

interpreter

Effective Interpretation

by Dennis O'Toole

What is effective interpretation? A quick answer to this question would be that effective interpretation is interpretation that succeeds in getting across to our visitors the information, topics, and storylines that are outlined in *Teaching History at Colonial Williamsburg* and the specific site and program objectives that embody them. But this answer, which is helpful so far as it goes, does not tell us, in the fullest sense, what effective interpretation is or how to achieve it. That is for those of us who do interpretation to decide and to do.

I offer the following definition of effective interpretation. It is, I believe, a consensus definition, one based on numerous discussions within HAPO over the past nine months. Elsewhere in this issue I present for further discussion some preliminary notions as to what steps we in our division might take to make our interpretations even more effective than they are now.

Effective interpretation can be defined both from the perspective of the visitor and from the perspective of the interpreter. Let's start with the visitor's point of view, since the impact of interpretation on visitors must be the ultimate measure of our success.

Visitors are taken out of their familiar, everyday worlds by effective interpretation. They are freed, for the moment, from their present-mindedness. *They are opened up* by effective interpretation. Their awareness of their surroundings, of others around them, and of themselves, is heightened; *their curiosity is aroused; their desire to learn and to teach others is awakened. They absorb pieces*—sometimes many pieces—*of information and experience*, and they talk of experiencing what they call "a sense of the past." *They smile, they talk* to one another, they look about attentively, *they pay attention* to an effective interpretation. *Later, they will think and maybe talk about their experience*, share it with

others, *and they develop a desire to return to Colonial Williamsburg* for another journey into the past.

Every day Colonial Williamsburg interpreters give many effective interpretations to visitors. Although they take place in a variety of settings and employ several interpretive techniques, these interpretations share certain traits from which their common effectiveness derives. When looked at from the interpreter's perspective, effective interpretations *refer frequently to artifacts* and their settings and tie them to their message. *They are keyed to the audience* and are guided by audience response. *They prompt visitor involvement. Their message is cast in terms of real human beings* of the eighteenth century, and *they are rich in the particularities* of the world they refer to—direct quotations from period sources, common greetings, terms, and sayings of the colloquial speech of the day, activities, gestures, costumes, sounds of the period. Effective interpretations *tell a good story*, with interesting characters, a "plot" (call it a theme) that moves right along, and a memorable ending. And it is *delivered with genuine enthusiasm*. Effective interpretations are *carefully put together*. They are thought through beforehand. They are neither too long nor too short, neither too talky nor too quiet, but are "just right" for the situation at hand and leave the audience eager for more. And, finally, they are scrupulously *accurate in fact and in emphasis*.

To summarize, then, an effective interpretation is AN ARTFUL PERFORMANCE THAT SKILLFULLY AND ACCURATELY JOINS ARTIFACT, AUDIENCE, AND HISTORY. IT MAKES THE PAST COME ALIVE FOR VISITORS AND IN DOING SO SPARKS A FRESH VISION AND NEW UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THEIR OWN WORLDS FOR THEM.

Achieving More Effective Interpretation

by Dennis O'Toole

Colonial Williamsburg has a remarkable tradition of excellence in interpretation. Keys to this tradition, I believe, have been the desire of members of its educational staffs to have interpretation at Colonial Williamsburg be as current and accurate as possible, a remarkable and seemingly inexhaustible creativity, and a reluctance to accept anything but the very best that we can do. It is in this tradition that I offer some thoughts on how we might be even more effective interpreting than we are now.

Not that we're doing a poor or mediocre job of interpreting now. We're doing an outstanding job. But why sit on our laurels? There are things we could do better, or do well more often. We can learn from other historic sites and museums about how to be more effective interpretively. But I suspect we can learn the most by learning from each other right here at Colonial Williamsburg. What I hope for is a future in which interpreters have the opportunity to become more involved than they have been in the various tasks that create the framework for effective interpretation.

What follows is a grab bag of ideas about how we can keep our edge of excellence. The contents of the bag are not my inventions. Not hardly. They have been begged, borrowed, and stolen—without apologies—from all sorts of people, but chiefly from co-workers here in Williamsburg. I've enjoyed talking about interpretation with so many Colonial Williamsburg colleagues that I couldn't begin to name them. And I've learned a great deal from them and have been constantly reinvigorated by their insights and energy. These ideas are theirs—and they are yours.

I hope what's offered here helps to keep this conversation going. It got started a long time ago here at Colonial Williamsburg and it will continue in some exciting new directions long after we've all stepped to the sidelines.

Knowing Our Visitors

If effective interpretation involves jolting visitors out of their present-mindedness, then we need to be much better informed than we now are about the expectations, historical knowledge, attitudes, and human needs visitors to Colonial Williamsburg bring to their stay with us. If we aren't well informed about our guests, how will we be able to tell if we

have caught their attention, provoked their curiosity, taught them something? This means that evaluation of the visitor's experience must become a systematic, ongoing activity of ours.

Similarly, we must identify the sorts of visitor behaviors we think give evidence of effective interpretation so we can measure in some objective way their presence or absence. How do people act, what do they actually do, when they've been "opened up," freed "from their present-mindedness"? It's clear that we'll have to be clever in devising the various devices for measuring reliably these different behaviors. Different tools are needed to determine what sort of information and misinformation visitors bring with them, to find out whether they've been provoked, or to discover whether they want to return to our old town. Let's invent them.

Which are our most effective interpretive techniques? Or, more accurately, what are the effects of the several sorts of interpretive methods we employ and under what circumstances do they have their greatest impacts? Presumably all of us have opinions about the effects of "stationed" and "guided" tours, of craft demonstrations, of historical dramatizations, of character interpretations. I think it's vital that we find out what the different effects of these techniques *actually* are so that we can make these several techniques as effective as possible and so we can make greater use of our most effective techniques.

Knowing our visitors also means knowing them in the aggregate and divining how the demographics of our audience might change over the years ahead. If our audience is going to have more of the elderly, more foreigners, and greater ethnic diversity, then we'd better try to find out so we can make changes in the Historic Area, in printed materials, and in our interpretations. And we'd better start trying to read this particular crystal ball now.

As we try to get to know our visitors better, there are some ways of proceeding that we need to follow. For instance, we should never take the time to gather information about visitors if we have no specific idea what use we'll put it to once we've gathered it. We're not scientists in a laboratory. We're interpreters and interpretation is an art, a skilled trade. We should seek to learn more about our audiences so that we can be better at our trade. It's equally clear to me that assessment of visitors' experiences must become a regular part of

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More Effective Interpretation, *continued*

each interpretive unit's routine operations. This implies that the assessment be an ongoing activity that is done by interpreters themselves. Persons with experience in this relatively new field should and will give guidance. But it most benefits interpreters and their interpretations if interpreters themselves gather information about visitors, analyze it, and make the adjustments in interpretation they think appropriate to achieve greater effectiveness.

Excellent Interpreters

There is no more important factor in achieving effective interpretation than finding, nurturing, and keeping on staff persons who are effective interpreters. The characteristics of effective interpreters are no secret. They are enthusiastic about people, about their work, and about the story they have to tell. They are knowledgeable in depth about the eighteenth century and have a well developed (because it's exercised regularly) historical imagination. And they are skilled communicators and gifted performers. Equal parts heart, head, and ham.

Of these qualities, a zest for the job of interpreting for the public, what I call enthusiasm, is probably the most important. No age group or sex or race or religion or region of the country has a monopoly of this vital attribute. We must make sure when we hire persons for interpretive positions that those we choose show signs of having the energy and commitment and outgoingness that are essential to effective interpretation.

Maintaining interpreters' enthusiasm for their work is a supervisor's chief task. Variety in routine work assignments, opportunities to tackle new responsibilities, research opportunities, fair treatment, recognition for a job well done, and a feeling that one has been able to make a contribution to making Colonial Williamsburg a better place to visit and to work for are ways that interpreters are enabled to generate a continuing enthusiasm for the job of interpreting. Through employee surveys, quality circles, unit-based or divisional planning teams, employee-management forums, career development opportunities, increased chances to do directed reading and research, and the like we will achieve a greater degree of enthusiasm for interpretation and hence more effective interpretation for our guests.

We look to our interpretive education programs and to on-the-job guidance to help our interpretive staff become knowledgeable.

Visitors constantly tell us that we know our stuff and that we present it with a spontaneity that belies any notion that the interpretations are the creations of some hidden scriptwriter rather than of the interpreters themselves. Our interpretations, though long in the preparation, are concocted right on the spot several times a day for an ever changing audience. That's remarkable. And I think we can do even better at it. We have yet to use all the methods that we could to help interpreters keep their interpretations fresh and up-to-date and on target.

More of our training needs to bring information and interpretation, theory and practice, more closely together in time and space. Little time should pass between the time an interpreter reads and hears a chunk of new information and gets a chance to use it in an interpretation. Our most effective interpreters should be used more often as exemplars and as peer teachers in teaching the art and mystery of interpretation. An interpreter's handbook, a compilation of essential factual information, useful primary sources, and guiding interpretive objectives, should be on every interpreter's book shelf. There should also be more opportunities for interpreters to take part in book reading and discussion groups. And it would be great if somehow people took part in such groups because they wanted to rather than because they were required or cajoled into doing so.

A lot of tools are available to help interpreters become skilled communicators and historical performers. Video and audio cassettes are potent feedback devices when used properly. Using outstanding interpreters as models and peer teachers for others not only reinvigorates these leaders but can also be highly effective teaching devices. I'm convinced, too, that much would be gained were we to give every interpreter training in the use of voice and in non-verbal communication. Similarly, training in and use of the "second language" of eighteenth-century spoken English, with its treasure trove of sayings, everyday terminology, salutations, proverbs, and exclamations, and greater awareness of how to wear and make interpretive use of period costuming might considerably enhance our presentation to visitors of an era that was different in many ways from their own. Presentation, or performance, is as much a part of interpretation as explication and demonstration; and our training should reflect that fact.

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More Effective Interpretation, *continued* *Varieties of Interpretive Experiences.*

At Colonial Williamsburg, we have not one or a few but many interpretive techniques that we use to make the past alive and real for visitors. The cityscape itself, the buildings and spaces with their furnishings and decorations, the animals and wheeled vehicles one sees, interpreters in costume and out of costume, speaking, demonstrating, acting, moving about, performing—all these and more are the ingredients of interpretation. How do we introduce them, how do we combine them, which should be strengthened or increased to achieve more effective interpretation?

We need to help visitors get a better start to their visit. Volunteers at the “May I Help You” desk at the Visitor Center, an improved *Visitor’s Companion*, a visitor aide stationed at bus stop #1, eye-catching displays about our full schedule of tours, evening programs, and special activities are some of the visitor orientation devices I believe hold the most promise for us. We need to acknowledge, though, that every interpreter has a role to play in orienting visitors and should be equipped and ready to do so.

In the Historic Area we must be ever vigilant against jarring modern intrusions while at the same time providing the requisite conveniences for our guests. Your bicycle parked in full view and benches for visitors equally compromise the interpretive experience. Vigilance starts at home, of course. It’s every interpreter’s job to push out the twentieth century and bring in the eighteenth. And so should we all work to learn the visitor’s needs and to satisfy them so far as we are able to do so in our eighteenth-century environment.

Now, about this business of provocation, of creating a sense of the past, of opening up and turning on our audience. What are our best tools for doing this? Here’s my short list. What’s yours, what would you add?

- Giving visitors a chance to touch, handle, smell, ask questions, join in the fun.
- Putting real eighteenth-century people in your interpretations and making them come to life with anecdotes, quotes things they owned, things they used.
- Showing visitors how something was done back then and giving some of them a chance, if possible, to do it too. (And I’m not talking about trades only.)
- Luring visitors into discovering things—a garden, an object, a fact, a place—for themselves.
- Encountering an eighteenth-century

character, a “living artifact,” and exploiting such encounters in one’s own interpretation.

- Telling a good story, a true story from life in the place where it occurred, with interesting characters, a strong plot, and a good punch line.

One Town, One Interpretation

For the visitor, it’s all of a piece. Their stay with us, that is. Their interpretive experience is made up of all the thousands of experiences they have while they’re here. Visitor Center, tavern, hotel room, on Duke of Gloucester Street, at the Capitol, in the blacksmith’s shop, at the eighteenth-century play. If we are to reach maximum effectiveness, we must acknowledge this in our organizational structure just as we must in other areas.

Compartmentalization can be a barrier to effective interpretation. We must all get to know the visitor and share with each other what we know. We are gifted and talented and must make use of those abilities wherever they can benefit our collective effort. Since not a few of us but all of us are responsible for achieving effective interpretation, we must share in our successes, learn from our failures, and promote and defend among ourselves our high standards.

We must strive to become a community of interpreters who know and appreciate the Williamsburg community of two hundred years ago and its history and who are dedicated to and skilled at interpreting it effectively to our guests.

Pronunciation of Barraud

Researching eighteenth-century pronunciations is not easy, and changes resulting from it are seldom popular. Take **chewing’s** for Chowning’s as only one example. Current restoration of the Barraud House and the accompanying publicity have caused people to ask exactly how that name ought to be pronounced. With my colleagues in the historical research department I have concluded that it was pronounced **BA-rawd** (“a” as in “bat,” slight emphasis on the first syllable, second syllable rhyming with “laud,” and the final “d” sounded). Let me summarize briefly how we arrived at this conclusion.

Barraud is a French surname; I think we all agree to that at least. In French the name is pronounced **bar-O** (emphasis on the last syllable and the “d” silent), but that’s no guarantee that Philip and Anne of late eighteenth-

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Historical Leaps: Hard Facts vs. Educated Assumptions

by Barney Barnes

The challenge of writing for *The Interpreter* strikes me as being remarkably similar to the challenge of being an interpreter. There are certainly dissimilarities—the method of presentation being only the most obvious—but consider for a moment the ways in which they are alike. In both cases, we confront the challenge of discussing often esoteric subjects with broadly heterogeneous audiences, portions of which may or may not have an abiding interest in the subject; severe time and space limitations require that we work quickly and with verbal economy. Seldom are we afforded the opportunity to develop our presentations at leisure and at length regardless of the subject's intrinsic importance.

This places a premium on our designing efficient presentations, ones that slice quickly and clearly through to the crux of the matter and then address it succinctly. And here is where many run into real problems: it is often painful—but always necessary—to omit some information or evidence that speaks to the issue at hand. We all resist that necessity; we tend to want to validate our insights by building massively detailed, ultimately irrefutable cases in their behalf. We frequently fail to recognize that in our desire to prove the case through the sheer weight of evidence we have brought to bear on it, we have overwhelmed and often intellectually smothered the very audience we set out to convince.

There is a way of avoiding the problem, and we are all aware of how to do so. Tilden addresses it when he says that interpretation is not information, but provocation. We have all heard this before, but acting on it remains one of our most difficult challenges. I promised myself that I would try to remember Tilden's precept in writing this essay; therefore, I will consider it a success, not if you agree with me after reading it, but if it has been provocative enough to make you rethink your own positions on the subject.

The title of the essay establishes a kind of false dichotomy between "hard facts" and "educated assumptions." I say false because it presumes that *one or the other* is a sufficient basis upon which to build an interpretation. This is manifestly untrue when interpreting social history.

But how can that be? How can hard facts be

inadequate? Isn't history a body of evidence (hard fact) that describes past reality? Not entirely. Traditional "hard facts"—the sort with which we seem to be most comfortable—provide only part of what we need to help our audiences comprehend the realities of historical lives. Why do I say this? For two reasons.

First, "hard facts" are frequently misused; they are almost never self-interpreting, yet all too often they are treated as though they are. We mistake the beginning of a journey for its culmination; that is, the fact itself becomes identified as its interpretation. Knowing a fact is not the same as understanding its significance or its meaning.

Second, there are *never* enough "hard facts" available about *any individual's* life to interpret it in depth. We must avoid the error of mistaking a facet of someone's life for the life itself. For example, in-depth knowledge of an individual's occupational history based on an impressive accumulation of "hard facts" still provides only part of what we need to assess the quality of that life unless we are willing to argue that occupation equals life.

There are ways of circumventing this problem. There may be an insufficiency of data on individual lives, but there certainly is a plentitude of data about most facets of life in the eighteenth century if we broaden our focus from the individual to the community, region, or even colony. Data is spread thinly but broadly across the historical record. Social historians make that data meaningful by aggregating it for statistical analysis; social historians may not be able to describe in detail the specifics of a particular individual's life, but they certainly can describe the contours of the lives that most people led. Contradictory as it may sound, this quantitative approach to the historical record is often the best way to achieve an appreciation of its qualitative implications.

Of course, the problem with aggregate data is that it lacks the specific focus that helps make history come to life. Nothing is more boring than simple lists of numbers and/or percentages. Our challenge is to transform the generalizations of aggregate data into the specifics of an individual's life experience. This is where "educated assumptions" come into play. The good interpreter creates, or synthesizes, or fabricates, the specifics of an individual's life, always being guided in that process by the generalizations; the life being discussed is, in effect, a composite reality.

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Historical Leaps, *continued*

Is this justified? Beyond any question. We at the Foundation create historical reality constantly, and not just when interpreting social history. For example, historical architects frequently create portions of restored buildings from surviving examples of functionally and structurally similar buildings. They use every available scrap of evidence from the original fabric of the building, but ultimately they must fall back on their educated opinions to complete the project. In the case of reconstructed buildings like the Capitol, the architects fabricated nearly the entire edifice, building on the slim store of hard facts provided by the Bodleian Plate, archaeological investigation, and what descriptive information they could glean from the written record. We don't often think about this because, once a building has been constructed, we treat it as a hard-edged statement of reality no matter that much of it is built on educated assumptions.

I alluded earlier to the false dichotomy between "hard facts" and "educated assumptions." I will close by saying simply that they are mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive. Both are necessary to paint a complete picture. The most vivid example I can think of to help you visualize their true relationship comes, not from history, but from paleontology. Think of the dinosaur skeletons you have seen in museums. Were complete skeletons unearthed and reassembled for your edification and enjoyment? Almost never. In the vast majority of cases, the paleontologist has taken the skeletal fragments (hard facts) that were excavated and then completed the skeleton by using related examples and the scientist's knowledge of anatomical relationships (educated assumptions).

HAPO Program Update

by Conny Graft

During the past several months, many interpreters, housewrights, landscape gardeners, actors and actresses, even the oxen and sheep have been busy with a number of innovative programs for visitors to Colonial Williamsburg. In this short space, I will present a brief update on some of the programs so that you may be encouraged not only to remind our visitors of these exciting new activities but also to experience the programs yourselves.

For fellow "Brothers of The Spade" and

other green thumb enthusiasts, Garden Tours will be offered in the Historic Area this spring, summer, fall, and winter. Although this is not a new idea, what is new is that for the first time on a regular basis our landscape gardeners will be conducting the tours. Monica Sprenkel, Rollin Woolley, Laura Viancour, Susan Dippre, and Terry Yemm have been studying the history of our gardens and landscape designs for several years. With the assistance and support of John Caramia, Gordon Chappell, Jennifer Haynes, and Kent Brinkley, a comprehensive one-hour tour has been designed to cover the history of both our Colonial Revival and eighteenth-century gardens and landscapes. Visitors will be introduced to the story of the restoration of over 175 acres of gardens and to the continuing search for authentic plant and vegetable varieties. By discussing the active plant exchanges between Virginia and Great Britain, the advice of garden enthusiasts John Randolph and John Custis, and the ideas and plans of Arthur Shurecliff, our present-day gardeners will help bring the evolving story of our gardens to life.

For the first few weeks of each season, we will be experimenting with different tour routes, days of the week, and times of day. After looking at attendance figures and collecting feedback from staff and visitors, a set schedule will be determined. Please check your copy of the *Visitor's Companion* for the schedule each week. Tickets will be sold at the Courthouse where the tours will also begin.

Should you encounter visitors who have only one day to spend at Colonial Williamsburg and want to visit the Historic Area and Carter's Grove, we can now offer such an opportunity. Beginning on June 21, Carter's Grove will offer Sunset Tours of the grounds and mansion. Between the hours of 6:00 and 9:00 P.M., guests will view the audiovisual program "A Thing Called Time," take a guided tour of the grounds (which will include the slave quarters and Wolstenholme Towne), enjoy lemonade and cookies, and tour the mansion. At some point during the evening they will see a spectacular sunset as a backdrop for the mansion. Bob Gerling is planning to offer this tour on Tuesdays and Thursdays through October. If you haven't been to Carter's Grove recently and seen the nearly completed slave quarters, or if you haven't had the pleasure of witnessing a Carter's Grove sunset, join one of these special tours. Tickets will be sold at the Visitor Center.

The story of the first theater in British
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HAPO Programs, *continued*

North America will be actively interpreted with the addition of the Fairbooth Theatre this summer. Located on the site of the first theater on Palace Green, the Fairbooth Theatre will introduce the audience to an important part of the cultural life of this city. Who were the actors who performed on this site, what type of plays were performed here, who were the theater-goers, and how did they react to the themes and ideas presented on stage? These are just some of the questions our twentieth-century audience will explore as several sections of plays, comedies, and musicals are performed on stage. The theater itself will be a very simple raised platform, and visitors will be seated on benches facing the stage. The program will consist of a brief introduction explaining the history of the first theater, its importance in the eighteenth century, theater structures of the period, and acting styles. Following the introduction, there will be three scenes taken from different plays. At the end of the program visitors will be invited to ask questions about what they've seen. Each program will run 40 to 45 minutes and will be offered at 10:00 A.M., NOON, 2:00 P.M., and 4:00 P.M. on Thursdays through Mondays. Tickets will be \$3.00 per person. As stated in the *Visitor's Companion*, performances will be cancelled in the event of inclement weather. (The stage is presently under construction, and the area is now being dug by our archaeologists as this article is being written, so our present "best guess" is that the theater will be open in mid-July.)

Although several of our programs for families are not new, we need to keep in mind what is available and appealing for families with young children who visit us each summer. When you look at the activities listed in the *Visitor's Companion*, you will find a number of sites and events that appeal to children and their parents. The coach and livestock staff will continue to offer their scheduled interpretive programs of our oxen, sheep, cow, and chickens throughout the summer. Allison Harcourt and Elaine Shirley will also have twelve junior interpreters from the 4-H Club working alongside them in costume assisting them with the animals and interpreting to our young visitors.

Did you know that there are over two hundred young people in costume performing and demonstrating appropriate activities of their eighteenth-century counterparts? The youngest members of the family might enjoy the "Once Upon A Town Tour" where children ages

4 to 6 can play eighteenth-century games, bring vegetables to Mrs. Wythe, visit the apothecary, feed fish in the canal at the Governor's Palace, all with the assistance of costumed children ages 9 to 14 who are also members of the 4-H Club. Families interested in how young people were educated in the eighteenth century might visit the College of William and Mary and talk to The Young Gentlemen at the College and their professor, Reverend Henley. Boys aged 14 to 18 portray actual students of the college in the eighteenth century and take families on a tour of the building highlighting both the academic and social aspects of campus life. Education in the eighteenth century occurred not only in the schools but in the home as well, which families can see in the Geddy House where young needleworkers interpret the daily life of the Geddy children; in the yard young boys introduce families to games such as ninepins, shuttlecock, and hoop rolling. Young musicians and dancers can be found in the Music Teacher's Room and in special programs in the Hennage Auditorium. Young girls interested in the courtship rituals and daily life of teenagers can visit the Benjamin Powell family and discuss their common interests with character interpreters Hannah and Nancy Powell. They may also talk to Nancy Geddy during the tour "According to the Young Ladies" as Nancy carries out her errands in town and talks about her friends and relations. At the Hennage Auditorium, young members of the African-American Programs staff present the life of eighteenth-century slave children. Throughout the summer, families may also enjoy the fife and drum program and militia review.

As with all of our special programs, the schedule, location, and ticket arrangements are listed in the *Visitor's Companion*. As many of us who work in the Historic Area know, few of our guests are really familiar with this important publication so we need to take advantage of those times when visitors are waiting in line, when young children are looking frustrated and bored, and inform our guests in person of the special and exciting activities that are available to them every day. In order to learn more about these programs, try and find the time to go to them. When you do, you will realize not only how many different opportunities we have for visitors to explore but also how successful our programs are in providing a sense of what life was like for all ages in eighteenth-century Virginia.

Barraud, continued

century Williamsburg said it that way. (We know that Philip's ancestors came to Virginia via England, and the English are far from strict about the way they pronounce French!) I looked for local indications of how to say the name, and what was to me the best evidence applied specifically to Dr. Philip Barraud of Norfolk and Williamsburg. Misspellings are helpful, because they probably represent phonetic spellings. In the *Virginia Gazette* the name is consistently spelled as we spell it today, so no phonetic help came from that quarter. Other printed sources I looked at, which were usually transcriptions of manuscript documents, nearly always read "Barraud" (34 out of 40 times). The two variants were "Barrawd," which appeared only once, and "Barrand," which showed up five times. The latter could easily have resulted, I think, from sloppy penmanship or the transcriber's not looking closely enough to distinguish between an "n" and a "u."

But, of course, transcriptions of documents are not a good evidence as originals, so next I checked the manuscript ledger books kept by Humphrey Harwood. His accounts are especially appropriate for this purpose since he was a Williamsburger and a contemporary of Philip and Anne and—more to the point—because he wrote clearly but spelled phonetically. (For example, he rendered Michael as "Mical.") When he wrote "Barraud" it is spelled that way. In the heading of Dr. Philip Barraud's account on folio 58 Harwood corrected the spelling to "Barraud" instead of whatever mistake he made first. (Elsewhere [folio 25] the "u" isn't perfectly clear and may be an "n.")

Evidence from a second local contemporary cinches the case, it seems to me. St. George Tucker, who was Philip's close friend and frequent correspondent, uses the name in one of his poems. In the work called "To William Nelson Esq., of Charles City" he uses "Barraud" to rhyme with "abroad." From scanning other of Tucker's poems I see that his rhymes are precise, and he was certainly in a position to know how to say his friend's name.

Further corroboration comes from a twentieth-century carrier of the name. In the introduction to his published genealogy, E. M. Barraud, an Englishman, says the second syllable rhymes with "lawd" and that the first syllable is accented. Granted, American family members use a variety of other pronunciations, everything from the proper French **bar-O** to

the widely irregular **ba-RARD**. (But it's also true that different branches of the Chowning family differ in how they say their name; some say **chowning**, others **chewning**.) By sticking with local and contemporary evidence relating to Williamsburg's late eighteenth-century Barraud family, I think we have the best possible indication of how to pronounce this surname.

—LP

Interpretation

Interaction with a group of people

Noting pertinent facts and details

Talking in a well modulated voice

Easy to listen to and

Ranging the group about one's self

Purposefully

Rambling on and on does not

Excite

The

Audience but

The good

Interpreter

Occasions curiosity that

Necessitates individuals to want to seek more information on their own.

—Ruth Rabalais

Historical Interpreter

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