

Winter 2-2014

The Duty We Owe Our Creator; Reformed Theology Deism and Disestablishment in Virginia

John Parker
Lynchburg College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalshowcase.lynchburg.edu/utcp>



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Other Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Parker, John, "The Duty We Owe Our Creator; Reformed Theology Deism and Disestablishment in Virginia" (2014). *Undergraduate Theses and Capstone Projects*. 84.
<https://digitalshowcase.lynchburg.edu/utcp/84>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Showcase @ University of Lynchburg. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Theses and Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of Digital Showcase @ University of Lynchburg. For more information, please contact digitalshowcase@lynchburg.edu.

The Duty We Owe Our Creator;
Reformed Theology Deism and Disestablishment in Virginia

John Parker

Senior Honors Project

Highest Honors

Submitted


February, 2014



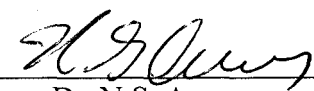
Committee chair; Dr. Stephen Dawson



Dr. Amy Merrill-Willis



Dr. Adam Dean



Dr. N.S. Amos

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution contains within it two distinct clauses, the first guarantees the free exercise of religion clause, the second prevents the establishment of a national church. Stating that “Congress shall make no law respecting an *establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof*”, this clause ensured that these United States would never have an official state church and that citizens could not be penalized for practicing their own faith. This was a major innovation. There did exist some provision for certain sects within the legal frame work, such as exemptions from the swearing of oaths granted solely to the Quakers¹, this was done on a case by case basis and was not built into the social contract. Dissenters in Virginia had been granted religious toleration, but never freedom. Toleration often came with financial or social penalties for the exercise of one's own personal beliefs. Not only would all religions be able to be practiced within absolute freedom in the United States but unlike every other contemporary western municipality, there would be no official state church.

The “religion clauses” were based on Mason’s Sixteenth Article of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, and Jefferson Statutes for Religious Freedom, both of which were part of a local debate within Virginia. For our purposes, to fully understand the rationale behind Jefferson and Madison’s attempt to protect and preserve this “natural right” we must first understand how

¹ A petition from Bedford County dated May 1774, alludes to the fact that Quakers are exempt from the swearing oaths to the state. The members of the Bedford Presbytery were fined for refusing on the same grounds, that swearing an oath violated a deeply held religious conviction. The Presbyterians of Bedford ask not for the removal of oaths from governmental duties but for the same exemption granted to the Society of Friends.

these men defined Religion. The first step in preserving prerogatives is always by specifically enumerating their boundaries. Luckily within the published positions of Mason, Madison, and Jefferson the reader can induce a definition of Religion that all hold in common. Further since these debates were part and parcel of the democratic Revolution there exists a large volume of petitions which provide a medium for testing whether both the clerical strata and the laity of various churches were operating with this same operational definition of 'religion'. What emerges in these documents is a practical, and subjective, definition of religion. It was born out of specific set of cultural, social, and religious norms present in the population of Revolutionary Virginia. This same diversity enable the formation of a unique synthesis of a Calvinist understanding of Grace and Enlightenment ideals, specifically the conception of Natural Rights as espoused by John Locke.

The disestablishment of religion had broad appeal, and would be advantageous to a large section of the population. For those members of the Commonwealth who held ideas outside the scope of Anglican orthodoxy, the disestablishment of the extant church removed the pressures of conscience that conformity required. They were no longer forced to choose between compromising deeply held religious convictions, and facing tangible social penalties. Those who dissented represented a large, growing and diverse segment of the population, and represented all economic strata. Simply this was not of movement of the marginalized but one that had a diverse cross section of supporters. Among the growing Protestant sects this meant the ability to worship how they pleased with out a financial penalty. It also meant an end to the perceived abuses of the Episcopal system, which held appeal to the educated elite. Since the reformation the intermingling of governmental and religious duties had been a source of criticism, both in

terms of economic corruption and brutal quests for orthodoxy.

The convergence of these different ideologies in the common cause of religious liberty was in some respects unavoidable. The British colonies were, in part, established to provide safe havens for religious groups that were unable to conform to the norms of the Church of England, Maryland for Catholics, Pennsylvania for Quakers, New England for Congregationalists, etc. Following independence there would naturally, due to the religious heterogeneous nature of American religiosity, be discussion over how best to adapt and preserve the various traditions. This was compounded by traditional understandings of the relationship between the church and the state, as most of Europe had an established church. This was especially important to the Commonwealth of Virginia, where the forms of Anglicanism had been adopted, and had in its final years as a colony undergone a gradual yet steady change in religious composition.

Anglicans, Baptists, and Presbyterians

The state of Virginia had a religious system unique to the United States. Much like other social structures in Virginia, the religious system was modeled on English norms. This is not surprising in the light of the administrative, bureaucratic, and social systems in place in Virginia. The church served both as a bureaucratic tool, recording births, marriages, and deaths, but also as the litmus test for inclusion in civil society in Virginia. Ever since William Hooker's *Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, the understanding within both the religious and secular community in England was that the membership in the church and in the state were intimately linked². More simply there was “no man who is a member of the Church of England who is not also a member of the Commonwealth,” and vice versa. Supplanting England with her colony, this same axiom

2 Hooker, Richard. *Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book VII Sec 1. This section discusses at length the relationship between the civil and religious government and effectual makes no differentiation between the two. Failure to comply or adhere to the norms of the one necessitated expulsion from the other.

held exactly in per-Revolutionary Virginia.

The erastian nature of the English Communion in Virginia placed the church in an uneasy position. The church functioned in a liminal state, and as such her clerics were often perceived as performing two roles, the church's spiritual duties and functioning as a mechanism of civil society. Compounding the distrust this fractured identity created was the question of Episcopal allegiance. The extant political church in Virginia by its very charter reaffirmed the authority of the King of England³. There are similarities between the arguments made against the Anglican Church in Virginia and those levied at the Roman Church in England during the Reformation, centered mainly around loyalty to a foreign potentate, in one case the Pope in another a King. As such it comes as no surprise that the revolutionaries and intellectuals in America viewed the Anglican church with skepticism and harbored a deep anti-clericalism. Many of these accusations focused on economic abuses since the Church, being part of the state, was supported through taxation. The vicars and bishops were state officials, and it was the duty of all citizens to provide them a living. Also, attendance at Anglican services was mandated not weekly, but yearly, often at Easter. On these occasions the local priest would carry out one of his primary civic duties and collect a census of his parish.

To the Anglicans of Virginia there was no church of the Faith, there was only the Church Imperial, a mechanism used to provide good order and instill appropriate morality in the population. This left the Episcopal Church open to much the same criticisms that were leveled against Roman ecclesiology during the Reformation. Namely that these ministers had no vested

3 The original wording of the 37th Article of Religion which was in effect until 1801 states, "The King's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England, and other his Dominions, unto whom the chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction."

interest in effectively ministering to their congregations, rather it was their superiors in the Episcopal hierarchy whose approval was coveted. Further as government officials they operated in the upper strata of society and as such enjoyed prerogatives and freedoms beyond the average citizen. The clerics held the keys to the doors of social inclusion.

For those who dissented from the Church of England, coercive measures were employed to force not their belief, but their participation in the exercise of Anglican Religion. These included outward professions of faith, and failure to conform or comply could lead to near total civic disenfranchisement. Compounding this insult was the fact that, while a colony of Great Britain, there was never a Bishop in residence for the Colonies. Even assuming that the majority of Virginians were Anglican, a point we shall return to shortly, a large portion of their tithes, or taxes, were being shipped back across the Atlantic to support an ecclesiastical office which had no direct effect on their day-to-day lives. Even if Anglicans held the majority, this would no-doubt have rankled all but the most ardent monarchist. Though data on the precise breakdown of religious adherents in the colony is rough, there is a broad consensus that the Anglican Church was not the monolithic faith that it was in England. Estimates vary in the number of dissenters from two thirds⁴, to a bare minority.⁵ As such, a large swath of Virginians would have found this situation not only irksome but offensive. Madison will argue exactly this point in Article 14 of his *Memorial*⁶.

Two petitions for Bedford County filed in the final years as a colony help to portray the dynamics of the realities of religious life in Revolutionary Era Virginia. Submitted to the House

4 Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, pg. 150

5 Buckley, *Religion in Revolutionary Virginia*, pg. 9

6 "Because a measure of such singular magnitude and delicacy ought not to be imposed, without the clearest evidence that it is called for by a majority of citizens" Madison, *Memorial and Remonstrance*, Article 14

of Burgesses, 14 May, 1774, these petitions portray the contrasts between those within and outside of Anglican orthodoxy. The first is a petition for John Brandon, the priest of “Russell Parish in the county of Bedford”, who, due to the “extensive and inconvenient distance of the parish to the churches and the badness of the roads” requests that he receive a raise in pay. The previous minister had been content to receive his income from the “Tobacco farmed [for him] at [12/6] percent”, but this would not do for the Rev. Brandon. Citing the recent raise in the living allowed to the vicar of Antrim Parish in Halifax County, and the geographical difficulties of his assignment, Rev. Brandon asks that his exchange rate in tobacco be set at the same level as the other ministers in the Colony⁷.

In contrast, on the same day the Peaks of Otter Presbyterian Church submitted a petition to the House, asking for their “protection in the free exercise of their Religion⁸”. Essentially the Presbytery requests prerogatives reserved for the Church of England: the right to own property, including slaves, the right to provide a living to their minister, and the right to choose their own minister. What can be extrapolated from this document is that any dissenting communion was economically at a disadvantage, and did not enjoy the same status in Virginia Society, in comparison to their Anglican counterparts. Brandon and the other Anglican priests could assume that there would be a living provided for them by the corporate church, at a time when a Presbyterian communion of the same county had to petition for even the basest recognition. Should the Peaks of Otter Presbytery be recognized, they still would not enjoy the same rights as their Anglican neighbors, as their income would be subject to misappropriation by the Civil Government. This is evidenced by the request to not only retain the profits left over after the

7 Petition date 17 May, 1774 John Brandon to the House of Burgesses

8 Petition date 17 May, 1774 Peaks of Otter Presbyterian to the House of Burgesses

living had been paid to the clergy, but further to allow them to be dispensed by the “Elders” of the Church as they saw fit⁹. The picture that emerges is of a communion wherein the laity was effectively marginalized, whether they be Anglican or dissenters, and the ecclesiological structure of the Church arbitrarily executed its authority.

Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists were newcomers to Virginia. In the middle of the eighteenth century, Reformed sects who found themselves outside the orthodoxy of the quasi theocratic society of New England began migrating to Virginia. The issues that caused this exodus are largely arcane and of importance only to the initiate, and as such, are outside the scope of this paper. However important these divergences were to these believers and their contemporaries, their similarities are revealing in terms of the development of an organic understanding of religion in Virginia. Those moving from the Northern Colonies were both General and Particular Baptist, sects with a broadly Calvinist understanding of Grace and endorsing adult baptism¹⁰. Congregations appeared in Northern Virginia and the Appalachians; these would become bastions of dissent¹¹. Concurrently, there occurred an influx of Scottish immigrants bringing with them their native Presbyterianism, which, though the national Church of Scotland, rejected many of the ecclesiological norms of Anglicanism. This communion, too, was at base Calvinist in its understanding of Irresistible Grace¹². The exception to this was

9 Ibid.

10 Gura, Phillip, *A Glimpse of Scion's Glory*, Chapter 8. Tracing the evolution of the Baptist sects both in the Old World and the New England Colonies, Gura portrays a sect that both rejected the extremism of the Anabaptist movement in Europe, and incorporated many elements of traditional non-conformist and Reformed (Calvinist) theology.

11 Ibid

12 *Irresistible Grace* is the conception that the will of the Divine is so powerful and that the will of man so ineffectual that when the adherent was called by Grace it was impossible to resist. “Faith is therefore to be considered as the gift of God, not on account of its being offered by God to man, to be accepted or rejected at his pleasure; but because it is in reality conferred, breathed, and infused into him; or even because God bestows the power or ability to believe, and then expects that man should by the exercise of his own free will, consent to the

Methodism, an Arminian movement, which existed largely as a movement within the Anglican Church until the Second Great Awakening.

Jefferson, Madison, and Mason

It was within this system that the first attempts to ensure religious liberty first emerged. This issue was so pressing that it was taken up immediately upon the commencement of hostilities with Great Britain. For the historiography of this period the author is utilizing the analysis of Thomas Buckley SJ in his seminal work *Church and State in Revolutionary Virginia*. Buckley assert that Jefferson, engaged with his Congressional duties in Philadelphia, was aided by Mason in drafting the *Virginia Declaration of Rights*, with Mason essentially acting as his proxy. Buckley also argues for socioeconomic difficulties in passing the Sixteenth Article, as the elites of Virginia were staunch Anglicans and an entrenched hierarchy in Virginia. During this time James Madison, a Presbyterian educated statesman, began compiling arguments made through diverse and sundry petitions to the House of Delegates. These became part of written campaign to ensure the free and equal exercise of Religion to all the citizens of Virginia. Below we shall examine the points of similarity in the thinking of Jefferson and Madison, which though numerous, are not uniform. There exists minor points of dissent between the two men but these are largely beyond the scope of this paper and the author hopes he will be forgiven for omitting them.

Religion, to these men, is both natural and the result of rational thought. It springs forth from the conscience of men, doing so because it is natural, sovereign and beyond coercive

terms of that salvation, and actually believe in Christ; but because he who works in man both to will and to do, and indeed all things in all, produces both the will to believe, and the act of believing also” *Canons of Dort Section 4 Article 14*

measures; simply, civil society possesses no mechanism to effectively alter a person's ideological positions. In outlining religion as a matter of personal conscience, Jefferson effectively acknowledges that it is impossible for any civil society to exercise coercive control over religion¹³. This internal and rational aspect of religion is at the core of Jefferson's understanding, and the reader can not engage his remaining points unless this is understood. The development of the adherent's religious beliefs lies beyond their control; they are the natural outgrowth of thought. Every action taken to shape, create, or police orthodoxy, is not merely a challenge to this or that sect, instead they are direct challenges to the rational conclusions of the adherent, and as such must be guarded against at all costs.

Religion to Jefferson is effectively ungovernable, precisely because it originates from the mind of the adherent beyond the grasp of temporal society. Nor is this argument purely an academic one, Jefferson insists that in attempting to regulate religion, the state does disservice not only to the mind, but to the work-a-day realities for her citizens. According to Jefferson the state's primary objective is not moral; rather to preserve the liberties of the citizen. The state and the religious then operate within different spheres of the human experience, each with their own separate prerogatives. Further, to Jefferson, the intermingling of the aims inherent in each of these of necessity corrupts the other¹⁴. Much of Jefferson's political thinking and indeed what he viewed as his greatest accomplishment was providing room within the political nation for

13 "That all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations , tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty power to do, but to extend it by its influence on reason alone" Madison, *Memorial, Art*

14 "That the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who , being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of think- in g , as the only true and infallible, and as such, endeavouring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time" Jefferson, *Statute*.

religion to operate. Jefferson understood that the only way to effectively preserve the prerogatives of both the political and religious nation was to clearly differentiate and define the scope of each. This meant that society must adapt a binary paradigm, certain obligations and rights are the province of the church and others fall to the state, never both.

Madison asserts that the sole authority and arbiter of Religion is the divine, that any attempt to regulate religion within the secular sphere is both ineffectual¹⁵ and corrupting¹⁶. Madison goes on to say that of all the natural rights it is this right that supersedes all others¹⁷. This is due to the duty owed by men to their creator. Though the state possesses the power to coerce men's bodies, but is powerless to coerce intent or will it is equipped to proscribe against action not thought. Though this may at first glance seem to be a reiteration of Jefferson's claims for religious autonomy, the reader can discern from this that Madison's understanding of Religion is one based on the Command/Obey matrix. That is, the Divine holds near-total omnipotence, commands, and the adherent is bound to Obey. This super-mundane deity holds such sway over the hearts of their adherents that bonds of family and society will gladly be smashed in favor of the prior obligation. This understanding of the nature of Humanity's interactions with the Divine, belie Madison's education at a Reformed institution.

15 "Religion be exempt from the authority of the Society at large, still less can it be subject to that of the Legislative Body. The latter are but the creatures and vicegerents of the former. Their jurisdiction is both derivative and limited: it is limited with regard to the co-ordinate departments, more necessarily is it limited with regard to the constituents." Madison, *Memorial*. Art 2

16 "Because the Bill implies either that the Civil Magistrate is a competent Judge of Religious Truth; or that he may employ Religion as an engine of Civil policy. The first is an arrogant pretension falsified by the contradictory opinions of Rulers in all ages, and throughout the world: the second an unhallowed perversion of the means of salvation." *ibid*. Art 5

17 "It is unalienable also, because what is here a right towards men, is a duty towards the Creator. It is the duty of every man to render to the Creator such homage and such only as he believes to be acceptable to him. This duty is precedent, both in order of time and in degree of obligation, to the claims of Civil Society. Before any man can be considered as a member of Civil Society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governour of the Universe: And if a member of Civil Society, do it with a saving of his allegiance to the Universal Sovereign." *ibid* Art 1

Religion, understood fundamentally as a duty, then must be respected as all other natural rights. Religion must be classed with these rights specifically because it is an ingrained and fundamental aspect of life. It is the “duty men owe to their creator”¹⁸. Though the ecclesiastical structure, form of worship and theology are creations of the human mind, their impetus and inspiration comes from a natural (or supernatural) force, this addresses Locke's first qualification of Natural Rights. Simply since the same force that creates humanity also creates the inspiration for religion, religion is then an aspect of “life”. If religion is natural, then the only forces in this world that religion can be opposed to are unnatural. Therefore any attempt to coerce religion is inherently unjust and tyrannical. Once again the ghost of the Calvinist understanding of Grace is present. Religion is irresistible and natural and therefore the province of God, not the state. The argument that the state requires an established church is passively challenged, the state requires faithful adherents and citizens, as adherents naturally lean toward morality and order¹⁹. Lastly religion, due to its corporate nature, is protected under the “Right of Possession”. The adherent produces income and goods and voluntarily donates proceeds and goods that are rightfully theirs in totality, to whichever communion they please. This also means that the forced tithing practiced in Virginia violated the adherent’s natural right to property.

The intertwining of the American Revolution with natural rights is alluded to often in these writings, signifying that the “late” events were believed to be part and parcel of a natural

18 Jefferson, *Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom*

19 The law of faith, being a covenant of free grace, God alone can appoint what shall be necessarily believed by everyone whom He will justify. What is the faith which He will accept and account for righteousness, depends wholly on his good pleasure. For it is of grace, and not of right, that this faith is accepted. And therefore He alone can set the measures of it: and what he has so appointed and declared is alone necessary. No-body can add to these fundamental articles of faith; nor make any other necessary, but what God himself hath made, and declared to be so. And what these are which God requires of those who will enter into, and receive the benefits of the new covenant, has already been shown. Locke, John *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*, 1695 Sec. 156

process. Challenging the inalienable rights of Liberty was essentially perceived to be a reactionary stance, one that went counter to the beliefs and ideals of the revolution²⁰. The preservation of these rights therefore is paramount, just as the Revolution was part of the gradual incorporation of more prerogatives for, and an extrapolation of natural rights, so too must the United States foster the continued growth of “Liberty”, this would become our moral imperative²¹.

In this regard, Madison and Jefferson show remarkable foresight. Interestingly though the Deist Jefferson implies that though the government ought not to attempt to regulate conscience, he operates under the assumption that the nature of Religion in these United States would be Christian. Madison however, argues directly that all forms of religion must be sacrosanct²². Once again this is a pragmatic move on the founders’ part. Arising out of a natural state, religion instills in the adherent a sense of duty that trumps any obligation that the adherent would feel towards the state. Indeed there is the potential for outright antagonism between the civil and religious spheres. Further the duty owed by the adherent to their faith, congregation and conscience, will always weigh more heavily in the mind of the adherent than the good of the state.

This fractious possibility, that without a uniform set of moral norms that society would degenerate into chaos, is the argument most often used in the establishment of a state religion so as to promote orthodoxy. The argument goes that a uniform church, with homogenous tenets

20 “Because it is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of Citizens, and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution” Madison, *Memorial*, Art 3

21 “It degrades from the equal rank of Citizens all those whose opinions in Religion do not bend to those of the Legislative authority. Distant as it may be in its present form from the Inquisition, it differs from it only in degree. The one is the first step, the other the last in the career of intolerance.” Ibid. Art. 9

22 “Who does not see that the same authority, which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other Religions, may establish with the same ease any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other Sects?” ibid. Art 3

ideals and theology, prevents the development and fostering of sedition within a sect. This argument is not entirely theoretical, the Peasant's War in Germany and the English Civil War were both rooted in questions of derivation of authority. More simply the movements that inspired both of these uprisings had at base an ideology that denied the validity of all traditional forms of authority, both political and religious, specifically, in the case of the English Civil War, the Roundheads adherence to the doctrine of Election. Election in reaffirming the supremacy of God calls into question all traditional delineations of authority, the unintentional results of which was the possibility for radical, and often violent, societal change. What then was to prevent an outbreak of widespread anarchy that would accompany disestablishment? Jefferson directly challenges these assertions and fears, not by addressing the violent conflicts that occurred in conjunction with the Reformation, but in pointing to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New York. In both of these, the lack of an established religion has not lead to any widespread disorganization or violent uprisings²³

The next major facet of religion is the church physical. This is understood in two ways, the first is that of the gathering of the faithful, or more simply the congregation. This is the more valuable of the two to Jefferson and Madison. This aspect of the physical church represents the “best” in religion to them. That is the gathering of men and women who voluntarily come together for moral and spiritual guidance out of a shared religiosity, to form a church. This model fits perfectly with the benefits of religion suggested by Locke and certainly works to

23 “But every, says an inquisitor, has established some religion no two, say I, have established the same is this a proof of the infallibility of establishments? Our sister states of Pennsylvania and New York, however, have long subsisted without any establishment at all the experiment was new and doubtful when they made. It is answered beyond conception. They flourish infinitely.” Jefferson, *Notes*, pg 172

benefit of the state²⁴. Further since this model is based on a “democratic” and voluntary selection of ministers and adherents there is less of a potential for the charges of Anti-clericalism than would exist with an episcopal structure.

Secondly, the church is understood as a real corporate body, owning land, and buildings, employing rectors, and so on. This aspect of the church is valuable only if the adherents exercise control over their property as mentioned above. This model however recognizes the church as primarily a propertied and financial institution, which lays the ground for critique. The main question would be the derivation of authority within the church itself. Would decisions be made by a church hierarchy, whose motivation was traditionally the maintenance of the extant English social order, or would arbitration of the earthly dealings of the communion lay with the consensus of individual members? The theory of Government by consent emerged out of the Presbyterian challenge to the Stuart monarchs’ claims of Divine right, and as such does not fully differentiate between civic and church polity. In the Reformed model, one that was adopted by Locke, and Madison, the sovereignty of the Divine is without parallel on Earth, and trumps all forms of temporal authority. Since God is the sovereign, the ultimate authority over both civil and religious society naturally rests in the hands of the divine, and is evidenced by the will of the members of the congregation.

The justification for the preservation of Religious autonomy in the first instance is an extrapolation of the themes found in the first treatment of religious freedom. Since the

24 Locke discussing the benefits of the Christian faith assert that Christ, “not only forbids actual uncleanness, but all irregular desires, upon pain of hell-fire; causeless divorces; swearing in conversation, as well as forswearing in judgment; revenge; retaliation; ostentation of charity, of devotion, and of fasting; repetitions in prayer, covetousness, worldly care, censoriousness: and on the other side commands loving our enemies, doing good to those that hate us, blessing those that curse us, praying for those that despitefully use us; patience and meekness under injuries, forgiveness, liberality, compassion” Locke, John *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*, 1695 Sec. 116

government has no effective authority to control, monitor, or proscribe orthodoxy, it would be unable to prevent the free association of adherents based on this arbitrary and unenforceable definition. Madison states in Article 4 that not only does Religion exist beyond the Physical world but that its origins lay with the Divine. Again and again Madison implies that the power of the Divine, executed through the observances, rites and , is both irresistible and sovereign. Madison conception of Religion therefore owes as much to the ideals of natural rights, which cannot be violated, as to a Reformed understanding of the divine, the sole autonomous sovereign entity in this world.

The corporate aspect of the church, it is argued, must be respected not because of the inherent worth or sacrosanct nature of religion; rather, the property administered by the church must be respected because it is effectively held in trust and represents the will of the adherents. Thus, in forcing the taxation of the citizenry for the express purpose of maintaining an ecclesiastical system that was contrary to their own beliefs, solely to carry out bureaucratic functions that could be taken over by a civil authority, was in essence preventing them from exercising control over their property.

Roughly distilled, Jefferson and Madison's understanding can be broken down into three facets.

- I. That religion is the result of personal introspection and conscience. That, as a matter of conscience, the adherent's beliefs should not be subject to coercion by any outside mechanism. More importantly perhaps is that there exist no mechanisms in society to coerce the logical and conscious conclusions reached by the adherent. Further, that the duty owed by men to their conscience and the divine transcends their duty to the state.

II. That the physical church exists in two forms

1. As a gathering of the faithful. Or more simply people who share the same creedal and sacramental beliefs. That preventing men from associating as they choose violates the tenets of not only the late revolution but also the natural rights of men for free association.
2. As a physical and corporate entity. That the existence of the church as real physical and fiscal entity was an integral part of the execution of faith. Further, that in continuing a system in which adherents are deprived of their property, i.e. forced tithing, sets precedent that challenges the liberty of all.

III. There is also a historical argument made, not on the nature of religion, but on the effects it has when it is intertwined with the execution of civil government. That religion, because of its base in each individual conscience and not the physical world, is corrupted when used as a tool of the state. This commingling of the political and religious hinders effective governance also as civil magistrates have no effective ability to regulate and arbitrate matters of the soul.

Amherst, Albermarle, and Bedford

What then of the average citizen in Virginia, what would their understanding of Religion be? Petitions made to legislators in the run up to the passing of the *Statute of Religious Freedom* offer an opportunity to test the beliefs and understandings of the average adherent. For the purpose of this examination, the author has selected petitions from the counties of Amherst, Albermarle and Bedford, in Virginia. These were selected for geographical reasons, Jefferson's

home, Monticello, lies in Albermarle, and his summer property (Poplar Forest) is located in Bedford, with Amherst in between. The compositions of these petitions, in the case of Amherst and Albermarle counties, was the combined effort of dissenters in three counties as such, while the material for Amherst and Albermarle is substantively the same, the dates of the “creation” are varied as to month and day. For the sake of ease the petitions pertaining to these municipalities have been collated by both location and year in which they were produced. This author has noted any differences in language between the different drafts.

1776-Albermarle, Amherst, and Buckingham

The petition dated October 1776, from the “disenters” of Albermarle, Amherst and Buckingham, calls for the disestablishment of Religion within the state of Virginia. The first argument made by these petitioners is that religious convictions that place these men outside the pale of the established church in Virginia do not prevent them from exercising their obligations to society as a whole,

yet in as much as this was the form of Government established; either when they came into the Colony, as being natives when they became Disenters [sic]) from the Church of England²⁵, for the sake of good Order, they have patiently submitted to their grievances, [continuing] to be peaceable and loyal subjects, always ready and willing to stand up with the foremost in the Support of Government, and in the Defense of the just Rights and Property of the Subjects.

This fits squarely with both Jefferson and Madison's understanding of the two separate spheres that Religion and Civil authority operate in. These men challenge the assertion made by erastian

²⁵ Split over two lines

thinkers that a state church is a prerequisite to good order. Citing their loyalty to the old regime, which did not recognize or temporally legitimate their religious beliefs and practices, these adherents remain committed to the “good Order” of the larger society. This is unsurprising, given the religious traditions of the dissenting groups. Order is of supreme importance to Christian theology; the first and last acts of the Divine in the Bible are the ordering of a chaotic world. To these men, the ordering of society was an emulation of Divine will, they were compelled to take part in the successful execution of a civil state. Though it is not specifically mentioned in Jefferson's argument, it is strongly implied that the state does not require uniform religiosity in its citizens to function, the implication in this passage is that the faith of the adherent's in the counties actually assists the functioning of the larger society.

Looking to a future with the continued establishment of an erastian church, the Memorialists voice the same concerns over the continued preference given to one church over all other.

the great injustice contained in the establishing of any religious denomination of people worshiping the same God and all struggling in the same common cause in preference to all others, and that all and every other religious Sectary should be obliged to contribute to the Support of that church thus established when it is with the greatest difficulty that they can support publick worship and manner that they rather choose.

Beyond the obvious citing of moral imperative, these Memorialists argue once again that the observation of Religion in accordance with their own conscience is an irresistible force. The argument by Jefferson and Madison, that the state has no effective tool by which to coerce or enforce orthodoxy, is validated. The Memorialists claim that the injustice is not that they are prevented from establishing a church, but that it is with great and undue difficulty that they are able to worship in a way that they deem acceptable. Further, the implication is that this is an

injustice visited on people who share the same faith; a fact which makes the wrongs committed all the more egregious. The language of cause is especially interesting for the purposes of this examination. Jefferson having used the Enlightenment argument, for the eventual triumph of Truth²⁶ against all challengers, and Madison's insistence that in proscribing certain sects damages the great cause of Christianity to spread the Gospel to all humanity²⁷, is obviously within the framework for religion possessed by these petitioners in the early days of the United States.

The petitions from 1776 are more focused with reassuring the House of Delegates that should Religion be disestablished there would be no immediate or dramatic change in the execution of civil society. Citing their adherence to the Laws and norms of the erastian Colony as proof of good faith, these petitioners are making a Civil and Physical argument for disestablishment. The church portrayed here is a physical manifestation of Religion, both in terms of a congregation of like minded adherents, and a physical corporate entity. The former aspect of the physical church is addressed by the assurance of good order and the latter in terms of justice and autonomy. This can only be interpreted as an indictment of the current system of taxes levied in Virginia, and the inability of a dissenting church to support its own successful execution of religion.

Your memorialist conscience, that *to put every religious denomination on an equal footing to be supported by themselves, independent from one another, would not only be a just²⁸ and reasonable mode of government* and would most certainly have an happy²⁹influence on the greater purity of the several churches on their more free and friendly intercourse with one³⁰ another

26 Jefferson *Virginia Statute for Religious Liberty*

27 Madison *Memorial Art* 12

28 1776 November 1 "reasonable and just"; Author's emphasis

29 Next line illegible

30 1776 November 1 "each"

Paraphrasing both Jefferson and Madison, the petitioners argue that not only does obstructing dissenting groups hinder society but the purity of Religion as a whole. The church physical is therefore obviously a vital component of religion, beyond the coercion of men but overlapping the spiritual sphere.

1779- Albermarle, Amherst, and Buckingham

The petition from the “Divers of the Freeholder and other Free inhabitants” of the counties of Albermarle, Amherst, and Buckingham, to the Assembly in 1779 is much bolder in tone than the previous petition to the House of Delegates. Whereas in the previous petition the Memorialists do not identify the nature of their differences with the established church, or sects with whom they are members, no such circumspection exists in the later remonstrance. The men who call for disestablishment are “good Church of England men; Presbyterians Baptists and Methodists [sic]”. Increased boldness is not the only difference in the approach these men take to validating their position. Whereas in 1776 the critique of establishment is circumspect and inferential, in 1779 the language of the petitioners is scathing.

Fully persuaded, gentlemen, that the Religion of Jesus Christ may and ought to be committed [sic] to the Protection Guidance and Blessing of its Divine author and needs not the interpretation of any human power of its establishment and support.... [When Religion is established]...Justice vanishes – reason looks with disdain, and religion loses her angels face and looks pale and sickly at the thought of such unrighteous distinction

The implication is clearly that the church exists as a spiritual entity beyond the control of this corrupting world. There are few claims to temporal prerogatives in this petition. It is mostly concerned with the corrupting force of the “secular” world. The binary model of life, in which

religion and civil obligation exist as separate and distinct prerogatives and purview, is evidenced in this petition.

Even when temporal issues are cited in 1779, they are done in terms of how they reflect, or affect the moral or spiritual standing of both the society and the church. The difference then in critique is not in substance but in method. Establishment is not only physically, and temporally unjust, but it is spiritually corrupting and hypocritical as well. Both Jefferson and Madison's writings contain within them an undercurrent of anti-clericalism that is rooted in accusations of hypocrisy. There is no such undercurrent in the 1779 petition.

Permit us gentlemen only further to observe as it is generally allowed that force or constraint appl[y]ed to any of the enjoyments of sense do entirely mar and destroy all the satisfactions which would result from them. How astonishing is it then, that religion which consists in a voluntary offering up our souls to God and devoting our bodies to his service should be bound down to any one particular form devised by only mere men like ourselves

Religious observance then is only the outward profession of faith, *as understood by the adherent*, and must be separated from the source of Religion, which is the Divine. This severs both the physical and spiritual churches and indicts all those on earth who claims the ability or knowledge to effectively judge and govern religion. The inability of humanity to effectively arbitrate religion is not only applied to the civil society. Jefferson and Madison, once again in line with both Locke and Calvin, claim that no ecclesiastical establishment is so endowed either. The dissenters of Albermarle and Amherst make this exact same claim. Not only is the civil but also church administration, which is also a construction of society, inadequate to make windows into their adherents' souls, much less to correctly interpret the mind of God. Not only is it hypocritical and presumptuous to coerce observances out of the individual, it is fundamentally un-Christian. Not

only is religious observance valuable to the Divine, because it is a voluntary act, but the teachings of Christ implore the adherent to reject the mechanisms of this world, its temptations, errors, and eventual death³¹.

The understanding of the rights of the faithful has dramatically expanded in the course of three years. Though the petitioners still utilize all due formality in petitioning the “Honorable House,” they exhort Nicholas Cabell, and John Rose their delegate, to the House that the authors “earnestly desire and *instruct you our worthy faithful representatives*³²” to vote for total and complete disestablishment. It is not simply the empowered tone of the petition that signals this shift away from servility. The closing lines of this petition insist that not only is this a matter of “temporal” but also “eternal” justice. No clearer indication of the autonomy, sovereignty, and empowered nature of the church spiritual exists in the Albermarle and Amherst petitions. Within these counties then all of the elements of a uniquely synthesized understanding of religion exists. The irresistibility and sovereignty of Grace that comes with a Calvinist theology, the conception of prerogatives that are the right of every living person and the ideals of Liberty engendered by the War for Independence have merged together. This blending of ideals could, however, be the result of local religiosity, an anomaly in education levels, or socioeconomic similarities to Madison and Jefferson. As such we now turn our eye to the county of Bedford, to see how religion fairs in the extensive parish, despite the “badness of the roads”.

November 8, 1779- Bedford County

While the voices from Amherst and Albermarle are concerned with the theoretical and moral implications of establishment, in Bedford the concern's of the petitioners are much more

31 Madison, *Memorial*, Art 6

32 Authors emphasis

pragmatic and narrow. The citizens of an unnamed sect refused to swear a religious oath when offering an account of their “taxable properties” to a state assessor, they were fined, in part because they were not Quakers and are requesting that the fine and costs be forgiven them. Quakers had a longstanding cultural exemption from conscription and the swearing of oaths in the American Colonies, this was the result of their continued refusal to do either, even in the face of invasion of social pressures. Within the simple narrative the reader is given all the previous assertions made by Jefferson, Madison and the Diverse Freeholders. The state does not require an established church to ensure morality, the belief of the adherent is not of this world and therefore beyond coercion, and that true Liberty requires that all citizens be granted the same rights with no exemptions or exceptions.

At the base of the petitioners’ grievance is that the assessor for the newly created state believed that due to these men's resistance to swearing an oath was due to deception. The petitioners however take pains to clarify their position to the House of Delegates.

properties he required them to render an account of their properties on Oath which Twenty Five Petitioners (through Religious Motives) refused offering at the same time to affirm to the same purpose... that they rendered a just and faithful account of their Taxable Properties, and their refusal did not proceed from disaffection to American Liberty, or the Current Government, but through conscientious motives ought not to Swear at all³³

Civil and religious obligations, they argue, can run counter to each other without either suffering in their execution. These men are not only paying lip service to the ideal of dissenters participating fully, and adhering to the laws of the State they are acting upon and within the tenets of civil law. Rather than outright refusing to pay, they petition the civil authorities for a redress of grievances, nothing could be more in line in Revolutionary and American ideals as this

33 Petition to the House of Delegates 1779, Bedford

action. Further these members of this sect imply that they owe an obligation to the civil society in the form of taxes, which is in line with a reformed understanding of order as a component of worship.

These men clearly show that no amount of coercive measure could convince them to violate their obligation, as *their consciences saw just*, to the divine. These men were “fined one hundred pounds and (the)cost” of court for refusing to take an oath, an enormous sum in the Revolutionary Era, and still refused to submit to what they believed to be an unjust oath. Implied in the petition is the criticism that the civil magistrate has been placed in a position to be the arbiter of religious issues. Himself having decided that the religious objections posed to swearing an oath were not substantive enough, this minor government functionary usurps authority far above his natural station. Once again religion is irresistible and beyond the scope of the temporal world to mediate or judge.

The failure to offer exemption for swearing was due to these men not being Quakers. Madison makes this same critique in *Memorial and Remonstrance*, that to provide differing standards is counter to the ideology of inherent and natural rights³⁴. As such since as shown above the execution of religion is according to the inviolate conscience of the adherent, it is unjust to suggest that certain sects and ideologies deserve special prerogatives, *through no merit of their own*. Simply, while it is just to provide punishments for voluntary actions, robbery, murder, etc, and just to award special privileges based on fiduciary responsibility, it is unjust to do either based on something beyond the control of the individual. However hypocritical this may seem in the light of Madison, Jefferson, and the Churches' ownership of slaves, it was ideologically a vital component of these authors' world view.

34 Madison, *Memorial*. Art. 4

Conclusions

Through the examination of these petitions a picture of a common understanding of the nature of religion emerges. Several aspects of these petitions bear repeating in order to emphasize the broad acceptance of this understanding of religion. The first is that unlike the petitions prior to independence, these petitions are the product of several churches within a single municipality. More simply they represent the combined effort of the entire religious community of the counties in which they were composed. As such the outline of religion portrayed is, if not complete, at least representative of the community as a whole. Within these petitions there has been found a clear delineation between the church physical, and personal, as well as a well formed understanding of the churches role in civil society. Religion is comprised of faith an internal and rational state, which lies beyond the scope of temporal powers. These men then gather voluntarily to execute their agreed upon faith, which through economic penalties, is hindered by the state. The adherents of the dissenting churches further complain that they have been deprived of resources which are their property, in order to support an organ which provides nothing for them, and violates their conscience. Lastly they argue that their church has become an entity unto itself, a corporation, and to infringe upon the liberties of a religious body endangers the whole of society.

Broadly speaking the tenets of Jefferson, Mason and Madison's views on the nature of Religion have been reaffirmed as corresponding with those of the laity in central Virginia. The breadth and scope of this definition allowed a consensus among the Protestant sects in Virginia, which enabled them to make common cause in supporting the passage and ratification of the Statute for Religious Liberty. While much of the defining aspects of religion were based on

“secular” theories surrounding the inalienable rights of humanity, the reader cannot overlook the impact that Reformed doctrine had on this definition. The emphasis on the sovereignty of the spiritual world and its removal from the events of this world, stand directly opposed to the tenets of Roman Catholicism, and the Orthodox Churches. So too does the insistence that the adherent is free to decide for themselves the “correct” form of religious observance. It should not be supposed, however, that this conception of religion was hostile to pre-Reformation communions; rather, we must give credit where credit is due. For without a Genevan understanding of Grace or, the development of a social theory inspired in part by Locke's experience, albeit by proxy, with century of Baptist oppression, the founders and citizens of these United States would never have create a system that protects and encourages the growth of religion and the pursuit of Truth.

Appendix A

Petition Transcription

Bedford County, May 17, 1774:

Russell Parish

To the Honourable the speaker and the members of the House of Burgesses.

Humbly Sheweth, your petitioner John Brandon Minister of Russell Parish in the County of Bedford~ That your petitioner hath the care of a Parish very extensive and~ inconvenient from the Distance of the Churches and the badness of the roads, that by an act of Assembly in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty three the Incumbent of that Parish was~ obliged to receive the Tobacco levied for him at [12/6] per cent. Your petitioner further sheweth this Honorable house upon the petition of of the minister of Antrim Parish in the Halifax County, that the salary of the Incumbent of the said Parish should be paid in~ Tobacco or at the rate other Ministers are entitled to under the Act of Assembly of one thousand seven hundred and forty eight so~ that your petitioner is the only Minister in in a part of the Colony so convenient who receives his salary at the rate of [12/6] percent. Therefore your Petitioner prays this Honorable House that this Incumbent of Russell Parish may by act of General Assembly be instilled to receive his salary at the same price and rate~ which other ministers receive in the Respective Parishes. And your Petitioner shall ever pray for you
John Brandon.

Bedford County, May 17, 1774:

Peaks of Otter

That your petitioners have been ever faithful subjects to the Commonwealth of Virginia and here

with cheerfully submit to whatsoever was required by the Assembly of said State, or commanded by the Congress of our petitioners. Humbly sheweth that when the assessor came to assess³⁵ properties he required them to render an account of their properties on Oath which Twenty Five Petitioners (through Religious Motives) refused offering at the same time to affirm to the same purpose but as your Petitioner did not profess to be Quaker the assessor did not conceive themselves to be at Liberty to grant your petitioners that indulgence but Returned your petitioners at once of refusing to take the said oath on which aforesaid action was commenced against them³⁶ and they fined the Sum of one hundred pounds and cost: your petitioners further sheweth that they rendered a just and faithful account of their Taxable Properties, and their refusal did not proceed from disaffection to American Liberty, or the Current Government, but through conscientious motives ought not to Swear at all: therefore your Petitioner Humbly Desireth that they may be relieved by an Order from your Honourable House from paying the said fine and Cost, and your petitioners as in Duty bound shall ever....³⁷

Albermarle, Amherst and Buckingham Counties, October 1/November 1, 1776:

Petition from Albermarle, Amherst, and Buckingham Counties from the year 1776. The petition was published on twice once on October 22nd and again on November 1st. For the purpose of this transcription the October publication has been used, differences between this copy and the later publication are indicated in footnotes. Where the October text is illegible the November has been supplimented with no indication, only where this author interpreted his best guess for content will there be a notation made. Finally there are portions of the original text

35 Authors best rendering

36 Authors best rendering

37 Illegible

which are illegible in both manuscripts and as such have been left blank.

To the Honourable, the Delegates and Senators, Representatives of the several Counties and _____ of the the Common Wealth of Virginia, _____ in the City of Williamsburg.

The Memorial of Petition of the dissenters from the Church of England (and others³⁸) in the Counties of Albermarle, Amherst & Buckingham, humbly sheweth.

That your Memorialists have never been on an equal footing with the Good People of this Colony in respect of religious Privilege, having been by law obliged to contribute to the established church, while at the same time they were moved from a Principle of Conscience to support that church which they called themselves Members; yet in as much as this was the form of Government established; either when they came into the Colony, as being natives when they became Dissenters from the Church of England³⁹, for the sake of good Order, they have patiently submitted to their grievances, continuing⁴⁰ to be peaceable and loyal subjects, always ready and willing to stand up with the foremost in the Support of Government, and in the Defense of the just Rights and Property of the Subjects.

Then when it became necessary that the form of Government should be modified, in consequence of us throwing off our dependence on the Crown and Parliament, of Great Britain, your Memorialist flattered themselves that, that form of government, that would secure just and

38 Added in superscript

39 Split over two lines

40 Authors interpretation

equal Right to the Subject would be the Choice of every Individual, both from the Consideration of the justice and Good policy that would be contained in it and also from the consideration, that by the joint and strenuous endeavours of every one, our Liberty, ____ all need be defended against the unjust Violators thereof, and that therefore all should enjoy equal Privilege.

That your Memorialists cannot disguise their real concern, to observe that instead hereof there are many who are still violent for a reestablishment of the Episcopal church and to have been informed that to their end there are sundry petitions about to be presented to the house signed by the bulk of the people, nor can they forbear signifying to this honorable house their _____ of the great injustice contained in the establishing of any religious denomination of people worshiping the same God and all struggling in the same common cause in preference to all others, and that all and every other religious Sectary (?) should be obliged to contribute to the Support of that church thus established when it is with the greatest difficulty that they can support publick worship and manner that they rather choose. Your Memorialist judge, however, that they may rest quite easy on referring it to the known Wisdom and candor and Integrity of the honorable house for such petitions should be heard and granted and also far a Mode of government should be established.

Your memorialist conscience, that to put every religious denomination on an equal footing to be supported by themselves, independent from one another, would not only be a just⁴¹ and reasonable mode of government and would most certainly have an happy⁴² influence on the

41 1776 November 1 "reasonable and just"

42 Next line illegible

greater purity of the several churches on their more free and friendly intercourse with one⁴³ another; an supporting anything like Fueds and animosity amongst the people and on attacking all of every denomination_____. Such a form of Government in all that you Memorialists desire and what they pray this honourable nor⁴⁴ can they doubt of attaining this or any other reasonable request from a body so respectable whom we trust have the equal Happiness of their constituents in particular and the Commonwealth in general as their highest morive.

That all propitious heaven may inspire this honorable⁴⁵ house with Wisdom equal to the importance of the _____ devolved upon them and that this Commonwealth become the Envy of the Nations of the Glory of the World that shall ever be the ardent wish of your memorialist and humble petitionors.

Albermarle, Amherst, and Buckingham Counties, November 1, 1779:

To the honourable the Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth the petition of Divers of the Freeholder and other Free inhabitants humbly sheweth that some of your petition have seen and the rest have heard of the Drat [?] of a bill into your Honorable⁴⁶ house last session for giving free and equal Liberty and & Privileges in matters of religion to all the inhabitants of this Commonwealth which we aprhend was printed and dispersed by order of your honorable House That they might at the next Session be the better & more fully informed of the sentiments of the people in General finally upon this great &

43 1776 November 1 "each"

44 1776 November 1 "nor nor"

45 1776 November 1 "hon"

46 Hon *superscript*

important point. And we assure you Gentlemen it is with much satisfaction that we your petitioners who are composed of Church of England men; presbyterians baptists and methodists do all unanimously and with one voice hereby declare to your honorable House our hearty assent concurrence and approbation to the purport of the said bill and desire that the same may be passed into law. Fully persuaded, gentlemen, that the Religion of Jesus Christ must and ought to be committed to the Protection Guidance and Blessing of its Divine author and needs not the interpretation of any human power of its establishment and support, we most earnestly desire and pray that not only an universal toleration may take but that all subjects of this Free state may be put upon the same footing and enjoy equal liberties and privileges which we think (consistent with the Declaration of Rights) can no longer with any shadow of justice be withheld. Permit us gentlemen only further to observe as it is generally allowed that force or constraint appl[y]ed to any of the enjoyments of sense do entirely mar and destroy all the satisfactions which would result from them. How astonishing is it then, that religion which consists in a voluntary offering up our souls to God and devoting our bodies to his service should be bound down to any one particular form devised by only mere men like ourselves or those who refuse it (besides providing for their own) must be furthered with hopes and contributions for the support of the ministers and preachers of another form of worship which their consciences do not allow them to conform to. Justice vanishes – reason looks with disdain, and religion loses her angelic face and looks pale and sickly at the thought of such unrighteous distinction and we earnestly desire and instruct you our worthy faithful representatives for this county and this district Nicholas Cabell and John Rose Esq. Delegates and William Cabell Esq Senator to vote for and use your best endeavors to promote a total and final repeal of all laws giving rise to them. That

the almighty may inspire the councils and give success to all Determinations of your Honorable House for both temporal and eternal interests of the whole community. We your petitioners Gentlemen in duty shall ever pray.

APPENDIX B

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anon. *Canons of Dort, 1619*. Accessed through “Early English Books Online”

Buckley, Thomas. S.J. *Religion in Revolutionary Virginia*. University of Virginia, Charlottesville. 1977.

Gura, Philipp. *A Glimpse of Scions Glory*. Wesleyan University Press, Middleton. 1984

Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia, 1785*.
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/jeffvir.asp

Jefferson, Thomas. *Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, 1777* .
<http://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/virginia-statute-religious-freedom>

Locke, John. *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures, 1695*. The Federalist Papers Project, accessed 11/10/13.

Madison, James. *Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assesment*.
http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/madison_m&r_1785.html

The Articles of Religion, found in, *the Book of Common Prayer*. Church Publishing Incorporated, New York. 1979

Hooker, Richard. *Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity, 1594-97*.
<http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/hookbib.htm>