

AUTHENTICITY AND QUALITY SINCE 1936

A newsletter published by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation for its Licensed Manufacturers and Williamsburg Shops

Mirror Fair Becomes Licensee

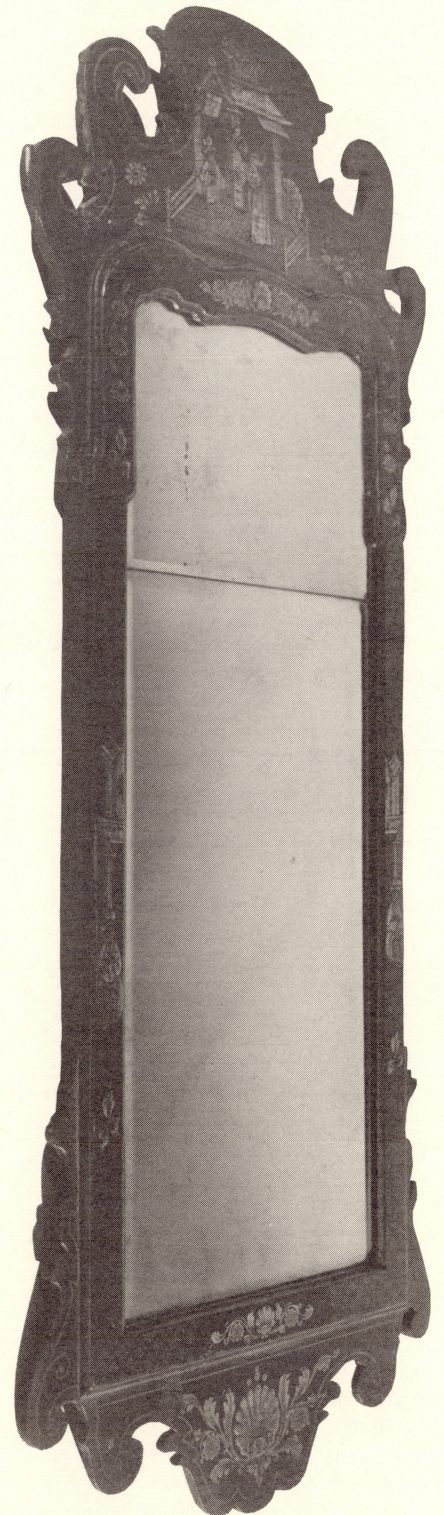


Reproductions of two British mirrors from the first half of the eighteenth century, now in the Colonial Williamsburg collection, will be introduced at the fall High Point furniture market by new licensed manufacturer Mirror Fair. The japanned deal frame of one reproduction looking glass is decorated with red and yellow chinoiserie designs. The other looking glass features gold leaf over wood and relief designs, including shells and a Prince of Wales feathered plume.

Mirror Fair, based in New York, is noted for its extensive line of tradi-

tional mirrors. The meticulously crafted frames of the *Williamsburg* reproductions combine the talents of skilled furniture carvers, cabinetmakers, and finishers. "We hope to incorporate the best of our methods and techniques handed down from father to son to son in products that are beautiful, authentic, and salable," said Steve Cavallo, president of Mirror Fair. "Drawing on examples from Colonial Williamsburg's vast library of antiques, we hope to bring together products with maximum impact. We plan to introduce two additional mirrors this spring and intend to continue introductions as needs arise."

A japanned looking glass will be reproduced by Mirror Fair. The original, shown here, is a British antique that was made between 1725 and 1745.



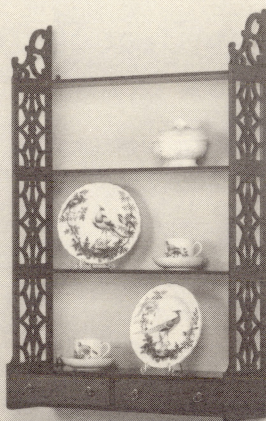
Williamsburg Licenses Tradition House

With the introduction of its line of ten *Williamsburg* products, Tradition House joins the *Williamsburg* licensed manufacturers group. "We realized there was a growing demand among *Williamsburg* customers for competitively priced period wooden accessories and occasional furniture," said Kris Fischer, group product manager, "and Tradition House has done an excellent job of producing an initial grouping of interesting and reasonably priced pieces."

The introduction at the fall High Point furniture market includes a box on stand, cellarette, tray, tray on stand, hanging shelf in two sizes, apothecary

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Ten new pieces from Tradition House will be introduced at High Point.



Baker Introductions at High Point

Baker Furniture's fall introduction includes four particularly useful furniture items: an upholstered wing chair, a writing desk, a bed- or chair side table, and a small chest of drawers. Colonial Williamsburg's designers have already



decided to use these pieces to furnish guest rooms in the colonial houses and taverns along Francis and Duke of Gloucester streets in Williamsburg. The designs should be especially employable by today's homeowner as well.

The upholstered wing chair, or "easy chair," as it was called in the eighteenth century, is based on a mid-baroque period chair made in Boston, Massachusetts, about 1700. The original is from the large collection of mid-baroque period furnishings given to Colonial Williamsburg by Miodrag and Elizabeth Blagojevich in 1977. The writing desk is based on a rococo period table made in North Carolina between 1760 and 1790. Based on an English original made about 1740, the small chest of drawers was built in a desirable small size in the late baroque style. Finally, the bed- or chair side table is based on an interesting Virginia antique made in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. It has one drawer and features at-



tenuated legs that terminate in claw-and-ball feet.

Baker's *Williamsburg* Furniture line now includes forty-seven pieces of furniture, with pieces for the dining room, living room, and bedroom, and a variety of accent pieces.

Media Mentions

- The tavern food line will be featured in the December 1993 issue of *Country Living*.
- The Schumacher Historic Reproduction Wallpaper book will be featured in a November 1993 article about reproduction wallpapers in *Southern Accents* magazine.
- *Woman's Day* will feature two cookie cutters and the Stevens Linens Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center Holiday Tree tea towel and pot holder in its December 1993 issue.
- The new Crown Crafts *Williamsburg* William and Mary pillow shams will be featured in a December/January gift story in *Home* magazine.
- A tabletop story in the December/January issue of *Brides* magazine will include Mottahedeh's Imperial Blue dinnerware from the *Williamsburg* Reproductions Program.
- The September 1993 issue of *Colonial Homes* included the Period Lighting handheld tin lantern from Williamsburg.

Mottahedeh Introduces New Pieces and Promotes Dinnerware

Be sure not to miss Mottahedeh's special Thanksgiving promotion, which takes place October 15 through November 25. With each purchase of four or eight place settings of Duke of Gloucester, Chelsea Bird, or Imperial Blue china, customers will receive an accessory item in the pattern. With four place settings (five pieces each) of Duke of Gloucester, purchasers receive a free shell dish; with eight place settings they receive a pitcher. In the Chelsea Bird pattern, four place settings (four pieces each) earns a trumpet vase; a pair of trumpet vases comes with eight place settings. Four place settings (five pieces each) of Imperial Blue include a scalloped bowl; with eight place settings, customers receive four rimmed soup bowls.



At market this fall, Mottahedeh will introduce additional pieces in the popular Duke of Gloucester pattern, based on a platter from the service commissioned by William Henry, duke of Gloucester, about 1770. A pair of shallow, lobed-edged dishes have been developed. The pair will retail for \$100.

Bassett Hall and the Rockefellers in Williamsburg

When Bassett Hall reopens in October, visitors will learn more about the Rockefellers and what they did in Williamsburg. Although Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had several houses, Colonial Williamsburg's Bassett Hall (adjacent to the Historic Area) was particularly special to them. It was under Bassett Hall's three-hundred-year-old great oak that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and the Reverend W. A. R. Goodwin met in the late 1920s to discuss the restoration of the old colonial capital in Williamsburg. At Bassett Hall, the Rockefellers entertained dignitaries and Williamsburg citizens alike.

Previous interpretations of the two-story, eighteenth-century frame home focused on the furnishings and particularly the folk art collections of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller. She and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., restored the house and planned its expansive gardens in the mid-1930s. They returned to the eclectically decorated home twice a year for four to six weeks at a time for the remainder of their lives.

"With the expansion of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center last year, we had the opportunity to shift the interpretation at Bassett Hall from folk art to how Colonial Williamsburg



Colonel Philip Johnson is believed to have built Bassett Hall between 1753 and 1766, but the house is named for Burwell Bassett, who bought the property about 1800 and owned it for nearly forty years. Abby Aldrich and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., bought and restored the house in the 1930s. It was bequeathed to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in 1979 along with its furnishings and a 585-acre tract of rolling woodlands.

came to be and what the Rockefellers did when they visited Williamsburg," said Lawrence Henry, director of museums. "Now, at Bassett Hall, the visitor will learn more about these extraordinary people." Visitors will first enter the reception center to see photographs of the Rockefellers and view an introductory film. "We will use photographs, newsreels, recordings, and

interviews with people who knew the Rockefellers to orient guests there. Then visitors will follow an audio tour that will guide them outside, around the house, and through the living room, parlor, bedrooms, and dining room, then outside again to the orangery, or teahouse."

Although John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had many philanthropies, his usual pattern was to create an agency and remove himself from a project over time. At Williamsburg, however, his experience was the opposite. He was personally involved with the activity here until his death in 1960. The Reverend W. A. R. Goodwin, rector of Bruton Parish Church, had hoped that would be the case when he first won Rockefeller over to the support of his vision to restore the eighteenth-century town.

Even though the interpretation uses more than furniture and objects to tell the story, these same objects reflect the personality of the residents of Bassett Hall. "Visitors will notice the richly textured object-presence of the house," said Henry. "The Rockefellers surrounded themselves with objects they loved. Abby Rockefeller's more avant-



The collection at Bassett Hall reflects the Rockefellers' interest in collecting and living with objects they enjoyed.

garde collecting has received a lot of attention at Colonial Williamsburg over the years, but John was an avid collector too."

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had more traditional and conservative taste and was particularly interested in Chinese ceramics and medieval art. He even purchased the building next to the family home in New York City to handle the overflow of art, including the Unicorn tapestries that later became a part of the collection at the Cloisters.

"The cupboards at Bassett Hall are filled with his ceramic collections, and in a sense one can say that the Rockefellers' most important collections at Williamsburg were the buildings themselves," Henry continued.

Leaving the house by way of the dining room, visitors will be led to the gardens and orangery. The gardens feature flowers that would bloom during the periods in the spring and fall when the Rockefellers stayed at Bassett Hall. In these peaceful surroundings, visitors will conclude their tour with an admiration for the Rockefellers and an understanding of their imprint on the development of Colonial Williamsburg.

Williamsburg licensed manufacturers including Baker Furniture, D. R. Dimes, and Michaelian and Kohlberg have copied items of furniture, carpets, and needlework from the Rockefeller collection on display at Bassett Hall.

The Rockefellers enjoyed entertaining in the orangery with its vista toward the flower gardens and rolling woodlands.



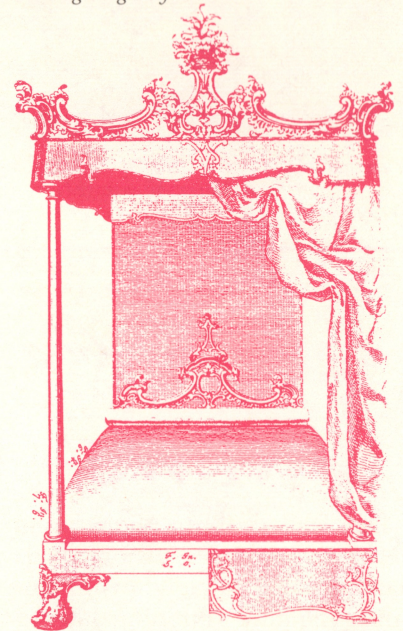
Colonial Williamsburg's Fife and Drum Corps can usually be seen marching down Duke of Gloucester Street in Williamsburg, but they will be marching down Broadway on Thanksgiving Day.

Fife and Drum Corps to Appear in Macy's Parade

Colonial Williamsburg's Fife and Drum Corps, one of our visitors' favorite and most memorable programs, will perform in this year's Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. It was one of twelve marching groups selected for the nationally televised event from a total of more than three hundred applicants.

The Fifes and Drums performed at Philadelphia's 1987 Constitution Parade and has received letters of commendation from the departments of the Army, Navy, and Justice, and the Tactical Air Command. The Corps's music has been heard on National Public Radio and the British Broadcasting Corporation.

The Colonial Williamsburg Fife and Drum Corps represents the modern counterpart to the Virginia State Garrison Regiment, which was raised by a bill of the Virginia General Assembly in May 1778.



Sleeping in Splendor

Liza Gusler, Colonial Williamsburg consulting curator, will be working with other consultants and staff in Schumacher showrooms in San Francisco, California, St. Louis, Missouri, and Troy, Michigan, on a one-day seminar that focuses on bed hangings. For more information on the program, entitled "Sleeping in Splendor," call Mrs. Gusler at 804-220-7526.

Tool Exhibition Opens at DeWitt Wallace Gallery

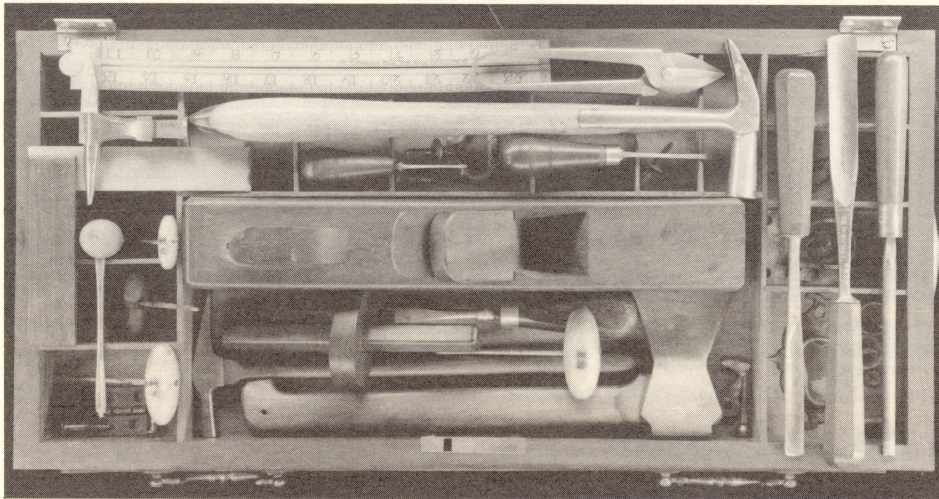
The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation opens the exhibition "Tools: Working Wood in Eighteenth-Century America" on January 14, 1994. The exhibit at the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Gallery will run through June 1995 and will feature more than 1,500 eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century woodworking tools and related objects

from the holdings of Colonial Williamsburg, other museums, and private collections. Loan exhibits include the Seaton tool chest from the Guildhall Museum in Rochester, Kent, England; tools owned by the Dominy family of Long Island, New York, from the Winterthur Museum; and tools used by Samuel Wing of Sandwich, Massa-

chusetts, from Old Sturbridge Village. Six other important but little-known tool kits are included. Eighteenth-century wooden products, tools recovered through archaeology, and related graphic and documentary materials complete the exhibition.

Using woodworking tools as a case study, the exhibition presents a view of craftsmanship in America when hand tools were the primary means of production. The exhibition explores the relationship between an artisan, his tools, and the way he learned and went about his work. Visitors will see how an artisan's tools influenced his products and learn about the development, manufacture, and marketing of woodworking tools. The ways artisans acquired woodworking tool kits during the eighteenth century will also be explored.

Colonial Williamsburg will sponsor a symposium on tools and their use May 19-21, 1994, concurrent with an Early American Industries Association meeting in Williamsburg. The symposium is open to the public and E.A.I.A. members. A softbound book about eighteenth-century woodworking tools will be published in conjunction with the exhibition.



Do you recognize this tool chest? Baker has copied the piece as a silver chest. This bird's-eye view with the top removed shows that tool kits were packaged inside wooden chests that contained anywhere from fifteen to seventy-five tools, plus an assortment of nails, screws, and other hardware.

The Williamsburg Shops program welcomes its newest store, **Bird in Hand**, located in Newtown, Pennsylvania. The store's building dates to the early 1700s and was used as a tavern through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries. The name "Bird in Hand" is painted on a swinging sign made by nineteenth-century neighbor Edward Hicks. Owner Raine von Hohen, formerly a shop owner in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, plans to feature informal *Williamsburg* products in this historic location.

Virginia Born and Bred in Lexington, Virginia, created a special sign to

hang beneath the Williamsburg bird bottle. The sign says, "This delightful Bird Bottle was reproduced from an original excavated in Williamsburg. Hang it beneath the eaves and add a twig for a handy perch." The sign sets off the product's Williamsburg origin and tells the customer how to use the novel item in just two short sentences!

Phyllis Muresan of **Country Garden** in Saint Charles, Missouri, reports that her Williamsburg Shop survived the flood that closed down most of the rest of the city. The shop was located only one-quarter of a mile from the river, but the store and its merchandise were spared. There was some damage to the building's basement level, however.

Send in news of your Williamsburg Shop by the November 15 deadline for inclusion in the winter *Williamsburg* Reproductions Program newsletter.

Williamsburg Licensees Get Involved

Williamsburg licensed manufacturers have been involved in several projects around Colonial Williamsburg this summer and fall.

Baker Furniture sent designer Dan Carrithurs to Williamsburg to consult with Gail Burger, product manager, and Margaret Pritchard, curator, on the redecoration of public rooms in the Coke-Garrett House, residence of Colonial Williamsburg president Robert Wilburn and family.

More than one hundred former members of Colonial Williamsburg's Fife and Drum Corps returned to Williamsburg for a reunion on July 31. *Williamsburg* licensee Cooperman

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chest, tea chest, nest of tables, and canterbury. These very functional pieces solve a variety of decorating problems. For instance, the canterbury, originally designed to hold music books, can be used near a chair to hold magazines. The cellarette, used for storing spirits in the period, can function as a small server in the dining room.

Founded in 1947, Tradition House operates today from a sixty-thousand-square-foot factory in Hanover, Pennsylvania. Furniture manufacturing has been an important part of the southern Pennsylvania economy for generations, and the area is rich in the tradition of fine craftsmanship.

M. Philip Lehr, president and owner of Tradition House, said, "We are very pleased to establish this association with the Foundation and with the Williamsburg Shops—many of whom have been our dealers for years. The *Williamsburg* line we are developing should become important products for both the gift shops and interior design stores. We are looking forward with great anticipation to the introduction of the initial offering at the fall market in High Point."

Obituaries

John Thompson, Jr., president and chief executive officer of **Jack Thompson Furniture Interiors**, died July 25, 1993. He was fifty-three. Thompson joined his father in the retail furniture and interior design business. His father founded the firm in 1949. His Williamsburg Shop was well known in the Richmond, Virginia, area.

Samuel D. DeForest III, president of Walpole Woodworkers, Inc., died June 24, 1993. He was instrumental in the development and marketing of the *Williamsburg* fence program.

Richard Scofield, designer for Period Lighting Fixtures, Inc., died in July. He copied and developed

sconces and chandeliers from antiques in the Colonial Williamsburg collection, always with an eye for design and a sensitivity to the traditions of early American craftsmanship.

Rosemary Brandau, manager of Colonial Williamsburg's historic foodways program, died on August 15, 1993. She worked with Colonial Williamsburg's colonial tavern chefs and *Williamsburg* Reproductions Program food licensees in the development of authentic and tasteful early recipes that extended Colonial Williamsburg's educational mission to visitors and food products customers.

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Fifes and Drums produced commemorative fifes and drumsticks for the event.

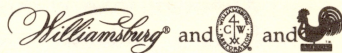
Colonial Williamsburg licensee D. R. Dimes has contributed sixty-three turned chair legs for the exhibition

"Tools: Working Wood in Eighteenth-Century America." The chair legs will be used to illustrate the production capacity of tools used to turn wood. Dietz Press is printing the tool show poster.

Comments/Suggestions

Comments and suggestions for making this newsletter more effective are welcome. Write:

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