

“THE MECHANICK’S ADVISER”

For July 28 – August 3

Apothecary – “Our last pharmacy student was featured in a promotional You-Tube video created for her school. There are a couple of quick pictures of her in our Shop and in the garden.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPTeQhiV778&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0ZRO3mefqfvhUfyuETXvGLNxJP9TBGXmCcJLQ1My8r_Ot6mD_acQ3Cmo4

Armoury:

Blacksmith – “The sighs of angels swept over the Shop, cooling the brows of the merry band of Blacksmiths. Ken has been out this week, and as the saying goes, ‘when the master’s away, the vane’s OK’. Further work will resume upon his return. For the remainder of the Shop, there are trials and tribulations afoot, as the Weavers demanded tripods for dye pots. The copper pots hold their bubbling cauldrons of foul liquid that produce such marvelous hues. Mark, Owen, and Alex have taken to the task with vigor and vinegar (from the pickles that keep them refreshed). Aislinn has been forming scrolls and finishing locks and pipe tamps, making by far the most elegant work in the Shop at the moment. Master Piggin also received a visitor this week, but proved to be a bit too cold. Alas, poor Piggin. Tim has produced his first pair of compass and is advancing at a steady pace in his shadow apprenticeship, learning the extremely peculiar mysteries of the Trade, or at least of this particular Shop. There are secrets to learn in the shadow of the anvil.”

Tinsmith – “The Tinsmiths definitely enjoyed the cooler weather this week in the cross breezes of their Shop. A few cups made earlier on the hotter days were soldered and cleaned up. Steve made some 8oz measures; Jenny made porringers. Jenny went back to coffeepots once the porringers were completed, finishing up handles and hinges as well as starting another coffeepot. Joel finished a couple of canteens, began work on a milk pan, and continued his research.”

Brickmaker – “On Monday, July 29th, the folks from North Carolina’s Historic Stagville will be bringing some of their clay to the Brickyard so that we can make bricks from it. They’re after a few hundred bricks made with their clay for some restoration and a fund-raiser for the slave quarters on their property. It sounds like a very cool project. The original bricks we’re copying have fingermarks from the enslaved workers that made the bricks, and they’re hoping to recreate those markings if possible.”

Cabinetmaker – “Tables, tables, tables in the Cabinet Shop. Brian and Bill have wrapped work on the walnut tea table (pictured below) - it is finished with boiled linseed oil and beeswax. Meanwhile, they continue carving work on the elaborate mahogany tea table they’ve been making. John has been progressing on the leg-apron joinery on his reproduction of a 1770s writing table from the Collection and spent a couple of more hours studying the original in the Art Museum. Not to be left out of the table business completely, the Harpsichord Makers are making the legs and stand for their current spinet. Once completed, the instrument will be ready for finish.”



Colonial Garden – “This week, we cleaned out our cold frame, and the Volunteers completed the job by painting the frame. We picked our first tomatoes and Armenian Melon. The Armenian Melon was called a cucumber melon by John Custis when his son grew them in his garden. He wrote, ‘and notwithstanding the excessive drouth he had one more than 3 feet long; to the astonishment of many; severall people rid many miles to see it...’ We find it a delightful refreshing snack in this hot weather, and it pickles very well. The Wheelwrights fashioned a new handle for one of our spades. Thank you, Paul, we can hardly wait to turn some soil. We had one of our tadpole children turn into a frog and “flee the coop”. Our first Melon D’Alger and Melon Noir de Carmes ripened. We finished papering one of our melon frames and then coated it with linseed oil to make it waterproof. In the next day or so, we will place the frame over the watermelon hills.”



Margaret, our summer intern, holding up our amazing Armenian Melon! No small feat.

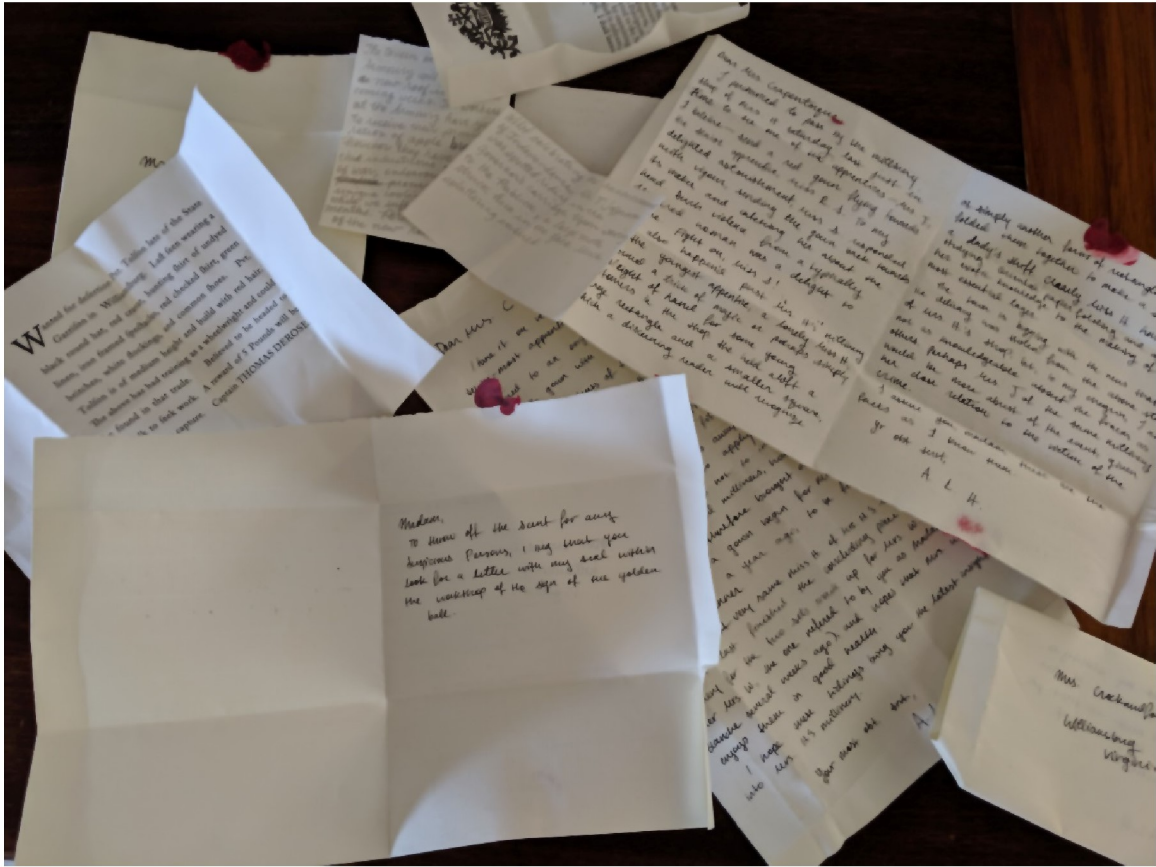
Cooper – “Recent projects for the Coopers include gunpowder kegs and beer barrels, both projects being related to the progress of our Apprentices, Harry and Bonnie.”

Joinery – “Work at the Joinery continues without end! Peter will be raising panels for his cabinet door, while Scott will be preparing material for a large walnut food safe. Amanda will continue cutting and fitting mortises for the toolshed door, and Charles will finish up installing several peg rails for the Tailors.”

Military Programs – “Visiting dignitaries are being escorted about the Capitol and shown how certain locations are strongly contributing to the cause. Also noted to our dignitaries are the different military contingents. Troops from the State Garrison, in their red small clothes and blue regimentals, are a constant fixture in the city. Continental soldiers are also seen about town and stand out in their white small clothes and, for summer, their hunting shirts, which are preferred over the blue regimental wool coats. Few militia, wearing their civilian small clothes and smock or hunting shirt, are seen as they are only called up as needed. With the State Garrison in place and Continental troops, it is less likely the militia will be called upon to muster.”

Milliner and Mantua-Maker – “I have it on the best authority that the three apprentices of MH---'s Millinery deserted their Mistress on Wednesday last for a jaunt about town with a learned group of newcomers from a Region west of Virginia called Kentucke. Mrs. J--- was said to have set a brisk pace hurrying her goslings nearly all the way to the college to admire the flora to be found in the gardens. ‘Twas merciful for her that the reprieve from the heat had arrived, else she might have had a mutinous band on her hands. Miss S--- was reported to have been seen delivering her party to the very same shop that she left off earlier that morning (likely much to the consternation of her Mistress!) The lovely (I thank my readers for the neater hand in this composition over the last) Miss H--- toured her party through the Armoury complex, no doubt in hoped of calling upon a certain Mr. P---. There are also rumours about town that a certain "gentleman" brick-maker has sought the making of a wrapping gown from a Mr. D---'s shop. If any agents on that end of town have more news to that end this author would be most gracious for their conveyance of said news to myself, that I may report it to those most interested readers of this publication.

“While passing an apothecary shop on a morning walk, a passerby overheard a Mistress W of MH---'s Millinery shop discussing the need of leg for the practice of amputation and bandaging. Until more information can be got on this front, this author would advise any milliner's apprentices in this city to be sure to mind their limbs to be sure it is not their own leg sought after by those surgeons. As always, please continue to submit your correspondence addressed to Mrs. Crackenthorpe either through one of those agents about town or left at the well in the usual spot.”



Wigmaker – “Greetings from the Wig Shop! With the warmer weather we've had over the past month or so, the ladies of the Wig Shop have been incredibly busy with maintenance, as many of our interpreters have been bringing their wigs in more frequently. Betty has been focusing on lady's styles (see image of a wig for Liz in progress below), and Regina has spent a lot of time putting wigs for our trial programs in curlers so that we can properly capture the look from the early part of the century.

“However, we also have a few new projects going on as well! Sara has been working on a new wig for Jefferson. She has completed the caul (the mesh base) and will begin stitching the hair in place this week. Debbie has been working on a hairpiece made out of 3 different shades of blond human hair. It will be a set of lady's curls when completed and should be done by mid-August.”

Please see pictures below:



Liz's wig during the process of being styled



Caul of Jefferson wig



Hair for Debbie's piece on the tressing frame