

## Resource Sheet #5

### Lord Dunmore's Proclamation in Modern English

By His Excellency the Right Honorable JOHN Earl of DUNMORE, His Majesty's Lieutenant and Governor General of the Colony and Dominion of VIRGINIA, and Vice Admiral of the same.

#### A PROCLAMATION

I have hoped that an agreement might have taken place between Great Britain and this Colony, without being forced by my duty to this most disagreeable but now absolutely necessary step, but I have to because a group of armed men are unlawfully assembled, firing on His Majesty's troops, and forming an Army that is now on a march to attack His Majesty's troops and destroy the good subjects of the Colony. To defeat such treasonable purposes, and so that all such traitors and their helpers, may be brought to justice, and that the peace and good order of this Colony may be restored, which the Law is unable to make happen; I have thought it fit to issue this my Proclamation, hereby declaring, that until the aforesaid good purpose can be obtained, I do, because of the power and authority to given to me by His Majesty, determine to execute Martial Law throughout this Colony: and so \*\*\*\*\* the Peace and good Order may the soon be restored, I do require every person capable of bearing arms, to join His Majesty's forces, or be looked upon as traitors to His Majesty's Crown and Government, and thereby become liable to the penalty the law inflicts upon such offenses; such as loss of life, confiscation of lands, etc. And I do hereby further declare all indentured servants, Negroes, or others, (appertaining to Rebels,) free if they are able and willing to bear arms and join His Majesty's troops as soon as may be, so the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper sense of their duty, to His Majesty's Crown. I do further order, and require, all His Majesty's subjects to keep their Quitrents [*a tax paid if one did not work for the king or queen*], or keep any other taxes due or that may become due, until such a time as peace may be again restored to this at present most unhappy Country, or demanded of them for their former purposes, by Officers who properly are to receive the same.

GIVEN under my Hand on board the Ship WILLIAM by Norfolk, the 7th Day of November in the SIXTEENTH Year of His MAJESTY'S Reign.

DUNMORE

(GOD save the KING.)