

● THE COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

interpreter

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Williamsburg 1699-1999



This Committee having maturely considered and fully debated the matters to them referred relating to the place for Erecting and building a State house after the nomination of Several places.

Resolved That the said State house be built at the Middle Plantation.

Ordered that Mr. Custis, Mr. Bassett, Mr. Robinson & Mr. Talliaferro do forthwith wait upon the Council and acquaint them that the House have had in Debate and under their Consideration the place for building a State house, and have resolved that the said Statehouse be built at the Middle Plantation to which the House desires their Honors Concurrence.

Journals of the House of Burgesses, May 1699

AN ACT DIRECTING THE BUILDING THE CAPITOLL AND THE CITY OF WILLIAMSBURGH

And [be it] further enacted by the Authority aforesaid and it is hereby enacted that two hundred & twenty Acres of the said Land according [to the] Bounds of the aforesaid Draught or Plott shall be and is hereby appointed and sett a part for Ground on which the said City shall be built and erected according to the Form and Manner laid downe in the said Draught or Plott which said City in Honour of our most gracious & glorious King William shall be for ever hereafter called and known by the Name of the City of Williamsburgh.

June 7, 1699

Middle Plantation in 1699

by Jennifer Jones

Jennifer is a historian in the Department of Historical Research and director of Colonial Williamsburg's digital library project.

In June 1699, Virginia's General Assembly voted to move the capital of Virginia to the small, inland settlement of Middle Plantation and rename it Williamsburg in honor of the king. This vote marked the end of a decades-long effort on the part of Middle Plantation residents to promote their settlement. The men who lived there tried as early as 1677 to make Middle Plantation Virginia's capital city. It took two more decades of growth and the help of the Reverend James Blair and Governor Francis Nicholson to sway those who found Middle Plantation an unlikely site for such an important town.

Throughout the seventeenth century, Virginians were reluctant to move the capital from its "ancient and accustomed place." Jamestown had always been Virginia's capital. It had a state house and a church, and it offered easy access to ships that came up the James River bringing goods from England and taking on tobacco bound for market.

Virginia's entire economy depended on the ebb and flow of the tidal rivers. The tobacco that grew prolifically in Virginia's soil demanded considerable amounts of land. Within decades planters had spread out into the countryside, laying claim to every acre of river land up to the falls of the James River.

To seventeenth-century critics of the colony, this dispersal into the countryside was considered a dangerous trend. English men and women were supposed to live in towns, close-knit communities where they would reinforce one another's civility and religious conformity. This was particularly true in the forested wilderness of the colonies. Moreover, Virginia's dearth of port towns was detrimental to the growth of the colony's economy. Virginia's legislature sought to remedy the situation by passing a series of town acts in the seventeenth century that ordered that Jamestown

be improved and that a number of other towns be established along the rivers. Middle Plantation was never mentioned in these seventeenth-century town acts.

Although Virginia's legislature did not recognize the site's potential, Middle Plantation residents believed it was a worthy contender for the capital site. In 1676, rebel Nathaniel Bacon burned Jamestown. When Governor William Berkeley regained control of the colony, the government had no place to meet. Middle Plantation residents saw an opportunity. The following year, they petitioned the king's commissioners, who had been sent to the colony to investigate the rebellion, to designate Middle Plantation as the site of the new capital. The commissioners responded to this seemingly insensible suggestion with scorn. To move the capital of the colony away from the James River to the middle of the peninsula was as foolish as if "Midlesex should have desired, that London might have beene new built on Highgat Hill, and removed from the grand River that brings them their Trade." (Nevertheless, the General Assembly did meet in Middle Plantation in the fall of 1677.)

What made Middle Plantation residents think their settlement was worthy of being the most important town in the colony? Certainly the status of some of its residents had something to do with it. The site's "serene and temperate air" and its "agreeable" climate attracted men such as John Page and Thomas Ludwell, both of whom had settled in the area by the 1650s. Moreover, Middle Plantation began to look more populated and wealthy. The houses

John Page House foundations

Photo by Willie Graham



that Page and Ludwell built were among the finest in the colony. By the third quarter of the seventeenth century, Middle Plantation must have looked like a place of importance.

Before Duke of Gloucester Street became the main thoroughfare of downtown Williamsburg, a meandering horse path wended through the area along the high land between the ravines. A traveler from Jamestown riding through Middle Plantation on his way to the York River would pass by the fine brick houses of John Page, Francis Page, and the Ludwell family as well as a number of smaller dwellings clustered in the area. He might notice a brick barn, a malt house, and other solidly built support buildings. He would see the stylish brick church built for Bruton Parish in 1683. He might stay the night at one of several ordinaries in the small settlement that catered to travelers like himself. He would have a sense that, after his long ride through the woods and past the tobacco fields, he had arrived at a place of some significance.

By 1693, Middle Plantation could boast of another distinction. The College of William and Mary had been chartered that year, largely through the efforts of Commissary James Blair, the highest-ranking clergyman in Virginia. The Virginia legislature resolved in that year that the location of the new college would be "as neare the church now standing in Middle Plantation old fields as convenience will permitt."

When the statehouse at Jamestown burned in 1698, Middle Plantation had another opportunity to become the capital of Virginia. This time, prominent men in Middle Plantation were joined by two powerful allies: James Blair, the energetic founder of the College of William and Mary, and the colony's new governor, Francis Nicholson. Anglican minister Blair arrived in Virginia in 1685; four years later he was named as the Bishop of London's representative in the colony. Blair managed to get himself appointed to the Council, and he solidified his position among the gentry by marrying the daughter of a prominent planter. Nicholson succeeded Edmund Andros as governor of Virginia. He had previously been governor of Maryland and had displayed a knack for urban planning by laying out the town of Annapolis. Now, he and Blair put their talents and their positions to good use to convince their fellow Virginians to move the capital to Middle Plantation.



*James Blair by Charles Bridges
Courtesy: Muscarelle Museum of Art, College of William and Mary*

On May 1, 1699, Blair put five students of the College of William and Mary in front of the combined assembly to argue that the gentlemen should designate Middle Plantation the capital of Virginia. The third student speaker summarized Middle Plantation's merits. Already the settlement could boast of "a Church, an ordinary, several stores, two Mills, a smiths shop a Grammar School, and above all the Colledge." He also acknowledged the many important men who already made their homes in and around the settlement. "Here is a good neighborhood of as many substantial Housekeepers that could give great help towards the supplying of a constant Market," he told his audience. Blair's speakers were carefully prepared to counter ambivalence and opposition to the choice of Middle Plantation as the new seat of government. The fourth speaker addressed the major objection "in many mens minds" to Middle Plantation when he referred to its inland location. When access to a settlement, he conceded, was "reduced to two Creekes navigable only by small craft that draws 6 or 7 foot of water" the site was "no such might conveniency to boast of." The student argued that the many other benefits of the location outweighed its inconvenient location.

The assembly was persuaded. The next month they voted to rename the settlement "Williamsburg" and to build the new state house there. ●

The "Wild West" comes to the Wallace Gallery

by Jan K. Gilliam

Jan is associate curator for exhibits in the Department of Collections and Museums.

How do you celebrate an important anniversary like the founding of Williamsburg? In the museum field, you mount an exhibit. The DeWitt Wallace Gallery is proud to be the site of a unique exhibit, *1699: When Virginia Was the Wild West!*, that commemorates the three hundredth anniversary of Williamsburg. The title itself tells you this exhibit is going to be different. Have you ever thought of stately Virginia as the Wild West? When English immigrants arrived almost four hundred years ago, the land they encountered must have seemed like a wild place indeed. Out of this wild frontier they built homes and towns, and after 1699, an impressive city housing centers of learning, religion, and government.

It took almost one hundred years of settlement before the English in Virginia moved the capital to Middle Plantation and bestowed on the town the grand name of Williamsburg in honor of King William. What prompted the settlers to move the capital from Jamestown to Williamsburg? Why, after decades, did it seem necessary to create such a town as Williamsburg? What did the new town have to offer that the old one did not? These are the questions that inspired the planning of the exhibition.

Cary Carson, vice-president of research, took a bold step into the curatorial world in order to put together an exhibit that tells the story of America's first frontier. Along with curators Jon Prown and Bill Pittman, Carson developed a story line for the exhibit that reads like a classic western comic book. In fact, the design of the exhibit was inspired by the Illustrated Classic comics of decades past. There is one big difference. This classic comic is based on years of research and in-depth study of objects surviving from the seventeenth century. As you walk through the exhibit, the large comic book panels help you visualize how the objects were used and entice you to look closely at the artifacts nearby. This is important because many of the objects are not, in fact, the premier examples of their type that



you expect to find in a decorative arts museum. Rather they are bits and pieces of objects discarded and then unearthed centuries later.

One of the goals of the curatorial team was to exhibit objects that had histories of having been in the Chesapeake region in the seventeenth century. This did not mean finding pieces that were like objects used here, but rather the objects themselves. A few pieces of furniture and silver have survived above ground, but the majority of pieces with strong Chesapeake histories come from below ground. Telling the story of the early Chesapeake and the founding of Williamsburg required going beyond the scope of our own collection to include objects held by a number of institutions and private individuals. The curatorial team spent several months mining these important archaeological collections. These included the five co-sponsors that joined together with Colonial Williamsburg in presenting this exhibit, which together with the Foundation hold the principal collections of archaeological materials from seventeenth-century Virginia and Maryland. The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond, Jamestown-

Yorktown Foundation and the National Park Service, Colonial National Historical Park in Williamsburg, and Historic St. Mary's City in Maryland all generously shared their scholarship, collections, and expertise. After much searching, the team pulled together more than four hundred objects that tell the story of life in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake. Objects such as iron tools, dining wares, personal accessories, architectural fragments, garden ornaments, and much more reveal fascinating details about the lifestyles of our seventeenth-century predecessors. Supplementing these artifacts are models of historic sites and reproductions of objects too fragile to exhibit.

After selecting the objects, the curators arranged them thematically to tell the story of how different groups—English, Native American, and African—interacted and influenced one another in the years leading up to 1699. This is the story of how the “Wild West” became “civilized” and how three different cultures adapted their ways to the land in which they lived. As might be expected, the majority of objects represent the lives of the English settlers, and a substantial number illustrate the Native American presence; but almost none survive to tell the material story of enslaved Africans. Nonetheless, the importance of all three groups in this story of taming the west is evident in the exhibit.

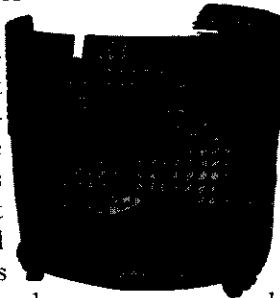
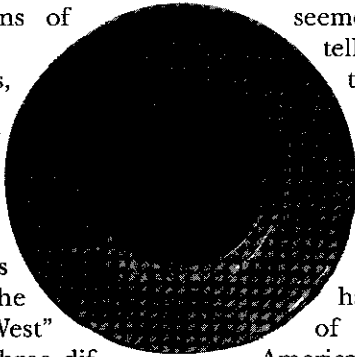
The large, colorful comic book graphics help visitors visualize and people the story that the objects tell. Because of this key relationship between story and objects, great care was taken with the illustrations. At first glance the large “pages” surrounding the objects are colorful and cartoon-like. But take a closer look and you will find that careful attention was paid to all manner of detail. In order to give the graphics a true comic book look, a talented comic book artist was chosen to create the illustrations. Brian Stelfreeze of Atlanta, better known for Batman and X-Men than Virginia farmers and burgesses, was hired to work with the curators to develop the pages. The curators provided the artist with a notebook of hundreds of illus-

trations featuring objects and landscapes from the seventeenth century. Stelfreeze studied these and incorporated many of the exhibit artifacts into the comic book panels. For instance, you can find a silver skillet, the Queen of Pamunkey frontlet, a Bartmann jug, and John Page's house all reproduced within the pages of the comic.

Not all parts of the story can be told with objects, though, since some important historical events did not leave behind tangible evidence. An important example from 1676 is Bacon's Rebellion. In this case, the comic book medium became the object. It seemed particularly well suited to tell the story of this “shoot out”—this time in 3-D. Visitors don cardboard-framed red and blue glasses and come face-to-face with Bacon and the rebels.

The exhibit culminates in a bird's-eye view of Williamsburg in 1725. By this time, visitors have wandered through the story of how English settlers, Native Americans, and Africans came together in the Chesapeake, how their cultures influenced the development of the area and the material world, and how lifestyles changed for all. For some, these changes necessitated building the town of Williamsburg. This new town attracted men of business and fashion and provided an economic and social center in which to show off their achievements.

Visitors can take home a memento of the exhibit by purchasing a comic book adapted from the large panels seen throughout the show. There is also a guidebook available that looks at the seventeenth-century Chesapeake and provides information about several seventeenth-century sites in Virginia and Maryland. Readers can visit these sites to learn more about the period and get a firsthand look at some of the places mentioned in the exhibit. Along with these exhibit-related publications, special programs are scheduled. This summer, children ages 8 to 12 had the opportunity to experience digging up the past at a mock-dig set up near the Public Hospital. Here children learned about archaeological methods and analyzed their “finds.” The Reverend James Blair, portrayed by Bob Chandler, and Governor Francis Nicholson, portrayed by

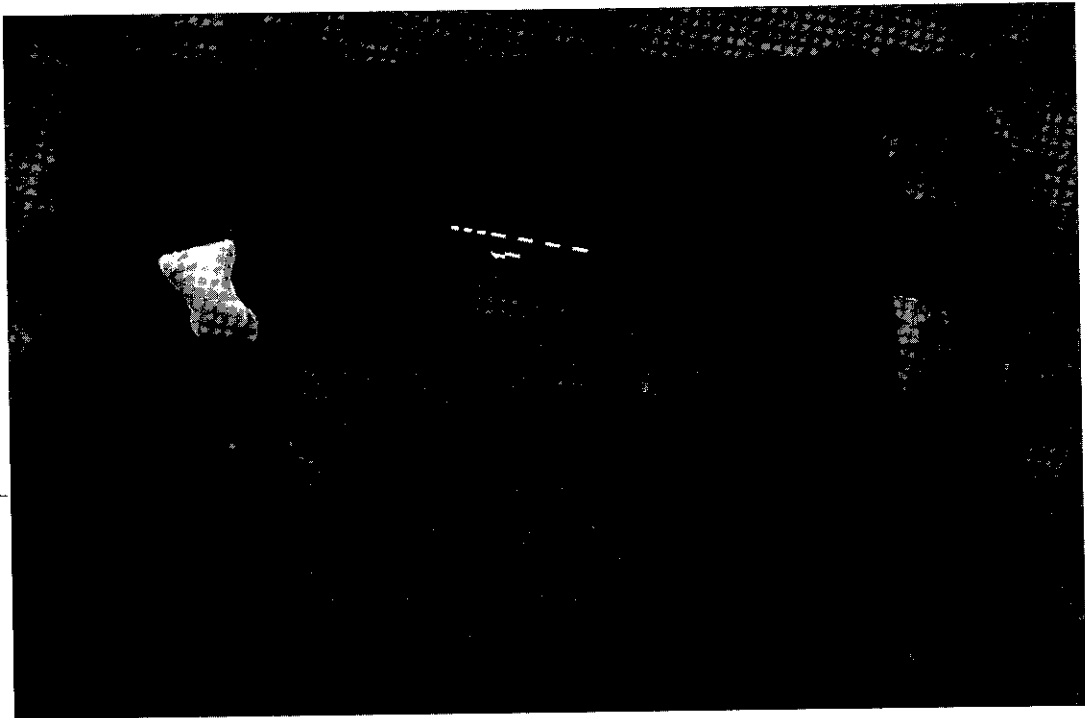


Robb Warren, greet visitors to the exhibit and offer insights on the period. In the fall, a lecture series will be offered on Wednesdays at the Wallace Gallery featuring experts in the field of seventeenth-century history and archaeology.

As with most exhibits, *1699: When Virginia Was the Wild West!* would not have been possible without the generous support of donors. Colonial Williamsburg gratefully acknowledges the Chipstone Foundation, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Virginia Corporate Council,

Richmond, Virginia; Hunton & Williams, Richmond, Virginia; Mr. and Mrs. Overton D. Dennis, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. James S. Watkinson; and the DeWitt Wallace Fund for Colonial Williamsburg for their assistance.

We invite everyone to share in the celebration of Williamsburg. Come to the DeWitt Wallace Gallery and spend time amid the pages of seventeenth-century history. Learn more about what encouraged our ancestors to create the town we interpret today. ☪



Nassau Street Ordinary Dig

by David Muraca

David is a staff archaeologist in the Department of Archaeological Research.

As part of Colonial Williamsburg's participation in Williamsburg's 300th birthday celebration, the Department of Archaeological Research (DAR) staged a public excavation of a site that was at the crossroads of Williamsburg's birthplace in 1699. The ordinary that served Middle Plantation residents in the late seventeenth century continued to serve the citizens and visitors of Williamsburg until

Overview of cellar exposed during 1940s excavation.

sometime around 1725 when it was razed. Currently preserved under a stretch of Nassau Street, the tavern was uncovered this June. The excavation gave Williamsburg residents and summer visitors to the Historic Area a chance to see what remained of one of the important buildings standing at the time Williamsburg was established.

Researchers disagree about the original owner and construction date of this ordinary. Some argue that regional elite John Page transferred the land to his son Francis in the 1670s. John Page had earlier built an imposing brick house for his family less than a mile away. Many artifacts from the excavation of Page's house can be seen in the

exhibit at the DeWitt Wallace Gallery. Francis Page, an attorney and county official like his father, is thought to have built the structure on Nassau Street as his dwelling. This Page's house was later turned into an ordinary. Others suggest that in 1663, Robert Weeks purchased 50 acres of land in this area. As county constable, Weeks received a license to keep an ordinary in his home. In 1667, his license was suspended until he posted a bond. The excavation should help resolve the debate over when the structure was built and who built it.

The first exploration of the site occurred in 1940, when architectural draftsman James Knight excavated the western half of the cellar. At the time, the portion of the cellar under Nassau Street was left intact. This section was the focus of the summer excavation. The 1940 excavation provided some clues as to who built this structure and when. Knight found two complete diamond-shaped casement windows, both of which are in the current exhibit at the Wallace Gallery, and several pieces of other windows. Approximately 10 percent of the strips of lead used to hold the casement window glass in place contain a date. Dates impressed on the lead strips found in this cellar include 1674, 1693, 1694, and 1695, suggesting the structure may date as early as the 1670s.

Other important artifacts found in 1940 were flat ceramic roofing tiles. Preliminary analysis suggests that the tiles of the ordinary's roof were manufactured at the tile kiln belonging to John Page. This kiln operated throughout the 1660s and possibly into the 1670s.

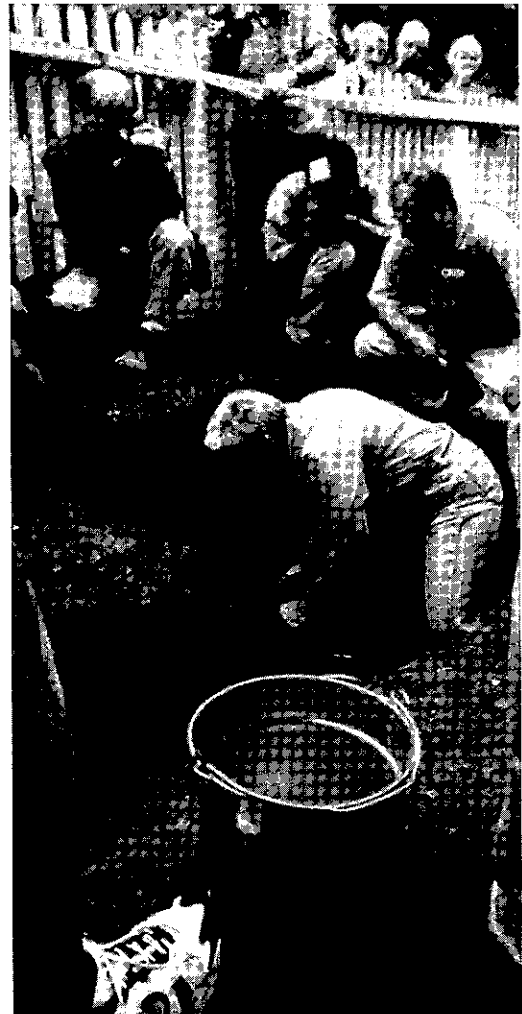
In order to complete this project, the City of Williamsburg closed a 100-foot section of Nassau Street for approximately twelve weeks from the second week in June until August 24. Vehicles could still use Nassau Street north of Duke of Gloucester Street and south of the excavation area. Parking facilities located off of Nassau Street remained accessible throughout the project.

The site was excavated with the help of the Colonial Williamsburg/College of William and Mary field school in historical archaeology and with support from both Colonial Williamsburg and the city. Students, volunteers, and teaching assis-

tants acted as site interpreters. Take some time to visit our web site and find out what we are discovering about the site.

Preliminary results from this summer's excavation suggest that the building was erected sometime after 1676. This fits nicely with the interpretation that Francis Page built this house. Examination of the cellar foundations indicates an attention to aesthetics on the part of its brick mason, but less concern for the structure's sturdiness. Its builder employed whole bricks on the visible portions of the foundation walls, and used broken bricks and mortar to fill in between. A portion of a collapsed one-brick-wide wall was found in the cellar. This piece of foundation was plastered on three sides suggesting it served as an interior partition wall. The building conflicted with the town plan and was demolished sometime before 1715. ☛

Virginia's first lady Roxane Gilmore excavates Nassau Street Ordinary cellar fill in summer of 1999.



Three Sites: Three Centuries of Williamsburg

by Linda Rowe

Linda is a historian in the Department of Historical Research and is assistant editor of this publication.

In celebration of the three-hundred-year history of the City of Williamsburg and its people, three libraries in Williamsburg (John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Earl Gregg Swem, and Williamsburg Regional) have collaborated on a three-part exhibit highlighting events and individuals from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. Each of the three libraries uses original objects, period documents, and photographic reproductions to illuminate one of the three centuries. The displays will continue on view through the end of 1999.

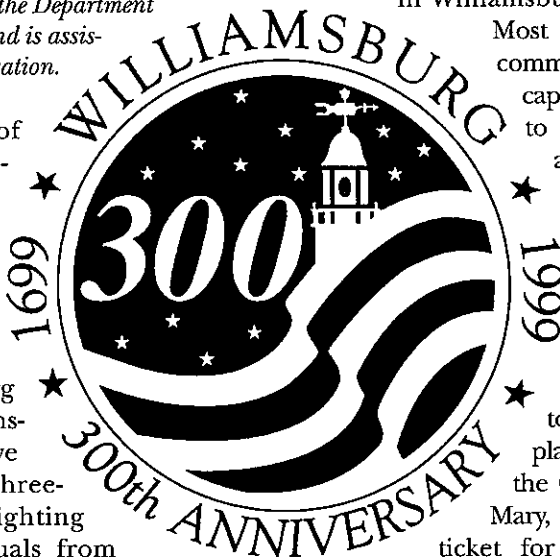
For the eighteenth-century third of the exhibit, objects associated with Williamsburg in the 1700s, several never before exhibited, are on display in the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library at Colonial Williamsburg. Of particular interest is a 1771 slave pass that ensured the safety of two slaves traveling with their master's permission from Fredericksburg to Williamsburg. Also remarkable is the 1769 Petition, Memorial, and Remonstrance (1769). The three-part document was composed by Virginia's House of Burgesses, agreed to by the Council, and sent to the British government by acting Lt. Governor John Blair. This was the first formal protest from any of the thirteen colonies against the Townshend Duties. The Rockefeller Library display also sports the first cookbook ever printed in America (*The Compleat Housewife*), Patrick Henry's signed copy of *Resolves against the Stamp Act*, and a 1773 handwritten sub-

scription list for establishment of a school in Williamsburg.

Most often described as a community adrift after the capital of Virginia moved to Richmond in 1780—awakened from its reverie only temporarily by the Civil War—Williamsburg in the nineteenth century was in reality a community of steadfast citizens who kept the town alive. Items on display at Swem Library at the College of William and Mary, ranging from a lottery ticket for the support of the

College to the minute book of the King's Daughters, focus attention on the "middle century" of Williamsburg's history. Largely ignored by scholars and history buffs, Williamsburg after 1800 is fertile ground for future research.

The last segment of Three Sites: Three Centuries of Williamsburg can be found at the Williamsburg Regional Library, where the display shows that Williamsburg in the twentieth century underwent change and growth brought on by world events and the city's own place in American history. Visitors in some numbers visited the area in 1907 attracted by Jamestown's 300th birthday celebration. A munitions industry during World War I drew new people and interests to the town as did activities military and otherwise before and during World War II. Video recollections from Williamsburg citizens focus on everything from race relations to the coming of motion pictures in this small Southern community. A photographic montage highlights the city's twentieth-century cultural, economic, and political life, including the restoration of colonial-era Williamsburg begun in the second quarter of the twentieth century. ♣





COOK'S CORNER

by Laura Arnold

Laura is a member of the interpreter planning board and is a volunteer for this publication.

The year 1699 marked both a beginning and an end: the beginning of Williamsburg as the capital of Virginia and the end of the seventeenth century. When the seventeenth century began, Elizabeth I's long, illustrious reign was nearing its end, and the shores of the Chesapeake awaited the arrival of those settlers who would name the new colony for their late queen. As the century progressed, England was fractured by a bloody civil war, but the successful restoration of the monarchy and William and Mary's Glorious Revolution meant that, in 1699, England was a strong and confident nation. Against this background of political upheaval and change, the lives of ordinary citizens were played out in the mundane details of everyday life. An examination of seventeenth-century cookbooks explores some of those mundane details and answers some questions about what they were eating and how their food was prepared.

The John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library has a small but select collection of seventeenth-century "cookery" books. These books are reprints or adaptations of original works with commentaries that are a fascinating lesson in the history of this turbulent century. Cookbooks were common during the seventeenth century; most emphasize the preparation of meats and sweets, food preservation, and medicinal recipes. Even though recipes for salads and vegetables are seldom included, their exclusion does not mean they were not part of the seventeenth-century diet.

One of the earliest and best cookbooks is *Elinor Fettiplace's Receipt Book* by Hilary Spurling, first compiled in 1604. The original leatherbound, handwritten manuscript is a collection of recipes from the family and friends of Lady Elinor Fettiplace of

Appleton Manor in Oxfordshire. She must have been a woman out of step with her times because her domestic routines were quite modern. In 1604, few women could set down in beautiful Elizabethan handwriting the recipes and housewifery instructions included in this manuscript. Lady Fettiplace rejected the medieval practice of serving food mixed together on one plate, preferring instead to offer a variety of separate dishes from which her guests could choose. Presentation of individual dishes was as important to her as the preparation of the food itself, foreshadowing the essence of eighteenth-century foodways. Although tea, coffee, potatoes, and tomatoes had yet to arrive in England, Lady Fettiplace used spices and dried fruits from the Mediterranean. The continental influence is evident in the six recipes for variations of "French biskit," one of which became the standard recipe for macaroons. Upon her death (circa 1647), the manuscript was willed to a favorite niece and ultimately passed down through her family to the present owners. Hilary Spurling has arranged the recipes by month to show the seasonality of ingredients as well as the rhythm of social and domestic life in an English manor house.

The drab, austere Cromwell years are represented by a slim volume that is actually a deliberate political satire. When *The Court and Kitchen of Elizabeth Cromwell* was published in 1664, the intent of the author (Randal Taylor) was to condemn Elizabeth Cromwell's housewifery skills. He criticized the thrifty habits she formed by necessity during the early years of her marriage, as well as the fasts imposed by the family's religious beliefs and the "spare" diet she provided her husband when he was ill. A "near servant" of the Cromwell's provided Mr. Taylor with the recipes used in their household, yet, in spite of the author's derogatory

intentions, the recipes reveal that in moments of good health and on festive occasions, the Cromwells ate very well indeed. This brief glimpse of mid-seventeenth-century cooking is a stepping stone to a larger work dated 1681.

The Compleat Cook or the Secrets of a Seventeenth-Century Housewife by Rebecca Price is another manuscript in the handwriting of a gentlewoman from Westbury. In 1681, when Rebecca first dated the manuscript, she was 21 years old, and she continued to add to the journal throughout her marriage and long life until her death in 1740. Rebecca lived during a time of prosperity in England, when fine copper cooking utensils were available as well as new spices, coffee, tea, and chocolate from the Orient. "Exotic" fruits such as apricots, oranges, and melons could be grown in the glasshouses that were changing English gardening techniques. The publication of *Le Cuisiner Français* in 1651 by François Pierre de la Varenne placed in Rebecca's capable hands the mastery of French cuisine that marked her as a creative cook. She also owned a copy of Gervase Markham's *Country Contentments, Or The English Housewife*, which became every woman's guidebook for managing an English household. Perhaps Markham's influence led her to the meticulous recording of the details that make her manuscript fascinating reading. She names the friends and relatives who shared recipes with her, she gives the cost of ingredients and their sources, and the inventories of her kitchen and dining room furnishings are almost as vivid as a photograph. Madeleine Masson assisted by Anthony Vaughn, researched and compiled the original manuscript. The result is a slice of social history made from the finest ingredients.

Karen Hess, the culinary scholar who transcribed *Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery*, surprisingly provides us with an American seventeenth-century cookbook.

The name "Martha Washington" is immediately linked with late eighteenth-century social and political history. However, the complete title of her "booke of cookery" clearly states its seventeenth-century origins: *Martha Washington's Booke of Cookery and Booke of Sweetmeats: being a Family Manuscript, curiously copied by an unknown Hand sometime in the seventeenth century, which was in her Keeping from 1749, the time of her Marriage to Daniel Custis, to 1799, at which time she gave it to Eleanor Parke Custis, her granddaughter, on the occasion of her Marriage to Lawrence Lewis.* Unlike the cookbooks of Elinor Fettiplace and Rebecca Price, which contain recipes collected over a period of time from family and friends, Martha Washington's cookbook is a manuscript largely in the handwriting of one female from the Parke-Custis family. After painstaking research, Karen Hess concluded that the manuscript was not written by Martha's mother-in-law Frances Parke Custis (who died in 1715), but instead probably was written as early as the mid-1650s by Lady Berkeley. It was she who started the book on its journey through the family by passing it to her stepdaughter, Jane Ludwell Parke. The seventeenth-century clues to the cookbook's origin are everywhere: archaic spellings and word usage, cooking techniques and equipment, and most important, the kinds of ingredients used in the recipes. Examine this book not for the recipes (whose literal transcription makes them difficult for twentieth-century cooks to use), but rather for Karen Hess's insightful commentaries about English culinary traditions in seventeenth-century America.

Other titles worth examining are:

The Compleat Cook and A Queens Delight
(1655)

Ladie Borlase's Receiptes Booke (1665-1822)

Pepys at Table (1660-1669)

The Receipt Book of Mrs. Ann Blencowe A.D.
1694 🍷

New Findings about the Virginia Slave Trade

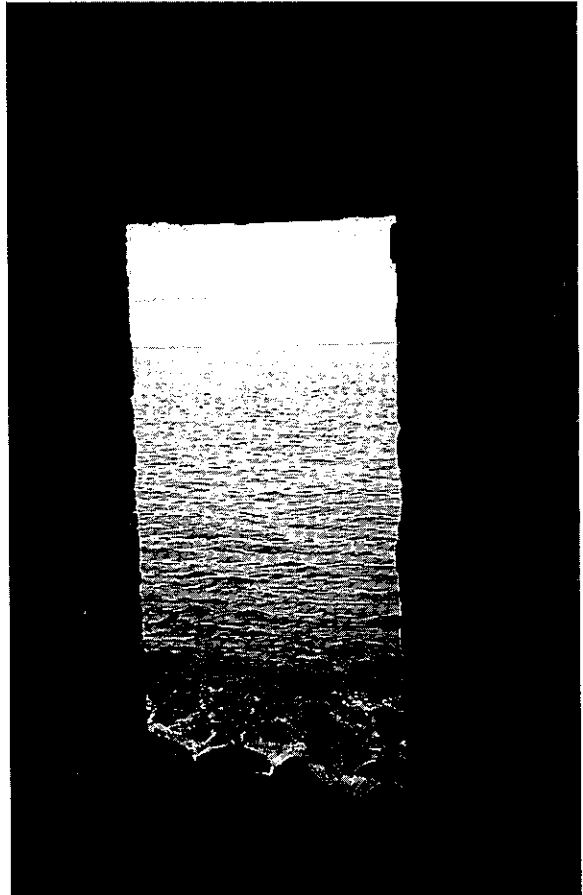
by Lorena S. Walsh

Lorena, a historian in the Department of Historical Research, is a member of the Enslaving Virginia Story Line Team.

To what extent were enslaved Africans brought to the Americas able to retain or to re-create elements of the cultures of their homelands? If there is one issue about which scholars currently disagree, this is it. Until recently, the consensus has been that this great forced migration led to a random mixing of disparate peoples drawn from many different parts of West Africa. They had roots in widely divergent cultures and were seldom able to communicate with one another except in the language of their captors. Thus, it has been widely believed that most Africans who survived initial enslavement and the subsequent horrors of the Middle Passage faced such formidable obstacles that they could at best re-create or creatively adapt only a few selected elements of their by then irretrievably "mangled pasts."¹

Now, new evidence from the W. E. B. Du Bois slave trade project is uncovering strongly patterned rather than random distributions of Africans in many receiving colonies. A few scholars have argued that peoples from only one or two African nations predominated in most places in the New World and that many slaves formed identifiable communities in the Americas based primarily on their prior ethnic or national pasts. Others continue to emphasize that even in places where most slaves were drawn from only one or two West African regions, significant cultural mixing still occurred between differing transplanted cultural groups, between Africans and creoles, and between these groups and Native Americans and Europeans. Furthermore, the asymmetry of power between the enslaved and the enslaving precluded any simple synthesis of African and European cultural forms.²

The new information on forced migration patterns requires serious questioning of previously accepted conclusions. Better evidence about the origins of forced migrants



"Door of No Return" at a fortress on Goree' Island, Senegal. Photo by Mike Lord

affords no more than a beginning, but even this is a significant advance. It can at least help to redress the overwhelming advantage that has privileged all parallel studies of European cultural continuities and transformations: the simple fact of knowing in advance the geographic origins of most migrants. Virginia district naval office records give reasonably solid answers about the slave trade for most parts of the colony throughout the eighteenth century.³ The evidence for the Lower and Upper James tends to support the older arguments for random mixing, while that for most of the older Tidewater tends to support arguments for much more homogeneity among forced migrants than has previously been supposed.

In general, the regional trade in slaves within Virginia more often concentrated rather than dispersed ethnic groups. London and Bristol traders favored the York River, while Liverpool and outport shippers were more active along the Rappahannock and South Potomac. Given that London, Bristol, and Liverpool slavers concentrated

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF SHIPS AND SLAVES

PORT OF ORIGIN	York		Rappahannock		South Potomac		NAVAL
	No. Ships	No. Slaves	No. Ships	No. Slaves	No. Ships	No. Slaves	No.
1698-1703							
London	11	1,350 +	1	12	0	0	
Bristol	2	131	4	10 +	2	4 +	
Liverpool	0	0	1	1	0	0	
Other Britain	0	0	3	8 +	1	9	
Virginia	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other Plantations	0	0	2	4	1	2	
West Indies	1	?	1	16	0	0	
Total	14	1,481 +	12	51 +	4	15 +	
1704-1718							
London	21	2,450	2	164	2	85	
Bristol	12	1,306	9	507	0	0	
Liverpool	5	247	4	111	0	0	
Other Britain	1	1	2	2	3	37	
Virginia	3	4	3	9	2	35	
Other Plantation	3	75	0	0	1	1	
West Indies	5	147	2	3	0	0	
Unknown	1	1	0	0	7	16	
Total	51	4,231	22	796	15	174	
1719-1730							
London	17	2,616	1	466	0	0	
Bristol	47	7,677	11	1,709	0	0	
Liverpool	2	13	5	594	0	0	
Other Britain	1	2	1	4	0	0	
Virginia	8	743	0	0	0	0	
Other Plantations	1	1	1	12	0	0	
West Indies	3	66	0	0	0	0	
Total	79	11,118	19	2,785	0	0	
1731-1745							
London	6	1,211	1	273	0	0	
Bristol	42	9,490	8	1,771	1	150	
Liverpool	6	1,225	8	1,004	8	1,019	
Other Britain	0	0	5	26	0	0	
Virginia	15	104	2	9	0	0	
Other Plantation	5	153	1	20	0	0	
West Indies	5	30	0	0	0	0	
Total	79	12,213	25	3,103	9	1,169	
1746-1760							
London	2	213	0	0	1	80	
Bristol	9	1,831 +	1	223	0	0	
Liverpool	8	1,360 +	4	492	0	0	
Other Britain	1	203	3	269	2	46	
Virginia	8	69	3	93	1	197	
Other Plantation	0	0	1	2	1	50	
West Indies	5	218	0	0	7	107	
Total	33	3,894 +	12	1,079	12	480	
1761-1774							
London	1	37	2	174	0	0	
Bristol	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Liverpool	1	154	11	1,754	1	30	
Other Britain	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Virginia	2	9	2	8	4	121	
Other Plantation	2	65	3	171	2	21	
West Indies	1	16	0	0	1	42	
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	7	281	18	2,107	8	214	

Notes:

1. Lower James includes Accomac.
2. Other Plantation includes ships with unknown port of origin.

BY NAVAL DISTRICT AND PORT OF ORIGIN

DISTRICT

Upper James		Lower James		District Unknown		Total	
Ships	No. Slaves	No. Ships	No. Slaves	No. Ships	No. Slaves	No. Ships	No. Slaves
2	?	2	?	0	0	16	1,362 +
0	0	0	0	0	0	8	145 +
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	4	17 +
5	2 +	1	?	0	0	6	2 +
2	13 +	1	?	0	0	6	19 +
2	?	0	0	0	0	4	16 +
11	15 +	4	0 +	0	0	45	1,562 +
2	51	2	23	22	4,294	51	7,067
0	0	3	190	4	598	28	2,601
0	0	2	42	0	0	11	400
0	0	4	13	0	0	10	53
4	54	25	173	0	0	37	275
5	22	17	112	0	0	26	210
4	39	10	183	0	0	21	372
0	0	1	7	3	390 +	12	414 +
15	166	64	743	29	5,282 +	196	11,392 +
1	8	1	94	0	0	20	3,184
0	0	0	0	3	300 +	61	9,686 +
0	0	0	0	0	0	7	607
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
0	0	6	31	0	0	14	774
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13
0	0	3	58	0	0	6	124
1	8	10	183	3	300 +	112	14,394 +
5	654	5	168	0	0	17	2,306
6	847	2	359	1	140	60	12,757
6	850	2	41	0	0	30	4,139
0	0	6	140	0	0	11	166
8	35	139	914	0	0	164	1,062
7	14	35	362	0	0	48	549
12	57	85	712	0	0	102	799
44	2,457	274	2,696	1	140	432	21,778
1	2	5	211	0	0	9	506
17	4,634	2	22	4	968	33	7,678 +
2	433	3	97	5	703	22	3,085 +
1	70	1	2	1	?	9	590 +
1	11	47	755	0	0	60	1,125
1	202	5	115	0	0	8	369
2	6	19	92	0	0	33	423
25	5,358	82	1,294	10	1,671 +	174	13,776 +
0	0	1	5	1	?	5	216 +
8	2,700	1	400	0	0	9	3,100
6	1,219	4	174	2	410	25	3,741
1	?	0	0	1	40	2	40 +
2	122	56	736	0	0	66	996
11	472	3	40	2	142	23	911
0	0	28	323	0	0	30	381
12	1,630	1	5	0	0	13	1,635
40	6,143 +	94	1,683	6	592 +	173	11,020 +

their trades on differing sources of supply within Africa, this alone would result in different ethnic mixes among slaves arriving in the various naval districts.⁴ Moreover, Bristol's widespread Virginia trade was itself far from random. Bristol ships delivered primarily Gambian and Windward and Gold Coast slaves to the Rappahannock River, while marketing most of their Biafran cargos on the York. (See Table 1)

In contrast to the relatively abundant information about the contemporary tobacco trade, surviving documentary evidence about the mechanics of the Virginia slave trade is frustratingly tenuous. Some combination of planter preferences and local trade networks likely produced these outcomes. Established slave owners probably preferred to purchase additional new hands from ethnic groups with whose ways they were already vaguely familiar over ones coming from totally unfamiliar ethnic groups. Chance choices of naval district that shippers made at the turn of the eighteenth century may have served to establish long-term trading patterns. The powerful Carter family's stated preference for Gambia or Gold Coast slaves, for example, coupled with their bad experience with one shipment of sickly and unfamiliar Angolans and subsequent refusal to accept further consignments from that region, may have been sufficient to influence the overall composition of the Rappahannock trade.⁵

With the exception of the York district, to which large planters throughout the colony went at times to buy new workers, the numbers of slaves imported annually into the Rappahannock, South Potomac, and Lower and Upper James were small enough to be absorbed mostly by purchasers living along these rivers and in their immediate hinterlands. Moreover, since sales usually commenced within a week after a ship arrived, it was surely primarily local buyers who had sufficient advance notice to travel to the sale or arrange for an agent to attend it. The majority of slaves sent to the smaller naval districts likely remained within the hinterlands of the rivers on which they disembarked.

The slave trade of the Lower James (and of the lower Delmarva peninsula, which this district also served) differed from that of all the other naval districts. Few soils in these places were suitable for tobacco, and, by

about 1700, most planters had dropped the staple entirely, turning instead to the production of naval stores, timber, cider, small grains, corn, and livestock, as well as to subsistence farming.⁶ The proportion of householders owning slaves was low compared to better endowed areas. Moreover, both plantation and labor force sizes were comparatively small. Fewer than 1,000 slaves disembarked in this district between 1698 and 1730. These newcomers were incorporated into an existing black population that included Africans earlier transshipped from the West Indies and the descendants of slaves, primarily from West Central Africa, imported by Dutch traders prior to 1660. After 1730, when the local economy experienced better times, the number of human imports increased. The 5,673 slaves who arrived in the Lower James between 1731 and 1774 likely ended up in the port towns of Norfolk and Hampton and on new farms on the North Carolina border; some were probably eventually sent further west to expanding Southside tobacco farms.

Most slaves arrived in the Lower James in small lots as ancillary cargo on small ships plying the West Indian trade. (See Table 2) During the eighteenth century, the mean number of slaves per ship was only twelve. Virginians were most prominent in this island trade, closely followed by West Indian shippers. The origins of most of the slaves are obscure, since nearly three quarters are recorded as coming from Barbados, Jamaica, Bermuda, Antigua, Nevis, St. Kitts, and other West Indian locations. The majority were probably recently transshipped Africans for whom no ready market appeared in the islands. The Lower James probably also received a disproportionate number of more seasoned, chronic troublemakers sold out of the islands as punishment. Fewer than 2,000 arrived directly from Africa; the half of these whose origins were specified came, with one exception, either from Senegambia or the Windward and Gold Coasts. Consequently the slave population in the Lower James region was likely the most ethnically diverse of any in Virginia. (See Table 3) In addition, conditions in the Lower James were the least favorable for maintaining specific African cultural practices. Specific factors include small absolute numbers of slaves, their low proportion in the total population, their

**TABLE 2. COASTAL ORIGINS OF AFRICANS IMPORTED INTO VIRGINIA
BY NAVAL DISTRICT**

YEARS	TOTAL AFRICAN SLAVES	AFRICAN REGION OF ORIGIN							
		Unspecified	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward & Gold Coasts	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	West-central Africa	Madagascar
York									
1698-1703	1,481	1,332	0	0	0	0	57	92	0
1704-1718	3,045	1,544	0	0	398	0	1,103	0	0
1719-1730	10,956	2,665	311	0	1,468	0	5,067	436	1,009
1731-1745	12,037	5,301	703	0	279	0	3,135	2,619	0
1746-1760	3,509	654	331	0	486	0	1,107	931	0
1761-1774	255	218	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	31,283	11,714	1,382	0	2,631	0	10,469	4,078	1,009
Rappahannock									
1704-1718	682	76	606	0	0	0	0	0	0
1719-1730	2,743	1,165	108	0	145	0	859	0	466
1731-1745	3,048	1,647	1,271	0	0	0	130	0	0
1746-1760	957	260	160	0	200	0	0	337	0
1761-1774	2,098	1,747	81	0	90	180	0	0	0
Total	9,528	4,895	2,226	0	435	180	989	337	466
South Potomac									
1704-1718	105	105	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1719-1730	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1731-1745	1,169	823	346	0	0	0	0	0	0
1746-1760	277	0	80	0	0	0	197	0	0
1761-1774	143	0	143	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,694	928	569	0	0	0	197	0	0
Upper James									
1704-1718	42	0	0	42	0	0	0	0	0
1719-1730	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1731-1745	2,253	1,756	102	0	0	0	395	0	0
1746-1760	5,339	449	278	427	350	0	3,195	640	0
1761-1774	5,994	946	604	0	1,369	0	1,052	2,023	0
Total	13,628	3,151	984	469	1,719	0	4,642	2,663	0
Lower James									
1704-1718	157	157	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1719-1730	94	94	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1731-1745	705	70	276	0	199	0	160	0	0
1746-1760	328	130	181	0	0	0	17	0	0
1761-1774	583	400	123	0	60	0	0	0	0
Total	1,867	851	580	0	259	0	177	0	0

Notes:

African ports of embarkation are grouped into regions as defined in the W.E.B. Du Bois dataset. Windward and Gold Coast are combined, since the two were often coupled in the sources.

widely mixed African origins, and their arrival in small lots from a variety of interim landings in the West Indies. Once in the region they were further dispersed to small estates whose owners then frequently hired them out by the year to yet other masters.⁷

South Potomac was the least important and most poorly documented Virginia desti-

nation. Only 2,052 slaves are recorded as disembarking there, and in many years, no ships carrying slaves arrived. The total surely understates the actual numbers imported into the area, since local Virginia planters sometimes evaded the higher duties Virginia assessed on imported slaves by clandestinely buying new hands on the

**TABLE 3. GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS OF AFRICAN SLAVES
(AS PERCENTAGE OF THOSE FOR WHOM ORIGIN IS KNOWN)**

YEARS	AFRICAN REGION OF ORIGIN							Percent with Known Origin
	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward & Gold Coasts	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	West-central Africa	Madagascar	
	York							
1698-1703	0	0	0	0	38	62	0	10
1704-1718	0	0	27	0	73	0	0	49
1719-1730	4	0	18	0	61	5	12	76
1731-1745	10	0	4	0	47	39	0	56
1746-1760	12	0	17	0	39	32	0	81
1761-1774	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Overall								
Percentage	7	0	13	0	53	21	5	69
	Rappahannock							
1704-1718	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	89
1719-1730	7	0	9	0	54	0	30	58
1731-1745	91	0	0	0	9	0	0	46
1746-1760	23	0	29	0	0	48	0	73
1761-1774	23	0	26	51	0	0	0	17
Overall								
Percentage	48	0	9	4	21	7	10	49
	South Potomac							
1731-1745	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
1746-1760	29	0	0	0	71	0	0	100
1761-1774	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Overall								
Percentage	74	0	0	0	26	0	0	45
	Upper James							
1704-1718	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	100
1731-1745	21	0	0	0	79	0	0	22
1746-1760	6	9	7	0	66	13	0	91
1761-1774	12	0	27	0	21	40	0	84
Overall								
Percentage	9	4	16	0	44	25	0	77
	Lower James							
1731-1745	43	0	31	0	25	0	0	90
1746-1760	91	0	0	0	9	0	0	60
1761-1774	67	0	33	0	0	0	0	31
Overall								
Percentage	57	0	25	0	17	0	0	54

Notes:

African ports of embarkation are grouped into regions as defined in the W.E.B. Du Bois dataset. Windward and Gold Coast are combined, since the two were often coupled in the sources.

Maryland side of the river.⁸ With the exception of 1734-1741, when Liverpool tobacco merchants made a concerted effort to ship slaves to this district, most of the consignments consisted of refuse slaves transhipped from Barbados. Of those imported directly from Africa, origins of only 45 percent are known. Most of these came from Senegambia.

Potomac River soils were capable of growing only inferior oronoco tobacco, and most local planters lacked both the wealth and mercantile connections that better situated planters could command. The basin's enslaved labor force was probably relatively diverse. Larger planters such as the Washingtons and Masons built up their workforces from varying combinations of

refuse slaves imported from the West Indies, of newly arrived Africans purchased in South Potomac or across the river in Maryland, and from a mix of more seasoned Africans and creoles acquired through marriage or inheritance from relatives living in other parts of Virginia and in Maryland. Africans from Senegambia and the Windward and Gold Coasts predominated in Maryland as well.

The Upper James district was the last area in Virginia to which substantial numbers of Africans were transported. Just over 200 slaves entered that district before 1731, and large direct shipments from Africa became common only after 1735. Ten years later the Upper James emerged as the leading slave entrepôt in the colony. By the 1760s, this district received nearly two thirds of all incoming Africans, by then transported almost exclusively by Bristol and Liverpool traders. More than 40 percent came from the Bight of Biafra, another quarter from West Central Africa, and lesser numbers also taken from the Windward and Gold Coasts, Senegambia, and Sierra Leone. The evidence for widely mixed origins is persuasive, since port of embarkation is specified for two-thirds of imported Africans.

These newcomers were dispersed throughout the Southside and the central Piedmont, where they joined a combination of native-born and African slaves forced to move west from throughout the Tidewater. Improving prices for upland tobacco encouraged planters to expand labor forces rapidly in the interior. Although new arrivals were initially further dispersed among small, far-flung quarters, both plantation size and the proportion of blacks in the local population increased rapidly. Moreover, sex ratios, both among Africans and transplanted creoles, were more evenly balanced than had been the case in the Tidewater earlier in the century. Finally, during the period of initial settlement, many slaves enjoyed greater autonomy than in the Tidewater, living on quarters with no resident master and sometimes no white overseer. Conditions for family formation were thus quite favorable.⁹ Whether these same conditions fostered the continuation of specific languages and customs or the development of specific ethnic identities is less clear. The concentration or mixing of groups likely differed consider-

ably from one estate and one locality to another. In some Piedmont neighborhoods, large communities of slaves were transferred virtually intact from earlier Tidewater neighborhoods.¹⁰ Syncretism appears the more likely outcome of this rapid mixing of Africans of diverse origins and of numerous creoles over a wide geographic area. The development of African-American cultures in the Piedmont clearly requires further investigation.

Until mid-century, however, more than 80 percent of imported Africans were disembarked in the York and Rappahannock Rivers. There, planter wealth and political power was most concentrated, and transatlantic mercantile connections most developed. The source of these fortunes and connections was the more valuable strain of sweet-scented tobacco, which could be raised only on pockets of rich, alluvial soils on the Lower and Middle peninsulas. Moreover, growers of sweetscented enjoyed a spate of high prosperity in the early 1700s when oronoco tobacco prices were sorely depressed. It was primarily these planters who had either sufficient resources or, more commonly, could command sufficient credit from English tobacco merchants to finance the purchase of large numbers of new African slaves.¹¹ Moreover, as a result of peculiar trading patterns, it was on the Lower and Middle peninsulas and in their immediate hinterlands that large numbers of Africans from three specific West African regions were most concentrated.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the Rappahannock trade ranked second to that of York. The years of greatest importation were between 1720 and 1745. More than 90 percent of the nearly 10,000 slaves sent there arrived directly from Africa on Bristol- or Liverpool-owned ships carrying a hundred or more captives each. This district received the fewest transshipments from the West Indies of any of the Virginia naval districts. Of the 49 percent of the Africans whose port of embarkation is known, more than half came from Senegambia and the Windward and Gold Coasts. The primary buyers were wealthier planters who owned Tidewater plantations along the major rivers where slaves raised the more valuable sweet scented tobaccos, as well as newer upland quarters in the Rappahannock hinterland. These slaves may have

joined older migrants from the same areas, for in the first decade of the eighteenth century, Rappahannock planters were the primary buyers of shipments sent by the Royal African Company, most of them arriving from Gambia or the Windward and Gold Coasts.¹² After 1745, most Rappahannock basin planters could meet needs for additional laborers from natural increase, and new imports trailed off quickly.

The York naval district was the primary destination of about two-thirds of the nearly 50,000 Africans transported to Virginia by 1745. Except for the years 1710 to 1718, when more than 1,000 slaves were transhipped from the West Indies, most arrived directly from Africa. Most of these, in turn, likely lived out their lives on the Lower Peninsula and in its hinterlands. An unknown proportion, however, were bought by big planters living in the Lower and Upper James and on the Rappahannock when their labor needs could not be satisfied from the shipments going to those districts.

London slavers predominated in the York District at the turn of the century, but then were quickly supplanted by Bristol shippers. Port of embarkation is known for two thirds of the direct African shipments arriving by 1745. Just over 9,000, or 56 percent, came from the Bight of Biafra, just under 20 percent each from West Central Africa and the Windward or Gold Coasts, and two additional twentieths from Senegambia and Madagascar. Caution is in order in making further inferences about the geographic origins of all; the information for Bristol shippers is comparatively rich, but the areas in which the London slavers were trading is seldom identified, and may well have differed.

Studies of some of the careers of individual Lower Peninsula planters demonstrate that a significant proportion of the new Africans purchased in the 1720s and early 1730s remained on Lower Peninsula estates. Through the mid 1730s, larger planters still had to buy new African hands of working age in order to staff recently established ancillary Tidewater farms, as well as to open new ones farther west. This need ended quite abruptly in the 1740s, when enough creole children were coming of age to replace dying and aging Africans in the work force, and slave imports into the York basin rapidly diminished.¹³

Evidence about the patterns by which larger York and Rappahannock planters assembled enslaved work forces in the first third of the eighteenth century further bolsters arguments for the likely concentration, on individual Tidewater estates, of slaves drawn largely from a single national group. Elite planters coming of age at the turn of the century almost invariably inherited ample land and some slaves as gifts or bequests from their parents as well as from the dowries their wives brought to their marriages. The inherited and dower slaves were almost never enough to fully exploit the inherited Tidewater lands, much less additional undeveloped acres farther west. However, the planters' substantial starting assets provided collateral, against which British tobacco merchants readily extended credit for purchasing additional slaves. Although most bought only one, two, and seldom more than four slaves from individual ships, they nonetheless acquired their adult labor forces within a span of no more than ten to fifteen years, either through design or because their adult careers ended in an early death. Occasionally there were sufficient assets in the estate to permit the purchase of additional new slaves for underage heirs. More usually, however, there were no further augmentations, aside from natural increase, until the next planter generation came of age. Temporarily concentrated local purchases in themselves increased the probability that many of the new Africans on a given estate would originate from the same geographic area, and this probability was further enhanced by temporal concentrations in the African trading regions of London, Bristol, or Liverpool suppliers. Furthermore, if a number of well-endowed young planters living in particular neighborhoods came of age at roughly the same time, a likely outcome of sequential European settlement in the Chesapeake, their individual estate-building strategies could unwittingly result in larger concentrations in these neighborhoods of new Africans from one or two West African areas. Then, even isolated, recently arrived Africans were likely to find members of their own nation on adjacent plantations if not on their home quarters.¹⁴

This seems indeed to be what happened on the lower peninsula in the first third of the eighteenth century. The possibility,

evoked by William Byrd II in 1736, of the region evolving into a colonial "New Guinea," was a result of individual actions that collectively produced a patchwork of localized concentrations of just one or two national groups on larger estates. On the peninsula south of Williamsburg and on other plantations just across the York and James Rivers, for example, around 1750, there were perhaps 200 Africans, who had arrived in the 1710s, 1720s, and early 1730s, living on five separate estates and numerous ancillary quarters owned by the Burwell family. Many of these newcomers shared both common geographic origins in the Bight of Biafra and more recently developed connections with longer established African and Virginia-born Burwell family slaves, as well as similar origins with other new Africans arriving at about the same time on adjoining plantations. However on the nearby Custis plantations, whose owner commenced buying new Africans a few years later than the Burwells, Angolans predominated.¹⁵

Local conditions, including unbalanced adult sex ratios, occasional severe plantation discipline, an unhealthy environment, and possible conflicts between recently arrived African and more privileged creole slaves did not favor sustained family formation until the 1740s. On the other hand, local circumstances did permit the continued or reconstituted use of African languages and other African customs, as well as the transmission to later generations of significant parts of their African history.¹⁶

Initial concentrations of Africans of particular ethnicities were further unwittingly perpetuated on large central Tidewater Virginia estates up to the American Revolution by the practice of entail. Most Chesapeake slave owners thought of slaves as personal property, along with other moveable goods such as livestock, tools, and household furnishings. Ordinary parents commonly divided their personal property relatively equally among their children, both male and female, whatever the consequences for the slaves. And when an owner

died without making a will, the courts apportioned the family slaves equally among all the heirs. However, in Virginia, the eldest son, who automatically inherited all the land when there was no will, had the right to keep all the slaves if he paid other family members their appraised value.

The idea of treating human beings as real property for purposes of inheritance was a novel legal practice that elite Virginians apparently borrowed from Barbados. In 1668, the Barbados assembly had classified blacks as real estate instead of chattels so that slaves could be legally tied to particular plantations, thus preventing executors or creditors from dismantling viable working units in probate settlements. The Virginia assembly passed a law allowing planters to entail slaves as well as land in 1705. And, in



1727, another act made provision for attaching slaves to particular tracts of land, so that both plantation and workers would be passed on to a single heir. The lawmakers wanted to ensure that the son who inherited land also received the laborers needed to make the land profitable. In practice the "annexing" of specifically named slaves and their descendants to a particular parcel of land meant that the entailed slaves could not be sold, but instead had to be transferred to the male heir who inherited the land. They could however be removed to other tracts their current master owned. Typically, not all family slaves were entailed, and these might be freely sold or bequeathed. Once some were entailed, however, affected gentry planters came to think of all, like their similarly entailed land, as family property to be passed on, largely intact, in the male line. Although a father might give one or two slave children whom he owned outright to a daughter or grandchild, he usually willed almost all the slaves, entailed or not, to one or more of his sons. Until the practice was abolished after the American Revolution, elite gentry inheritance strategies, especially common in the York and Rappahannock districts, unintentionally afforded the largest and most ethnically concentrated enslaved com-

munities more settled places of residence and more generational continuity than was the lot of most Chesapeake slaves.¹⁷

Although Virginia planters seldom specified the ethnic or geographic origins of their slaves, documentary evidence is often sufficient for tracing when and by what means the labor forces living on particular plantations were assembled. Purchases of new Africans cannot often be linked to particular ships, but one can often establish approximately when and in what river new Africans were bought.¹⁸ This evidence can then be compared with the information about the trades of particular naval districts to identify probable origins. Caution is surely in order when making inferences from probabilities rather than certainties, but probabilities are preferable to no information at all.

It is still too early to accept uncritically arguments that the slave culture or cultures of portions of any one North American colony developed primarily from one or two West African sources. Collective knowledge of early modern West African history, both in general and for particular regions, remains too scanty to sustain widely shared consensus. But growing evidence for a trade whose geographic and temporal complexities can be unraveled for both sending and receiving localities certainly encourages careful attention to more particular transatlantic ethnic continuities than has heretofore appeared either possible or probable.

Notes

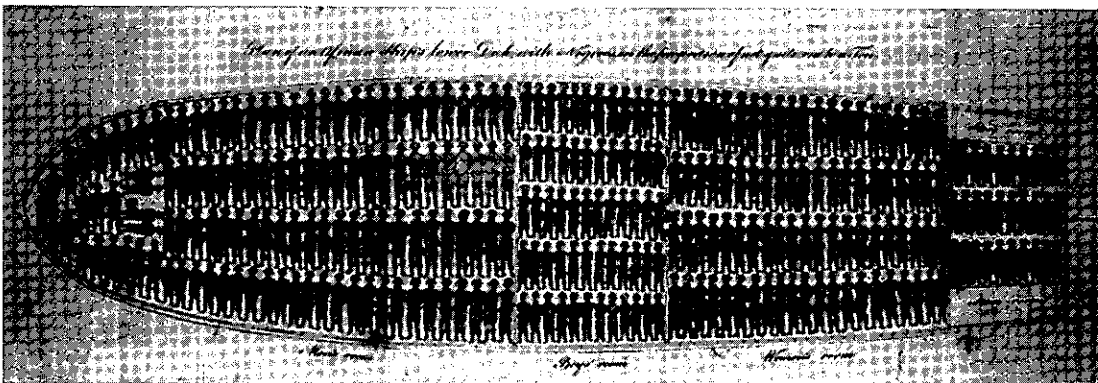
The materials in this article were presented in a paper at the Conference on Transatlantic Slaving and the African Diaspora: Using the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute Dataset of Slaving Voyages, Williamsburg, Va., September 1998.

1. Sidney W. Mintz, "Foreword," in Norman E. Whitten, Jr., and John F. Szwed, eds., *Afro-American Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives* (New York, 1970), p. 9. The classic formulation of this position is Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Boston, 1992).
2. Recent works arguing for a central role for ethnicity include John Thornton,

Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680 (Cambridge, Eng., 1992); Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge, La., 1992); Douglas Brent Chambers, "He Gwine Sing He Country": Africans, Afro-Virginians, and the Development of Slave Culture in Virginia, 1690-1810 (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1996); and Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1998). Arguments for cultural mixing are summarized in Philip D. Morgan, "The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Destinations and New World Developments," in David Eltis and David Richardson, eds., *Routes to Slavery: Direction, Ethnicity and Mortality in the Atlantic Slave Trade* (London, 1997), pp. 122-45.

3. The data is published in Walter Minchinton, Celia King, and Peter Waite, eds., *Virginia Slave-Trade Statistics, 1698-1775* (Richmond, Va., 1984). David Richardson, ed., *Bristol, Africa, and the Eighteenth-Century Slave Trade to America*, 3 vols. (Bristol, 1986) contains additional information on African ports of embarkation for some of the ships. Chambers was the first scholar to uncover marked differences in the geographic origins of slaves disembarked in the various Virginia naval office districts. ("He Gwine Sing He Country," chaps. 4 and 5).
4. For the Bristol slave trade, see W. E. Minchinton, "The slave trade of Bristol with the British mainland colonies in North America 1699-1770," in Roger Anstey and P.E.H. Hair, eds., *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade, and Abolition* (Liverpool, 1976), pp. 39-59; and the introductions to each of the three volumes of Richardson, ed., *Bristol, Africa, and the Eighteenth-Century Slave Trade*. Additional information from the Du Bois dataset will appear in David Eltis, David Richardson, and Stephen D. Behrendt, "The Structure of the Trans-

- atlantic Slave Trade, 1595–1867,” in Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Carl Pederson, and Maria Diedrich, eds., *Transatlantic Passages* (forthcoming).
5. Chambers, “He Gwine Sing He Country,” p. 255.
 6. Lorena S. Walsh, “Summing the Parts: Implications for Estimating Chesapeake Output and Income Subregionally,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 56 (1999): 53–94.
 7. Sarah S. Hughes, “Slaves for Hire: The Allocation of Black Labor in Elizabeth City County, Virginia, 1782 to 1810,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 35 (1978): 260–286; Michael L. Nicholls, “Aspects of the African American Experience in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg and Norfolk” (typescript, Department of Historical Research, Colonial Williamsburg). T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes, “Myne Owne Ground”: *Race and Freedom on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, 1640–1676* (New York, 1980), pp. 17, 70–72, 130n., documents the early Angolan connection.
 8. Donald M. Sweig, “The Importation of African Slaves to the Potomac River, 1732–1772,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d. Ser., 42 (1985): 507–524.
 9. Philip D. Morgan and Michael L. Nicholls, “Slaves in Piedmont Virginia, 1720–1796,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 46 (1989): 211–251.
 10. Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter’s Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (Charlottesville, Va., 1997), chap. 7.
 11. Walsh, “Summing the Parts”.
 12. Charles L. Killinger III, “The Royal African Company Slave Trade to Virginia, 1689–1713,” M.A. Thesis, College of William and Mary, 1969, pp. 63–70, 137–146.
 13. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter’s Grove*, chap. 1.
 14. *Ibid.*
 15. *Ibid.*; William Byrd II to the Earl of Egmont, 12 July 1736, in Marion Tinling, ed., *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684–1776*, 3 vols. (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 2:487.
 16. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter’s Grove*, chaps. 1 and 3.
 17. *Ibid.*, pp. 44–45, 148, 224.
 18. *Ibid.*, pp. 67–68.



“Plan of an African Ship’s lower Deck”
 Ink on paper engraving
 Matthew Carey
 Philadelphia, 1797

THE CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG A TIMELINE

1632 Dr. John Potts (physician, Council member, acting governor, cattle rustler) settled on land between Queens Creek and Archers Hope Creek.

1633 *An Act for the Seatinge of the Middle Plantation*

That every fortyeth Man be chosen and maynteyned out of the tithable Persons of all the Inhabitants, within the Compasse of the Forrest conteyned betweene *Queenes Creeke* in *Charles River* [meaning either York River or Charles River County, later York County], and *Archers Hope Creeke* in James River, with all the Lands included, to the Bay of *Chesepiake*, and it is appoynted that the sayd Men be there at the Plantation of Doct. *John Pott*, newlie built before the first Day of *March* next, and that the Men be employed in buildinge of Houses, and securing that Tract of Land lyinge betweene the sayd Creekes. . . . And yf any free Men shall this Yeare before the first Day of May, voluntarilie goe and seate upon the sayd Place of the *Middle Plantation*, they shall have fifty Acres of Land Inheritance, and be free from all Taxes and publique Chardges.

First settlement at Middle Plantation began.

1634 Six-mile-long palisade was built between Archers Hope Creek and Queens Creek.

1658 Middle Plantation Parish and Harrop Parish joined to form Middletown Parish.

1674 Bruton Parish was formed from Marston and Middletown Parishes.

1676 Nathaniel Bacon's Rebellion: "leading his Men to *Middle-Plantation* (the very Heart and Centre of the Country) hee [Bacon] there for some Tyme quarters them."

1677 The General Assembly met at Middle Plantation in October because of Jamestown's destruction during Bacon's Rebellion.

Several York County residents petitioned the king's commissioners to relocate the capital to Middle Plantation.

And if a Towne be built for the Govnor Councill, Assembly to meet and for the Generall Court we humbly propose the *Middle Plantation* as thought the most fitt Place being the Center of the Country as also within Land most safe from any Foreigne Enemy by Shipping, any Place upon a River Side being liable to the Battery of their greatt Guns.

The commissioners' answer to the above petition:

That the Town now burnt [Jamestown] should be removed to the *Midle Plantation* which is noe other than if *Middlesex* should have desired, that *London* might have beene new built on *Highgat Hill*, and removed from the grand River that brings them in their Trade.

1683 Brick church for Bruton Parish was built in Middle Plantation. (Foundations near present-day church)

1693 King William and Queen Mary granted a charter establishing a college in the colony of Virginia. It became the second oldest college in America.

An Act Ascertainning the Place for erecting the College of William and Mary in Virginia:

That *Middle Plantation* be the Place for erecting the said College of *William and Mary* in *Virginia* and that the said College be at that Place erected and built as neare the Church now standing in *Middle Plantation* old fields as Convenience will permitt.

1695 Foundation was laid for the college building. (Wren Building—the oldest academic building still in use in America)



1698 The State House at Jamestown burned.

1699 (May 18) Middle Plantation was again recommended as the location for the new capital of Virginia:

I [Gov. Francis Nicholson] do now cordially recommend to you the Placing of your publick Building (which God willing you are

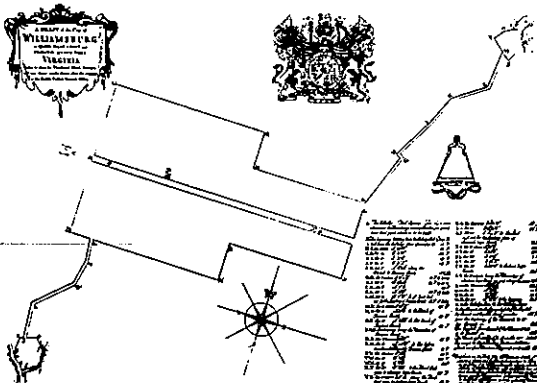
designed to have) somewhere at *Middle Plantation* nigh his Majesties Royall Colledge of *William and Mary* which I think will tend to Gods Glory, his Majesties Service, and the Welfare and Prosperity of your Country in generall and of the Colledge.

Journal of the House of Burgesses

When the State House and Prison were burnt down, Governor *Nicholson* removed the Residence of the Governor, with the Meeting of General Courts and General Assemblies to *Middle Plantation*, seven Miles from *James Town*, in a healthier and more convenient Place, and freer from the Annoyance of Muskettoes.

Hugh Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*

(June 7) *Middle Plantation*, renamed *Williamsburg* in honor of King *William III*, designated the capital of the colony.



An Act directing the Building the Capitoll and the City of *Williamsburgh*:

And forasmuch as the Place commonly called and knowne by the Name of the *Middleplantation* hath been found by constant Experience to be healthy and agreeable to the Constitutions of the Inhabitants of this His Majestyes Colony and Dominion having the naturall Advantage of a serene and temperate Aire dry and champaign Land and plentifully stored with wholesome Springs and the Conveniency of two navigable and pleasant Creeks that run out of *James* and *York* Rivers necessary for the Supplying the Place with Provisions and other Things of Necessity.

(June) *Theodorick Bland* completed first survey of *Williamsburg*.

(November) *Henry Cary* was employed "to Oversee the building of the Capitoll."

Governor *Francis Nicholson* devised the City's town plan.

Soon after his [Governor *Nicholson's*] Accession to the Government, he caused the Assembly, and the Courts of Judicature, to be remov'd from *James-Town*, where there were good Accommodations for People, to *Middle-Plantation*, where there were none. There he flatter'd himself with the fond Imagination, of being the Founder of a new City.

Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia*

1700 (December 5) The General Assembly convened in *Williamsburg* for the first time; the Council had been meeting at the College since October.

1701 June 5 observed as a day of thanksgiving in the city for "it has pleased almighty God of his Infinite mercy to deliver this Colony from the late great & raging Plague of Caterpillars."

1702 (June 18) A grand celebration in *Williamsburg* marked the accession of *Queen Anne*: 2,000 troops and 40 Indians joined local residents for orations, fireworks, marching, music, a meal for prominent persons, and "a glass of rum or brandy with sugar" for ordinary folk.

1703 (April) General Court first met in the unfinished Capitoll building. Council convened there in October.



1704 General Court Prison (Public Gaol) was constructed.

(April 27) A written Message from his Ex [Governor *Nicholson*]

I recommend to you to give Directions that the old House belonging to Mr. *John Page* standing in the Middle of *Gloucester Street* be pulled downe that the Prospect of the Street between the Capitoll and Colledge may be cleer and that you take Care to pay what you shall judge those Houses to be worth.

(May 5) *Ordered* That Mr. *Henry Cary* forthwith sett the Labourers employed about the Building the Capitol to pull down the four old Houses and Oven belonging to Mr. John Page which stand in Gloucester Street and have been appraised and that they lay the Bricks out of the Street on the Lott of the said John Page.

Journals of the House of Burgesses

1705 (October) College building burned; rebuilt between 1710 and 1716.

(November) Capitol Building completed.

Edward Nott became lieutenant governor.

General Assembly passed *An Act Concerning Servants and Slaves* which revised and consolidated slave laws enacted piecemeal in the seventeenth century.

1706 Work began on Governor's house (Palace).

Governor Nott died.

1710 Alexander Spotswood became lieutenant governor.



1714 James City County seat moved to Williamsburg.

1715 The Powder Magazine was constructed for storing arms and ammunition.

New Bruton Parish Church was completed near location of the 1683 church.

Courthouse was built at corner of Francis and England Streets.

1718 Governor Spotswood sponsored a play at the Levingston playhouse (the first theater in colonial America) on Palace green in honor of the birthday of King George I.

Blackbeard's pirates were tried and thirteen were executed in Williamsburg.

1722 Governor's Palace completed.

The City of Williamsburg was granted a charter by King George I.

Williamsburgh is now incorporated and made a Market Town, and governed by a Mayor and Aldermen; and is well stock'd with rich Stores, of all Sorts of Goods, and well furnished with the best Provisions and Liquors. Here dwell several very good Families, and more reside here in their own Houses at Publick Times. The Number of Artificers [craftsmen] is here daily augment-

ed; as are the convenient Ordinaries or Inns for Accommodation of Strangers. The Servants here, as in other Parts of the Country, are *English, Scotch, Irish, or Negroes.*

Hugh Jones, *The Present State of Virginia* Governor Spotswood was removed from office, but continued to live in Virginia.

Hugh Drysdale became lieutenant governor.

Population: some 500 souls and 50 houses.

1726 Governor Drysdale died.

1727 William Gooch became lieutenant governor.

1730 Slave unrest in Virginia resulted from the rumor that Christian slaves were to be freed.

1731 Convicted slave Mary Aggy sought benefit of clergy based on her Christianity.

1732 New law extended benefit of clergy to slaves (with some limitations) and women.

1736 William Parks founded the *Virginia Gazette* newspaper.

1739 English evangelist George Whitefield preached in Bruton Parish Church.

1740 Gooch absent from Williamsburg for nine months because of military expedition against Cartagena (Colombia).

1745 First theater building was refitted for Williamsburg Hustings Courthouse.

1747 (January 30) The Capitol building burned.

City suffered a smallpox epidemic that continued into 1748.

1748 Smallpox epidemic delayed meeting of General Assembly until October.

By a vote of 40 to 38 the House of Burgesses passed "*An Act for Rebuilding the Capitol in the City of Williamsburg.*" (There were strong arguments to move the seat of government to a more central location.)

The Secretary's Office (Public Records Office) completed.

1749 Governor Gooch returned to England for health reasons.

1750 Population: some 1,000 persons in 100 households.

1751 Robert Dinwiddie became lieutenant governor.

New theater was built near Capitol.

John Blair (president of the Council

and justice of the peace for York County) wrote in his diary:

This afternoon I laid the last top brick on the capitol wall, and so it is now ready to receive the roof, and some of the wall plates were raised and laid on this day. I had laid a foundation brick at the first buildg of the capitol above 50 year ago, and another foundation brick in April last, the first in mortar towards the rebuilding, and now the last as above.

- 1752 George Washington delivered dispatches to Governor Dinwiddie from Lawrence Washington.
- 1753 The General Assembly met for the first time in the rebuilt Capitol.
- 1754 The French and Indian War began.
Wall and guardhouse were added to the Magazine.
- 1756 Benjamin Franklin accepted the College of William and Mary's first honorary degree.
- 1758 Governor Dinwiddie left office and returned to England.
Francis Fauquier became lieutenant governor.
George Washington took his seat as a burgess.
- 1760 King George III ascended the throne.
Bray School for black children opened in Williamsburg with Mrs. Ann Wager as schoolmistress.
- 1762 Thomas Jefferson enrolled at the College of William and Mary.
- 1765 New burgess Patrick Henry delivered his "Caesar-Brutus" speech against the Stamp Act; student Thomas Jefferson heard it.
Presbyterians granted permission to use a Williamsburg house owned by George Davenport as a meeting house.
- 1766 William Rind announced his intention to publish a rival *Virginia Gazette* in Williamsburg.
Peyton Randolph became speaker of the House of Burgesses.
- 1768 Governor Fauquier died.
Norborne Berkeley, baron de Botetourt, became governor.
- 1769 Thomas Jefferson attended his first Assembly meeting as a newly elected burgess from Albemarle County.
In response to a petition of free black men, an act exempting free black and Indian women from the levies passed.

John Witherspoon, on a fundraising trip for the College of New Jersey (Princeton), preached to a crowd in the Capitol yard.

After the governor dissolved the House of Burgesses, its members met at the Raleigh Tavern and drew up a non-importation agreement to protest the Townshend Duties.

Bell tower was added to Bruton Parish Church.

- 1770 A new courthouse for James City County and the City of Williamsburg was constructed on Market Square.

Lord Botetourt died.

- 1771 John Murray, earl of Dunmore, became governor.

- 1772 Joseph Pilmore, Methodist itinerant, preached in the playhouse and Capitol yard.

- 1773 Public Hospital, the first hospital in America devoted entirely to treatment of the mentally ill, opened on Francis Street. Officers included James Galt, keeper, and Dr. John de Sequeyra, visiting physician.

Local Masonic Lodge obtained a new charter (active in the city as early as 1751).

- 1774 First Virginia Convention met in Williamsburg to elect delegates to the First Continental Congress.

Williamsburg resident Peyton Randolph was elected president of the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

Charity, a free black woman from Richmond County, was admitted to the Public Hospital. (Slaves not admitted as patients until 1846.)

Bray School for black children closed when Mrs. Wager died.

- 1775 (April 21) Lord Dunmore ordered removal of gunpowder from the Magazine.

(June 8) Dunmore left the Palace to take refuge on board a British ship in the York River.

Williamsburg's population reached

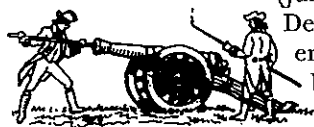


approximately 1,880 of which 52 percent were African-American, mostly slaves.

(September 2) A devastating hurricane hit Tidewater Virginia. A Norfolk newspaper stated that it was one of the worst "within the memory of man."

- 1776 Fifth Virginia Convention met in Williamsburg and drew up a resolution instructing Virginia's delegates in Philadelphia to propose independence. A declaration of rights and a state constitution were also adopted.

Patrick Henry became Virginia's first state governor and moved into the Palace.



(July 18) Official news of Declaration of Independence reached Williamsburg.

Phi Beta Kappa, international collegiate fraternity, established—tradition says—at the Raleigh Tavern.

Traditional date of the founding of the black Baptist church in Williamsburg under the leadership first of Moses and then Gowan Pamphlet.

- 1779 Thomas Jefferson became Virginia's second state governor, the last governor to occupy the Palace.

General Assembly passed "An Act for the Removal of the Seat of Government" to Richmond, which was considered "more safe and central than any other town situated on navigable water."

Jefferson's bill for religious freedom was introduced in the House of Burgesses. (Finally enacted in 1786 in Richmond.)

The Pulaski Club, a social organization, was founded at the Raleigh Tavern. It later met in the Taliaferro-Cole Shop, and, today, occasionally meets on benches in front of the shop.

The College of William and Mary became a university.

The Assembly met for the last time in Williamsburg and ordered that books, papers, and records be transported to the new seat of government.

- 1780 (April) The capital of Virginia moved from Williamsburg to Richmond.
- 1781 British troops under Lord Cornwallis occupied Williamsburg.

Williamsburg July 11th 1781

My ever dear Fanny: Could I have entertained a doubt of the propriety of my conduct in endeavouring to remove you beyond the reach of the British army, the sight of this unhappy spot must immediately have removed it. . . . Here they remained some days, and with them pestilence and famine took root, and poverty brought up the rear. . . . As the British plundered all that they could, you will conceive how great an appearance of wretchedness this place must exhibit. To add to the catalogue of mortifications, they constrained all the inhabitants to take paroles. . . . Among the plagues the British left in Williamsburg, that of flies is inconceivable. It is impossible to eat, drink, sleep, write, sit still or even walk about in peace on account of their confounded stings. Their numbers exceed description, unless you look into the eighth chapter of Exodus for it.

St. George Tucker to his wife.

The city became a staging area before and after the Battle of Yorktown. General Washington headquartered at the Wythe House; French commander Rochambeau resided at the Peyton Randolph House.

The Palace burned while serving as a military hospital.

Earliest documentary date for founding of the black Baptist church in Williamsburg.

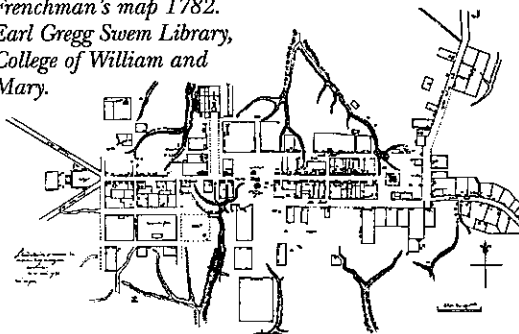
- 1782 The French army began withdrawing from Williamsburg.

Methodist Francis Asbury preached outside at the Courthouse to a congregation of whites and blacks.

Population: 1,344

- 1788 George Washington was named the first American chancellor of William and Mary.

Frenchman's map 1782.
Earl Gregg Swem Library,
College of William and
Mary.



- 1794 The eastern wing of the Capitol was demolished.
- 1800 (February 22) Bishop James Madison delivered a funeral oration at Bruton Parish Church in memory of George Washington who died in December 1799.
- 1812 Francis Asbury made his last preaching visit to Williamsburg.
- 1824 Lafayette revisited Williamsburg, lodged at the home of Mrs. Mary Peachy (Peyton Randolph House), and was entertained at the Raleigh Tavern.
- 1828 White Baptist church in Williamsburg formed; met for a time in the Magazine.
- 1831 Black Baptist church in Williamsburg closed for part of the year following Nat Turner rebellion in Southampton County.
- 1832 (April 10) West wing of the Capitol building burned.
- It is my unpleasant duty to inform you that the former Capitol in this City was this Day entirely consumed by Fire. I am happy however, to be able to add that all the Record Books and Papers are saved.*
- Letter from A. P. Upshur to the Governor
- 1834 A tornado blew down "many chimnies and Frame houses" in the city including "the colored people's meeting house near the Lunatic Hospital."
- 1838 Bruton Parish Church's eighteenth-century interior obscured by extensive renovation and modernization.
- 1840 Elizabeth Galt writing to a family member about the interior changes to Bruton Parish Church: "And do tell me, who have been the Goths and Vandals who have modernized our dear abbey?"
- 1841 Vice President John Tyler was notified at his Williamsburg home on Francis Street that he had become president of the United States following the death of William Henry Harrison (like Tyler, a native Virginian). He was the first vice president to succeed to the presidency.
- 1842 First Christmas tree in Williamsburg at Tucker House.
- 1846 General Assembly passed a law permitting the Eastern Lunatic Asylum to admit slaves as patients.
- 1856 Black Baptist church (now First Baptist Church) dedicated a new brick building on Nassau Street to replace a wooden carriage house converted for their use decades earlier.



First Baptist Church, Nassau Street

- 1857 White Baptist church (now Williamsburg Baptist Church) dedicated new church on Market Square.
- 1859 (February) Main building (Wren) of the College burned; reopened in October.
- The Raleigh Tavern burned.
- 1860 Population: 1,895, including residents at the Asylum.
- 1861 The Civil War began with the firing on Fort Sumter (Charleston, S.C.).
- Virginia seceded from the Union.
- Richmond chosen as the capital of the Confederacy.
- (May 10) *College of William and Mary Faculty Minutes*
- Whereas—Civil War is imminent, and the State of Virginia is threatened with an armed Invasion; and whereas the exposed Position of this Section of the State requires that every Citizen should be free to enlist in its Defense; and whereas, a large Majority of the Students have already left College, and those who still remain—most of whom also purpose to leave—are unable, from the excited State of the public Mind, to pursue their collegiate Duties with profit—Therefore—*
- Resolved—That the Exercises of the College be suspended from this Day, during the Remainder of the present Session. . .*
- Whereas—the President [Benjamin S. Ewell] of the College has accepted, at the Call of the State, a military Position in her Service, . . .*
- Resolved—That the Records and Keys of the College be committed to the Care of Professor Morrison,*
- 1862 The Battle of Williamsburg commenced.

Union officer George Armstrong Custer (later of Little Big Horn fame) served as best man at the Bassett Hall wedding of John Willis Lea (a West Point classmate and Confederate officer).

Union troops occupied Williamsburg until the end of the war in 1865.

The College (Wren) building was set on fire by Union troops.

- 1863 Hospital reformer Dorothea Dix, correspondent and friend of asylum superintendent Dr. John Minson Galt II (d. 1862), visited the mental hospital and distributed gifts of tobacco, paper, books, pictures, and ribbons to the patients.
- 1868 New Virginia constitution mandated public schools for white and black children.
- 1869 The Casey brothers opened a general merchandise store.
- 1870 Williamsburg School Board was formed.
- 1871 White and black public schools opened in rented, makeshift spaces.
- 1874 African-American John M. Dawson, pastor of First Baptist Church, was elected to the state Senate.
- 1881 C & O Railroad laid temporary tracks down the middle of Duke of Gloucester Street (then Main Street) to help transport dignitaries to Yorktown for the centennial celebration of the Battle of Yorktown and the British surrender.
Samuel Harris, successful African-American merchant, owned and operated his "Cheap Store" at the east end of Duke of Gloucester Street (at present site of Davidson Shop).
- 1882 The railroad came permanently to Williamsburg when tracks were laid a few blocks north of Duke of Gloucester Street.
- 1883 Samuel Harris, local African-American businessman, was appointed to the school board.
- 1884 New public school for blacks opened on Francis Street. It was the first school (black or white) built from the ground up by the local school board.
- 1885 The Eastern Lunatic Asylum (original Public Hospital building and additions) burned.
- 1889 Williamsburg resident Cynthia Tucker Coleman, granddaughter of St. George Tucker, helped found the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

The APVA purchased the Powder Magazine.

Mayor George Coleman described late nineteenth-century Williamsburg in a speech dedicating the newly reconstructed Raleigh Tavern in 1932:

Williamsburg on a Summer Day! The straggling Street, Ankle deep in Dust, grateful only to the Chickens, ruffling their Feathers in perfect Safety from any Traffic danger. The Cows taking Refuge from the Heat of the Sun, under the Elms along the Sidewalk. Our City Fathers, assembled in friendly leisure, following the Shade of the old Court House around the Clock, sipping cool Drinks, and discussing the Glories of our Past. Almost always our Past! There were Men and Women who strained every Nerve, every Means in their Power, to help the Williamsburg of the present Day, to supply the Necessities of Life to poorer Neighbors, to build up the College and procure Means of Education for their Children, but even they shrank from looking toward the Future. The Past alone held for them the Brightness which tempted their Thoughts to linger happily.

- 1890 The APVA excavated the foundations of the old Capitol building.
- 1895 Industry came to town over next five years: planing mill, ice factory, canning company, steam laundry, and knitting mill.
African-American public school student Eli Brown, suspended after a scuffle with a group of white boys, told the superintendent of schools that "he would die before he would yield the path to those boys."
- 1897 The APVA acquired the Capitol site from the Old Dominion Land Company.
Nicholson Street School (white) opened.
- 1900 Population: 2,044
- 1903 The Reverend William Archer Rutherford Goodwin became rector of Bruton Parish Church; began raising money to restore the building.
The family of artist Georgia O'Keeffe moved to Williamsburg from Wisconsin. O'Keeffe later wrote:



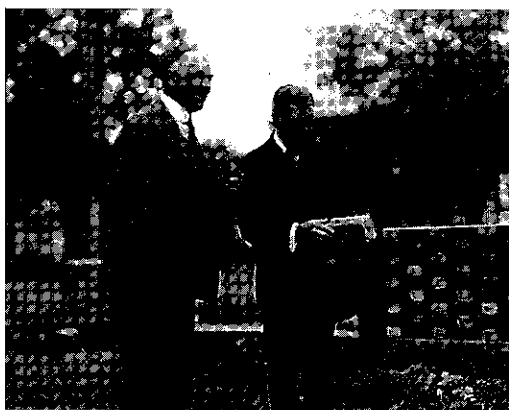
I lived in an old-fashioned house—open fires and a lot of brothers and sisters—and horses and trees.

- 1904 APVA erected monument on the site of the Capitol building.
- 1906 The College of William and Mary became state-supported institution.
- 1907 Restoration of Bruton Parish Church was completed.
Celebration of the 300th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown.
- 1908 Dr. Goodwin accepted a call to become rector of an Episcopal church in Rochester, New York.
Confederate monument erected on Palace green.
- 1914 Public Library opened.
- 1918 (March) The College of William and Mary became the first co-educational state institution in Virginia.
- 1921 From the Business Men's Association:
Williamsburg is well equipped with Business Houses, there being two prosperous Banks; three Hotels; one Restaurant; numerous up-to-date Stores; one Bakery; four public Garages; electric Light and Power Plant, furnishing 24-hour Service; a Steam Laundry; flouring Mill; Ice Plant; one Moving-Picture Theatre; commercial Job Printing and Stationery Establishment; and one Newspaper, the Virginia Gazette established in 1736.
Williamsburg High School (white) constructed on Palace site. There were state-wide protests over the placement of the school at that historic location.
- 1923 Dr. Goodwin returned to Williamsburg as fundraiser and professor of biblical literature for the College of William and Mary.
- 1924 Goodwin spoke before the Phi Beta Kappa Society in New York City with John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in attendance; Goodwin invited Rockefeller to visit Williamsburg.
James City County Training School (black, elementary through high school) opened at the corner of Boteourt and Nicholson Streets.
- 1926 Goodwin again became rector of Bruton Parish Church.
The George Wythe House became the parish house for Bruton Parish Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller visited Williamsburg and met with Dr. Goodwin. The Rockefellers returned to attend the dedication of Phi Beta Kappa Hall at the College of William and Mary. During this visit Rockefeller authorized preliminary restoration drawings.

Dr. Goodwin, on behalf of Mr. Rockefeller, purchased the Ludwell-Paradise House—the first building purchased for the restoration. In a telegram to Goodwin approving the purchase, Rockefeller wrote *"Authorize purchase of antique referred to in your long letter of December four,"* signed "David's Father."

- 1927 John D. Rockefeller, Jr., formally agreed to fund the restoration of Williamsburg.



At the request of Dr. Goodwin, Boston architect William Perry created plans for Merchants Square, one of the country's first planned shopping centers.

- 1928 The Williamsburg Holding Corporation and Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., were established to conduct the restoration and associated educational programs.

At a town meeting, residents approved the transfer of Market Square and Palace green to Colonial Williamsburg and finally learned that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was the benefactor.

It is the purpose of our associates to make this favored city a national shrine . . . dedicated to the lives of the nation's builders. We will be the custodians of memorials to which the eyes of the world will be turned. We should return thanks that this place has been chosen as a shrine of history and of beauty. There will be windows built here, through which men may look down the vistas of the past.

Dr. W.A.R. Goodwin, June 1928

- 1929 Bodleian Plate discovered in England; the ca. 1740 engraving provided the

only known eighteenth-century architectural drawings of the College, Capitol, and Governor's Palace.

1930 Mr. Rockefeller purchased site of Governor's Palace where the city's Matthew Whaley School (elementary) and Williamsburg High School stood; a new Matthew Whaley School (white, elementary through high school), was built just west of the Historic Area.

1931 The restoration of the Wren Building at the College of William and Mary was completed.

The reconstruction of the Capitol began.

The Williamsburg Theatre was constructed.

1932 The reconstructed Raleigh Tavern, the first exhibition building, opened to the public.

Restoration of the Courthouse of 1770 began.

1934 The reconstructed Capitol opened.

The reconstructed Governor's Palace opened.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated Duke of Gloucester Street, "the most historic avenue in America."

1935 The restored Ludwell-Paradise House opened to display the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection.

1936 The James City County School League wrote to the Williamsburg Holding Corporation expressing support for the restoration and suggesting improved educational and community facilities for Williamsburg-area African Americans.

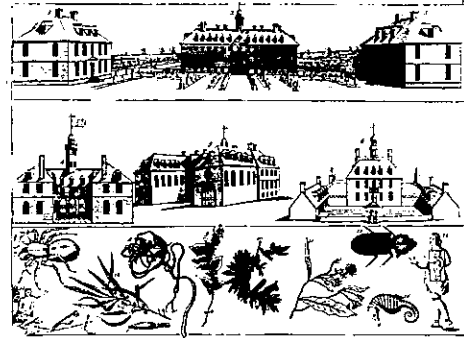
We wish to let you know that, as Negro citizens we are interested in the Restoration Movement . . . because (1) colored people were among the earliest settlers in this area, (2) we have helped to build up and to preserve the Nation and stand willing to sacrifice again and again to uphold law, order, and peace. . . . We ask that Negro schools be consolidated and that the high school be . . . for boys and girls within a radius of fifteen miles. . . . We believe you appreciate the contributions colored people have made to Virginia's historical progress and prestige.

The Williamsburg Inn opened.

The Craft House opened.

1939 The Williamsburg Lodge opened.

Dr. W.A.R. Goodwin died.



Mrs. Rockefeller donated her folk art collection to Colonial Williamsburg.

1940 Population: 3,942

\$245,000 was amassed (including a federal grant, a city bond issue, \$50,000 from Mrs. Rockefeller, \$35,000 from the (Rockefeller) General Education Board, and a 30-acre site donated by Mr. Rockefeller) to build and equip Bruton Heights School (elementary through high school) for the Williamsburg-area African-American population.

The Wythe House opened.

1941 The Goodwin Building in Merchants Square was completed and dedicated.

Movie theater for Williamsburg-area black population opened in Bruton Heights School auditorium.

Chowning's Tavern was added to Colonial Williamsburg's restaurants.

African-American James Payne and his family lived on the second floor of the Wythe House kitchen. When at home, the family wore colonial costumes and tended a garden on the grounds to give the site a more "colonial" look.

1942 An army private visiting Colonial Williamsburg wrote:

Of all the sights I have seen, and the books I have read, and the speeches I have heard, none ever made me see the greatness of this country with more force and clearness than when I saw Williamsburg slumbering peacefully on its own foundations.

Williamsburg Inn reserved for commissioned officers of armed forces and their families.

1943 British and American Joint Chiefs of Staff stayed at the Williamsburg Inn.

Bruton Heights School housed USO for black servicemen on the peninsula.

- 1945 The College of William and Mary and Colonial Williamsburg established the Institute of Early American History and Culture.
- 1946 Colonial Williamsburg's Education Division was formed. President Kenneth Chorley marked this as a turning point for the foundation:
As we began to get the physical restoration settled down a bit, although it hasn't been finished yet, (God knows if it ever will be), we began to think in terms of education and interpretation.
 Winston Churchill visited Williamsburg.
- 1947 The first Garden Symposium held.
- 1948 The Craft Shops program was formally structured.
- 1949 The first Antiques Forum was held.
 The restored Powder Magazine opened to the public through a special arrangement with its owner, the APVA.
- 1951 Chorley expressed concern about handling the growing number of visitors:
As the growing numbers of visitors increases each year, we find ourselves pressed hard against a dilemma. One voice urges that more and more people be brought to Colonial Williamsburg. . . Another voice, however, reminds us that only so many people daily can be guided through exhibition buildings under the best-conditions. If the intimacy is lost, much may be lost with it.
 The King's Arms Tavern opened.
- 1953 Winthrop Rockefeller became chairman of the Board of Trustees of Colonial Williamsburg.
 More than 300,000 people visited Colonial Williamsburg.
- 1954 Colonial Williamsburg built the Williamsburg Shopping Center off Richmond Road.
- 1956 Christiana Campbell's Tavern opened.
- 1957 The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center opened.
 The Information Center and Motor House opened.
 The film *Williamsburg: The Story of a Patriot* premiered.
 Jamestown celebrated the 350th anniversary of the colonists' arrival.
 The Colonial Parkway was extended from Williamsburg to Jamestown.
- 1958 The reconstructed Printing Shop and Post Office opened.

- Carlisle Humelsine succeeded Chorley as president of Colonial Williamsburg.
- 1960 John D. Rockefeller, Jr., died.
 Colonial Williamsburg acquired the old Eastern State Hospital site.
- 1961 Williamsburg Community Hospital opened.
- 1963 The Conference Center at the Lodge opened.
- 1964 Three black students enrolled at previously all-white James Blair High School; a piecemeal "freedom of choice" desegregation plan was adopted the next year.
 Colonial Williamsburg began operating Carter's Grove plantation in James City County as an exhibition site under an agreement with Sealantic Fund.
- 1966 More than 600,000 people visited Colonial Williamsburg.
- 1968 Mandatory system-wide desegregation of Williamsburg-James City County schools occurred.
 The Cascades Restaurant and Meeting Center opened.
 James Geddy House, Peyton Randolph House, and Wetherburn's Tavern opened.
 The College permitted Colonial Williamsburg to interpret the Wren Building.
- 1969 The City of Williamsburg closed the Duke of Gloucester Street year round to daytime motor-vehicle traffic.
 Sealantic Fund donated Carter's Grove to Colonial Williamsburg.
 Attendance reached 800,000.
 An Occasion for the Arts, the city's outdoor art festival, began.
- 1970 Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., and Williamsburg Restoration, Inc., merged to form the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.
 Population: 9,069.
- 1972 The restored Powell House opened for school groups.
 The Providence Hall wing of the Inn opened.
 The city's Waller Mill Park opened to the public.
- 1973 Visitation exceeded one million for the first time.



- 1975 The reconstructed James Anderson House opened as an archaeological exhibit.
- 1976 The United States celebrated the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
Colonial Williamsburg celebrated its 50th anniversary.
A presidential debate was held in Williamsburg at William and Mary Hall between President Gerald Ford and Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter.
- 1977 Archaeologist Ivor Noël Hume and his staff discovered the seventeenth-century settlement of Wolstenholme Towne at Carter's Grove.
Charles Longworth became president of Colonial Williamsburg.
- 1979 Colonial Williamsburg acquired Bassett Hall from the Rockefeller family.
The Foundation began a comprehensive interpretation of black history.
- 1981 The refurbished, redecorated, and reinterpreted Governor's Palace opened.
The Colonial Williamsburg Board approved plan to reconstruct the Public Hospital and build the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Gallery on Francis Street.
- 1983 Craft House opened on Merchants Square.
Greenhow Store opened.
The ninth annual Summit of Industrialized Nations was held in Williamsburg, hosted by President Ronald Reagan.
- 1985 The reconstructed Public Hospital and the Wallace Gallery opened.
- 1986 The reconstructed James Anderson Blacksmith Shop opened.
Colonial Williamsburg purchased the Magazine from the APVA.
- 1987 The first History Forum was held.
- 1988 The Play Booth Theater began holding performances on the site of the first theater in America, next to the Brush-Everard House on Palace green.
- 1989 Shields Tavern opened as the Historic Area's fourth and largest operating tavern.
A reconstructed slave quarters opened at Carter's Grove.
The military encampment opened.
- 1990 A purebred flock of rare English Leicester sheep from Australia arrived in Williamsburg as part of the Foundation's rare breeds program.
Population: 11,409.
- 1991 The newly restored Courthouse opened as an exhibition site.
Golden Horseshoe Green Course officially opened.
- 1992 The City of Williamsburg deeded the Bruton Heights School property to Colonial Williamsburg.
Robert Wilburn became president of Colonial Williamsburg.
The new wing of AARFAC opened.
Presidential candidate Bill Clinton stayed at the Williamsburg Lodge to prepare for the presidential debate in Richmond.
- 1996 "Becoming Americans: Our Struggle to Be Both Free and Equal" became the central interpretive theme at Colonial Williamsburg. Six Becoming Americans story lines (Choosing Revolution, Redefining Family, Freeing Religion, Enslaving Virginia, Taking Possession, and Buying Respectability) are scheduled to be incorporated in interpretive programs—one per year—between 1996 and 2001.
- 1997 Bruton Heights School Education Center at Colonial Williamsburg was dedicated.
- 1998 City Council elected Williamsburg's first woman mayor, Jeanne Zeidler.
Colonial Williamsburg created three neighborhoods in the Historic Area and launched its "Days in History" program.
A major ice storm on Christmas Eve knocked out electricity in much of Virginia, including to the city. Power was out from three to six days. A number of trees were lost in the Historic Area, including the 400-year-old Great Oak at Bassett Hall.
- 1999 The city celebrated its 300th anniversary.
The newly created Northington Green opened on North Boundary Street.
The new Municipal Center was dedicated.
The newly repainted, refurbished, and redecorated Peyton Randolph House opened.
Robert Wilburn stepped down as president of Colonial Williamsburg. Rick Nahm, senior vice-president, became acting president.

Compiled by Nancy Milton and Linda Rowe



To Hostesses and Escorts at Garden Week

This poem was written—tongue-in-cheek—by Rutherford Goodwin in 1935. Goodwin was director of education for Colonial Williamsburg at that time.

This lovely Governor's Palace,
 I feel that you should know,
 Was built by Henry Cary first
 Two hundred years ago.
 The governors here resided then. . .
 The King? He stayed at home. . .
 Now, follow with your party, please;
 One's not allowed to roam.
 As I said, the floor is marble. . .
 That chair—It's Chippendale. . .
 No, I never read his book. . .
 That is a hand-wrought nail.
 Yes, ma'am, this group's just starting
 out.
 The restroom? It's outside.
 Yes, sir, the rug is tapestry. . .
 (Oh, Lord, perhaps I lied.)
 Please, little girl, don't handle that. . .
 No, ma'am, the paint is new. . .
 (I'll have to choke that woman yet
 Before this group is through.)
 Venetian blinds are of that day. . .
 Or, so the record said. . .
 You must await the second floor
 To see the old oak bed.
 The panel in the mantelpiece
 Has certain pieces old. . .
 No, sir, the chair seat's needlepoint. . .
 Antique, so we are told.
 And here the fam'ly dining room. . .
 No, that one lies ahead. . .
 I fear your friend's mistaken then. . .
 Upstairs you'll see the bed.
 This Chinese cistern over there—
 No, son, they drank from wells—
 Yes, sir, they took a glass or two. . .
 Or so our history tells.
 And this little pantry room—
 No, ma'am, the bed's upstairs—
 The food came in in covered plates—
 Yes, you may buy such chairs.
 These tiles are old—no, these and
 these—
 The others were not here.
 Don't tighten up the napkin press—
 I don't know that, I fear.
 And this the dining room of state—
 No, of the colony—
 Virginia's now a Commonwealth.
 No, that's a state, you see.
 These screens were carved—we once

said so—
 But now we've changed our minds.
 Oh, yes, the plates are Wedgwood
 made—
 He made so many kinds.
 These chairs—no, ma'am, the bed's
 upstairs—
 (Oh, Lord, with us abide.)
 These chairs—yes, that's the floor
 above—
 (Fast fall the eventide.)
 The stairs, no, sir, the treads are pine
 And this is holly wood.
 No, son, that's California.
 Yes, I see how you could.
 This bookcase—yes, the books are
 old—
 No, they were never here.
 The third floor's closed. The door's
 not locked.
 You can't go up, I fear.
 The northeast bedroom is here.
 Yes, madam, here's the bed. . .
 You say your great aunt owned it.
 (I hope she's dead.)
 You say 'twas made of cherry wood. . .
 Well, this one seems of oak.
 You say she married Jacob Bean?
 (Quick, water! 'ere I choke!)
 Oh, yes, they'll love to hear it;
 I'll tell the Curator.
 No, I'll not forget to write. . .
 That's what we're looking for.
 Ah, here's another hostess now. . .
 Please follow with her group.
 I've learned that sixty school children
 Are waiting on the stoop.
 Oh, thank you, no, we don't take tips. . .
 And I've enjoyed it too.
 Please come again—No, that's down-
 stairs—I really hope you do.
 Oh, God of hosts and hostesses,
 We pray be with us yet—
 Lest we should fail to earn
 The forty cents an hour we get.
 Oh, God of hosts and hostesses
 Who did authenticate the zinnia,
 Pray give us time and strength
 To tell the history of Virginia.



The Restoration

This poem, written in 1929 by Jack Hundley, was inspired by the news disclosed at a town meeting on June 12, 1928, that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., was Williamsburg's benefactor and had plans to restore the town.

My gawd they've sold the town,
My gawd they've sold the town.
And it is said the news has spread
For miles around

They've sold the courthouse green,
I dare say all the people,
They'll sell the church,
the vestry too
And even sell the steeple. . . .

They've sold the Powder Horn
The School House and the lawn.
It is the tale they've sold the Jail
And the Streets we walk upon.

My gawd they've sold the town,
My gawd they've sold the town.
We'll have to go to Toano,
Or maybe—you know—down.
It is a sacrilege
The way they trade and barter,
Next they'll sell old Botetourt
And then our Alma Mater. . . .

The streets will all come up
And the poles will all come down,
So take it from me stranger,
It's going to be some town.

BRUTON HEIGHTS UPDATE: *New at the Rock*



Recently acquired books in the Special Collections Section of the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library:

- Welles Bosworth, *Gardens of Kijkuit* (N.P.: Privately printed, 1919)
- Flavius Josephus, *Works* (Baltimore: Armstrong & Plaskitt, 1832)
- Thomas P. Kettell, *History of the Great Rebellion* (Hartford: L. Stebbins, 1865)
- Charles L. C. Minor, "Notes on the Civil War, Vol. II" (n.d. [ca. 1901])

- Charles L. C. Minor, "The Sons of 'King' Carter: How They Lived and How They Brought Slaves from Africa to Virginia," (n.d. [ca. 1890s])
- Assorted materials from the Historic Christ Church Foundation including a 1784 letter concerning hire of slaves and several letters from a Confederate soldier imprisoned in the North.

George H. Yetter

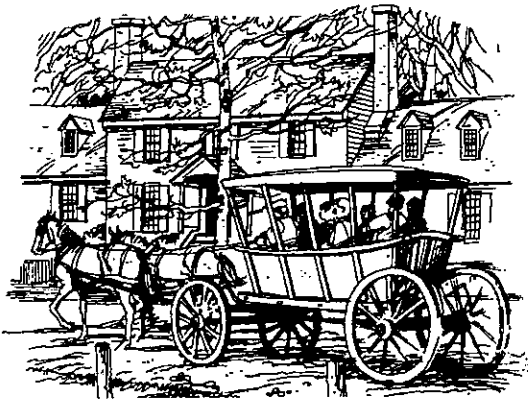
*Associate Curator, Architectural Drawings
and Research Collection*



EDITOR'S NOTES . . .



We welcome two new members to the planning board—Bob Doares in interpretive education and Katie Wrike in school and group services.



The Colonial Williamsburg interpreter is a quarterly publication of the Education Division.

Editor: Nancy Milton

Assistant Editor: Linda Rowe

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Summer