his ready access to the mails, and facing the financial trouble generated by the *Recorder*, Davis was convinced by his principal supporters – Richmond's merchants and bankers – to follow Pace's lead and hire a disgruntled Republican polemicist as his editor in order to reinvigorate his *Gazette*. Their choice was yet another British émigré, John Wood (456). He had landed in New York in 1800 and soon became part of Aaron Burr's political circle there; Wood was hired to write a "muckle-book" on John Adams, much as Callender had; when the text appeared in January 1802, Burr was unhappy with the result and set out to suppress the work, as well as buy Wood's silence; in the ensuing newspaper brouhaha, Wood alienated New York Republicans loyal to the new governor, George Clinton, and soon fled the state in the face of a libel prosecution. It was Southern Federalists, who Burr was then courting, who found a place for his friend Wood in Richmond with Davis.

When Wood assumed the editorial chair of the *Virginia Gazette* in October 1802, it marked the beginning of a decade-long period wherein Davis took a back seat to his editors and backers. Davis's complaints about Jefferson and his partisans multiplied in the pages of his paper after he had been dismissed as the public printer, but they seem to have had little effect. Indeed, contemporaries noted that Davis often fell afoul of the Richmond Junto – the city's Republican leaders – while in this funk; they would send him pseudonymous articles exposing Jeffersonian faults only to find those stories flamboyantly refuted in the pages of a Republican paper, either Jones's *Examiner* or Pleasants's *Argus*. By hiring Wood, he brought an end to that game, and moved to meet the challenge posed by the *Recorder* of Pace & Callender. Their challenge imploded the following June when the two men parted ways over Callender's monetary demands; Callender drowned in the James a month later, while the

Recorder expired in August from rapid decline in its support, so leaving Pace destitute. Meanwhile Wood remained with Davis and the *Virginia Gazette* until the summer of 1805, achieving the planned reinvigoration of that Federalist journal.

Wood was eventually convinced to relocate to Kentucky by friends of John Marshall, where he started a new Federalist paper; Davis turned to a Massachusetts-born writer, Charles Prentiss (341), as Wood's successor. Prentiss had built a reputation in his home state as a fiery essayist, earning him a chance to edit the *Virginia Federalist* after its removal to the national capital, where it became the *Washington Federalist*; in 1802, he started a new journal in Baltimore, the *Republican or Anti-Democrat*; his choice of a title embodied the understanding of many Federalists of the political problem then facing the country – that the Republicans were democrats, not republicans, in the true sense of those words. Prentiss sold his *Republican* in June 1803 and left America for a tour of Europe; when he returned, he was ready to take up an editorial position again; he arrived in Richmond in March 1805, just about the same moment that Wood made known his plans to move west, suggesting that the transition between the two editors was planned well in advance, either by Davis or his supporters, so securing the gains made for the *Gazette* over the preceding three years.

Unfortunately, Prentiss's time in Virginia was far shorter than had been Wood's; by January 1806, he had returned home to Massachusetts, leaving Davis to fend for himself once again. Davis likely employed other editors after Prentiss left, though he published no reports of such changes in his *Gazette*. What is clear is that during 1806, Davis began a determined effort to diversify the production of his office by taking on book printing on a scale he had not previously pursued. The only significant personnel change in his office over the next three years came when Davis made his son George (122) a partner in his newspaper with issue of July 11, 1807; that fall, his nephew, Thomas Willis White (442), later publisher of the celebrated *Southern Literary Messenger*, returned home to Richmond from Washington to work in the *Gazette* office. And all the while, Davis's journal slowly shrank in influence, eclipsed by newer Federalist ones in Alexandria, Fredericksburg, Petersburg, and Norfolk.

Renaissance

Davis omitted publishing the Saturday issue of his broadsheet on December 23, 1809, in order to once again reorganize and reinvigorate his aging paper. Yet when it reappeared on the following Tuesday, the front-page masthead bore the new title of *Virginia Patriot* rather than the familiar *Virginia Gazette*; inside was a long statement from its new editor, Samuel Livermore (267). Raised among the influential Federalists of Newburyport, Massachusetts – the so-called Essex Junto led by lawyer Theophilus Parsons (1750-1813) – Livermore came to Richmond from Baltimore where he had edited the *Federal Republican* of Alexander Contee Hanson (1786-1819); his polemical skills made Hanson's newspaper notorious for its vociferous and vituperative censures of the Republican administrations of Jefferson and Madison alike. Virginia's Federalist leaders apparently believed that Livermore's perspective was just what was required to renew the capital city's only Federalist newspaper. In his introductory address, Livermore made it clear that those in the governing party were not "republicans" in the true sense of the word, despite their use of the term, but rather

deluded radicals:

"The political principles, which this paper will inculcate, are those of our Republican Constitution:—The principles of Washington and his compatriots. With these principles we shall not confound the anarchical doctrines of revolutionary France. By the patriots who formed the Constitution of these United States, it was never intended to organize a democracy but a federal republic. That the people were sovereign and the only source of legitimate power and authority was assumed as the basis of their plan; but they were sensible that the people must delegate their authority, for the advancement of their interests and security of their liberties. Such is the principle of representation in our Constitution. The people delegate their authority to representatives for a limited period; it is strange, that a distinction so obvious between a Republican form of government and a democracy, which in fact is no government, being another name for anarchy, should be so little understood."

He went on to argue that the fast multiplying number of pro-administration journals in the county represented a "licentious abuse of the presses, to corrupt the taste and morals of our countrymen, to sink our national character in the eyes of Europeans, and insensibly to destroy civilization." Livermore saw this development as clear evidence that the premise advanced fifty years earlier by conservative Anglican writer, John "Estimate" Brown (1715-1766) – so described from his 1757 tract, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* – that such unrestrained partisanship "combined with a too perceptible degeneracy of taste and feeling [meant that] ... another age of cimmerian darkness is coming upon the world." While he laid blame for that trend at the feet of the party in power, Livermore tried to argue he was not a partisan himself, only the dutiful bearer of "correct opinions."

That bold assertion soon provided fodder for Thomas Ritchie (360), publisher of the state's leading Republican journal, the *Richmond Enquirer*, the successor to Jones's *Examiner*. The arch-Federalist quickly found that his new situation lacked the kind of backing that he had experienced in Baltimore; at the end of March 1810, after just three months in the editorial chair, Livermore sold his interest in Davis's paper to Samuel B. Beach (468), a Federalist lawyer from upstate New York, and returned to Baltimore to practice law. Ritchie noted the change with the wry comment that:

"A Virginia Patriot, is one who has been in Virginia but once, perhaps, in his life— whose very air is that of a foreigner; who is ignorant of our laws and manners; and, who comes as the missionary of truth, to convince us how much we have been mistaken, all this time, in our politics and rights."

Beach had exhibited a tone similar to Livermore's in editing *The People's Monitor* in Easton, Maryland, over the preceding year. He was a protégé of Charles Goldsborough (1765-1834), a Federalist congressman from Maryland's Eastern Shore in whose household he had once served as a tutor. But Goldsborough's influence there was on the wane, making the *Monitor* a problematic venture; when Livermore made it known he intended to leave Richmond, Beach became the choice of the Federalists behind Davis's journal; and with Beach then facing the expiration of a one-year contract in Easton, he promptly accepted their invitation to relocate to Virginia. The new editor evidently learned from his predecessor's mistakes,

issuing only a brief statement as his introductory address, one in which he eschewed any need for formulaic avowals of principle, noting that he was simply "an American by birth, a Federalist from principle and conviction, and not entirely inexperienced" as an editor. Just how long Beach edited the *Virginia Patriot* is unclear, though his Richmond contract most likely repeated his year-long experience in Maryland; Davis did not again print any notices of changes in his partnership agreements until after the War of 1812. By then, Beach had long moved on to other ventures in New York.

Still, the swift departures of his latest editors do not seem to have immediately effected his recast *Patriot*. With the relaunch, Davis began publishing a twice-weekly country edition of the restyled journal; he also increased the frequency of the *Patriot's* production to thrice-weekly during sessions of the Assembly, conforming to the practice of the *Virginia Argus*, now the state's journal-of-record as a result of Samuel Pleasants's appointment as public printer in 1804. What does seem to have effected Davis's *Patriot* was the establishment of a non-partisan daily in Richmond in May 1813: the *Commercial Compiler*. That newspaper's publishers – editor Leroy Anderson (011) and printer Philip DuVal (155) – consciously chose to locate their journal between the partisan extremes of the capital's other papers, and so draw readers and advertisers from both ends of the spectrum. During the War of 1812, the impact the *Compiler* had on its competitors was minimal, as all of Richmond's papers were stressed by supply and labor problems then; but at war's end, the *Compiler* was sold into the trade circle dominated by Thomas Ritchie, making the daily an engine that pumped its profits into his partisan press office.

So as the 1816 election approached, and with it, the end of James Madison's presidency, Davis and his Federalist supporters in Richmond turned to Charles Prentiss once again, not the least because of his prior Virginia residence, but more because he was then the most reputable Federalist editor in the country, having not been tarnished by opposition to "Mr. Madison's War" by being essentially in retirement for the war's duration. This time Virginia Federalists made Prentiss a more substantial offer than the one he had accepted in 1805; he received a year-long contract with an equal interest in the *Virginia Patriot* to that of founder Davis, as well as patronage for a new school he would conduct in the city. So compensated, Prentiss took up the editorial chair again in May 1816, and became a full partner in July. Then in August, the partners took the leap to convert their twice-weekly paper into a daily one, challenging the *Compiler* directly and stressing the viability of Richmond's other journals. While Davis had finally taken the offensive with this move, rather than just reacting to the actions of other journalists as he had in the past, his second partnership with Prentiss only lasted until the end of their original contract in July 1817. The 1816 election cycle effectively ended the Federalists' influence as a national party, while Virginia now evinced a growing conservative alliance between disaffected Republicans and the remaining Federalists; the shift meant that the circulation of the *Patriot* saw little improvement under Prentiss's care, despite his efforts; so the editor returned to his Massachusetts farm once his commitment was fulfilled, never to return.

Endings

The *Virginia Patriot* reverted to Davis's care alone with the departure of Prentiss. It appears

that the sixty-five-year-old publisher was assisted in his efforts by his son George – now the only survivor among his four sons, the others having met premature, accidental deaths. The 1820 census indicates that his office employed three other white hands, ages 16 to 25, and one enslaved pressman, as was then a common practice in the city. Yet with six workers in all, the *Patriot* office was much smaller than those of its chief competitors; the *Richmond Enquirer* office led all press offices with eleven working hands (6 journeymen, 3 apprentices, 2 pressmen), while the *Daily Compiler* had ten (7 journeymen, 1 apprentice, 2 pressmen). That difference indicates that the circulation of the *Patriot* had shrunk since the end of the war, and that the growing number of small job-press operations in the capital had reduced Davis's non-newspaper production; these indicators suggest a considerable reduction in his printing business's revenues from 1812 onward.

Despite its waning influence, there evidently still was interest in reviving the *Virginia Patriot* once again. About 1819, Davis employed one William Ramsay (348) as a journeyman in his office; that year, Ramsay apparently used the *Patriot* press to publish a history of the recent war in the area bordering the Gulf of Mexico written by Nathaniel Herbert Claiborne (1777-1859), brother of the late governor of Louisiana, William Charles Cole Claiborne (d. 1817); his service in the *Patriot* office over the ensuing two years as foreman and manager made him the logical successor to the aging Davis in the eyes of the publisher's financial backers, particularly given the declining health of Davis's son George. So following the issue of April 2, 1821, Davis retired from the Virginia print trade by selling his paper and press to Ramsay; even so, he retained ownership of the building in which the business operated, so drawing some recompense from the *Patriot* for as long as Ramsay used that space. Davis apparently spent the rest of days at his rural Henrico County home at Westham, where he died at the age of seventy-three in November 1825.

With the issue of April 3, 1821, the *Patriot* became a production of the new firm of William Ramsay & Company, showing once again that the titular owner was beholden to unnamed financier, as Davis often had been. Neither was Ramsay a polemicist, as he announced in that initial number that the company had presently "engaged a gentleman of talents to assist them in the editorial department," though that editor's identity remains unclear. Yet the sale did not separate the *Patriot* from its long past; over the next year, Ramsay altered the title of both editions of his journal frequently in an apparent effort to fashion a new image for the hoary journal; he also strove to broaden its distribution by increasing the frequency of his country edition from twice- to thrice-weekly. All the same, stiff competition from the increasingly hostile *Richmond Enquirer* of Thomas Ritchie (now the public printer, following the death of Samuel Pleasant in 1814), compelled the termination of the country edition in July 1821 so as to allow Ramsay and his editor to focus on the daily alone.

By the end of 1822, however, the Federalist past of the *Patriot*, and its uncertain future in a shifting political environment, led Ramsay and his partners to embrace a common trade practice: to close a failing paper, in order to settle its encumbering accounts, and then to start publishing an entirely new paper shortly thereafter. Hence, the *Virginia Patriot* – once the *Virginia Independent Chronicle* and then the *Virginia Gazette* – issued its final number on the last day of 1822, a Tuesday.

Six weeks later, Ramsay introduced Richmond to his new *Daily Virginia Times*, published in conjunction with editor Samuel Crawford. But the new journal lasted only until the end of August when the *Times* was abruptly closed. Commentator Samuel Mordecai would later report that Ramsay's paper was one of those "sundry 'Times' [issued in Richmond, which] whether dull, or brisk, or hard, they did not become old."

Sources: LCCN nos. 84-024704, 84-024705, 84-024706, 85-026760, 85-026761, 84-024701, 84-024700, 84-024701, 85-026147, & 85-026149; Brigham II: 1151-1152, 1146-1147, 1152-1153; Cappon 1301, 1392; Hubbard on Richmond; Printer File, American Antiquarian Society; Rawson, "Guardians," chaps. 5 & 6; York County Records Project files, CWF; *Journal of the House of Delegates*, 1779-98; *Journals of the Council of the State*, 1780-98; Executive Papers Received, 1791-1804, Archives Division, Library of Virginia; Mordecai, *By-Gone Days*; Downing, *Literary Federalism in the Age of Jefferson* (1999); notices in *Virginia Gazette* (C&D), *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, *Virginia Patriot*, *Virginia Argus*, and *Richmond Enquirer*, 1779-1825.