Becoming Americans
Our Struggle to Be Both Free and Equal

Buying Respectability

The Consumer Revolution in Colonial Virginia

Resource Manual

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Colonial Williamsburg

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Key Points

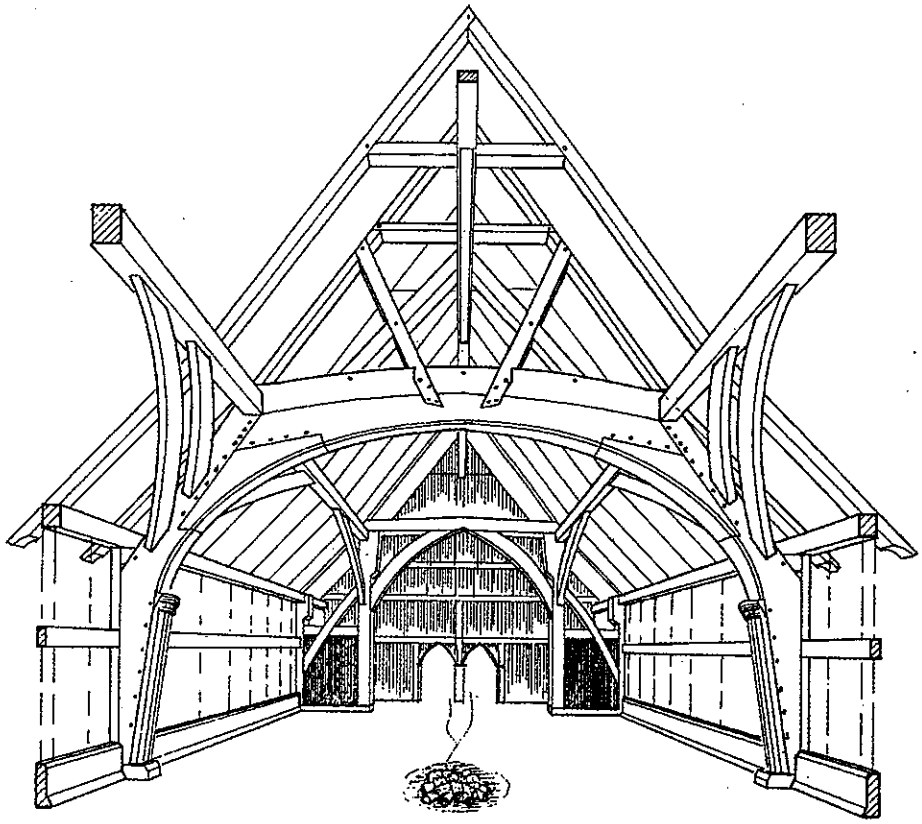
Rising Demand.	By 1700, growing numbers of ordinary people in northern Europe and North America began to demand and acquire newly available consumer goods, use services, and engage in social, recreational, and educational activities, all of which went far beyond meeting or improving their basic physical needs.
Creating an Image.	To achieve respectability within an increasingly urbane and mobile society, affluent Virginians dressed in the latest London fashions and built houses suitable for entertaining. They furnished their houses with new furniture forms, took tea from the newest teaware, and learned the rules of polished behavior that reaffirmed their social position and differentiated them from the lower ranks.
Selling Respectability.	By mid-century, local tradesmen and merchants offered an ever-increasing variety of consumer goods and services made possible by advances in British business practices and industrial innovations.
Democratization.	Widespread possession of fashionable items, combined with etiquette book manners, contributed to a novel idea—equality—a belief in every person's equal worth and his or her right to strive for a better life.
Clashing Interests.	The consumer revolution was rejected by some, disadvantaged others, and led to a variety of conflicts. The tug-of-war between haves and have-nots, slave and free, men and women, country and city, and different religious groups became ever more apparent over time.
Coming of the Revolution.	Their widely shared democratic experience as consumers enabled Americans of various backgrounds to express in unison their anger at parliament and their resolve to oppose what they perceived as its unjust laws.

N.B. What follows is an expanded version of the published essay, now including footnotes and references to other parts of this resource manual.

How It Used To Be

Enter the hall of a medieval house in the English countryside. It is home to a prosperous landowner and his family, but amenities seem few and far between. Since there is no chimney, smoke from the open hearth lingers in the air before reaching the high rafters. Big pots for boiling soups and stews, the typical meals, hang over the fire. The multipurpose room is quite dark since there are few windows. Through the gloom, we see that the hall, though large, contains almost no furniture. A woven or painted wall hanging covers one of the plastered walls. At mealtimes, tables—nothing more than boards laid over trestles—are set in place and covered with a rug or linen cloth. Benches without backs provide the only seating for the diners, and one or two cupboards stand against the walls. Silver cups and platters are stored away under lock and key because such precious items are displayed only when visitors are present to admire them. With spoons and fingers, diners scoop up the stew from communal vessels and spear pieces of meat on the point of a knife. The master and mistress sleep in an upstairs chamber in the best bed, which is covered and maybe curtained with costly textiles for privacy and warmth. They own relatively few articles of clothing and only one or two items of jewelry.[1]

Before the seventeenth century, being rich meant having more but not living all that differently from one's poorer neighbors. Prosperous Britons acquired more household goods and personal possessions, but most objects met basic needs: bedding, a bedstead, and additional cooking equipment to prepare a wider range of foods. A man's reputation was a matter of common knowledge in medieval times. His neighbors measured his worth by the amount of land, labor, and livestock he owned or commanded, not by the cut of his coat or the fashion of his table.



The open hall of the manor house, West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England, built about 1300. This was the main public area in the residence of a prosperous landowner, but this early style of life was spartan and drab at best.

Changes by the Colonial Period

By contrast, generations later in colonial Virginia's small capital city, Betty and Peyton Randolph's standard of living is markedly different. The Randolphs, one of the most prominent and powerful gentry families in Virginia, occupy a handsome frame house with glazed sash windows. Four principal rooms upstairs and four down are special-purpose spaces for entertaining family and a select group of friends. They own all the right equipment to engage in a variety of genteel activities—witness their parlor with a dozen mahogany chairs, a looking glass, a card table, two tea tables, sets of china, and a fine Wilton carpet on the floor. The newly constructed wing includes the broad passage and the dining room reserved for formal meals. Another carpet covers this floor. Two tables and twelve chairs, all made of imported mahogany, stand along the walls ready to be arranged as the occasion requires. A fashionable sideboard and built-in closets hold specialized dinnerware—dozens of china plates, china bowls, and china mugs, wineglasses, beer glasses, punch glasses, water glasses, silver knives and forks, and coffee cups and saucers. Service is an important part of the Randolphs' dining practice, as articles such as the sideboard table, soup tureen, sauceboats, decanters, six japanned waiters, and the tea board attest.[2]

The Consumer Revolution

The differences between the ways people lived during the Middle Ages and those in the period just before the American Revolution are almost unimaginable to modern, comfort-loving Americans. What caused the drastic change in lifestyles and standards of living? Many factors combined to make new consumer goods available to nearly everyone in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Incomes were rising, so more people had more money left after they acquired the bare necessities. The impulse to acquire these newfangled consumer goods was not a case of simple human nature. The pre-modern world differed in how wealth and status were expressed. Traditionally, money was invested in farmland, a house, herds and flocks, and laborers. While items of beauty and utility might inspire envy and otherwise attract admiration at any time in human history, the new consumer goods were something new under the sun. Teapots, books, forks, and dancing ability had little or no intrinsic value; their worth lay in what they could communicate about the people who owned them and those individuals' reliance upon appearance and behavior—their own and other people's.

Although historians are still struggling to define the relationship between supply and demand, it is clear that mechanization, the factory system, faster and less expensive transportation, and the Industrial Revolution were all preceded by the phenomenon we now call the "consumer revolution." The term refers to the total revision of expectations.

> *Property is become more Valuable & many Estates have increased more then tenfold, But then Luxury & expensive living have gone hand in hand with the increase of wealth. In 1740 I don't remember to have seen such a thing as a turkey Carpet in the Country except a small thing in a bed chamber, Now nothing are so common as Turkey or Wilton Carpetts, the whole Furniture of the Roomes Elegant & every appearance of Opulence. All this is in great measure owing to the Credit which the Planters have had from England & which has enabled them to Improve their Estates to the pitch they are Arrivd at, tho ignorant of the true Cause.*
>
> John Wayles to Farrell and Jones,
> August 30, 1766

Why this new demand? As society became more mobile, houses, land, and livestock alone no longer communicated social rank. By the end of the seventeenth century, ordinary men and women began to demand consumer goods that indicated their status.[3]

In the eighteenth century, more and more people in Europe and the colonies desired goods and services that would have been unimaginable a few decades before. Consumption and display went well beyond basic human needs for a warm place to sleep and food on the table. People wanted fashionable, portable, status-bearing goods. Embroidered waistcoats, card tables, sets of carved chairs, and services of china plates and silver forks communicated their owners' rising standard of living and their style and worth.

> DEFINITIONS
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> *The word* respectability *was not used in the eighteenth century; it dates from the next century.* Respectableness *is the correct period term to use in the Historic Area.*
>
> *In recent scholarship, the words respectability and gentility are both used to indicate the "increasing comfort, attractiveness, and even elegance in living quarters and dress, more arrangements for individual use of space and utensils, increased emphasis on manners and social ceremony, and a desire to be fashionable."[4] Members of the middling ranks and below could aspire to "respectability." Rare was the middling or working person who achieved gentility, the exclusive province of the wellborn and well to do.*

Items that once were considered luxuries reserved for the highest ranks began to "trickle down" to common households in the late seventeenth and eighteenth cen-

turies. Consequently, owning such things no longer elevated the well-to-do above their inferiors. The elite responded by seeking new status symbols to differentiate themselves from the clamoring horde. The middling and poorer sorts—and occasionally even slaves—kept up as best they could.

Each group sought to stay ahead of the folks below, so the wheel of changing fashion turned faster and faster. Gradually, as the latest commodities became more plentiful and affordable, traditional regional folkways were forced to compete with the new internationally recognized store-bought culture. The increasingly frantic pace of change and the widening range of people caught up in it propelled the consumer revolution.

One way the gentry set themselves apart was by cultivating social skills and engaging in leisure activities that working people had no time to learn or practice. Accomplished dancing, games of skill, tea drinking, and fine dining expressed their sophistication. Using their leisure time for intellectual pursuits in literature, natural science, and other subjects, the gentry aspired to the true refinement of both their inner and outer selves. With the growing importance of these civilities came the need for even more brand-new goods and services. The newest, often exclusive luxuries introduced at mid-century symbolized all that separated the highest rank of society from others. Fitted carpets and drapery-style beds are two examples of furnishings found only in the finest houses. Likewise, tea kitchens (ornate yet functional vessels to keep water hot and handy at the tea table[5]) only interested those connoisseurs who cared about the freshness and temperature of their beverage and who wished to savor it uninterrupted by servants. Not only objects, but also leisure activities and body language could reflect the gentry's social complacency. Portraits after mid century also show a more relaxed posture and clothing style, informality only the elite could carry off.

> *It is not only the Decency and Aptitude of the Cloaths, which gives the Character of a Person, but his Servants, his Equipage, his House, his Furniture, and his Table; all these ought to be modell'd and proportioned to his Quality; for they are all so many Witnesses, declaring the Wit or Weakness of their Master.*
>
> Erasmus Jones, *The Man of Manners or Plebian Polished*, 1737

Supply and Demand

> There was a consumer revolution in eighteenth-century England. More men and women than ever before in human history enjoyed the experience of acquiring material possessions. Objects which for centuries had been the privileged possessions of the rich came, within the space of a few generations, to be within the reach of a larger part of society than ever before, and, for the first time, to be within the legitimate aspirations of almost all of it. Objects which were once acquired as the result of inheritance at best, came to be the legitimate pursuit of a whole new class of consumers.[6]

The debate continues about exactly when and why demand began,[7] but it is clear that these unprecedented changes in how people lived could never have occurred without the ever-increasing availability of consumer goods.

In Williamsburg by the early 1770s, business rivals competed in several trades. There were, for example, a dozen taverns—none of which was filled to capacity, probably, except during Publick Times. Three different editions of the *Virginia Gazette* appeared weekly, and each of the presses also produced pamphlets and books, as well as selling imported volumes, prints, and other items. Tailors were the most numerous tradesmen in Williamsburg, numbering sixteen in 1774 and 1775, and the same was true for other towns as well.

Urban populations grew by leaps and bounds after about 1750. Town and city life was essential to many people's occupations. Williamsburg, although small by comparison to London and Philadelphia, was still a very desirable market, one whose size was increasing apace after mid century. Following the smallpox epidemic of 1746/7 and the rebuilding of the Capitol, Williamsburg's importance as Virginia's governmental, social, and fashion center was reaffirmed. Townspeople had purchased all available lots, so the city fathers annexed several adjacent tracts from private owners. The Virginia capital was full and getting fuller.[8]

Certainly a European and North American population explosion raged after 1750. In England, for example, the population increased by more than 40 percent during the second half of the century.[9] Obviously, such growth in numbers of potential customers meant that manufacturers and retailers could increase the size of their establishments and market base. In England as in Virginia, high numbers of young people ensured a good supply of workers.

Scientific discoveries from the seventeenth and very early eighteenth centuries were applied to production. The old ways of trade guilds and municipal restrictions were

falling away. Increased capital and falling interest rates (particularly in England) also contributed to the formation of new "manufacturies" and new organization of the putting out systems for accomplishing handwork.

The conjuncture of new and increasing supplies of land, labor, and capital permitted the expansion of industry. Coal and steam provided the fuel and power for large-scale manufacture (in England initially). Low interest rates, rising prices, and high expectations of profit were enticing possibilities to would-be entrepreneurs. Besides all these economic factors and new innovation hovered an even more significant reason for the fertility of new industrial progress: travel in, immigration to, and trade with distant lands broadened people's view of the world, just as science had widened their conception of the universe. The industrial revolution was also a revolution of ideas.

"Every man," exclaimed one ebullient capitalist in 1780, "has his fortune in his own hands." Needless to say, his statement was not true, not even halfway true. But society in the mid and late eighteenth century, particularly in England and her North American colonies, had become fluid and subject to change. "Vertical [social] mobility had reached a degree higher than that of any earlier, or perhaps any succeeding, age."[10]

> *Trade is . . . far from being inconsistent with a gentlemen, that, in short, trade in England makes gentlemen: for, after a generation or two, the tradesmen's children, or at least their grandchildren, come to be as good gentlemen, statesmen, Parliament men, Privy Councillors, judges, bishops, and noblemen, as those of the highest birth and most ancient family.*
>
> Daniel Defoe, *A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain, . . .* 1724–27

Creating One's Own Image

The consumer revolution that began in northern Europe soon spread to the New World. Americans in particular quickly earned a reputation for their enthusiasm for material things. "Pride of wealth is as ostentatious in this country as ever the pride of birth has been elsewhere," an English traveler declared.[11] Other commentators despaired that consumer extravagance had reached new extremes in the colonies.

Why were Americans reputed to be so highly materialistic? Society in North America was exceptionally fluid. Such a culturally diverse and geographically mobile population could not establish and maintain the traditional status symbols rooted in ancient lineages and hereditary rights in Britain. A never-ending stream of newcomers reinforced the colonials' need for inexpensive, movable, and fashionable objects.[12] Standardized consumer goods and rules for using them gave immigrants of means confidence that their rank would be recognized immediately no matter where they traveled or settled in polite society. Those who owned the "right stuff" without knowing how to use it properly gave themselves away as imposters. The new material culture divided the haves from the have-nots and the knowledgeable from the know-nothings. Traditionalists, the poor, and most slaves usually continued to practice their separate folkways.[13]

The consumer revolution was on view everywhere in eighteenth-century Williamsburg. After all, the town was the place that no less an authority than Thomas Jefferson referred to as "the finest school of manners and morals that ever existed in America."[14] Aspiring ladies and gentlemen wore London fashions imported by milliners Jane and Margaret Hunter, tailored by James Slate, and laundered by Ann Ashby. They learned the rules of courtesy, the art of polite conversation, the fine points of furnishing their homes, and the customs of the dinner and tea table. They participated in genteel pastimes. Fashion-conscious townsfolk attended playhouses, concerts, and scientific lectures. They hired dancing masters, teachers, lawyers, doctors, and other providers of specialized services.

Towns were the hotbeds of consumption, mostly because the richest people congregated there and because close contact meant that fashions spread more quickly. London was "the great metropolis" toward which all style-watchers looked, of course. At English watering places like Bath and Tunbridge Wells, the social fluidity characteristic of urban life was also notable. Despite its small size, Williamsburg shared this characteristic to some extent.[15]

Selling Respectability: Retailing and Production

England established the colony of Virginia to exploit the region's natural resources, including its agricultural products. It is no overstatement to say that Jamestown came about as an aggressively commercial venture. Like other European powers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, England followed the economic policy known as mercantilism; that is, the government wanted to increase English wealth by discouraging imports and encouraging exports.

Mercantilism proved to be a viable policy for England's North American colonies as soon as John Rolfe introduced West Indian tobacco. Tremendous profits earned by tobacco in the European market altered the colony's economy forever. Tobacco sales enabled Virginians to buy manufactured goods from England. Beginning in the 1660s, the Navigation Acts strengthened this trade relationship by eliminating competition since Virginians could import goods only through

British merchants.

The Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730 guaranteed the quality of tobacco and centralized its collection at inspection warehouses. An unintended side effect was the development of retail businesses throughout the colony. Merchants, particularly Scottish factors, promptly established networks of stores where tobacco was purchased and imported goods could be sold year-round to customers in the neighborhood.[16]

CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER

It is really with concern that I mention what I know you must be tired of hearing, that is the impositions of your Tradesmen and the badness of their Goods, but their behavior last Year was so very gross that I think it my duty to inform you of it. . . . I beg you will deliver them [a handkerchief sent me last year] & try to shame them for their behavior, I know they think anything good enough for Virginia, but they should be informed better, and be made to know that the people in Virginia have a good taste and know when they are imposed on.

Peter Lyons of Hanover to John Norton
in London, September 25, 1772

Once warehouses were established, a small planter did not have to sell his tobacco when the annual fleet arrived. Instead, he could use tobacco notes from the warehouses to establish credit and purchase goods at any time. The notes were readily transferable so he could bargain with several merchants at different locations. Consequently, stores sprang up everywhere. By the middle of the eighteenth century, complex distribution and credit systems had developed throughout tidewater, southside, and piedmont Virginia.

Imports reflected the new ease of selling one's tobacco crop. In 1720, Virginia and Maryland imported £110,717 worth of British goods; by 1736—just six years after the warehouses were established—the amount had nearly doubled, reaching £204,794; and by 1763, imports had surged to £555, 391, climbing to the impressive figure of £717,782 in 1770.[17] Or, to look at the same trade from the other side of the Atlantic, English exports roughly doubled in value between 1700 and 1750 and nearly quadrupled in the remaining years of the eighteenth century. Most of the trade was in manufactures destined for markets in North America.[18]

IN STOCK IN A FRONTIER STORE!

At Holmes's in Winchester, Fithian spent £3 on cloth for a new suit, consisting of black crepe for the coat and striped velvet for the breeches.

Fithian's Journal, 1775–76, p. 77

The business of this Country is very soon acquired, and if he is disposed to push for him self, he'll not want Chances. I have just been thinking of the people in my remembrance who have done anything for themselves, in this place [Norfolk], Pr Anne, Portsmouth, Suffolk, the W[estern] Branch, Smithfield, and the E Shore. Of our Country men [Scots] there are some who have made fortunes, Others who have got a sufficiency, with prudent management to get easily through life. . . . They had generally speaking little or nothing to begin with and were not Factors. The Same path is still open and as much probability of Success.

James Parker to Charles Steuart
May 3, 1771

The verb to shop *came into common usage about 1764. As a noun,* shop *dates from at least the fourteenth century.*

Oxford English Dictionary

the finest Laces held up by the fairest Hands; and there examined by the beauteous Eyes of the Buyers the most delicate Cambricks, Muslins, and Linnens.

[Richard Steele]
Spectator no. 552, 1711/12

Luxury

Employ'd a Million of the Poor,
And odious Pride a Million more.
Envy it self and Vanity
Were Ministers of Industry;
Their darling Folly, Fickleness
In Diet, furniture and Dress,
That strange ridic'lous Vice, was made
The Very Wheel, that turn'd the Trade.
Their Laws and Cloaths were equally
Objects of Mutability;

Thus Vice nursed Ingenuity,
Which join'd with Time, and Industry
Had carry'd Life's Conveniencies,
It's real Pleasures, Comforts, Ease,
To such a Height, the very Poor
Lived better than the Rich before;
And nothing could be added more.

Bernard Mandeville,
The Fable of the Bees, 1714

This cartouche is from "A Map of the Most Inhabited Part of Virginia and . . . Maryland" (1968-11), the work of Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson in 1751. It gives a view of an unidentified wharf with all the components that went into making the tobacco trade a mutually successful venture for both producers and purchasers of the valuable commodity. (Wharves and commercial buildings on this massive scale did not exist in the Chesapeake of the eighteenth century.)

Even so, the commercial system in the colonies was distinctive by about 1750. "It is possible to discern certain general characteristics that distinguished the colonial market-place at mid-century: an exceptionally rapid expansion of consumer choice, an increasing standardization of consumer behaviour and a pervasive Anglicization of the American market."[19]

> *Another reason which keeps us in debt is the multiplicity of shops with English goods. These present irresistible temptations. It is so much easier to buy than it is to spin. The allurement of fineries is so powerful with our young girls that they must be philosophers indeed to abstain from them. Thus one fifth part of all our labours every year is laid out in English commodities. These are the taxes that we pay.*
>
> J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur,
> *Letters from an American Farmer*

Increasing Production

Technological innovations spun off from the seventeenth-century scientific revolution helped to supply a worldwide market, as did more efficient labor organization and new marketing practices. Two patents of 1769 and 1771 had enormous consequences in textile manufacturing. First came James Watt's steam engine (an improvement of Thomas Savery's and Thomas Newcomen's steam engines for pumping coal mines) and then Richard Arkwright's spinning frame. The latter, powered by water at first, spun cotton much more quickly and efficiently than hand and wheel. Full-scale factories first produced textiles because the machinery like Arkwright's "water frame" was immense. Later, when steam engines powered spinning frames, factories could be located anywhere—in towns and cities, wherever labor was available—not just close to water sources. It is no exaggeration to say that the Industrial Revolution was born in these first Lancashire factories making cotton cloth.

New technology was also applied to the production of ceramics, creating higher quality wares and more quickly changing designs. Innovations in mining included the use of Newcomen's "atmospheric" engine to pump water from deep mines. This opened new supplies of coal, a cheap, plentiful fuel, in place of wood that was being cut faster than forests could grow. These and other advances increased precision and productivity in iron smelting, tool making, and ceramics manufacture.[20]

> MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK
>
> *A workman not educated to [pin making] . . . could scarce . . . make one pin in a day, and certainly could not make twenty . . . this business is now . . . divided into a number of branches. . . . One man draws out the wire, another straights it, a third cuts it, a fourth points it, a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving, the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on is a peculiar business, to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations. . . . [When ten workers are supplied] with the necessary machinery, they could, when they exerted themselves, make among them about twelve pounds of pins in a day. There are in a pound upwards of four thousand pins of a middling size. Those ten persons, therefore, could make among them upwards of forty-eight thousand pins in a day. Each person, therefore, making a tenth part of forty-eight thousand pins, might be considered as making four thousand eight hundred pins in a day. But if they had all wrought separately and independently, and without any of them having been educated to this peculiar business, they certainly could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not one pin in a day; that is, certainly, not the two hundred and fortieth, perhaps not the four thousand eight hundredth part of what they are at present capable of performing, in consequence of a proper division and combination of their different operations.*
>
> Adam Smith
> *Wealth of Nations*, 1776 [21]

While inventions resulted in direct improvements in a few specific industries, most products continued to be made using traditional workbench tools and technologies. Yet, many English industries were revolutionized in other ways. Entrepreneurs reorganized small workshops so that tradesmen produced goods collaboratively. Production became more specialized, with each individual artisan working on

one piece or performing one operation of the complicated process. Masters coordinated production, supplied raw materials, set quotas, enforced standards, collected and finished goods, and oversaw wholesale marketing.[22]

Most simply, many artisans bought components of their products from other artisans who specialized in making them. Cabinetmakers bought the brass hardware for their furniture from founders who made nothing else. Swordsmiths bought blades from cutlers and hilts from silversmiths or brass founders. The swordsmith, despite the all-encompassing name of his trade, concentrated only on assembling these parts and making scabbards.

In other trades, specialized shops worked together with other shops to produce goods neither could make on its own. Cabinetmakers subcontracted their carving, gilding, or upholstery to shops that performed only those types of work. Silversmiths sent their products to specialist engravers to be decorated.

Larger shops employed a diverse range of specialists not only to increase the quantity of their product but also to expand the range of goods they could make. The diverse labor force of London cabinetmakers William and John Linnell was probably representative of large-scale businesses. The Linnells employed joiners, cabinetmakers, picture and looking glass frame makers, chair and sofa frame makers, hardwood carvers, softwood carvers, chair carvers, gilders, upholsterers, and a turner, as well as general laborers.

And finally, some trades, notably those producing textiles and small metalwares, were organized by what was called the "putting-out system." Under this system, small shops worked for a middleman who "put out" work to them. The middleman supplied the shops with materials, an order for the goods to be made from those materials, and, in some cases, tools. When the materials were worked up into products — or, as was often the case, components of products, the artisan delivered them to the middleman, received payment in the form of a piece rate for his work, and collected another consignment of materials. The master, in turn, coordinated any other steps necessary in the production and finally saw to the wholesale marketing of the finished wares.

Once English goods[23] reached North America, local storekeepers had plenty of eager customers. Competition was stiff. They ran long, detailed newspaper advertisements describing their vast array of merchandise. To attract and keep their clientele, merchants displayed their wares more enticingly. They stocked a wide assortment of goods to appeal to all tastes and pocketbooks.[24] Pricing became more competitive, bringing new products and new styles within the reach of many more consumers. In the absence of a banking system in the colony, Williamsburg storekeepers such as William Prentis were obliged to extend credit in order to attract and keep customers.[25] Merchants might also offer goods at a reduced price when payment was in ready money.

Perhaps because the gentry regularly gathered in the capital, more tradespeople there than in other Virginia towns manufactured fashion and luxury goods. Newly arrived artisans usually had been trained in London or in provincial British cities. Style-conscious patrons—from planter George Washington to saddler Alexander Craig—supported local cabinetmakers, upholsterers, carvers, carpenters, masons, jewelers, watch- and clockmakers, engravers, milliners, glovers, tailors, hatters, mantua makers, staymakers, and other producers of stylish goods.

A Tradesman Faces the Reality of Working in Virginia

Gentlemen, and Others, that have Occasion of any Kind of Iron or Brass Work, either polish'd or rough, may be supply'd on applying to the Subscriber, in York Town, with as good Work, and as cheap as can be imported, having Materials and Men, from the best Shops in London, for that Purpose.

Ephraim Goosley.

Virginia Gazette, 6 June 1751

* * *

Made and Sold, by the Subscriber, all Sorts of Axes and Hoes, at the low Price of Forty per Cent. more than they cost in London. Any Gentlemen, Merchants, or others, that will favour me with their Custom, will encourage a Branch of Trade that may be useful to this Country, and oblige

Their humble Servant,
Ephraim Goosley.

Virginia Gazette, 17 October 1751
(courtesy of Ken Schwarz)

Was It a Good Thing?

The Industrial Revolution is called a revolution because it changed society both significantly and rapidly. Over the course of human history, there has been only one other group of changes as significant as the Industrial Revolution [the Neolithic Revolution during the Stone Age, when hunter-gatherers switched over to farming and raising animals, leading to permanent settlements].

The social changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution were significant. As economic activities in many communities moved from agriculture to manufacturing, production shifted from its traditional locations in the home and small workshop to factories. Large portions of the population relocated from the countryside to towns and cities where manufacturing centers were found. The overall amount of goods and services produced expanded dramatically . . . in the long run the Industrial Revolution has brought economic improvement for most people.

http://encarta.msn.com (an on-line encyclopedia)

Services as Well as Goods

Lawyers, doctors, music teachers, artists, and others offering specialized services also settled in the Virginia capital. Customers paid them good money for intangibles—their advice and expertise. A novice would gladly pay a dancing master such as William Fearson for professional instruction in the intricacies of the minuet if he or she hoped to attract the notice of polished company at balls and assemblies. Many who purchased genteel services were certainly ladies and gentlemen, while other customers such as silversmith James Geddy, cabinetmaker Anthony Hay, and mason Humphrey Harwood belonged to the prosperous middling sort.[26]

Local shops and warerooms displayed up-to-date fashions, and the tradesmen and women themselves were purveyors of new styles. Dressing and behaving much like their clientele, smart business people educated their customers in new trends. Nevertheless, retailers' influence in matters of taste was tempered by what their customers would accept.

To enlarge their product line and increase the number of potential customers, some entrepreneurial craftsmen engaged in several related trades at the same time. Benjamin Bucktrout, for example, made furniture, repaired spinets and harpsichords, and hung wallpaper. Another cabinetmaker silvered glass for mirrors in addition to performing more typical furniture construction work. On the other hand, tradesmen sometimes cooperated rather than diversified. To keep up with new skills and to offer more variety, tradesmen sometimes associated themselves with those in related crafts. Coach makers employed gilders, wheelwrights, and blacksmiths. Carvers worked with cabinetmakers, and engravers worked with silversmiths. Such collaborations expanded the range of styles and products that a single shop could offer.

Fithian personalized the problem of not knowing how to dance on December 17, 1773: "I was strongly solicited by the young Gentlemen to go in and dance. I declined it, however, and went to my Room not without Wishes that it had been a part of my Education to learn what I think is an innocent and an ornamental, and most certainly, in this province is a necessary qualification for a person to appear even decent in Company!"

> *About Seven the Ladies & Gentlemen begun to dance in the Ball-Room—first Minuets one Round; second Giggs; third Reels; and last of All Country-Dances. . . . The Music was a French-Horn and two Violins—The Ladies were Dressed Gay, and splendid, & when dancing, their Silks & Brocades rustled and trailed behind them!—But all did not join in the Dance for there were parties in Rooms made up, some at Cards; some drinking for Pleasure; some toasting the Sons of america; some singing "Liberty Songs". . . in which six, eight, ten or more would put their Heads near together and roar. . . . I was solicited to dance by several. . . . George Lee, with great Rudeness as tho' half drunk, asked me why I would come to the Ball & neither dance nor play Cards? I answered him shortly . . . that my Invitation to the Ball would Justify my Presence; & that he was ill qualified to direct my Behaviour who made so indifferent a Figure himself—Parson Smiths, & Parson Gibbems Wives danced, but I saw neither of the Clergymen either dance or game.*
>
> Fithian Diary, January 18, 1774

"Grown Gentlemen Taught to Dance" (1952-153) and "Grown Ladies Taught to Dance" (1952-152), in 1767, satirized the dilemma of those who, for whatever reason, failed to learn the genteel accomplishment of dancing at an early age. In the print of men, note the poor fellow seated in the background with his feet in a form to encourage proper turn out. In the background of the woman's print, two little girls titter at the woman's clumsy attempts. In towns and cities, the most sought-after dancing instructors made comfortable livings by their trade. Their occupation was somewhat ambiguous: paid to teach grace of movement and decorum to their pupils, they were working people, not members of the gentry whom they were paid to emulate.

Never Done: New Standards of Housekeeping

Women in the middling rank and above were particularly affected by the material and behavioral changes during this era. Women like Annabelle Powell, aspiring to gentility, took on new and highly complex household duties and obligations as their standard of living rose. New and more luxurious furnishings meant that additional time and skill were required to keep house. Middling people probably had higher standards of cleanliness and neatness than they had grown up with. A family like the Powells took part in social activities that involved new ceramic items that were both fragile and apt to go in and out of style quickly. No doubt, they entertained guests at dinner, in which case the housewife, her daughters, and their cook had to deal with new recipes and serving pieces and styles of service. Furthermore, the new emphasis on stylish clothing entailed more laundering, starching, and ironing, all of which had a considerable impact on the work routines of both white and black women in the family. Educating children, especially daughters, and training household slaves in appropriate skills and deportment demanded more of the housewife's attention. With all this emphasis, did the new household comforts mean that home became more valued by individual family members? There were signs of changing social attitudes by the 1790s—changes that included a new emphasis on privacy for the family and their most intimate friends. Architectural changes are especially telling in this regard.[27]

"The Good House-wife" (1958-357), circa 1745, illustrates the ideal matron of the period: neat, modest, diligent, and attentive to all her household business.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MAIL ORDER

Let me beg of you to make enquiry of some of the best Cabinet makers, at what price, and in what time, two dozen strong, neat and plain, but fashionable, Table chairs (I mean chairs for a dining room) could be had; with strong canvas bottoms to receive a loose covering of check, or worsted, as I may hereafter choose.

George Washington to Bushrod Washington,
September 22, 1783

STRONG LIKES AND DISLIKES . . .

I . . . desire you would by the first of your ships . . . to Annapolis send me the Contents of the Inclosed Invoice . . . as they are for my own use I would have them the best of the sorts—the furniture of the neat Plain fasshion and Calculated for Lasting nothing of the Whimsical or Chinese Tast which I abominate.

Charles Carroll to William Anderson,
October 29, 1767

Provincialisms

Although international standards of style and taste prevailed, there was still room for a modicum of local preference and individual expression. Williamsburg was a center of fashion in Virginia, but nonetheless some provincialisms remained popular in the colonial capital. Most frame houses, for example, were painted a single color, typically white or a reddish-brown. Local furniture makers generally worked in the "neat and plain" style rather than richly ornamenting their pieces, although eastern Virginia tea tables frequently display lavish carving. As a rule, however, Virginia fashions reflected current British styles.[28]

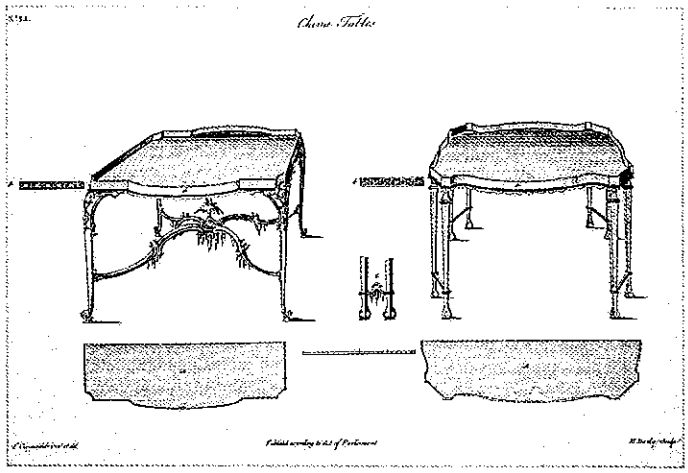
Democratization

Because new goods were available to anyone with money in his or her pocket, participation in the consumer culture helped lay the groundwork for democracy. Respectable looks and behaviors acquired from stores, teachers, and books strengthened one of the ideas that underpinned the Revolution: the belief in every person's equal worth and in his or her right to a better life. Recently, some historians have begun to see the consumer revolution as one of the earliest and strongest alternatives to traditional ideas about the traditional order of society and about the deference that most men and all women were expected to pay to their social superiors. The full fruits of that birthright, which still are not shared by all citizens today, were certainly unimagined by most Americans in the years before the American Revolution.[29] Nevertheless, the idea took root in the common pleasures and everyday purchases that more and more townspeople came to enjoy after about 1730.

Owning land or personal property gave planters and tradesmen a stake in society and entitled them to vote. Widespread possession of fashionable, status-giving objects granted a nation of newcomers unusually easy access to social and political systems.[30]

Those who moved to Virginia and other colonies by choice viewed their new home as the "land of opportunity." (Africans, of course, came by force, not by choice.[31]) America was renowned as "the best poor man's country"[32] for its abundance of land and because the social order was not yet sharply delineated. A shortage of skilled labor in the colonies meant better wages for those with training and experience.

On his travels in 1747, Dr. Alexander Hamilton of Annapolis encountered individuals and whole families whose demeanor or style of living he describes. Financial means and ownership of some fashionable articles did not convince Hamilton that people like a certain Mr. Morison were genteel or even respectable.[33] Many contemporary diarists and letter writers mock (they rarely pity) those up-and-comers who acquired the finery to deck themselves out before they fully learned the ways and manners equal to their possessions.



These china tables (and labeled as such) are from Plate LI of The Gentleman & Cabinet-Maker's Director *by Thomas Chippendale (3d ed., 1762). Chippendale gave cabinetmakers and patrons suggestions about up-to-date decoration and styling in fashionable furniture. The legend for this plate states that they may be used as "Tea-Tables" and "look very well, when rightly executed." They are definitely an exception to the rule of "neat and plain" found in the orders of many Virginia consumers.*

Print Culture

As stylish living spread to the middling sort, the newly established popular press flooded the market with prints, plays, novels, broadsides, and books on self-improvement. The public's appetite for the "freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestick"[34] created a mass market for information and a brand-new retail market. Never had so many been willing to pay for useful information. Nor had so many been eager to sell it at affordable prices.[35] In Williamsburg, the printing offices supplied the public with polite literature and practical information by printing the weekly newspaper and selling both imported and locally produced books.

New and expanding means of communication brought about a new phenomenon—widespread discussion of numerous topics from fashion to politics. Newspapers and broadsides printed everything from the arrival of a shipment of store goods and the play premiering at the theater down the block to the latest gossip and the most recent acts of parliament. Easy access to printed materials at low prices greatly enlarged the number of those in the know. As more people became better informed about the issues of the day, power relationships in families, communities, and politics began to change.

Clashing Interests

Social mobility and pleasure seeking (and what else ever motivates materialists?) have seldom taken place without a clash of interests. Those who clamor to share America's bounty more widely have often been opposed by the forces of selfishness and exclusivity. One person's happiness usually has come out of someone else's pocket or someone else's hide. The Buying Respectability story line abounds with adversaries, starting with the rich and poor.

As the consumer impulse moved down the social ladder, nearly everyone adopted materialistic values. Modern measures of individual worth gradually replaced traditional ones. In practice, these values manifested themselves differently from place to place and among people of different ranks, thereby giving rise to adaptations and social variations. Those with leaner pocketbooks could still acquire the outward signs of success through the purchase of second-hand goods at estate auctions or elsewhere.[36] Still, access to status symbols depended on where those of limited means lived and how much time could be devoted to polishing their manners.

Slave labor financed the consumer revolution in Virginia. African Americans worked in the tobacco fields, built and tended the great houses, and practiced skilled trades. Slaves were simultaneously symbols, commodities, and the means of production in the drive for wealth and respectability. Did the spread of genteel culture set up rivalries and divisions within the slave community? Did it create a double identity for black cooks, musicians, coachmen, and body servants who served fashion-conscious masters and mistresses but who inevitably were also part of the culture of the quarter? Historians can only speculate.[37]

Some slaves bought or borrowed fashionable items for their own use. A traveler wrote of his surprise upon seeing "in the midst of poverty some cups and a teapot" at the Mount Vernon slave quarter.[38] Did consumer goods have the same meaning for enslaved Virginians as for free African Americans?[39]

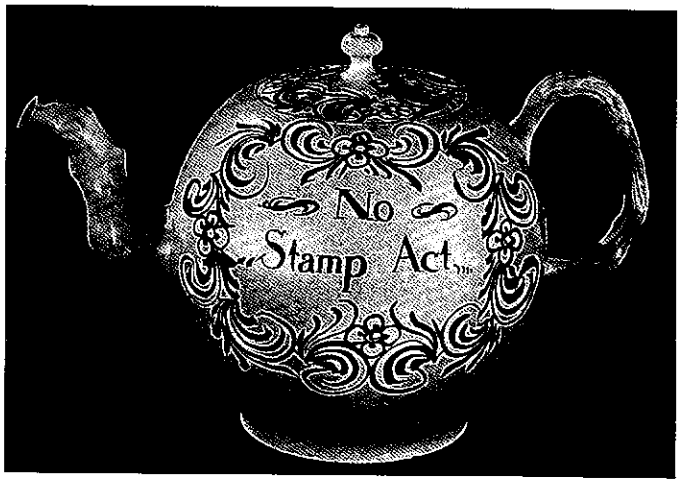
The few inventories of free blacks' property show that some owned stylish goods. For example, local African-American carter Matthew Ashby owned a tea board and a silver watch.[40] Store accounts show that slaves purchased items for adornment and grooming—ribbons, textiles, combs, and small mirrors—as well as sugar and rum.[41]

Conservative folkways flourished in eighteenth-century Virginia, especially in the countryside. German immigrants in the Valley of Virginia, for example, were slower to accept a way of life that smacked of English superiority. Some Baptists, Quakers, Ulster Scots, certain free blacks, and other plain people were indifferent to or outright scornful of newfangled upstarts whom they increasingly identified as town dwellers or planters too big for their britches.[42]

Traditionalists were not alone in their concern that keeping up with the Joneses would subvert both the moral and the social order. Preachers, playwrights, and politicians decried the "modern luxury and excess" and disapproved of the "opulence" enjoyed by all ranks.[43] Debates about the insidious spread of luxury appeared in the pages of the *Virginia Gazette*.[44] The topic was disputed in Williamsburg taverns. Clergy condemned luxury in sermons, personal instruction, and family correspondence. Some Baptist preachers warned their congregations about self-indulgence and castigated the gentry for their spendthrift ways.[45]

Coming of the Revolution

American prosperity prompted a series of political crises between England and her colonies. In the decade leading up to the Revolution, parliament looked to the New World to help pay imperial debts and passed the Townshend Duties and the Tea Act taxing a variety of imported commodities. Colonists relied on British imports but took offense at such taxation. Trade goods became the focus of political discontent, thereby creating new consumer pressures in the colony. Some protested British tyranny and denied themselves foreign goods, thereby showing solidarity with their fellow colonists. Others redirected their business to local tradesmen sympathetic to American interests.[46]



"No Stamp Act" is the defiant demand of this English-made teapot (1953-417, A&B), circa 1770. While British politicians might argue about American representation in parliament, British merchants were more than willing to take advantage of popular sentiment to promote sales of their wares. How ironic that soon after this pot was manufactured, tea became the disputed article!

Many of Speaker Randolph's household items reflected his political sympathies. He bought Irish linen, curtained his bedstead with Virginia cloth, and drank legal coffee instead of boycotted tea.[47] Peer pressure had its effect as well. Local merchant John Greenhow explained that the teas for sale in his store had been imported before the Association.[48] His competitor John Prentis apologized in the *Gazette* for violating the non-importation agreement by ordering the tea that protesters dumped in the York River on November 7, 1774.[49] Two days later, about five hundred merchants gathered in Williamsburg to sign the Continental Association, which they then presented to Peyton Randolph and other congressional delegates assembled at the Capitol.[50]

The hundred women who wore homespun gowns so proudly to the December 1769 ball at the Capitol patriotically eschewed silks and laces in the American cause. The newspaper included a long description of the important and unusual occasion:

> On Wednesday evening the Honourable the Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Burgesses, gave a ball at the Capitol for the entertainment of his Excellency Lord BOTETOURT; and it is with the greatest pleasure we inform our readers that the same patriotic spirit which gave rise to the association of the Gentlemen . . . was most agreeably manifested in the dress of the Ladies . . . who, in the number of near one hundred, appeared in homespun gowns. . . . It were to be wished that all assemblies of American Ladies would exhibit a like example of public virtue and private economy, so amiably united.[51]

An English mezzotint satirizing both provincial and female society, "Society of Patriotic Ladies at Edenton in North Carolina" (1960-132) nonetheless states the colonial position on British goods. The petition they sign reads, "We the Ladys of Edenton do hereby Solemnly Engage not to Conform to that Pernicious Custom of Drinking Tea, or that we the aforesaid Ladys will not promote ye wear of any Manufacture from England untill such time that all Acts which tend to Enslave this our Native Country shall be Repealed."

MAKING A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY . . .

No Dances, and but little Music! You will begin to ask what is the world comint to? —No Tea . . . or lace, nor Silks nor Chintzes; Good Sirs—Good Sirs!—Well Nancy, in these hard times, I must want Stocks, and you must want Caps—But you look best . . . you look ten thousand times over the best without any Cap at all.

Fithian to Nancy Carter, 13 October 1775

In Virginia, formal institutions like law and religion were relatively weak, while informal ones—social occasions and public gatherings—were relatively strong in changing people's values to encompass store-bought goods, book learning, and high-falutin' manners. Consumer goods and services left their marks on everything from private entertainment to retail stores to dances and theatrical performances. Strict protocols governed travel, public entertainments, business dealings, marriages, burials, education, the practice of religion, and much more. Each activity required the proper apparel, equipment, and social setting. Buildings with new parlors, dining rooms, or assembly rooms began to appear in colonial towns, including Williamsburg, in the mid-eighteenth century. The Great Room at Wetherburn's Tavern, the Apollo Room at the Raleigh Tavern, and the Ball and Supper Rooms at the Governor's Palace, to name just a few, all date from about 1750.[52] Carefully designed social spaces separated knowledgeable and respectable citizens from their socially untutored inferiors. Thus, the consumer revolution helped create the perception among traditionalists that formal institutions encouraged exclusion rather than inclusion. Private and public tensions between economic and social ranks, races, genders, New Light and Old Light Christians, and country and city became apparent everywhere.

The development of a consumer society influenced the American Revolution in various ways. Recent research shows that the consumer revolution even gave voice to Americans' growing conflict with Britain. Many colonists came to believe that the "insatiable itch for merchandizing"[53] and their folly and extravagance in imitating foreign fashions had set up the constitutional conflict with parliament over issues of taxation. True or not, conspicuous consumption of British manufactured goods gave credence to stories of untold American wealth spread by travelers and army officers returning to Britain from the French and Indian War. The Stamp Act crisis and the Townshend Duties helped many Americans in all thirteen colonies recognize their common cause as consumers of British imports and as victims of British taxes. The non-importation movements of 1765, 1768–69, and 1774–76 proved that customers in the colonies could exert economic pressure on parliament to force change. Communal sacrifices during the boycotts brought together farmers and artisans, merchants and planters, northerners and southerners, and old money and new. In the words of historian Timothy H. Breen, "A virtuous man or woman was one who voluntarily exercised self-restraint in the consumer marketplace."[54]

A LADY'S ADIEU TO HER TEA TABLE,
Farewell the Tea Board, with its Gaudy Equipage
Of Cups and Saucers, Cream Buckets, Sugar tongs,
The pretty Tea Chest also, lately stor'd
With Hyson, Congo, and best Double Fine.
Full many a joyous Moment have I sat by ye,
Hearing the Girls' Tattle,
the Old Maids talk Scandal,
And the spruce Coxcomb laugh at may be—Nothing.
No more shall I dish out the once lov'd Liquor,
Though now detestable,
Because I'm taught (and I believe it true)
Its Use will fasten slavish chains upon my Country,
and LIBERTY's the Goddess I would choose
To reign triumphant in AMERICA.

Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon)
January 20, 1774[55]

The widely shared democratic experience of consumption enabled these unlikely allies to express with one voice their anger at parliament and their resolve to oppose its unjust laws. Joining together in a revolutionary cause eroded the stubborn localism of earlier times and gave rise to a heightened awareness of national identity. Patrick Henry put into words what many colonists were thinking when he declared, "I am not a Virginian, but an American."[56]

The Legacy: Land of Opportunity?

The influx of European peoples to the American colonies that helped to fuel the consumer revolution increased in both speed and volume during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We have inherited both its rosy promises and dire consequences. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the combination of industrialization, abundant western lands, improved transportation, and extreme geographical mobility opened seemingly limitless opportunities for industrious, risk-taking individuals. Inspired by a new republican optimism, Americans came to believe that everyone had an equal claim to "The American Dream," a dream that united a nation of immigrants into a democracy of fellow consumers. The notion of a classless society assumed the dimensions of an American myth because fortune seekers were as likely to strike it rich as old wealthy families were to go bust.[57]

In reality, however, materialistic values attached to social status sharpened class differences in the United States—making them more visible and pervasive. In this country sooner than elsewhere, an upper class of purveyors and possessors learned to manipulate and control the economically disadvantaged in new and powerful ways.

In the 1930s . . . people went [to see films] not just to be entertained or to escape the dreariness of their workaday lives but to gain an education, to see the world, to learn table manners and interior decoration, how to dress, kiss, to laugh and cry, how to react to tragedy and happiness, how to be brave, evil and good.

C. David Heymann, *Poor Little Rich Girl: The Life and Legend of Barbara Hutton*, 1984

Advertising and product brands are by no means unique to the current era. Brand-name recognition, which began in the 1700s with canny entrepreneurs like Josiah Wedgwood, grew like wildfire in the 1900s. Madison Avenue invented failsafe images for manufacturing giants such as General Motors, Kellogg's, Bayer aspirin, and Bass Weejuns. By the 1960s, the brand more than product quality or price was important to purchasers.[58]

Immigrants from all over the world, but mostly from Europe, endured difficult journeys and overwhelming odds to become Americans. They expected to create entirely new, undoubtedly prosperous lives for themselves. One persistent American myth, rooted in this past and continuing to the present, celebrates a person's opportunity to improve his or her lot in life. Horatio Alger's heroes were cultural icons in

their day, moving as they did from "rags to riches."[59] A few immigrants and a few more whose families had been here for generations actually reached such goals. Most did not. Overall, nineteenth-century Americans made do with much humbler achievements. Despite severe hardships, some held onto their optimism, telling themselves that they had at least set the stage for their children's successes.

Why We Love "Stuff"

Psychologists explain modern consumers' reliance on—and mad yen for—material things by pointing out our need for order, solace, and some sense of stability in a world that is changing rapidly and dramatically:

> Our dependence on objects is not only physical but also, more important, psychological. Most of the things we make these days do not make life better in any material sense but instead serve to stabilize and order the mind. . . .
>
> Our addiction to materialism is in large part due to a paradoxical need to transform the precariousness of consciousness with the solidity of things. The body is not large, beautiful, and permanent enough to satisfy our sense of self. We need objects to magnify our power, enhance our beauty, and extend our memory into the future.[60]

Good Housekeeping

Inventing all the equipment necessary for a virtual "push-button" household was the ambition of the post–World War II engineers. Stay-at-home wives were to be relieved of drudgery, or so the story went. That aspiration did not materialize, of course, but certainly live-in domestic workers became a rarity. By the 1950s and '60s a quantifiable result was the isolation of many American homemakers.

During the 1970s, fuel shortages and inflation sent more and more people into the workplace. Many American households found that they wanted or had to have dual incomes to satisfy their wants and needs. At about the same time, single-parent families became much more numerous due to rising rates of divorce. Working parents began relying on convenience foods and household shortcuts of many kinds; the microwave oven, for example, became commonplace.[61] Latchkey children, readily available harsh chemicals, ozone-destroying aerosol cans, plastic packaging, skyrocketing heating and cooling costs, and empty-calorie meals had and have environmental and health costs for most of the country.

> *In the affluent society no useful distinction can be made between luxuries and necessaries.*
>
> John Kenneth Galbraith,
> *The Affluent Society*, 1976

Nothing Succeeds Like Excess

In the 1980s and '90s soaring profits in real estate, a bull market on Wall Street, and electronic marketing built much fancier "castles in the air" for many investors, Internet entrepreneurs, and day traders. Millionaires seemed insignificant, as billionaires grew in number. Ostentation and celebrity news coverage meant that more and more people expected to make their fortunes. That old television series *Life Styles of the Rich and Famous* gave us plenty to emulate and lust after.

No longer content with humdrum Fords, Maytags, and Keds, America's status seekers now look to elite designers and producers. Eye-grabbing advertisements in glossy magazines such as *Vanity Fair*, on QVC, in countless mail-order catalogs, and on the World Wide Web attest to the continuation of materialism, conspicuous consumption, and our desires to own more, then better, and eventually the very best. Luxuries beyond the wildest dreams of Americans in the eighteenth century are touted in these media. Such extravagances appear in a few middle-class homes and driveways. Some quite ordinary working people own—or expect soon to acquire—the fastest computer, the latest running shoes, the toughest SUV, a Patek Philippe watch, or a Prada handbag. In this game of one-upmanship, function is never the main consideration; the label matters more.

In the year 2000, being adequately clothed or shod does not enhance one's reputation among, say, high school students—a particular designer's sweatshirt or a specific make of sneakers makes the desired fashion statement. None of this is different from the conformist 1950s and '60s; what is new about status symbols in the past several years is that the objects of desire come from extremely expensive product lines or even haute couture. In the late 1990s, total U. S. spending on luxury goods went up 21 percent per year, year after year, while overall merchandise sales rose only 5 percent.[62]

A few high-price, high-visibility labels convey status both in the boardroom and on the street. Some powerful electronics and cars (Jeep's Grand Cherokee, for example) have this dual clientele. Lately some lines of clothing have gained popularity with unanticipated segments of the market. Preppy designer Tommy Hilfiger became a fashion icon

by sheer serendipity. Unbeknownst even to the designer, a popular rap artist performed in one of Hilfiger's red, white, and blue rugby shirts. Overnight, enormously oversized yachting gear in regatta colors became the "in" thing both on the street and eventually in most American middle schools. Tommy's name shows up in the grittiest and the nicest 'hoods.[63]

Other crossovers are more difficult to explain. Architect Michael Graves designs household items specifically for the Target discount chain.[64] Taste maven Martha Stewart's name appears on paints, sheets, and towels sold at lowbrow K-Marts.

Clothing, automobiles, and housing seem to be the most conspicuous status symbols. Naturally, styles of these change rapidly. Private residences, especially in suburban areas, have transformed in the last two decades or so. "Desire evolves. While some features of the American dream house have stayed constant for decades—a yard, a garage, plenty of windows—others have changed with the times. In today's models, there are fireplaces, double sinks, room to roam. As families have gotten smaller, houses have grown larger."[65] A recent *Washington Post Magazine* reported that in 1998 the national average for square footage of residences was 2,225, up from 1,500 square feet in 1974.[66]

While middle-class couples shop for the perfect family home, the ghettos grow more crowded and more desperate. The infrastructure in many major cities continues to crumble. And welfare enrollment numbers wax and wane as political incentives change.

The Gap between Rich and Poor

Clearly, this is the land of opportunity for only part of the population. Many Americans can afford a style of life that goes well beyond necessities. Access to credit continues to grow. The gap between the rich and the poor widens every year. The wealthy—and they are becoming vastly richer—have more than just mere goods. Education and technological training are two valuable items that money can buy. Overcrowded schools and undertrained and underpaid teachers are typical of poorer neighborhoods. The needy have little or no access to specialized tutoring for school-age children and adult literacy. They also lack adequate health care and financial and legal assistance—and especially critical these days—access to information. Thirty years from now, the offspring of today's poor will still feel the results of present deprivations.

A recent editorial by Steven Lagerfeld in the *Wilson Quarterly* used the phrase, "the democratization of affluence." By this, he meant that, at the end of the twentieth century, many more people than ever before in history have

"MISS MANNERS" & THE BIZ . . .

These ought to be boom times for etiquette. Historically, whenever sudden fortunes were being made, etiquette instruction was in hot demand.

Miss Manners is not entirely proud of this dynamic. It hasn't necessarily meant that once people satisfied their material needs, they were eager to learn how to make life pleasant for those whose lives they found themselves in a position to affect.

Rather, as the hunger for riches began to be gratified, a ravenous appetite would develop for social status. To prepare for steep social climbing, people would realize that they needed the proper equipment. It's not much use to have a manor house without the manners to run it properly.

In itself, that quest is unobjectionable. Miss Manners doesn't see the attraction of mountain climbing, either, yet she understands that others do. She has never required people to have disinterested motives for behaving well.

But when etiquette is acquired for the express purpose of violating the spirit of manners—in order to make other people feel bad—it is too much for her.

She is not saying that this is what is happening now. Notice that she has been discussing all this in the past tense. This is because she hopes that today's new fortunes, although they have inspired the same sort of gigantic shopping sprees, might escape the lunges at personal aggrandizement that traditionally earned the newly rich a generous share of ridicule.

They should not deserve that. In a society built on respect for merit and labor, new money and those who make it should be more admired than old money and those who merely inherit it.

But in times of economic upheaval, when class warfare rages, everybody looks foolish—as a result, Miss Manners regrets to say, of abusing etiquette. It is not just a matter of using newly acquired manners clumsily, as everybody claims in derision of everyone else. It has to do with using manners as a weapon.

That is what happens when the newly rich study etiquette not only because they think it will help them fit in with the older rich, but to distinguish themselves from their old friends who didn't make it. And the older rich are just as bad when they not only scorn the newly rich for not getting those forms right, but also invent subtle and secret new ones to make sure they don't. . . .

Today's newcomers claim a taste for the least formal ways of living, and the older rich have few sophisticated forms left to defend. Miss Manners is not happy about the fact that sloppy manners prevail throughout the economic scale, but this could at least serve as a leveler.

Still, there is an important principle of manners that needs to be acquired with money to escape ridicule. It is the realization that no amount of money buys enough freedom from others' opinions to make it safe to be rude.

"Miss Manners" by Judith Martin,
Washington Post, May 28, 2000

disposable income in considerable quantities—money to spend without restrictions. Should there be restrictions of some sort? Will there have to be some before long?

The Economics of Ecology

Besides the expense of those individuals who are being shut out, another consequence is ecological in nature. Depredations of the environment continue—and even increase—as some parts of the Third World begin to improve economically. "The Good Life" costs more than charges on this month's American Express statement. It is no longer just an American phenomenon and an American problem. Industry finds cheap labor in third world countries, while the U. S., Europe, and Japan focus on services, especially information technology. Solutions, even economically advantageous solutions, may be possible according to some. Journalist and environmental researcher Mark Hertsgaard writes with both admonition and optimism.

> For much of the 1990s I traveled the world to write a book about our environmental predicament. I returned home sobered by the extent of the damage we are causing and by the speed at which it is occurring. But there is nothing inevitable about our self-destructive behavior. Not only could we dramatically reduce our burden on the air, water and other natural systems, we could make money doing so. If we're smart, we could make restoring the environment the biggest economic enterprise of our time, a huge source of jobs, profits and poverty alleviation. . . .
>
> Getting it done will take work, and before we begin we need to understand three facts about the reality facing us. First we have no time to lose. While we've made progress in certain areas—air pollution is down in the U. S.—big environmental problems like climate change, water scarcity and species extinction are getting worse, and faster than ever. Thus we have to change our ways profoundly—and very soon.
>
> Second, poverty is central to the problem. Four billion of the planet's 6 billion people face deprivation inconceivable to the wealthiest 1 billion. To paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that the bottom two-thirds of humanity will strive to improve their lot. As they demand adequate heat and food, not to mention cars and CD players, humanity's environmental footprint will grow. Our challenge is to accommodate this mass ascent from poverty without wrecking the natural system that makes life possible.
>
> Third, some good news: we have in hand most of the technologies needed to chart a new course. We know how to use oil, wood, water and other resources much more efficiently than we do now. Increased efficiency—doing more with less—will enable us to use fewer resources and produce less pollution per capita, buying us the time to bring solar power, hydrogen fuel cells and other futuristic technologies on line. . . .
>
> The idea is to retrofit our farms, factories, shops, houses, offices and everything inside them. The economic activity generated would be enormous. Better yet, it would be labor intensive; investments in energy efficiency yield two to 10 times more jobs than investments in fossil fuel and nuclear power. In a world where 1 billion people lack gainful employment, creating jobs is essential to fighting the poverty that retards environmental progress.[67]

What the Future Holds

In the third millennium, how will consumer impulses fit in our increasingly complex, much more populous, ever-shrinking and endangered world? Will competition remain fierce as we compete in an increasingly larger—but simultaneously smaller global economy? Can humans cooperate across national, ethnic, and economic boundaries? What transformations in our homes, workplaces, lifestyles and expectations are next? It remains to be seen whether the objects of our desire will unite or further divide us.

Buying Respectability and the "Becoming Americans" Theme

Diverse Peoples

Large numbers of ordinary Americans—men and women, native-born and immigrants, free and enslaved—participated to some degree in the international consumer culture by the middle of the eighteenth century. For the first time in history, consumption of luxuries and amenities was not confined to the aristocracy. The middling sorts, especially townspeople, eagerly acquired the new goods and the rules of polite behavior that went with them. Williamsburg was a magnet for those seeking their fortunes. The upper ranks enjoyed the leisure, resources, and opportunities to achieve the genuine refinements of mind and character that had

always distinguished true ladies and gentlemen. Others copied the fashions and aped the manners of their betters in their scramble to climb higher up the social ladder. Still others further down the social scale, including some slaves, could make no claim to gentility itself but found such means as they could to indulge in some of its amenities—a cup of tea, a bit of ribbon, a pair of gloves, and maybe a table fork instead of fingers. What these items meant to people of African descent and how they used them are still under investigation.[68]

Once introduced to European manufactured goods, Native Americans demanded a steady supply and expanded their hunting grounds to provide Europeans with deer hides and beaver skins. Eventually, capitalistic market forces altered gender roles in Indian society by giving new importance to men's work and devaluing women's.[69]

Clashing Interests

The new values communicated through store-bought goods sharpened the differences between the haves and have-nots and often came into conflict with traditional ideas and practices. Plain people either disdained or disregarded the newfangled upstarts. The unquenchable appetite for material goods, according to society's self-appointed guardians, subverted the moral and social order. Sermons, plays, and political debates debunked the new materialism. By the 1760s, the constitutional conflict with parliament over taxation on imported goods that had long since become necessities grew into a classic conflict between tax resisters and those who argued that the high cost of defending the British Empire in America from its French and Indian enemies should be borne by those who enjoyed its protection.

Shared Values

By the Revolution, most Americans aspired to a piece of this new, store-bought culture and met little resistance beyond the nagging of preachers and the spoofing of playwrights. Folkways blended with genteel culture to create hybrid American forms of polite behavior. These compromises gave substance to the popular notion that every free white citizen enjoyed a rough-and-ready equality. The gathering conflict with Great Britain over the Stamp Act and the Townshend Duties helped Americans throughout the thirteen colonies recognize their shared experience as common consumers of British goods and common victims of the higher taxes parliament attached to some of those goods. Non-importation movements in the 1760s and '70s brought together planters, craftsmen, storekeepers, housewives, gentry, and yeomanry. This democratic experience enabled the colonists to unite in opposition to parliament and its unjust laws. The non-importation crisis helped consumers see themselves as a larger collective, which they called "the public."

Formative Institutions

Political institutions in the capital city of Williamsburg and the social activities they sponsored reinforced by example the image of the town's elite. Ballrooms, parlors, and dining rooms were formative institutions no less than courthouses and churches. A person's appearance and deportment during Publick Times influenced marriage prospects, political clout, and business opportunities. The town was also rich in less formal institutions including schools, playhouses, and dancing and music lessons that taught the rules of refined conduct and rehearsed their practice.

Partial Freedoms

Knowing the rules and owning the "right stuff" required leisure, education, and resources. The wealthy enjoyed those advantages disproportionately to the poor. While the consumer revolution brought higher standards of living to many ordinary people, traditional notions of social hierarchy changed slowly. Materialistic values attached to social position in the new United States heightened class divisions by making them obvious and unavoidable.

Revolutionary Promise

The domination of the rich over the poor is not the end of the story. Inexpensive consumer goods, the things they could do, and the harmless human pleasures they provided became for many the fullest expression of their liberal Jeffersonian right to the pursuit of happiness. Easy access to consumer goods and cosmopolitan services has been a tremendous liberating force in American society. Plentiful and affordable creature comforts have oiled the wheels of democracy far more than political philosophies. In the process, this enduring American dream has been a potent catalyst dissolving people's traditional loyalties to clans, social rank, religions, and homelands.

Connections to Other "Becoming Americans" Story Lines

Taking Possession *(introduced 2000)*

Manufactured goods followed the moving frontier in pack trains, peddlers' wagons and later canal boats. Personal possessions and conduct announced one's social position to any community of strangers. Native Americans' reliance on trade goods also played an enormously important part in European-Indian relations, and they refashioned Native American material culture in complex and unexpected ways. Europeans' desire for pelts drove the market that beset Native Americans and changed their mores.[70] Supplying that demand drastically altered Indian cultural traditions by devaluing women's work in comparison to men's. Here in

Williamsburg, Native Americans sold their pottery to Governor Botetourt's household servants at the Palace. The Brafferton at the College of William and Mary was established with the explicit intent of "civilizing" native boys.

ENSLAVING VIRGINIA *(introduced 1999)*

The extravagance indulged in by a few and the comfortable sufficiency enjoyed by many more white Virginians was made possible by the labor of Virginia's enslaved population. Their work enhanced masters' stylish appearances. Slave artisans helped build the great houses, the settings in which the gentry displayed the refinements that set them above lesser folk. Not to put too fine a point on it, chattel slaves were themselves as much consumer goods as a tea service. Complicating the story even more, slaves sometimes participated in consumer culture, either for their own benefit or at the direction of their masters. More background is needed on material culture in Africa during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in order to amplify our understanding of African-American material culture practices. Archaeologists have identified artifacts from slave sites in Virginia that include surprisingly stylish items such as ceramics and buttons, but their meanings to slaves remain obscure. People routinely denied the basic freedom to enjoy the rewards of their labor may have attached very different values to such objects, however acquired.

FREEING RELIGION *(introduced 1998)*

The sin of pride and its affront to Christian humility were two hair-trigger issues in the religious life of America. The "pursuit of happiness"—that is, property—contradicted traditional notions of virtue and the newly awakened dedication to austerity and self-sacrifice. The established church accepted and profited by the new materialism. Both in England and Virginia, Anglican clergy were expected to dress, speak, behave, dance, and live like gentlemen. In the colony many livings provided for the maintenance of clergy, and part of their salaries included glebe land upon which clergy made tobacco and grew wheat for trade and profit. Dissenting denominations, especially Baptists, were stricter in their teachings. Some also expected their preachers to lead self-denying lifestyles, much humbler than the ways clergy of the established church were living.

REDEFINING FAMILY *(introduced 1997)*

Gentility refashioned family life and redefined relationships between husbands and wives. Women particularly felt the repercussions of the consumer revolution as more elaborate lifestyles multiplied their household chores and responsibilities. As children were expected to learn more, parents spent larger sums on their education as well as for instruction in dancing, music, and etiquette. New products were developed for a completely new set of customers; shrewd tradesmen created toys, books, and games for children. Rituals such as marriages, baptisms, and funerals became occasions for public display and generated their own specialized clothing, gifts, foods, and practices.

CHOOSING REVOLUTION *(introduced 1996)*

Many of the thematic links between the Buying Respectability story line and Choosing Revolution are described under "Coming of the Revolution," p. A-11–13. But the war was not the last chapter in the larger story. Almost as soon as hostilities ceased, English merchants and manufacturers rushed to reopen the American market. The new nation inspired new product lines bearing American symbols such as images of George Washington and American eagles. These goods were often designed and made in England specifically for export to the United States.

1 For the evolution of early English houses, see Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House.*

2 Ronald Hurst, "Refurnishing the Randolph House . . . Again?" 37–42. A transcript of Randolph's inventory is attached to this manual. See also "Where In the World?" pp. P-2–3, which uses the Randolphs' dining room as an example of gentry dining paraphernalia and foodstuffs.

3 Historians Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb give several reasons for dating the beginnings of the English consumer revolution to the eighteenth century. They consider the "conspicuous consumption" of the period to be distinctly modern. Spending was driven by "social emulation and class competition" among all social ranks. See Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, eds., *The Birth of a Consumer Society,* 9–33.

4 Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Standard of Living in the Colonial Chesapeake," 137. For another definition, see Barbara G. Carson, *Ambitious Appetites,* 16–17.

5 See illustrations of tea kitchens in "Style Changes," p. Q-6.

6 McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, eds., *Birth of a Consumer Society,* 1.

7 Technology played a critical role in increasing productivity and reducing prices of consumer goods; see "Increasing Production," pp. A-6–7.

8 Cathleene B. Hellier, "Private Land Development in Williamsburg, 1699–1748," 75–76.

9 T. A. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution, 1760–1830,* 4. This population growth was due to lower mortality rates, not higher birth rates.

10 Ashton, *Industrial Revolution,* 14.

11 Robert Southey, *Letters from England,* 164–165.

12 As historian T. H. Breen puts it, "Eighteenth-century Americans . . . communicated perceptions of status and politics to other people through items of everyday material culture, through a symbolic universe of commonplace 'things' which modern scholars usually take for granted but which for their original possessors were objects of great significance. By focusing attention on the meanings of things, on the semiotics of daily life, we gain fresh insight into the formation of a national consciousness as well as the coming of the American Revolution." Breen, "Baubles of Britain," 74.

13 See "Clashing Interests," p. A-11, and the section called "Non-Participants: Groups Uninterested in the Consumer Revolution," pp. J-1–2.

14 Dumas Malone, *Jefferson and His Time,* Vol. 1: *Jefferson the Virginian,* 87, quoting from the memoirs of Thomas Jefferson Randolph.

15 See Lorena Walsh's article, "Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency," reprinted beginning p. S-5, for further information and regional specifics.

16 J. H. Soltow, "Scottish Traders in Virginia, 1750–1775," 83.

17 MacPherson, *Annals of Commerce,* III; cited in Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763–1776,* 393.

18 D. C. Coleman, "The Economics of an Age of Change," 150.

19 Breen, "Baubles of Britain," 79.

20 Newcomen's pump was very early—its first use dates from 1712 in a colliery in Staffordshire. K. T. Rowland, *Eighteenth-Century Inventions.* See also D. C. Coleman, "Countryside and Industry," 123–150. The bibliography of Paul Mantoux's *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century,* 478–516, includes numerous English regional studies about manufacturing innovations in different places and several different trades. Innovations were far from simultaneous.

21 A similar excerpt from Smith's seminal economic treatise featured as the label for an antique pin in the *Patron and Tradesman* exhibition, 1985–1993, at the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va.

22 Jay Gaynor, *Tradesmen and Technology,* 1986 Antiques Forum lecture, videotape, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va. For the history of product endorsements, warerooms, as well as rapid changing fashions and marketing see McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, eds., *Birth of a Consumer Society.*

23 Yes, it is undeniably true that "English goods were ever the best." For certain proof, see *Williamsburg: The Story of a Patriot,* endlessly.

24 A lengthy list of merchandise sold at John Greenhow's Store appears on p. R-17.

25 Most of John Greenhow's advertisements indicate that he sold "for ready money only"; perhaps his clientele came from a different segment of society than Prentis's and most other merchants'.

26 Harwood Ledger A for Andrews's account 1786 and 1787, folio 76; Hallam's dated January 14, 1786, folio 48. See Colonial Williamsburg's digital library at *www.pastportal.com.*

27 Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790,* 305. See also "Development of the Passage" in the "Architecture and Furnishings" section of this manual, p. B-3, and Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects.*

28 Ronald L. Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture, 1680–1830;* and Wallace B. Gusler, *Furniture of Eastern Virginia.*

29 See "The Legacy: Land of Opportunity?" pp. A-13–14, for a more recent history of materialism in the United States. Facts and figures appear in the notes.

30 Charles S. Sydnor, *American Revolutionaries in the Making;* and Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution.*

31 A more complete discussion of slaves' involvement with consumption appears in "Clashing Interests," p. A-11.

32 This phrase, with many variations, was frequently employed, for example, by Christopher Sauer in 1724, William Moraley in 1743, and Joseph Poultney in 1783. See James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country,* 229, n. 1.

33 See also the "Manners, Education, and Conversation" section, p. C-1, for quotations from Dr. Hamilton's journal.

34 Motto on the masthead of Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette.* The curator of special collections and archivists at the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library are planning an exhibition on print culture in Virginia to coincide with the premier of this story line. Check the library's exhibit space just inside the main entrance in mid-March 2001.

35 David D. Hall, "Books and Reading in Eighteenth-Century America," 354–372; Hugh Amory and David D. Hall, eds., *A History of the Book in America,* vol. I: *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World;* and David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire.*

36 Other ways of acquiring items beyond one's apparent means included inheritance, gift, and theft.

37 See p. N-1, for an annotated bibliography of recent literature about the archaeology of slave sites.

38 Martha B. Katz-Hyman, "'In the Middle of this Poverty Some Cups and a Teapot': The Furnishing of Slave Quarters at Colonial Williamsburg," in *The American Home*. An early version of this article—"'In the Middle of this Poverty Some Cups and a Teapot': Furnishing the African-American Presence at Colonial Williamsburg," which appeared in the Enslaving Virginia Resource Book—is reprinted on pp. I-2–5 of this manual.

39 Lorena S. Walsh, "Fettered Consumers: Slaves and the Anglo-American 'Consumer Revolution,'" paper presented at the Economic History Association meeting, September 1992; copy in Rockefeller Library, Williamsburg, Va.

40 See pp. R-8–9 for Ashby's 1771 estate appraisement, and the section "The Poor: Keeping Body and Soul Together—Consumption at the Lowest Levels of Society."

41 Allason Papers, 1760–75 (originals owned by Library of Virginia), Colonial Williamsburg Foundation microfilm M-1144-1-14. See also Katz-Hyman, "'In the Middle of this Poverty Some Cups and a Teapot,'" below, p. I-3.

42 See the "Non-Participants: Groups Uninterested in the Consumer Revolution," pp. J-1–2. Clifton Ellis, "Dissenting Faith and Domestic Landscape in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," 23–40, deals with Baptists in the eighteenth-century Southside of Virginia. Edward A. Chappell, "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley," 27–57.

43 Thomas Hall, "The Loathesomeness of Long Hair . . . with an Appendix against Painting, Spots, Naked Breasts, etc." [sermon], 1654 (courtesy of Stevie Kaufman); and McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, eds., Birth of a Consumer Society, 9–10.

44 One Englishman wrote of his disdain for "luxurious" and, to his mind, modern Christmas customs. See p. J-2 for a more complete excerpt of his diatribe.

45 "Non-Participants: Groups Uninterested in the Consumer Revolution," for the Baptist rules of 1780 about attire, p. J-1.

46 Breen, "Baubles of Britain," 98. "It [tea] was perhaps the major article in the development of an eighteenth-century consumer society, a beverage which . . . appeared on the tables of the wealthiest merchants and the poorest labourers. For Americans, therefore, it was not difficult to transmit perceptions of liberty and rights through a discourse on tea. By transforming this ubiquitous element of daily life into a symbol of political oppression, parliament inadvertently boosted the growth of a national consciousness . . . tea-drinkers [were considered] enemies 'to the liberties of America.'"

47 Randolph's inventory listing these particulars appears in "Probate Inventories, Advertisements, and a Lottery," pp. R-2–4.

48 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 12, 1771, 3, col. 2. Greenhow's lengthy advertisement appears in "Probate Inventories, Advertisements, and a Lottery," p. R-17. (Varieties of tea and his explanation are emphasized.)

49 Prentis's explanation appeared in Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette* on November 24, 1774, along with the story of the Yorktown Tea Party and the Gloucester and York County Committees' "Condemnation of Tea Merchants and Ship Captain."

50 John E. Selby, *A Chronology of Virginia and the War of Independence, 1763–1783*, 16.

51 *Virginia Gazette* (Rind), December 14, 1769.

52 See October 9, 2000, memorandum by Pat Gibbs in Research Query File, Rockefeller Library, Williamsburg, Va. See also p. F-6 for Alexander Finnie's 1752 newspaper notice of a subscription ball at the Raleigh in which the Apollo Room is specifically mentioned.

53 "Incultus Americanus," *New-London Gazette*, 20 January 1769, cited in T. H. Breen, "Narrative of Commercial Life," 475. Excerpts from Breen's very long and eloquent article are reprinted below, pp. S-1–4.

54 Breen, "Narrative of Commercial Life," 495.

55 See also pp. E-6–9 and H-1 for information about tea-related objects and social events.

56 Patrick Henry, speech in the Virginia Convention, September 1774, cited in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, 9th ed., 429.

57 Prejudice, especially racism, restricted the upward mobility of African Americans, Native Americans and certain European immigrants, such as the Irish.

58 More recent repercussions are discussed below under the heading "Nothing Succeeds Like Excess," pp. A-14–15.

59 Horatio Alger (1832–99), American author, beginning with his first published work, *Ragged Dick, or, Street Life in New York with the Boot-Blacks* (Boston, [1868]), wrote numerous inspirational novels.

60 Milhaly Csikszentmihalyi, "Why We Need Things," 20–29.

61 Figures for microwave oven ownership before 1974 could not be located; in fact the number was probably insignificant. But between 1974 and 1998, the percentage of homes in the Washington, D. C., area with these appliances grew from 3 percent to 58 percent. Cited in D'Vera Cohn, "By the Numbers," W15.

62 Robert Frank, *Luxury Fever*. In his new book, Frank, an economist at Cornell University and author of *The Winner-Take-All Society* (1995), argues that Americans spend irrationally, wildly, and without gaining the least satisfaction from their sprees or the items acquired.

63 Product ads and the designer's bio are available at *www.taimur.net*.

64 Graves follows in the footsteps of mid-century industrial designers Charles and Ray Eames. See Donald Albrecht, *et al.*, eds., *The Work of Charles and Ray Eames*. A 1999 exhibition of the Eameses' work at the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., is on line at *http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/eames*.

65 Cohn, "By the Numbers," W15.

66 *Ibid.* A friend, who shall remain nameless for his own safety, coined a phrase for the very large and ostentatious houses being built in Williamsburg's newer developments: he calls them *tract mansions*.

67 Mark Hertsgaard, "A Global Green Deal," 84–85.

68 See pp. I-1–6 for a discussion of eighteenth-century life on the margins and the "Topical Bibliographies" section, p. N-1, for a bibliography on the archaeology of slave-related sites.

69 See pp. R-16–17 for Indian traders' accounts of goods sold to individual Indians and the skins due as payment. For the impact of Europeans on other tribal cultures, see Carmel Schrire, *Digging Through Darkness*, chap. 4, especially pp. 111–112.

70 Ironically—or perhaps suitably—the market demand for pelts, especially beaver, was a function of fashion; beaver hats were the style at the time.

B. Architecture and Furnishings

This section of the resource manual examines the objects and settings that enabled an individual in eighteenth-century Virginia to demonstrate his or her gentility, that is, "the manners, bearing, habits of life, etc., characteristic of a gentleman or gentlewoman" as well as "social superiority, rank above the commonalty, as evidenced by, or asserted on the ground of, manners or habits of life."[1] What signifiers announced and validated claims to rank and superiority? In providing answers to this question, it is important to consider buildings, their furnishings and fittings, individual and group behavior, and the role of personal attire. This survey also will include individuals who aspired to gentility, those who could participate only peripherally, and those who made no claims to it at all. Respectability, as evidenced by the middling rank's approach to material goods and genteel behavior, could be purchased only to a point. An individual might be able to afford the proper clothing, but then not be able to conduct himself or herself in a genteel manner. Still other eighteenth-century Virginians, namely slaves, laid no claims to gentility since their role was primarily that of providing the labor necessary to produce wealth—the wealth that supported others in their genteel pursuits.

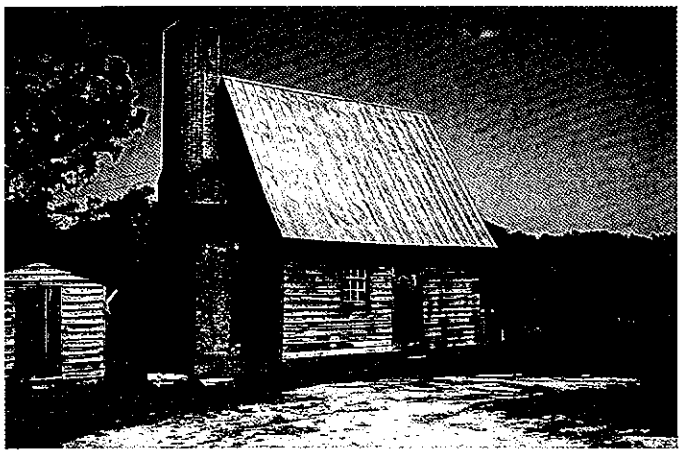
Housing

For many Virginians 250 years ago, home was not much different than it had been in the preceding century: post-in-the-ground or "earthfast" construction with the frame and roof covered with riven and lapped boards, often tarred to provide waterproofing. The interiors might consist of only one or two rooms whose walls were unplastered revealing the backs of the clapboards that covered the house. Often floors were packed earth, while a chimney consisted of wattle and daub. All of these features are a far cry from the dwellings of successful, upper-middling planters, such as the mid-eighteenth-century John Rochester House in Westmoreland County (illustrated below), which, in turn, are so small and humble in comparison to their larger neighbors, such as Mt. Airy and Stratford Hall.

Living in a One-Room House

The mode of living in a one-room house, even with a loft or an upstairs chamber under the eaves, varied little regardless of whether the floors were wood or earthen, the walls were plastered or unplastered, or the chimney was brick or wattle and daub. While the better outfitted house was certainly more comfortable (fewer drafts, warmer floor, improved draft for the fire) and suggested certain aspirations, the inhabitants of either type of house followed a similar routine of daily life that revolved around the HALL, "that Roome which is their Kitchin, their Chamber, their all."[2] The communal hall was the center of a family's activities. Cooking, eating, sleeping, and receiving guests were just some of the many activities that took place here. While objects in these one-room dwellings may have demonstrated their owner's furnishings aspirations, there was no way to segregate activities. In many instances cooking still took place in the same room where the family ate, slept, worked, entertained, conducted business, and did everything else.

Seasonal rhythms that affected everyone's day-to-day life may have had even more influence on those living in these small dwellings than they had on their better-off neighbors. Winter, with the accompanying need for warmth, brought people together in a way that most of us today would find intolerable. Modern-day notions of privacy were virtually unknown, and a variety of activities took place simultaneously within a very limited space. Summer, on the other hand, with its long days and warm weather, permitted people to extend their activities out of doors. The house could be opened up to take advantage of welcome ventilation, with the air and light of the season providing a striking contrast to the closed and constrained conditions of winter.

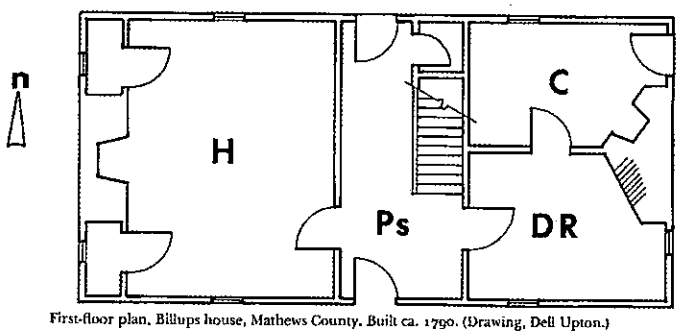


Rochester House, Westmoreland County. Built during the third quarter of the century by John Rochester II, this rare survival has one room on the main floor, a brick chimney, raised wooden flooring, a half-story upstairs, a cellar, and glazed windows. These characteristics set its owner apart from those living in less permanent, earthfast structures. The tin roof shown here is modern.

Hall, Smith's Fort, built circa 1763, illustrates the impressive paneling that could be found in dwellings of smaller but successful planters. Equipped with a pair of bowfats suitable for displaying and storing wares needed for meals and beverages, this room was the formal entertaining space for visitors who would have immediately recognized it as the most important room in the house.

Multiroom Housing

For those who could afford it, a two-room house was a definite step up. Certain functions could be moved out of the hall, for example, cooking and related food-preparation activities. Although probably a three-room dwelling originally, Lynnhaven House in what is now Virginia Beach is an example of this early attempt to segregate activities. For planters owning few or no slaves, there was less concern



First-floor plan, Billups house, Mathews County. Built ca. 1790. (Drawing, Dell Upton.)

One of the variations of an eighteenth-century Chesapeake house plan is shown in this Dell Upton drawing. Four specialized first-floor spaces are contained within a rectangular footprint: hall, passage, dining room, and chamber. Dell Upton, "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," Winterthur Portfolio 17 (Autumn/ Summer 1982): 98.

about moving the kitchen into a building detached from the main house in order to remove African Americans from the dwelling itself. Despite some distinctions in the use of these two rooms (cooking and family dining in one, while the other was used for receiving guests), they still served multiple functions. Beds and bedsteads, for example, were usually located in each room.

If the builder of one of these larger houses had the means, he might include simple cornices, chair boards, and washboards—features that suggest a rudimentary architectural hierarchy. Rather than leaving the back of clapboards exposed, the affluent builder could have his walls plastered. The HALL or OUTWARD ROOM, as it is sometimes called in period documents, was the more public of the two spaces and had slightly more embellishment than its partner. Beds disappeared from halls by about 1720. The INWARD ROOM, the CHAMBER, the PARLOR, or (on rare occasions) the KITCHEN was the more private space. The hall was larger, with a better fireplace surround, and possibly a built-in cupboard or closet. Later in the colonial period, other enhancements to the hall might include a washboard, a chair board and surbase (the molded part of a chair board), a cornice, or even a paneled fireplace wall. However, these amenities were rarely, if ever, present in housing that large planters sometimes provided for laborers and overseers. For example, Joseph Ball did not install glazed windows in the dwelling built for the use of his hired manager. He even went so far as to say that he saw "no reason why I should keep a fine house with sash [i.e., glazed] windows for an overseer."[3] In other words, hierarchy and one's place within it were discernible in a number of ways. An overseer might have a house with more than one room, but the lack of architectural embellishment betrayed any claims that mere size would make of the building's possible importance.

The next stage in the evolution of the Chesapeake house, as the type is known, was the addition of a third room. Typically, the new room came from the lesser of the two existing rooms, and the resulting three spaces—HALL, DINING ROOM, and CHAMBER—formed an L-shaped floor plan with the chamber protruding from the rear. This back room was usually a bedchamber and heralded the beginning of increased emphasis on room specialization. About the time that beds started to disappear from the hall and parlor within a three-room floor plan, the latter space started increasingly to be referred to as the dining room. Here the family entertained intimates, reserving the hall for more formal occasions. Although beds remained in place in some halls and dining rooms, prominent and aspiring planters increasingly tended to reserve the best rooms for formal activities while using secondary spaces primarily for family and close friends.

Development of the Passage

The first quarter of the eighteenth century witnessed the development of another discrete space within aspiring houses: the PASSAGE. This feature allowed for scrutiny of and social control over outsiders. Instead of entering directly into the HALL, as the one- or two-room plan permitted, callers were received in a more neutral space before being allowed to continue farther into the building. With the addition of a fourth room to the first floor, the CENTRAL PASSAGE also enhanced the privacy of the other spaces, permitting each room to have its own entrance.

At first the passage was merely that—a means for getting from one part of a house to another. Take, for example, the STAIR PASSAGE at the Thomas Everard House. While the woodwork dates to the 1740s, the space was created in the late 1710s and illustrates the purely functional purposes of most of these early passages. However, by mid-century, stair passages generally had increased in size and were turned into summer living spaces that took advantage of cross breezes and drafts during the heat of a Virginia summer. The passage at George and Elizabeth Wythe's home exemplifies the passage as an additional living area.

The Fully Developed Chesapeake Gentry House

The addition of a fourth room leads us to the next development in floor plans: the double-pile house (i.e., one that is two rooms deep, such as the Wythe House and Carter's Grove). Its appearance on the scene, however, caused some problems for the eighteenth-century home-

owner. Beyond establishing a symmetrical floor plan, this fourth room had no set function. For some, like Carter Burwell at Carter's Grove, it became a second BEDCHAMBER. Others, such as George Wythe, used it as a STUDY or LIBRARY. Inventories indicate that the term BACK ROOM frequently described such rooms, and the listings of contents show that the area served a variety of secondary purposes. The name itself suggests that the space had no clearly defined social purpose and so was used in a variety of ways.

These double-pile plans also reveal a change in usage for the two main public spaces and a name change for one of them. As dinner became a more important event within gentry society, the dining room itself was elevated in importance and became larger to accommodate an increasing number of diners at formal meals. No longer was it a more intimate space reserved for family dining. Over the course of the century, the term *hall,* meaning the most important public space within a house, remained in use, but not in the most fashionable houses. Instead, the PARLOR began to appear in its place.[4] A smaller room than the dining room, it was the space set aside to which ladies withdrew to drink tea after dinner, while gentlemen remained at the dinner table trading toasts and sharing bowls of punch. Because of these activities, the PARLOR was viewed as a feminine space while the DINING ROOM took on masculine associations. A good example of this trend can be seen at the Randolph House where Peyton's dining room is large and commodious, while Betty's parlor is smaller, but luxuriously furnished.

Two-story gentry houses with three to four rooms on each floor represent the upper end of eighteenth-century housing. Surprisingly, given the surviving dwellings that we immediately think of today, such as Shirley, Kenmore, and Westover, to name just a few, most actually were constructed of wood, with very few being of brick or stone. One historian has determined "that a brick house was usually beyond the means of colonial Virginians who owned less than five hundred acres."[5] However, as much as the construction materials distinguished these buildings, so did the number of rooms with their specialized uses. These multiroom houses allowed spaces to be designated specifically for public or private use, a luxury unknown to the vast majority of Virginians.

By and large, houses in early Virginia were smaller, cruder, and less durable than those available in England. Before about 1750, Virginians concentrated their resources—labor, time, and money—on growing tobacco and gave only moderate attention to housing. Owning a home of some description was possible for most free people, at least in rural areas. Building a house with stylistic pretensions, of course, cost more—and required capital that planters could otherwise spend on fresh farmland and more laborers. Even so, between 1730 and 1750, both in Williamsburg and elsewhere in the Chesapeake, more durable and formal houses were constructed.

In most colonial Virginia towns, including Williamsburg, early speculators had snapped up lots and held onto them by putting up some kind of structure, either a house for themselves or a rental property. Williamsburg, at least from the boom decade of the 1750s, had a housing shortage, so potential clients clamored for any available town property. Rental property generated additional income for its owners and provided housing for individuals either unwilling or unable to buy.

Tenements in Williamsburg ran the gamut. They ranged from a one-room shop, a modest residence on one of the back streets, a well-known and propitiously situated tavern or trade shop, to Custis Square, a gentry estate by any definition.[6] Rental properties never stayed vacant long, especially if located on the east end of Duke of Gloucester Street, the premier business address.

When the occasional urban house and a lot—or even a fraction of a lot—came on the market, would-be townspeople bought and renovated. At least two successful and deep-pocketed residents, Benjamin Powell and St. George Tucker, bought small, early structures. They enlarged and modernized the existing buildings, making them suitable for their own occupation.

Wall Treatments in Gentry Houses

In substantial and stylish houses, the public or formal areas consisted of the PASSAGE, DINING ROOM, and PARLOR, what one architectural historian has called the triad of spaces that were "the public component of the planter's domestic world."[7] While lesser spaces within a gentry house might seem lavish when compared with those in middling dwellings, the public triad received the most elaborate interior treatments within the grandest houses. Rooms could be fully paneled, as we see at Wilton, originally sited in Henrico County on the James River, but now relocated in Richmond. There could be a combination of paneled and papered rooms, such as those in the Peyton Randolph House. A third option is illustrated at the Wythe House where most of the rooms have wallpaper. The interiors of these three buildings exhibit the decorative pecking order established within public areas as well as between public and private spaces. Architects wrote about the practice. For example, during the third quarter of the eighteenth century, English architect Isaac Ware described the hierarchy of wall treatments as hardwood paneling being the most expensive, then painted paneling, and finally wallpaper. (See color illustrations of the hierarchy of wall treatments on pp. O-14–15.)

However, at the very time that Ware was documenting a hierarchy of wall finishes, fashion was changing. Floor-to-ceiling paneling started to seem old fashioned, and rooms with wallpaper above the wainscoting, such as we see in Gunston Hall's public rooms, began to come into vogue. One English writer commented in 1763: "The art of Painting and Staining of Paper of various patterns and colours, for hanging of rooms, is lately become a very considerable branch of commerce in this country, for we annually export vast quantities of this admired article; and the home consumption is not less considerable, as it is not only a cheap, but an elegant part of furniture, and saves the builders the expense of wainscotting; for which reason they have brought it in vogue, and most of the new houses lately erected are lined throughout with paper."[8] Sometimes, builders of new houses even did away with paneling under the surbase or chair board and substituted painted plaster. This treatment, discovered at Kenmore, served as the basis for the redone passage, hall, and dining room at the Wythe House. Just as the degree of elaboration found in period paneling tells us about a room's importance, so does the type of wallpaper that can establish hierarchy in lieu of wainscoting.

> *Paper to hang 3 Parlours all of ye following dimentions: round ye 4 sides of one Parlour measures 55 feet fm ye Floor to ye Ceiling 11 Feet The 1st Parlour a good Paper of a Crimson Colour—The 2d Parlour a better Paper, a white ground wth large green leaves—The 3d Parlour best Paper a blue ground wth large Yellow Flowers.*
>
> Robert Carter III, invoice to
> John Morton Jordan, February 16, 1762

Only four examples of period wallpaper have been found *in situ* in Williamsburg. They are illustrated in color on p. P-11. The paucity of physical evidence is more than offset by the documentary evidence that survives, particularly the numerous advertisements in the *Virginia Gazette* describing dwellings for sale with wallpapered rooms. Even more important, merchants who advertised the types of wallpaper available in their shops occasionally indicated what type of paper was appropriate in certain rooms. For example, paper imitating silk damask was a popular choice for fashionable parlors while large-scale patterns referred to as stucco papers usually were seen in entries, stair halls, and staircases. Surviving period houses in other areas provide still another important source of documentation. St. Mary's Manor in Maryland, the Jeremiah Lee House in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and Temple Newsam outside of Leeds in England are just three examples of houses retaining varying quantities of eighteenth-century wallpaper.

As wallpaper gained popularity as an alternative to paneling, paint colors became lighter. Before 1750, dark colors tended to predominate. However, after mid-century lighter shades appeared in gentry houses.[9] This resulted partly from changes in technology that allowed the production of new paint pigments. The lighter palate indicates that wallpaper was originally intended in some interiors. For example, the Wythe, Everard, and Tucker houses are three dwellings where paint analysis discovered shades of ochre and straw on wainscoting and trim. At the Everard, evidence of eighteenth-century paper was found in the dining room and the first-floor bedchamber. For the Tucker House there is a paint contract—possibly the earliest surviving one in the United States—that St. George Tucker drew up specifying both exterior and interior paint colors with tradesman Jeremiah Satterwhite. One of the interior colors specified is "a pale Stone colour, or straw Colour."[10] Wallpaper orders also survive in the Tucker family papers for the same time period so we know that wallpaper and specific paint colors were applied simultaneously.

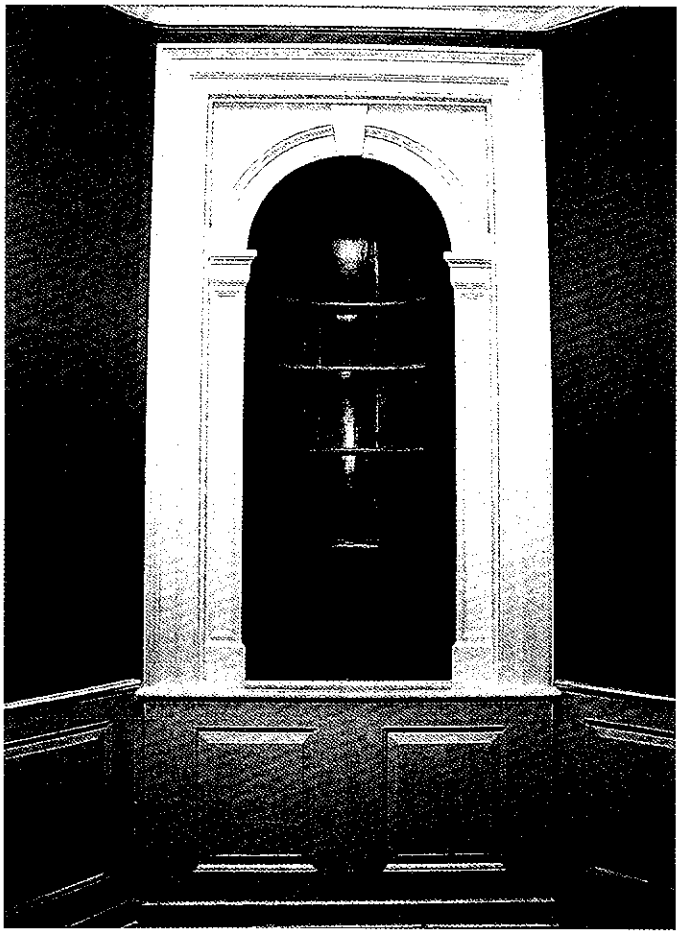
The result of this accumulated evidence can be seen at the Wythe House where the ochre-painted trim suggested which rooms the Wythes papered. A damask-type paper appears in the hall,[11] a stucco paper in the STAIR PASSAGE, and a solid-color paper in the DINING ROOM. In the CHAMBERS, less expensive papers have been used, while the STUDY has no paper at all. Its walls have been left as whitewashed plaster, although the painted blue trim in the room was glazed at the same time that most of the other trim was painted ochre. The only other room in the house to have a different trim color was the room over the study, clearly a less important space, given its location within the house and its off-centered fireplace. Its dark gray-blue trim received no special treatment, and the walls have been left bare.[12]

Peyton and Betty Randolph's home offers a striking contrast. The Randolphs remodeled their existing dwelling and built on an addition just a few years after the construction of the Wythe House. While Peyton and Betty used some wallpaper—in the stair hall and the least important chamber, they obviously preferred paneling. These two houses, built so closely in time, illustrate the range of wall finish options available to consumers. While some homeowners made fashionable choices for their houses (with expense as a possible consideration as well), others preferred the statement that paneling or wainscoting made about their dwellings.

Closets and Bowfats

Contrary to what is sometimes heard in house museums, CLOSETS did exist in the eighteenth century, although not every house had one and the meaning of the term changed over the course of the century. Furthermore, pre-Revolutionary Virginians did not pay tax on houses, rooms, windows, or hearths, so there was no reason to avoid these architectural features. While the poorest people had little need for built-in storage in their dwellings, more affluent individuals might view closets as a necessity. For example, Ware wrote that "the architect must not forget, on any occasion, to make the best use of all natural recesses for closets. . . . There are a multitude of things that must be always at hand, and never in sight; and these are what furnish closets: nothing can be more needful than a place of reception for them."[13] The Wythe, Geddy, and Powell houses all have examples of these "places of reception."

Another type of built-in storage was the BOWFAT (also spelled *beaufait* and *beaufet*) usually found in dining rooms and halls, but occasionally also in parlors and bedchambers.



This beaufait or bowfat is a built-in feature of the largest of the public rooms at the William Byrd III House. It provided a specialized space to display the ceramics and glass needed to serve formal meals when this room was used for dining.

These built-in cupboards could be fairly plain (such as the one in the Thomas Everard House dining room) or fairly elaborate (like the one in the dining room at the William Byrd III House). While these bowfats primarily served as storage spaces, they also provided an arena for the display of items needed to set an up-to-date dining table. Fashionable ceramics, glassware, and teaware underscored a family's awareness of genteel consumer goods and the behaviors that their ownership implied. Bowfats served as an area of prominent display, and they were associated with the mistress's role within the household. Here she could set out for family and friends those wares that held the food that she and her cook prepared as well as serve the tea that she brewed after dinner.

Flooring

Flooring also indicated hierarchy within an eighteenth-century building. Packed earth was the easiest and cheapest option. However, a family with enough money to afford a wooden floor, usually southern yellow pine, had several construction methods to consider. The least expensive option—a face-nailed floor—made no attempt to hide the nails that secured the boards to the joists. All of the other techniques hid the means of securing the boards and gave a smoother appearance to a room's flooring. Using tongue-and-grooved or splined boards or boards that were secret- or blind-nailed incurred higher costs. The most expensive treatment was doweled flooring. For illustrations of several types of flooring, please see color photographs and a detailed drawing on p. O-11.

From roughly the 1720s through the 1780s, floors were made of unfinished wood, left white (the term used in period documents, meaning neither waxed nor varnished), and cleaned with damp sand and dry rubbing brushes. Hannah Glasse, in *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* (1747), advised housemaids, "Always when you sweep a room, throw a little wet Sand all over it, and that will gather up all the Flew and Dust, prevents it from rising, cleans the Boards, and saves both Bedding, Pictures, and all other Furniture from Dust and Dirt." Susanna Whatman gave even more specific instructions to her maid; she told the worker to "use as little soap as possible (if any) in scowering rooms. Fuller's earth and fine sand preserves the colour of the boards, and does not leave a white appearance as soap does."[14]

Heating and Lighting

Even in the poorest Chesapeake houses, the ready availability of wood meant that most people had access to heat. However, the fireplace furniture, such as andirons, shovels, tongs, and fenders, varied widely among economic levels. Slaves and poor whites built fires directly on packed earth and used a stick as a poker. Those slightly better off may have been able to afford a pair of iron firedogs, as andirons were also called, but not necessarily much else in the way of equipment. Only at the higher levels of colonial society did full complements of fireplace furniture begin to appear and, even then, not in every room with a fireplace. While a lower-middling family made do with plain iron dogs, a wealthy household might own very elaborate andirons. The most expensive could be embellished with brass or polished-steel decoration as could the finials on pokers and tongs. Fenders with pierced work allowed firelight to shine through and throw patterns of light on the floor while restraining coals that might otherwise roll onto the wooden floor.

Some well-to-do households went beyond wood fires and heated their dwellings with coal, which required special grates. Probate inventories for both the Governor's Palace and the Peyton Randolph House list grates and coal. Coal heat was not restricted to domestic structures, however. Anthony Hay had several coal grates installed at the Raleigh Tavern before his death in 1770, not an altogether surprising fact given that he imported coal into Williamsburg from Norfolk. While coal could be viewed as a status statement (because it required special equipment and had to be imported either from Britain or from upriver at Midlothian, Virginia), it nonetheless provided a greater level of heat and required less effort to maintain a fire than did wood.

Bath stoves, an improved type of coal grate, further improved heating in some well-to-do households of the period. These fit into fireplaces, with additional masonry filling in the cheeks and securing the stove.

Sources of artificial light were more varied than sources of heat. While many poor individuals made do with the light provided by a fire, others may have supplemented firelight with cheap candles made from tallow. For some reason Betty lamps and rush lights, common in New England, do not seem to have been used to any extent here in Williamsburg.[15] Of course, candlesticks varied among economic levels.[16] Sheet-iron sticks were the least expensive type, although brass examples most commonly survive. Brass candlesticks could be found in households of various levels. Even the well-to-do used brass in lesser rooms while reserving more expensive types like silver, ceramic, and glass for public spaces.

Sconces sometimes appeared both in domestic and public buildings, but because they were fixed to walls, they do not always appear in probate inventories. They were especially effective for illuminating relatively large spaces. Orders survive for installing sconces in specific rooms at the Capitol. Chandeliers (made of metal) and lusters (glass), still other means of lighting large rooms, were very striking in their effect. These tend to be found primarily in public buildings and used to illuminate spaces where numbers of people gathered after nightfall, for example, the ballroom, supper room, and middle room upstairs at the Governor's Palace.

Types of candles also varied, with the cheapest (and smelliest) tallow candles at one end of the market, myrtle wax

Bath stove, Palace Dining Room (1979-495, A-C). The Bath stove was an innovation in heating technology. A cast-iron fixture set into the firebox, the stove's center portion was a grate for coal, while the higher sides provided surfaces to warm saucepans, teakettles, and so on. The heavy iron parts absorbed heat from the burning coals and radiated it to the room. Despite their functional nature, Bath stoves were also considered fashionable. Designs changed often to keep them up to date. Carron Co., a Scottish manufacturer of ironware since the late 1750s, instructed its London agents in April 1772 to sell off as much of its existing stock "before Summer if possible, as our new patterns [for next winter] will be very pretty."

and beeswax in the middle, and spermaceti at the upper end. The slightly greater efficiency of spermaceti candles did not justify their added expense—at least for some. George Washington determined this in two experiments that he conducted in early December 1785. He found that spermaceti candles were approximately three times the cost of tallow but only burned 10 to 15 percent longer. However, the elegance of spermaceti candles made them extremely attractive to those who could afford them, as Philip Vickers Fithian noted in his journal: "Last night and to night I had large clear, & very elegant Spermaceti Candles sent into my Room."[17]

"Miss December" (1972-177, 12) presents an overly optimistic view of light levels after dark on a winter's night. In addition to candles and firelight, the moon, visible through the partly drawn curtain, contributes to the illumination of the room. The engraver has, however, taken artistic license in the presentation of this generally well-lit interior. Note the wick trimmers in the woman's left hand. They were needed to keep the candle (with its spun-cotton wick) burning evenly and efficiently.

Decorating and Furnishing a Home

For those at the bottom of the social and economic scale, household furnishings were a minimal investment and consideration. Squatting or sitting on an earthen floor, eating with hands from a communal cooking pot, and sleeping on a blanket on packed dirt were hard facts of life at the lowest levels of Chesapeake society. Probate inventories bias the modern researcher toward those who died with sizable estates, just as the better period houses that survive trick us into thinking that most people 250 years ago lived in paneled multiroomed structures filled with elegant objects. These modern-day, sentimental perceptions of the past are far from accurate for the vast majority of our colonial forebears.[18]

Furnishing a One-Room House

For those who lived at the subsistence level, domestic furnishings were minimal. A six-board chest provided storage, a tabletop, and seating. Cooking equipment might consist of a few iron pots, one or two wooden spoons, and a multipurpose knife. These items also served as eating implements. Sleeping accommodations might involve a coarse bed (what we today call a mattress) filled with pine tags, straw, or tow (trash fibers from flax) placed directly on the floor with possibly a blanket or two.[19] The fire gave off some heat and was probably the only source of light in the simplest rooms. The one or two windows had no glass, only solid wooden shutters. In short, it is almost impossible to imagine living under such rudimentary conditions with so few creature comforts.

At a slightly higher level of material prosperity, people could begin to afford more specialized items. Seating might mean a stool or two, possibly even a chair, such as a crude ladder-back type. A table with stretcher construction could provide a work surface as well as space for serving food. The bed might be placed on a low-post bedstead instead of directly on the floor. Cooking wares still consisted primarily of a

William Byrd, on his journey surveying the line between Virginia and North Carolina, had to spend a night in a squalid cabin on the Carolina frontier. With intense sarcasm, Byrd wrote that he and his companions were:

> *obliged to lodge very sociably in the same apartment with the family, where reckoning women and children, we mustered in all no less than nine persons, who all pigg'd it lovingly together [on the floor].*

William Byrd II, 1728

In "The Idle 'Prentice Returned from Sea & in a Garret with a Common Prostitute" (1972-409, 82), William Hogarth shows living conditions on the fringes of society. Plate VII of "Industry and Idleness," this is one of twelve moralistic engravings. The series compares and contrasts Francis Goodchild and Thomas Idle. After starting life in similar circumstances as apprentice weavers, their lives took different turns as a result of their choices and work habits. Idle, shown here, wound up at Tyburn; Goodchild as Lord Mayor of London. Note the lack of material goods in general and specifically the low-post bed, similar to the simplest, cheapest bedstead illustrated in "Objects by Social Rank," p. O-17.

few iron pots, but the addition of a frying pan, a Dutch oven, and possibly a small brass kettle provided some variation in food preparation. By using these additional equipment items, food could be prepared in several different ways.

As a person's income rose, furnishings might be expanded to include a mixture of chairs and stools for seating, a large table and a small one so that activities could be segregated to some extent, a greater number of cooking implements, the presence of some tableware, and a pair of andirons for the fireplace. All of these things would still be found in one room that served as PARLOR, DINING ROOM, and BEDCHAMBER for many colonial families in the Chesapeake. When William Polson's inventory was taken in 1755, the appraisers found only £11.0.3 worth of goods. Polson owned no slaves, but he had six chairs, a pine table, a walnut table, a looking glass, a chest of drawers, a pair of andirons, and some tea equipage, plus some other amenities, in what was obviously one room. He could by no means be called affluent given his personal worth of slightly more than £11, but he certainly had aspirations toward gentility, given the nature of his possessions. This may be related to his living in town as opposed to out in the country, especially since he owned no slaves.[20]

If we examine the estates of people living in one-room houses out in the country, we often see a difference in how people allocated their financial resources. Many prosperous planters lived in one-room dwellings, similar to the Rochester house pictured on p. B-2. While they had the luxury of an upstairs space, John Rochester II, his wife, and children carried on their daily routines within the confines of a single room that was no larger than that belonging to a very poor family. What set the house apart from its less well-to-do neighbors was its solid construction "with a substantial foundation and a handsomely laid up chimney, characteristics that Virginians widely recognized as indications of successfully managed affairs."[21] The upstairs also provided additional space for sleeping, which further distinguished the family from their poorer neighbors.

Coupled with its interior finish and furnishings, the house underscored John Rochester's social and economic standing within his community. It is interesting to compare this 1790s inventory of the house with the one that was taken for John Rochester's father in 1754. John Rochester I lived in a one-room house on the same site, although his house was less substantial than his son's. Despite more than forty years' difference in their death dates, the two men had similar ideas about where to spend their money. Each was concerned about material comfort. John I had a desk, an oval table, one square table, nine flag chairs, a looking glass, a parcel of glass and earthenware, and fireplace equipment among other furnishings. John II had similar items, but was equipped to do more entertaining, as might be expected in a household in the early federal period. Proportionately, he laid out more money on slaves than did his father, but each man was obviously more concerned about the number of laborers he owned than the number of teacups. Slaves, a major capital investment, created income for their owners; teacups, although available at much smaller prices, could not. For prosperous planters, who had greater purchasing power, the choice between investing in household furnishings and purchasing slaves was less of an issue.

Furnishing a Multiroom House

For those further up the social ladder, we begin to see multiroom houses, as described above, which allowed for specialization of activities and called for specific furnishings. Sets of objects (chairs, ceramics, glassware, etc.), formerly the preserve of the extremely well-to-do, begin to appear in more middling households by the third quarter of the eighteenth century. While we see sets of objects appearing in one-room dwellings, such as John Rochester's, it is in increasingly larger houses that we begin to see these sets distributed among spaces set aside for specific activities.

In the HALL, twelve is the usual number listed in

inventories for a set of chairs. One or two dining tables may be listed: one large oval and one smaller, as we see in William Blaikley's estate inventory dated June 30, 1736.[22] If the number of diners was greater than the number of seats at the large table, the overflow sat at the smaller table. William Byrd II described such a situation in a 1711 diary entry when he "waited on the Governor home to dinner where we found Mrs. Churchill and several other ladies and my wife among them. The table was so full that the Doctor and Mrs. Graeme and I had a little table to ourselves."[23] These types of tables gave way to matched pairs of dining tables later in the century. Other items found in halls in comfortable households sometimes included a desk or desk and bookcase, a tea table, a card table, maps and prints, and/or a sideboard table, sometimes with a marble top. Closets or bowfats might provide built-in storage for wares related to eating and drinking. Some families, however, used freestanding pieces of furniture such as corner cupboards or bowfats, the latter a term that also could be applied to a piece of case furniture.

DINING ROOMS clearly reflect the shifting domestic hierarchy, especially the relative importance of public rooms in a domestic context.[24] Early dining rooms, found in aspiring and gentry households by about mid-century, were more private than those found only a few years later. Reserved for family rather than for more public entertaining, they tend to be physically smaller and their furnishings usually are less expensive than those enumerated for the hall, as can be seen in William Prentis's 1765 estate inventory.[25] Prentis's inventory (although somewhat mutilated) lists twelve hall chairs worth £10, while his twelve dining room chairs (mismatched) were valued at only £4. The "large Oval Mahogany Table in the hall was appraised at £4, while the "Oval Mahogany Table" in the dining room is valued at the much smaller sum of £1.10. However, Prentis's choice of mahogany for his dining room table reflects another change that occurred during the third quarter of the eighteenth century—the emergence of mahogany as the preferred wood for fashionable furniture. While some scholars attribute this seeming preference to more readily available mahogany from the Caribbean coupled with parliamentary legislation that encouraged colonial trade and heavily taxed imported European walnut,[26] the result was the same. The darker wood dominated furniture production during the late colonial period.

Changing Patterns of Socializing in Public Rooms

About 1750, the formula for public rooms in well-to-do households began to change. Dining became more important as a social and cultural vehicle not only for providing hospitality but also for allowing a family to display its knowledge of fashionable behavior. In a sense, the hall and dining room switch places as the latter requires more space. The HALL, renamed the PARLOR, acquires different furnishings to support its new purpose. The new DINING ROOM and PARLOR of the third quarter of the eighteenth century are both important spaces, but they fulfill different functions and have different gender associations. As early as 1726, a Bristol undertaker commented on the size that should be allocated to the dining room: "I think it an Error in people who make the Room where they eat . . . less than what the same Company afterwards go only to sitt and converse in: Whereas the Eating Room besides the same Number of Seats wants the addition of a Table, a Sideboard (or Buffett) and Room for Servants to go to place the Victuals and give what is cald for."[27] It took Virginians another twenty-five years to catch up.

The Dining Room

In the new, fashionable DINING ROOM of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the furnishings were directed toward the serving of food and drink in a consistent manner to a larger group of people than a few generations earlier. A pair of square dining tables set end-to-end accommodated everyone at the same table. A dozen matching chairs provided identical seating at the table, while a sideboard table and a side table supplied the necessary space for the staging of drink and for removes and additional dishes for the diners. The one or two closets flanking the fireplace held sets of soup, dinner, and dessert plates, various glass and table wares, flatware, and silver.

An examination of Peyton Randolph's estate inventory of 1776 provides a good idea of the items that furnished an extremely fashionable gentry dining room at the end of the colonial period. Peyton and Betty could serve a number of dinner guests, given the extensive numbers of dining-related wares detailed in his inventory. The Randolphs dined at a mahogany table covered with one of their forty-eight tablecloths. They sat in mahogany chairs and were served from two sideboard tables, one with a marble top. They ate their food on either red-and-white or blue-and-white plates. During mealtime, an inexpensive carpet covered the unwaxed floor to protect it from food spills that might stain. After dinner, Peyton could entertain his gentlemen visitors around the dining table with punch from one of five china bowls.[28]

One distinct difference, however, between the Randolph dining room and those of many other families is the lack of a desk or desk and bookcase. These pieces of case furniture often appeared in dining rooms during the period. This was certainly true at the Governor's Palace

where Lord Botetourt had several pieces of furniture dedicated to writing and business as indicated by his estate inventory taken in October of 1770. The presence of these functional pieces suggests that dining rooms were used for more than just meals. Philip Vickers Fithian went so far as to describe the dining room at Nomini Hall as the room "where we usually sit." This preference could be explained partly by the lack of central heat. Why go to the trouble and expense of maintaining fires in several rooms when one in the dining room—equipped with chairs, tables, and a desk for the family's use—would suffice?

The Parlor

A gentry PARLOR was furnished with some of the same sorts of items that were found in dining rooms—usually a set of twelve chairs, a tea table, one or two card tables, a carpet, with occasionally a spinet or fortepiano. However, the objects in the parlor were often more expensive than those in the dining room. For example, a comparison of the chairs in Peyton Randolph's inventory shows that the parlor chairs were worth £2 apiece while the dining room chairs were worth only £1.5.0. The four looking glasses in the dining room were worth £5 each, a substantial sum of money, but they pale in comparison to the parlor looking glass valued at £10. The same holds true for the parlor carpet worth £10 while the dining room carpet is valued at only a tenth of that amount. In sum, DINING ROOMS were often the more important room on the basis of size; however, PARLORS could be viewed as equally important, albeit smaller, based on the cost of parlor furnishings.

The Passage

The PASSAGE, as it increased in size by mid-century, contained certain objects that related to its use and location within a gentry house. A set of six or twelve Windsor chairs is often listed in passages of gentry homes. These chairs could be used in the passage itself or moved elsewhere in the house as needed. They could even be taken outside during good weather, which may explain why they were usually painted green; they could blend into the background. In addition, an old dining table (round or oval), is occasionally listed in the passage. It could be used there during the summer or merely stored until needed elsewhere in the house. Other objects sometimes found in a passage context include an old couch, out of style but still functional, and a spyglass, generally only in rural areas where it proved useful to identify things at a distance.

The Chamber

The primary BEDCHAMBER was usually located on the first floor during this period. The Randolphs had moved all of their CHAMBERS to the second floor by the time of Peyton's death in 1775, but they are an exception. Living in an urban context, where bedchambers were moved upstairs at an earlier date than out in the country, may have contributed to their decision. Occasionally, in more rural areas, a house might have two first-floor bedchambers, such as the ones at Carter's Grove and Rosewell.

The chamber is another room in the gentry house with feminine associations. It is the room in which conception, birth, and death usually occurred and where children received their earliest education. John Mason's memories of his mother's early death when he was a small child suggest the importance of the chamber. As an adult, he still could recall the contents of every drawer in the chest of drawers and the contents of each of the two closets in his mother's chamber at Gunston Hall.[29]

The furnishings for the PRIMARY CHAMBER included a tall-post bed with curtains and valances, or what was called in the period bed furniture. The bedstead was the frame, while the term *bed* referred to what we today call the mattress. William Pearson's 1777 estate inventory describes his bed as: "1 Bedstead Bed 1 pr. Blankets 1 pr. Sheets 1 Counterpane Bolster 2 Pillows and Curtains £16." These are the items usually included on a well-outfitted bed. Curtains in a chamber context refer to bed curtains. If window curtains are listed, they include the term *window* as a descriptive reference. Window curtains are rarely found in Virginia inventories. When listed, they tend to show up in a chamber and in towns, and they are usually inexpensive. For example, the window curtains in the Randolphs' chamber are worth only 40 shillings, which suggests they were more for privacy than for fashion.

The remaining room on the first floor of a gentry house could be used in several ways: as a SECOND CHAMBER, as mentioned above, as a STUDY or LIBRARY, as we see at the Wythe House, or as a BACK PARLOR, as we have at the Everard property. The architectural elaboration of the fourth room can give clues about its use. At the Wythe House, the southwest room was painted a color different from the rest of the first floor. Littleton Waller Tazewell's recollections of Wythe indicate that his study was on the ground floor, so Wythe's study was installed in this fourth space. Studies and libraries were more simply decorated than public rooms and even chambers. At Everard's house, on the other hand, the more elaborate fireplace surround in the southeast downstairs room suggested that the space had been used for something other than a second chamber or a study. Inventory studies reveal that BACK PARLORS some-

time occupied the fourth area. The absence of an inventory for Everard's estate has given us a chance to interpret such a space to visitors.

On the SECOND FLOOR of gentry houses, rooms served primarily as bedchambers. Beds varied greatly in terms of value. One house might contain a tall-post bedstead, bed, and furniture worth £20 as well as a low-post bedstead (unpainted) with bed, bolster, and blankets worth less than £3. Often, more than one bed was located in a chamber, such as we see at both the Randolph and Wythe houses. Other furniture might include three or four side chairs, a dressing table and glass, and a clothespress. The better chambers had more fashionable items, while the secondary spaces were supplied with out-of-date and cheaper objects.

Additional Furnishings

LOOKING GLASSES

Fashionable gentry dwellings of the late colonial period contained many types of objects in addition to the furnishings already mentioned and those described in other sections of this manual. On the walls hung *looking glasses,* what we would call mirrors. Those found in bedchambers, were usually described as *dressing glasses,* sometimes called *swing glasses* because their angle could be adjusted to suit the different needs of a short man adjusting his wig or a tall woman dressing her hair. Several looking glasses are illustrated in the "Objects by Social Rank" section, p. O-18.

Glasses located in public rooms were larger and designed more for light reflection than vanity. When hung on the walls between windows, as in the dining room at the Randolph House, they were called *pier glasses.* The middle room upstairs at the Governor's Palace displays an example of a *chimney glass* over the fireplace. Looking glasses helped to reflect light into a room making it brighter than it might be, especially on dark, cloudy days. Chimney and pier glasses were sometimes equipped with sconce arms for candles. Reflection doubled the light.

PORTRAITS

Fashionable eighteenth-century households sometimes boasted portraits, which denoted wealth and status by indicating who could afford to hire a portrait painter. The survival of dozens of colonial portraits proves that these objects existed, even though the historical record usually omits them. Although rarely listed in inventories, portraits occasionally show up in wills. For example, Peyton Randolph's inventory contains no paintings, but Betty's will refers to "the Family Pictures." Presumably these family items had little monetary value to outsiders, despite their great sentimental value for relatives.

Two portraits of members of the gentry, Robert Carter III and his wife, Frances (née Tasker) Carter, are reproduced in the "Color Plates" section, p. P-7.

MAPS, VIEWS, AND PRINTS

Fashionable households also displayed maps and prints, the former usually in dining rooms, passages, and studies. Very seldom were maps framed and displayed under glass, regardless of their size. They were frequently suspended on rollers, as is the map over the fireplace in the Wythe dining room. The geographical subjects depicted ranged throughout the world. Maps of Virginia, New England, North America, Britain, Europe, Africa, and Asia could be found on the walls of colonial dwellings. Thomas Hornsby's inventory, below, provides us with an example in which "1 Map of Virginia 10/" is listed among the contents of the hall.

Views of cities—London, Bristol, and Oxford, to name just a few—supplemented maps of different regions and countries. Some people may have considered them a reminder of earlier times. This may have been the case with John Carlyle of Alexandria, originally from Carlisle in northwestern England. When his inventory was taken in 1782, it listed one "prospect" of Carlisle and fifteen of Cumberland.

Prints most commonly appeared in public rooms although a few inventories list a print in a chamber context. Subject matter varied from the sacred to the everyday—from the scripture prints in the Palace parlor to Hogarth's "Marriage-à-la-Mode" in the Everard dining room (suggested by Ralph Wormeley's 1791 inventory, which calls for "Hogarths Allamode" in the drawing room). Series of prints, like Hogarth's, with a story to tell, were popular as were sets of the seasons, the months, the senses, and the elements. Individual prints dealt with a wide variety of subjects—from May–December romances to tavern scenes to portraits of famous and infamous personages. Some individuals sought out subjects that would entertain. John Custis ordered "good Comicall diverting prints to hang in the passage of my house."[30] Done in a variety of techniques, these engravings conveyed images of the latest fashionable dress, household furnishings, and architecture. Thus, prints were both decorative and instructive.

Unlike maps, prints were usually framed, although the method of framing could vary depending upon how much a family could afford to pay. Glazing could mean varnishing the print (for example, the prints in the hall at the Public Gaol) or putting it under glass. The frame itself could be a simple black frame or one with a gilt spandrel that separated the print visually and sometimes literally from the outside frame, such as the set of *Scenigraphia Americana* in the Wythe dining room. Frames could be suspended from the wall with simple nails or they could hang from rings looped over polished,

brass nails that caught the light. In less well-to-do households, prints might be nailed directly to the wall.

Maps and prints were available locally. John Greenhow's 1771 newspaper advertisement lists among its many items "Mezzotinto Prints." The Printing Office also sold prints. Dr. James Carter, for example, paid £1.2.6 "For 6 Prints framed with Glass @ 3/9" in 1751. In 1765, Jane Vobe purchased three "Views of Studley Park in frames, gilt" for £3 as well as "1 Shepherdess painted on glass" for ten shillings.[31]

Ornamental China

Only the wealthiest households could afford ornamental china. Lord Botetourt's inventory lists two sets: one in the parlor and one in the dining room. Given the sequence of the items within the inventory, these objects were probably located on the mantelshelf in each of these rooms. The same is true in the Randolph home where "a Sett of Ornamental China," listed in the inventory, has been installed over the parlor fireplace.

Conclusion

A person's house conveyed a wide variety of messages to those who entered. The size, materials, degree of architectural finish, and means of heating and lighting all provided information about the owner's economic and social status, hopes and aspirations, or lack thereof. Contemporary observers of eighteenth-century life make this abundantly clear in their writings. From documents written by Philip Vickers Fithian, Dr. Alexander Hamilton, and Josiah Quincy, to name just a few, we know that houses and their fittings were scrutinized for what they revealed about their owners' current social and economic status and their spoken and unspoken ambitions. The briefest glance at a person's living arrangements provided myriad details about these matters.

Genteel buildings with genteel furnishings were not restricted to use as residences. When the College of William and Mary began construction in 1693, it marked a change in the style of public buildings and ultimately wrought changes in domestic structures as well. The Capitol, Governor's Palace, Bruton Parish Church as rebuilt in 1715, the Powder Magazine, the Brafferton, and the President's House all reflected changing perceptions of appropriate building techniques for permanent settlement and set new architectural standards for both interiors and exteriors.[32]

The Capitol and the Palace, with their paneled and painted interior walls, provided the setting for entertainments that the gentry attended. These buildings replicated what some colonials already had experienced if they had visited Britain or had been educated there. The Palace in particular served as a model for the domestic application of various elements of these public building. Colonial elites invited to the Palace conversed, dined, and danced in a setting that reflected the taste of the king's own representative in Virginia.

Consequently, local gentry families began to jump on this new construction bandwagon to demonstrate their own awareness of up-to-date trends, thus validating their claims to social, political, and economic leadership within the colony. Within thirty years of the completion of the Palace (around 1715), several ambitious private houses were under construction in eastern Virginia. These include Rosewell, Berkeley, Shirley (although the interior was not finished until the early 1770s), Sabine Hall, and Stratford. After 1750, the great period of mansion building began with structures such as Carter's Grove, Westover, Gunston Hall, Mt. Airy, Brandon, Menokin, and Kenmore to name just a few.[33]

Before 1750, a house and a tavern were not readily distinguishable from one another. The original section of the Raleigh Tavern (about 1717) was basically a two-room house with a loft. However, business success brought about the need for more space, and the Raleigh was expanded less than twenty years after its original section went up. The 1730s addition to the east, now called the Public Room[34] gave much more space for customers. Wetherburn's Tavern, probably constructed during the 1730s, was a much larger building initially. No doubt it could accommodate a large number of customers in spaces with some degree of specialization. Nonetheless, it might still be mistaken for a large dwelling.

By the 1750s, however, the interior layout of neither establishment could be confused with that of a residence. The increasing need for specialized spaces meant that taverns began to use rooms differently than those in homes. Taverns needed a public dining room where ordinary travelers could find a dinner at a set price, as required by law. However, taverns also needed private rooms that patrons could rent out for special occasions where they "clubbed together" (shared expenses). These private spaces might be required for a special dinner or cards, accompanied by coffee, tea, or punch, as part of gentlemanly entertainments.

Larger events, such as assemblies, required larger rooms; so too did a large public dinner—for example, the dinner given at Wetherburn's in November 1751 to honor and welcome Governor Gooch. Both taverns had added large entertainment spaces in the early 1750s: Wetherburn's to the west end with the Great Room and the Raleigh to the north with the Apollo Room. As part of the building boom in town following the 1748 decision to keep the capital at Williamsburg, these large rooms were necessary for genteel entertainment styles, as they had developed by mid-century, both in taverns and dwelling houses. However, for a tavern it was a business necessity, if the tavern keeper wished to stay competitive and offer genteel accommodations.

Furnishings for taverns could sometimes be as expensive as those in a private home. For example, Henry Wetherburn had an eight-day clock worth £8 in the Bullhead Room. If tavern keepers wanted to attract fashionable clientele, they had to furnish their establishments with stylish, up-to-date furniture, ceramics, and glassware. This was certainly true at Wetherburn's and the Raleigh. An Englishman in the 1750s commented favorably on a tavern in Leedstown, Virginia, and noted that, "the House and Furniture, has as elegant an appearance, as any I have seen in the country. Mr. Finnays or Withbernes in Williamsburg not excepted. The chairs Tables &c of the Room I was conducted into was all of Mahogany, and . . . stuft with fine large glaized Copper Plate Prints."[35] Clearly, genteel furnishings made an impression on discerning patrons.

Big-city shoppers also came to expect fashionable surroundings for their favorite pastime. Williamsburg, unlike London and other British urban centers, had no high-end shops and warerooms (epitomized by the showrooms established by entrepreneurs like Josiah Wedgwood) in which customers browsed, judged the newest trends, and made purchases. While Williamsburg stores carried up-to-date merchandise, it was not displayed as in London shops. Large bow windows, for instance, did not begin to appear on the fronts of Chesapeake shops until the late eighteenth century. While shopping in a Virginia store was a means of socializing and learning about the latest styles, it was not the leisure activity that it was in major urban centers. Otherwise, American townspeople with shillings to spare had easy access to all the makings of gentility. One traveler in the 1770s seemed stunned by the rapidity with which Americans took up the latest trends. "I am almost inclined to believe that a new fashion is adopted earlier by the polished and affluent Americans than by many opulent persons in the great metropolis [London]."[36]

1 *Oxford English Dictionary*.
2 Edward Williams, *Virginia: More Especially the South Part . . .*, ed. Peter Force, cited in Dell Upton, "Early Vernacular Architecture in Southeastern Virginia," 154.
3 Joseph Ball cited in Camille Wells, "Social and Economic Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Housing in the Northern Neck of Virginia," 57.
4 The term *drawing room* also applied to this space in some cases.
5 Wells, "Social and Economic Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Housing," 126.
6 Custis Square consists of the eight lots along the south side of Francis Street east of the Public Hospital. The Custis residence no longer stands, and the block is vacant except for the Custis Kitchen and some oxen.
7 Mark R. Wenger, "The Dining Room in Early Virginia," 154.
8 Thomas Mortimer, *The Universal Director* (London, 1763), p. 54, cited in Charles Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration*, 128.
9 See Ian C. Bristow, *Architectural Colour in British Interiors, 1615–1840*, chaps. 3–5, for specific information on changing paint colors during the eighteenth century.
10 As quoted in Marcus Whiffen, *The Eighteenth-Century Houses of Williamsburg*, 280.
11 Memorandum, March 26, 1993, Betty Leviner and Mark R. Wenger to Pam Pettengell, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation archives.
12 Margaret Beck Pritchard and Willie Graham, "Rethinking Two Houses at Colonial Williamsburg," 166–175.
13 Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture*, 327.
14 Susanna Whatman, *The House Keeping Book of Susanna Whatman, 1776–1800*, 37.
15 No archaeological fragments of these lighting devices have been found in an eighteenth-century context in Williamsburg. Personal communication, William Pittman, July 15, 2000.
16 See the samples of "Lighting Devices," in the "Objects by Social Rank" section, p. O-9.
17 Fithian's diary entry on Christmas night, 1773, Philip Vickers Fithian, *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773–1774*, 54. For more information on candles as a light source, see Betty Crowe Leviner, "'Luminous and Splendid?'" 17–20.
18 For a more complete discussion of household furnishings, see Jan Kirsten Gilliam and Betty Crowe Leviner, *Furnishing Williamsburg's Historic Buildings*.
19 See photographs of sleeping arrangements for various social ranks on pp. O-16–17.
20 York County, Wills and Inventories 20 (1745–59): 380.
21 Wells, "Social and Economic Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Housing," 280.
22 York County, Wills and Inventories 18 (1732–40): 312–316; transcript pp. R-7–8.
23 Cited in Graham Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg*, 129.
24 These areas of residences were "public" in that they were intended for receiving guests.
25 York County, Wills and Inventories 21 (1760–71): 252–263.
26 This tax situation had more impact in Britain than in America because the latter imported very little European walnut. Nonetheless, as the use of mahogany increased in British furniture making, it influenced American thinking as to what constituted an up-to-date, fashionable wood. See Adam Bowett, "The Commercial Introduction of Mahogany and the Naval Stores Act of 1721," 43–56; and John M. Cross, "The Changing Role of the Timber Merchant in Early Eighteenth Century London," 57–64.
27 John Bold, "The Design of a House for a Merchant, 1724," 79.
28 York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83): 337–341. See also, pp. R-2–4.
29 John Mason's recollections, 1832, unedited typescript in Gunston Hall Archives, p. 1.
30 John Custis to Perry, Lane, and Perry, 1717, quoted in Mark R. Wenger, "The Central Passage in Virginia," 137.
31 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 12, 1771, p. 3, col. 2 for Greenhow's ad, reprinted in full p. R-17; and *Virginia Gazette* Journals, August 8, 1752, for Dr. James Carter, and April 11, 1765, for Jane Vobe, who on the very next day purchased "6 four Sheet Maps on Rollers, coloured 13/ [each]" totaling £3.18.0).
32 For a discussion of Williamsburg's public buildings, see Marcus Whiffen, *The Public Buildings of Williamsburg*.
33 The only comprehensive survey of Virginia's gentry houses of the colonial period is Thomas T. Waterman's *Mansions of Virginia, 1706–1776*.
34 For an analysis of the Raleigh's architectural expansion over the course of the eighteenth century, see Mark R. Wenger, "The Construction of Raleigh Tavern," in "Raleigh Tavern Historical Report," Block 17, Building 6A, Folder 2, Rockefeller Library, Williamsburg, Va.
35 Daniel Fisher's Journal, 1750–55, in Louise Pecquet du Bellet, *Some Prominent Virginia Families*, 2: 791.
36 William Eddis, *Letters from America*, ed. Aubrey C. Land, 114.

C. Manners, Education, and Conversation

In the hierarchical society of eighteenth-century England and Virginia, personal appearance and deportment equated to social rank. Clothing and body language defined a person's place in the world, and his or her station was readily apparent. Historian Cathleene B. Hellier maintains that an eighteenth-century person could readily identify the social rank of an individual seen at a distance of several hundred feet!

To a certain extent, a person's "marks of identity" were determined by birth and education, but, by the middle of the eighteenth century, some upwardly mobile folk undertook to learn new social skills as adults. They were fully aware of the significance of personal appearance; it was no trivial matter. And just having money was not sufficient. Clothing, mode of transportation, quality of voice and the content of speech, gracefulness in dancing, ways of eating and drinking, and many other attributes and personal effects contributed to a person's overall image. One's choices in these several matters broadcast his or her social position to all observers. A convincing image required harmony among the various elements. Without being introduced or knowing anything about him, a viewer could draw valid conclusions.

The English satirical prints, "Grown Gentlemen Taught to Dance" and "Grown Ladies Taught to Dance," reproduced on p. A-8, capture the essence of new money used for acquiring genteel behaviors. The uncouth subjects may not be apt students of the minuet, but they (or their fathers or husbands) have recently captured the market and made good money. Manufacturing, brewing, shipping, and retailing made fortunes for some entrepreneurs. Such self-made Englishmen were frequently scoffed at, snubbed, and satirized for their coarse origins and money-grubbing ways.

American upstarts were by no means immune to criticism. In 1744, Alexander Hamilton, a Scots physician living in Annapolis, took a horseback journey to the North. He was an astute observer of his fellow travelers, and his journal of the trip may be read as a guide to the behaviors of various social ranks in colonial America. One of the best examples is a Mr. Morison whom Hamilton met at a tavern in New Castle, Delaware. Morison apparently had financial means—and he certainly had social pretensions, despite his "greasy jacket and breeches and a dirty worsted cap" and foul language. The man flew into a rage when the landlady gave him scraps instead of the choicer breakfast served to guests of more refined appearance. As Hamilton recounted it, "He told us that tho he seemed to be but a plain, homely fellow, yet he would have us know that he was able to afford better than many that went finer: he had good linnen in his bags, a pair of silver buckles, silver clasps, and gold sleeve buttons, two Holland shirts, and some neat night caps; and that his little woman att home drank tea twice a day; and he himself lived very well and expected to live better."[1]

No amount of good linen could make up for Morison's coarseness, his "heavy, forward, clownish air and behaviour," his "naturall boorishness." His political opinions were not original; he believed what "some very good gentlemen" told him was correct, including their opinion that Sir Robert Walpole was "a damnd rogue." Morison had little education, few opinions of his own, no gentleness, and little experience of the wider world—or else he had learned nothing from it. His only claims to the status of gentleman were some modicum of wealth and unbounded social ambition. Morison missed the mark of gentility by miles.

Gentlefolk were, first of all, gentle in their behavior; their language, wardrobes, and table manners were components of their overall demeanor. True gentility, refinement, or respectability came from within—from the spirit and intellect. Attaining social sophistication and correctness was a pursuit for the whole person, not just a matter of using the correct table implements or wearing expensive apparel. Education and exposure to good company were the best lessons in true refinement and respectability.[2]

> The Epitome of Virginia Womanhood
>
> *Miss [Jenny] Washington is about seventeen; She has not a handsome Face, but is neat in her Dress, of an agreeable Size, & well proportioned, & has an easy winning Behaviour; She is not forward to begin a conversation, yet when spoken to She is extremely affable, without assuming any Girlish affectation, or pretending to be overcharg'd with Wit; She has but lately had opportunity of instruction in Dancing, yet She moves with propriety when she dances a Minuet & without any Flirts or vulgar Capers, when She dances a Reel or Country-Dance: She plays well on the Harpsichord, & Spinet; understands the principles of musick, & therefore performs her Tunes in perfect time, a Neglect of which always makes music intolerable, but it is a fault almost universal among young Ladies in the practice; She sings likewise to her instrument, has a strong, full voice, & a well-judging Ear; but most of the Virginia-Girls think it labour quite sufficient to thump the Keys of a Harpsichord into the air of a tune mechanically, & think it would be Slavery to submit to the Drudgery of acquiring Vocal Music; Her Dress is rich & well-chosen, but not tawdry, not yet too plain; She appears to Day in a Chintz cotton Gown with an elegant blue Stamp, a Sky-Blue silk Quilt, spotted Apron.*
>
> Fithian Diary, June 24, 1774

Education for the Masses

Parents were their children's first educators, of course, and most taught their offspring to read and do simple ciphering as well as perform some other basic skills. Most children in colonial Virginia, both black and white, went no further. In Williamsburg and a few other Virginia towns Bray Schools for African-American children (both slave and free) operated during the late colonial period. Students at these schools learned the Anglican Church's catechism, some reading, cleanliness, and obedience. (Girls also received instruction in sewing and knitting.)

Colonial girls of all ranks spent most of their time learning housewifery. The subject demanded long attention to achieve competence. It encompassed many and varied skills like planning, cooking, and serving meals; cleaning; gardening, dairying, and raising poultry for meat and eggs; food preservation in the various seasons; laundering, cutting out, sewing, and repairing the family's apparel as well as the household linen; supervising and training slaves, servants, and perhaps other employees; concocting medicines and tending infants, children, and the ill; and dozens of other small and large tasks. Young women from the upper-middling and wealthy segments of Virginia society were also expected to dance gracefully, dress well, perform music on an instrument or vocally, engage in polite conversation, return visits, and entertain effortlessly. Their "job description," a seemingly simple one, was indeed complex and demanding.

> *They wash here the whitest that ever I seed for they first Boyle all the Cloaths with soap, and then wash them, and I may put on clean linen every day if I please.*
>
> *I have a very fine feather bed under me, and a pair of sheets, a thin fold of a Blanket and a Cotton bed spread is all my bed cloaths, and I find them Just enough.*
>
> June 14, 1774, *Journal of John Harrower,* p. 56

For some boys of the middling sort, formal apprenticeships brought both job training and basic education. Formal indentures required masters to provide basic literacy training, in addition to teaching the particular trade. Ideally, apprenticeships began when a child reached the age of fourteen and lasted until he or she was twenty-one. Boys whose families had the means might send them to the Grammar School at the College of William and Mary at about that same age. Clearly then, grammar school boys were expected to become professionals and scholars, not to work with their hands at a trade. But Williamsburg's middling sort strove to a higher level of education; for instance, cabinetmaker and tavern keeper Anthony Hay owned a book on Latin grammar, and his successor, Edmund Dickinson, a bachelor, had a French dictionary and books of English poetry.[3]

A small number of Virginia children from the wealthiest families—almost all boys, by the way—attended formal schools either in the colony or in England. Some were taught privately by tutors or governesses. Tutors were employed by one household or by several families who shared the expense. On a less regular basis, parents employed dancing masters, French teachers, and instructors in music, fine needlework, painting, fencing, and other specialties. Even some middling families in Williamsburg paid for extra training for their children—sometimes exchanging the father's work for the specialized skills of the master or mistress. Humphrey Harwood, for example, undertook building repairs for Sarah Hallam in exchange for dancing lessons for his sons. He made similar arrangements with the Reverend Robert Andrews to teach William mathematics for six months.[4]

> *Catch, then, oh catch the transient hour;*
> *Improve each moment as it flies!*
>
> Samuel Johnson, *Prologue on the Opening of Drury Lane Theatre*

Advanced education and leisure for intellectual pursuits were the province of the elite during the colonial era. Having time to engage in such nonessential activities was, by and large, predicated upon wealth. The issue of time in the early modern period is extraordinarily interesting and perplexing. Questions abound: Who had leisure time and how did they use it? How did he or she make a living or have the means to live? How did different kinds of people regard time, keep time, and tell time—by the sun? by clocks in public buildings? by their own household clocks or pocket watches?

Rural areas necessarily held to natural, seasonal time schedules until very recently. Farming and other outdoor work like house building, carting, and woodcutting could hardly be accomplished economically by artificial light, so the sunup-to-sundown schedule probably applied to those engaged in these kinds of work. Williamsburg residents and other townspeople heard time tolled from clocks in the cupolas of major public buildings. Urban people of all ranks were also more likely to own timepieces than their country cousins.

Very little information—and none of it direct—about the work schedules for early Virginia stores and trade shops exists; perhaps their hours were somewhat flexible, varying with the seasons, and could be extended beyond sunlight

with candles and lanterns. Operating hours at both the College of William and Mary and Williamsburg's Bray School certainly shortened in winter's darkness; probably other establishments, both private and commercial, did the same. One of the best sources of information about this subject, although it is not about the Chesapeake region, is Benjamin Franklin's autobiography, which hints at the variable work times, long dinner hours, and the frequent religious and local holidays that printers and their employees enjoyed in the northern colonies.

The use of one's time was a personal matter, although parents certainly tried to influence how their offspring spent their waking hours. Thomas Jefferson installed the large clock at Monticello to regulate the time of his entire family and staff on the plantation. Even earlier, some Virginians had showed a propensity to hoard time and account for its passing. William Byrd II, for example, entered his schedule in his diary, recording his profitable and pleasurable activities by the hour. True to his origins as the son of a watchmaker, Irish Huguenot John Fontaine traveled throughout Virginia in the second decade of the eighteenth century filling his diary with notes about the time of his arrivals and departures.

> *Perfection is the child of Time.*
>
> Bishop Joseph Hall, *Works* (1625)

Scholarly endeavors and polite literature were not for everyone, not even for many. Working hard, physically hard, was the lot of the majority of early Virginians. Although he had gone to England as a youth for his own schooling, Landon Carter, by 1770, believed "everybody begins to laugh at English education; the general importers of it nowadays bring back only a stiff priggishness with as little good manners as possible."[5] Overall, Virginians valued education and intellectual pursuits. Scholarly attainments could actually compensate for lack of family and estate; for example, Fithian told his successor as tutor at Nomini Hall that a graduate of Princeton, even without a fortune, rated as high on the social scale in Virginia as a man worth £10,000.[6]

> *I am settled here [at Belvidera, Col. William Daingerfield's plantation in near Fredericksburg] as a Schoolmaster and can really say with great truth that I never lived a genteel regulare life untill now.*
>
> John Harrower to his wife
> in Scotland, August 7, 1774

Education of Gentry Children

In both Virginia and England, education in duty and manners was conveyed formally (by tutor or school) and informally (by experience and observation). Training in virtue, etiquette, and religious duty helped children to apply cultural ideals to everyday, face-to-face social relationships. The gentry in Virginia insisted that their children master all the "polite" accomplishments. This concern is clearly revealed in surviving manuscripts. Nathaniel Burwell of Gloucester County, for example, deplored his brother's neglect of his studies. Not only would the lack of practical skills impede his management of his own affairs, his ignorance would make him socially unacceptable in every way. If he were obviously uneducated or undereducated, he would be "unfit for any Gentleman's conversation, & therefore a Scandalous person & a Shame to his Relations, not having one single qualification to recommend him." Likewise, William Fitzhugh of Bedford in Stratford County believed that his children had "better be never born than illbred."[7]

The study of mathematics and law prepared a gentry boy to manage the estate he would inherit and to take up his future social obligations. But the objective of education for the gentry was not related to occupation. Instead, study developed every side of a gentleperson's character. George Washington expressed this concept plainly when he wrote about Jacky Custis's education. Washington agreed that "a knowledge of books is the basis upon which other knowledge is to be built," but he did not believe that "becoming a mere scholar is desirable education for a gentleman." Similarly, the will of Robert Beverley of Newlands in Spotsylvania County directed that his son's guardians continue the boy's education until Harry mastered "everything necessary for a gentleman to learn."

Young gentry women were not exempt from education, although their course of study was usually quite different—less academic, some emphasis on artistic achievements, but mostly encompassing practical matters. The 1762 will of Charles Carter of Cleve dictated, "it is my positive will and desire that my daughters may be maintained with great frugality and taught to dance." Regarding his sons, John and Landon, who were then in England "for the benefit of their education," Carter stipulated that "it is my will and meaning that they shall be continued at school to learn the languages, Mathematicks, Phylosophy, dancing and fencing till they are well accomplished & at a proper age to be bound to some reputable, sober, discreet practicing attorney til they arrive at the age of twenty-one years and nine months." The difference in the education provided for daughters and sons can hardly be made clearer than Carter did in his last will and testament.

The gentry of Virginia hired tutors, established plan-

tation schools, paid local clergyman who taught, or occasionally sent their children to England. The fact that boys of the upper ranks were educated in both England and America is significant, indicating that the educational standards of the two places were interchangeable. This commonality suggests cultural nationalism, which is further substantiated by the fact that English and Virginia libraries contained the same or similar titles.

Although parents and tutors were responsible for cultivating genteel behavior, dancing masters taught the ceremonies and civilities of proper behavior. Itinerant dancing and music masters conducted classes for some amount of time, usually several days, at one plantation and then moved on to the next set of students. Fithian's diary contains quite a lot of information about Mr. Francis Christian who taught the Carters of Nomini Hall, for example, and other sources corroborate that evidence.

To some minds, actual participation in society was as significant a way to learn gentility as formal training. By associating with persons of rank, a youth would learn by example the right kind of behavior. Civility (from the same Latin root as civics and civilization) grew with experience in society. The company of others determined what was universally acceptable behavior. A person secluded from society had little opportunity to observe and consult others and to use his good manners and common sense.

Informal education thus relied on participation in society. The wealthier a person was, the broader his or her experiences in society might be and, therefore, the wider ranging his observations and his knowledge of how to act in particular circumstances. Participating in society was the best way for a young person to learn appropriate behavior because such participation required the unremitting performance of acts of civility and ceremony. Gradually, universally pleasing conduct became second nature so that children no longer had to stop and consider their actions. "As soon as we have gained knowledge of civility," an English etiquette book author affirmed, "we shall find the best way to improve it will be Exercise." Chesterfield reminded his son that "good-sense can only give you the great outlines of good-breeding, but observation and usage can alone give you the delicate touches and the fine colouring." Governor Gooch found that a young man who visited the Palace had not learned from experience and observation:

> Your friend . . . I wish I had never known, and to whom I have nothing to give . . . to say nothing of his prophane Jests against Religion and things sacred, or of his lewd and unnatural Lust of which he Boasts . . . to enlarge upon his Principles, he had the assurance, in a most insolent manner, to affront my Wife and Sister, at my own Table, for which he had no other Provocation than their rallying [bantering with or gently ridiculing] him upon his manner of Behaviour.

Hugh Jones noted that Virginians were inclined "to read men by business and conversation," indicating the importance of formal education and practical sense. In face-to-face encounters within a small community reading the behavior (intentions and dispositions) of one's fellows was essential to social, political, and economic survival. Virginians tended to rely on their immediate reactions to determine what would be pleasing to another person and what made sense in a given encounter.

Social life among the gentry of Virginia rested on the easy practice of civility and the successful execution of a few specific ceremonies. Formal procedures such as addressing the governor, taking an oath of office, proposing a toast at a formal dinner, and so on were important ceremonies, each with its set of rules. The rules of ceremonies might change according to fashion and required specific training, experience, or observation. Civilities, by contrast, were in constant use and considered immutable.

Adult men and women, by long practice, followed a self-imposed guide of conduct. Observing the behavior of others made gentlemen and ladies sensitive to their own social obligations. As a consequence, they were quick to feel any insinuation that their conduct did not comply with custom. Monitoring the behavior of others was an important way of "reading" and "knowing" people, both new acquaintances and old friends. Imperfections and slips merited notice. They were noted in diaries and letters, discussed over the dinner table, or whispered about after church. Social mistakes were the bad examples one took to heart and remembered. Learning from one's own errors or others' faux pas perpetuated the system of informal education.

The pitched battle between Lieutenant-Governor Francis Fauquier and Reverend John Camm began with the second Two-Penny Act in 1758. Their quarrel roiled and escalated over the years. A social slight—whether intentional or accidental—felt like salt in an open wound to Fauquier. Camm was accused of failing to extend civilities to the governor and wrote the Bishop of London to defend himself.

> I have received from Mr. Horrocks such Intimations of the grounds of this confirmed dislike of the Governor & his family to me as the following. That, the Governor & His Lady once fancied Mr. Graham & me to have purposely Omitted the putting off our Hats to them, when they passed by in a Chariot on the out side of the Pales of the College, while we were walking to & Fro in the gravel Walk within. And it was taken

> notice of it seems, that I did not put off my hat to Mr. Fauquier & Captain Fauquier when I happend to meet them in the Streets. This compliment I never failed to pay the Governor so far as I can recollect; because custom here gave it to him from everybody. But I did not extend it to his sons: because I thought it would be resented as a challenge of Acquaintance, from one who had never enjoyed the Honor of being introduced to them, & therefore could have no pretensions to make such a challenge.

Control of undesirable or unwanted body gestures and twitches that might convey an unintended meaning to others was a preoccupation of the mid-eighteenth century. External expressions belied one's relationship not only to God but to society in general. Good conduct revealed good nature, good manners, and successful management of self. Self-control was considered a duty to others within society.

A well-bred demeanor was an aesthetic way of doing everything—a graceful air, a comeliness of execution, or the *je ne sais quoi* (that little indefinable something) of which Chesterfield so often wrote. It should be part of every action of gentlepersons, even when they were simply standing in a room or sitting in a chair. Demeanor was a decorative quality that enhanced the reputations of individuals who acquired it. British conversation pieces, a genre of small-scale, informal portraiture representing real people at home or in other intimate surroundings, capture the essence of proper demeanor.

Dancing masters urged both young and old pupils "to appear easy and amiable, genteel and free in person, Mien, Air and Motions, rather than stiff, awkward, deform'd and consequently disagreeable." In his *Rules of Good Deportment . . . For the Use of Youth* (1720), Adam Petrie cautioned, "be careful what Gestures or Motions of the Body you use, especially in speaking; see that it be decent, not accompained [sic] with nodding, shaking of the Head, or looking a skew, or wry Mouth'd, moving the Hands, &c." Deportment was a body skill, insuring ease and harmony of body parts. Dancing went further and extended the lessons of deportment by inculcating balance, alignment, aesthetic lines and twists, and rhythm. (See pp. F-4–6 for specific information about dancing.)

A Virginian laid claim to gentility on the basis of birth and virtue. Wishing to claim gentility, a Virginian might agree with Daniel Defoe, who wrote, "If the vertue descends not with the titles, the man is but the shadow of a gentleman, without the substance." Virtue was the true source of nobility and gentility. All men were equal in the sight of God, but some had been elevated above their fellows because of their outstanding moral qualities and exemplary conduct. Among these qualities were patriotism, godliness, and the accomplishments and discipline of education. Such heroic qualities were what had raised one's ancestors to honor, to an honorable name, and possibly to titles. The same qualities were expected in all gentlepersons and especially in leaders.

Gentility moderated a world that was made up of rules and conventions on the one hand and essentially rude and natural on the other. From tutors and by observation, the gentleperson had learned those habits that pleased others. Henry Fielding thought agreeableness was the essence of a well-bred person: "In short, by good breeding . . . I mean the art of pleasing or contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of those with whom you converse." Richard Steele wrote his own description of the combination of traits that combined to produce gentility: "When I view the fine gentleman with regard to his manner, methinks I see him modest without bashfulness, frank and affable without impertinence, obliging and complaisant without servility, cheerful and in good-humour without noise."

Etiquette and Deference

Social behavior at various levels of society is difficult to recapture. For colonial Virginia, only sparse anecdotal information is available. In general and not surprisingly, it is safe to say that adult white males topped the societal pyramid.

According to Pulitzer Prize–winning historian Rhys Isaac, "rank was not defined in old Virginia simply by wealth. Yet there was a direct connection between status and the ownership of sufficient property to support a great household. It was this close association that most impressed an acerbic Scots tutor, James Reid, who felt himself to be very much an observer from outside the charmed circle:

> If a [man] . . . has Money, Negroes and Land enough he is a compleat Gentleman. These . . . hide all his deffects, usher him into (what they call) the best company, and draws upon him the smiles of the fair Sex. His madness then passes for wit, his extravagance for flow of spirit, his insolence for bravery, and his cowardice for wisdom. . . . Learning and good sense; religion and refined Morals . . . have nothing to do in the composition. These are qualifications only proper for a dull, plodding, thoughtful fellow, who . . . cannot appear in polite company for want of Negroes: Nor at horseraces and Cock matches for want of skill in those . . . heroic exercises.[8]

Reid's comment is that of an outsider, so he shows

himself to be deeply prejudiced against the successful—and necessarily slave-owning—upwardly mobile Virginia planter whom he lampooned so mercilessly.

That paragon of the Enlightenment, Governor Francis Fauquier usually behaved in an extremely courteous manner. Twice that we know of, however, he completely lost his temper. Both incidents involved his nemesis, the Reverend John Camm, who accused the governor of succumbing to "an indecent and unmanly rage." As recounted in William Robinson's letter, after lecturing Camm imperiously, the governor concluded, "You are very Ignorant or very impudent, take which alternative you please. . . . I order you never to enter my doors again." He called his servants, white and black, free and enslaved, and pointed to Camm: "Here, look at him, that you may know him again. If ever he should come to ask for me suffer him not to enter my doors."[9]

Devereaux Jarratt's autobiography gives a very clear example of the differences between gentry and middling behaviors.

> I went now to board with a gentleman, whose name was Cannon. He was a man of great possessions, in lands, slaves, &c. &c. As I had been always very shy of gentlefolk . . . imagine, how awkwardly, and with what confusion, I entered his house. . . . It was on a Sunday P.M. when I first came to the house—an entire stranger, both to the gentleman and his lady. . . . . The interview, on my part, was the more awkward as I knew not . . . what style was proper for accosting persons of their dignity. However I made bold to enter the door, and was viewed, in some measure, as a phenomenon. The gentleman took me . . . for the son of a very poor man, in the neighbourhood, but the lady, having some hint, I suppose, from the children, rectified the mistake, and cried out, it is the schoolmaster.[10]

Philip Vickers Fithian was ordinarily a model of politeness (as well as a perceptive and articulate observer). Once, however, he incurred Mrs. Carter's anger. On a June evening in 1774, "I took a whim in my head and would not go to Dinner. My Head was not dressed, and I was too lazy to change my clothes—Mrs. Carter, however, in the evening lash'd me severely. I told her I was engaged in reading a pleasant Novel. —That I was not perfectly well—But she would not hear none [sic], and said I was rude, and censurable."[11] The normally mild Frances Carter took him to task for his lax ways. To modern sensibilities, the incident seems trivial in the extreme, but by the standards of eighteenth-century Virginia's gentry society Fithian was guilty of a serious faux pas.

Concerning the problematical question of a slave owner's demeanor around his slaves, we have very little information; however, the Lancashireman Richard Parkinson made close study of George Washington in this regard. In giving orders to his slaves, the former president, known for his mildness in white society, surprised Parkinson by his severity and brusqueness. "The first time I walked with General Washington among his negroes when he spoke to them, he amazed me by the utterance of his words. He spoke as differently as if he had been quite another man, or had been in anger." Parkinson was apparently not alone in making this observation. "It was the sense of all his [Washington's] neighbours that he treated them [his slaves] with more severity than any other man."[12] Whether this was the norm among slave owners it is not possible to say, for not enough data survives. Certainly the children at Nomini Hall did not treat their body servants in a severe or brusque manner, but as dependents—underage though white and gentry—they were on a very different footing with the household staff than Washington with his field hands.

> *I blush for many of my acquaintances when I say that the [Carter] children are more kind and complaisant to the servants who constantly attend them than we are to our superiors in age and condition.*
>
> Fithian to Rev. Enoch Green, December 1, 1773

French visitors at the end of the eighteenth century were unaccustomed to encountering Africans and not used to racial slavery. The future king of France, Louis-Philippe, duc d'Orléans, spent some weeks at Mount Vernon in 1797. Concerning his encounters with Washington's slaves, he wrote, "Here Negroes are not considered human beings. When they meet a white man, they greet him from a distance with a low bow, and they often seem amazed that we [Frenchmen] return their greeting, for no one here does so."[13] From this brief remark, it is clear then that slaves were expected to bow to all or most white people they encountered; the latter, it seems, usually ignored them.

See also Hesselius's painting of the young Calvert boy attended by a slave in livery on p. P-5.

Conversation

Conversation—and the preparation that it required to become an elevated and polite discussion—was the main form of entertainment in most family circles. Reading, travel, scientific observation, politics, new acquaintances, collections of botanical specimens, music, riddles, or works of art—all these were potential topics of discussion among friends and family members. Talking about these subjects well and gracefully was a major raison d'être.

> *Conversation between refined individuals is "the grand business of our lives, the foundation of every thing, either useful of pleasant."*
> Henry Fielding, *Essay on Conversation*, 1743

"Actual people, while they did not record complete conversations, did frequently comment on the conversational abilities of their associates, just as they judged the beauty of refined women. The Charleston newspaper, in extolling the virtues of Eliza Pinckney, said of her that 'her understanding, aided by an uncommon strength of memory, had been so highly cultivated and improved by travel and extensive reading, and was so richly furnished, as well with scientific, as practical knowledge, that her talent for conversation was unrivalled.'"[14] Fithian's diary (yes, that same old source again!) gives the best perspective on discussion subjects and styles. See p. E-6, for his description of presiding over the Christmas dinner table at Nomini Hall.

Serious scholars—the clergy, statesmen, medical men, and other professionals—of course, had other reasons to read and carry on their studies, but most people in polite society read and engaged in other intellectual and artistic pursuits to relate their newfound store of knowledge to others in amiable and witty talk. Conversation, it is no exaggeration to say, became an art form—to one historian it was "the culminating genteel art."[15]

Critiques of what one had heard, seen, or read and of people one had met were of general interest and valid conversational topics. While today it might, in some circles, be considered rude to discuss the personal appearance or attire of a new acquaintance or old friend, in the eighteenth century—a more judgmental era—this was a perfectly appropriate subject. Indeed, the whole purpose of the minuet was to allow the dancers to show off their ability. Afterward observers critiqued to their hearts' content.[16] The urge to gossip may be part of our human nature; it is usually interesting, often amusing, and sometimes quite valuable.

Reciting or reading aloud poetry, plays, and other kinds of literature, either from oral or written sources, was another form of entertainment. Talk might also be simply informational and practical, transmitting family histories and cultural wisdom. It warned, taught, and entertained. Listening to adults was the main way children of the middling and lower sorts learned about life, love, work, humor, and everything else.

Other pastimes included various kinds of stitching (either functional or ornamental) and playing cards, dice, board games, and word games like crambo.[17] Any of these, given adequate light sources, could help while away long evenings and simultaneously show off one's polite ways and informed mind.

Amusements did not have to be sedate and artistic, even for the genteel. The list of the most popular entertainments among all ranks of Virginia society includes cockfights, lotteries, billiards, wrestling, swimming, boating, fishing, foxhunts, horseback riding, and a great variety of sports. Even comparing one's horse to another was considered high sport, and the more formal horse races topped the social schedule in colonial Virginia. Wagers won and lost at horse races came to whopping sums. For many, gambling was a form of conspicuous consumption. Indeed, nearly any contest—hazard played with dice, loo at cards, drafts, footraces, quoits, and many others—could be bet upon. Huge amounts of money might change hands at the drop of a card or on the roll of the dice. Neither were men the only wagerers. Women and even young girls bet at cards and other games.

George Washington's "Rules of Civility"

George Washington's manuscript "Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation" dates from about 1747, when Washington was fourteen or fifteen years old. These rules came from the hundred-year-old English etiquette book *Youth's Behaviour, or Decency in Conversation among Men.* Francis Hawkins is listed as the author of that 1640 publication, but the content is virtually identical to rules compiled by French Jesuits in 1595 at the College of La Fléche; these, in turn, came mainly from the 1558 Italian book *Il Galateo* by Giovanni della Casa.

Although this long list of rules seems forbidding, sterile, and utterly disorganized at first, the rules cluster around three basic themes: respect for rank, bodily restraint, and regard for the feelings of others. By the way, the adolescent Washington probably copied these rules as much as an exercise in penmanship as for the improvement of his conduct.

1st Every Action done in Company, ought to be with Some Sign of Respect, to those that are Present.

2d When in Company, put not your Hands to any Part of the Body, not usualy Discovered.

3d Shew Nothing to your Freind that may affright him.

4 In the Presence of Others Sing not to yourself with a humming Noise, nor Drum with your Fingers or Feet.

5th If You Cough, Sneeze, Sigh, or Yawn, do it not Loud but Privately; and Speak not in your Yawning, but put Your handkercheif or Hand before your face and turn aside.

6th Sleep not when others Speak, Sit not when others stand, Speak not when you Should hold your Peace, walk not on when others Stop.

7th Put not off your Cloths in the presence of Others, nor go out your Chamber half Drest

8th At Play and at Fire its Good manners to Give Place to the last Commer, and affect not to Speak Louder than Ordinary

9th Spit not in the Fire, nor Stoop low before it neither Put your Hands into the Flames to warm them, nor Set your Feet upon the Fire especially if there be meat before it

10th When you Sit down, Keep your Feet firm and Even, without putting one on the other or Crossing them

11th Shift not yourself in the Sight of others nor Gnaw your nails

[12th] Shake not the head, Feet, or Legs rowl not the Eys lift not one eyebrow higher than the other wry not the mouth, and bedew no mans face with your Spittle, by appr(roaching too near)r him (when) you Speak

13th Kill no Vermin as Fleas, lice ticks &c in the Sight of Others, if you See any filth or thick Spittle put your foot Dexteriously upon it if it be upon the Cloths of your Companions, Put if off privately, and if it be upon your own Cloths return Thanks to him who puts it off

14th Turn not your Back to others especially in Speaking, Jog not the Table or Desk on which Another reads or writes, lean not upon any one

15th Keep your Nails clean and Short, also your Hands and Teeth Clean yet without Shewing any great Concern for them

16th Do not Puff up the Cheeks, Loll not out the tongue rub the Hands, or beard, thrust out the lips, or bite them or keep the Lips too open or too Close

17th Be no Flatterer, neither Play with any that delights not to be Play'd Withal.

18th Read no Letters, Books, or Papers in Company but when there is a Necessity for the doing of it you must ask leave: come not near the Books or Writings of Another so as to read them unless desired or give your opinions of them unask'd also look not nigh when another is writing a Letter.

19th let your Countenance be pleasant but in Serious Matters Somewhat grave.

20th The Gestures of the Body must be Suited to the discourse you are upon.

21st Reproach none for the Infirmaties of Nature, nor Delight to Put them that have in mind thereof.

22d Shew not yourself glad at the Misfortune of another though he were your enemy.

23rd When you see a Crime punished, you may be inwardly Pleased; but always shew Pity to the Suffering Offender

(24th Do not laugh too loud or) too much at any Publick (Spectacle).

25th Superfluous Complements and all Affectation of Ceremonie are to be avoided, yet where due they are not to be Neglected

26th In Pulling off your Hat to Persons of Distinction, as Noblemen, Justices, Churchmen &c make a Reverance, bowing more or less according to the Custom of the Better Bred, and Quality of the Person. Amongst your equals expect not always that they Should begin with you first, but to Pull off the Hat when there is no need is Affectation, in the Manner of Saluting and resaluting in words keep to the most usual Custom

27th Tis ill manners to bid one more eminent than yourself be covered as well as not to do it to whom it's due Likewise he that makes too much haste to Put on his hat does not well, yet he ought to Put it on at the first, or at most the Second time of being ask'd; now what is herein Spoken, of Qualification in behaviour in Saluting, ought also to be observed in taking of Place, and Sitting down for ceremonies without Bounds is troublesome

28th If any one come to Speak to you while you are Sitting Stand up tho he be your Inferiour, and when you Present Seats let it be to every one according to his Degree

29th When you meet with one of Greater Quality than yourself, Stop, and retire especially if it be at a Door or any Straight place to give way for him to Pass

30th In walking the highest Place in most Countrys Seems to be on the right hand therefore Place yourself on the left of him whom you desire to Honour: but if three walk together the mid(dest) Place is the most Honourable the wall is usually given to the most worthy if two walk together

31st If any one far Surpasses others, either in age, Estate, or Merit (yet) would give Place to a meaner than hims(elf in his own lodging or elsewhere) the one ought not to except it, S(o he on the

other part should not use much earnestness nor offer) it above once or twice.

32d To one that is your equal, or not much inferior you are to give the cheif Place in your Lodging and he to who 'tis offered ought at the first to refuse it but at the Second to accept though not without acknowledging his own unworthiness.

33d They that are in Dignity or in office have in all places Preceedency but whilst they are Young they ought to respect those that are their equals in Birth or other Qualitys, though they have no Publick charge.

34th It is good Manners to prefer them to whom we Speak befo(re) ourselves especially if they be above us with whom in no Sort we ought to begin.

35th Let your Discourse with Men of Business be Short and Comprehensive.

36th Artificers & Persons of low Degree ought not to use many ceremonies to Lords, or Others of high Degree but Respect and highly Honour them, and those of high Degree ought to treat them with affibility & Courtesie, without Arrogancy

37th In Speaking to men of Quality do not lean nor Look them full in the Face, nor approach too near them at lest Keep a full Pace from them

38th In visiting the Sick, do not Presently play the Physicion if you be not Knowing therein

39th In writing or Speaking, give to every Person his due Title According to his Degree & the Custom of the Place.

40th Strive not with your Superiers in argument, but always Submit your Judgment to others with Modesty

41st Undertake not to Teach your equal in the art himself Professes; it Savours of arrogancy

(42d Let thy ceremonies in) Courtesie be proper to the Dignity of his place (with whom thou conversest for it is absurd to ac)t ye same with a Clown and a Prince

43rd Do not express Joy before one sick or in pain for that contrary Passion will aggravate his Misery.

44th When a man does all he can though it Succeeds not well blame not him that did it.

45th Being to advise or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in publick or in Private; presently, or at Some other time in what terms to do it & in reproving Shew no Sign of Cholar but do it with all Sweetness and Mildness

46th Take all Admonitions thankfully in what Time or Place Soever given but afterwards not being culpable take a Time (&) Place convenient to let him know it that gave them.

(4)7th Mock not nor Jest at any thing of Importance break (n)o Jest that are Sharp Biting and if you Deliver any thing witty and Pleasent abtain from Laughing thereat yourself.

48th Wherein wherein [sic] you reprove Another be unblameable yourself; for example is more prevalent than Precepts

(4)9 Use no Reproachfull Language against any one neither Curse nor Revile

(5)0th Be not hasty to beleive flying Reports to the Disparag(e)ment of any

51st Wear not your Cloths, foul, unript or Dusty but See they be Brush'd once every day at least and take heed tha(t) you approach not to any uncleanness

52d In your Apparel be Modest and endeavour to accomodate Nature, rather than to procure Admiration keep to the Fashio(n) of your equals Such as are Civil and orderly with respect to Times and Places

53d Run not in the Streets, neither go t(oo s)lowly nor wit(h) Mouth open go not Shaking yr Arms (kick not the earth with yr feet, go) not upon the Toes, nor in a Dancing (fashion).

54th Play not the Peacock, looking every where about you, to See if you be well Deck't, if your Shoes fit well your Stockings Sit neatly, and Cloths handsomely.

55th Eat not in the Streets, nor in ye House, out of Season

56th Associate yourself with Men of good Quality if you Esteem your own Reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad Company

57th In walking up and Down in a House, only with One in Compan(y) if he be Greater than yourself, at the first give him the Right hand and Stop not till he does and be not the first that turns, and when you do turn let it be with your face towards him, if he be a Man of Great Quality, walk not with him Cheek by Joul but Somewhat behind him; but yet in Such a Manner that he may easily Speak to you

58th Let your Conversation be without Malice or Envy, for 'tis a Sig(n o)f a Tractable and Commendable Nature: And in all Causes of Passion (ad)mit Reason to Govern

59th Never express anything unbecoming, nor Act agst ye Rules Mora(l) before your inferiours

60th Be not immodest in urging your Freinds to Discover a Secret

61st Utter not base and frivilous things amongst grave and Learn'd Men nor very Difficult Questions or Subjects, among the Ignorant or things hard to be

believed, Stuff not your Discourse with Sentences amongst your Betters nor Equals

62d Speak not of doleful Things in a Time of Mirth or at the Table; Speak not of Melancholy Things as Death and Wounds, and if others Mention them Change if you can the Discourse tell not your Dreams, but to your intimate Friend

63d A Man ought not to value himself of his Atchievements, or rare Qua(lities of wit; much less of his rich)es Virtue or Kindred.

64th Break not a Jest where none take pleasure in mirth Laugh not aloud, nor at all without Occasion, deride no mans Misfortune, tho' there seem to be Some cause

65th Speak not injurious Words neither in Jest nor Earnest Scoff at none although they give Occasion

66th Be not froward but friendly and Courteous; the first to Salute hear and answer & be not Pensive when it's a time to Converse

67th Detract not from others neither be excessive in Commanding

68th Go not thither, where you know not, whether you Shall be Welcome or not. Give not Advice whth being Ask'd & when desired (d)o it briefly

(6)9 If two contend together take not the part of either unconstrain(ed); and be not obstinate in your own Opinion, in Things indiferent be of the Major Side

70th Reprehend not the imperfections of others for that belong(s) to Parents Masters and Superiours

71st Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of Others and ask not how they came. What you may Speak in Secret to your Friend deliver not before others

72d Speak not in an unknown Tongue in Company but in your own Language and that as those of Quality do and not as ye Vulgar; Sublime matters treat Seriously

73d Think before you Speak pronounce not imperfectly nor bring ou(t) your Words too hastily but orderly & distinctly

74th When Another Speaks be attentive your Self and disturb not the Audience if any hesitate in his Words help him not nor Prompt him without desired, Interrupt him not, nor Answer him till his Speec(h) be ended

75th In the midst of Discourse ask (not of what one treateth) but if you Perceive any Stop because of (your coming you may well intreat him gently) to Proceed: If a Person of Quality comes in while your Conversing it's handsome to Repeat what was said before

76th While you are talking, Point not with your Finger at him of Whom you Discourse nor Approach too near him to whom you talk especially to his face

77th Treat with men at fit Times about Business & Whisper not in the Company of Others

78th Make no Comparisons and if any of the Company be Commended for any brave act of Vertue, commend not another for the Same

79th Be not apt to relate News of you know not the truth thereof. In Discoursing of things you Have heard Name not your Author always A (Se)cret Discover not.

80th Be not Tedious in Discourse or in reading unless you find the Company pleased therewith

81st Be not Curious to Know the Affairs tof [sic] Others neither approach those that Speak in Private

82nd Undertake not what you cannot Perform but be Carefull to keep your Promise

83d When you deliver a matter do it without Passion & with Discretion, howev(er) mean ye Person be you do it too.

84th When your Superiours talk to any Body hearken not neither Speak nor Laugh

85th In Company of these of Higher Quality than yourself Speak not ti(ll) you are ask'd a Question then Stand upright put of your Hat & Answer in few words

86 In Disputes, be not So Desireous to Overcome as not to give Liberty to each one to deliver his Opinion and Submit to ye Judgment of ye Major Part especially if they are Judges of the Dispute

(87th Let thy carriage be such) as becomes a Man Grave Settled and attentive (to that which is spoken. Contra)dict not at every turn what others Say

88th Be not tedious in Discourse, make not many Digressions, nor rep(eat) often the Same manner of Discourse

89th Speak not Evil of the absent for it is unjust

90 Being Set at meat Scratch not neither Spit Cough or blow your Nose except there's a Necessity for it

91st Make no Shew of taking great Delight in your Victuals, Feed no(t) with Greediness; cut your Bread with a Knife, lean not on the Table neither find fault with what you Eat.

92 Take no Salt or cut Bread with your Knife Greasy

93 Entertaining any one at table it is decent to present him wt meat, Undertake not to help others undesired by ye Master

(9)4th If you Soak bread in the Sauce let it be no more than what you (pu)t in your Mouth at a time and blow not your broth at Table (bu)t Stay till Cools of it Self

(95)th Put not your meat to your Mouth with your Knife in your ha(nd ne)ither Spit forth the Stones of any fruit Pye upon a Dish nor Cast (an)ything under the table

(9)6 It's unbecoming to Stoop much to ones Meat Keep your Fingers clean (&) when foul wipe them on a Corner of your Table Napkin

(97)th Put not another bit into your Mouth til the former be Swallowed (l)et not your Morsels be too bit for the Gowls.

98th Drink not nor talk with your mouth full neither Gaze about you while you are a Drinking.

99th Drink not too leisurely nor yet too hastily. Before and after Drinking wipe your Lips breath not then or Ever with too Great a Noise, for its uncivil.

100 Cleanse not your teeth with the Table Cloth Napkin Fork or Knife but if Others do it let it be done wt a Pick Tooth.

101st Rinse not your Mouth in the Presence of Others

102d It is out of use to call upon the Company often to Eat nor need you Drink to others every Time you Drink

103d In Company of your Betters be no(t longer in eating) than they are lay not your Arm but o(nly your hand upon the table)

104th It belongs to ye Chiefest in Company to unfold his Napkin and fall to Meat first, But he ought then to Begin in time & to Dispatch (w)ith Dexterity that ye Slowest may have time allowed him

(1)05th Be not Angry at Table whatever happens & if you have reason to be so, Shew it not but on a Chearfull Countenance especially if there be Strangers for Good Humour makes one Dish of Meat a Feas(t)

(1)06th Set not yourself at ye upper of ye Table but if it be your Due or that yeMaster of ye house will have it So, Contend not, least you Should Trouble ye Company

107th If others talk at Table be attentive but talk not with Meat in your Mouth

108th When you Speak of God or his Atributes, let it be Seriously & (with) Reverence. Honour & Obey your Natural Parents altho they be Poor

109th Let your Recreations be Manfull not Sinfull.

110th Labour to keep alive in your Breast that Little Spark of Ce(les)tial fire Called Conscience.

Finis

1 Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress*, 13, cited in Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 79.

2 A select bibliography on etiquette and dance, including both primary and secondary materials, appears in the "Topical Bibliographies" section. See p. N-2. The story line team thanks Cathleene B. Hellier for contributing the bibliography to this manual.

3 Hay's inventory was taken on February 2, 1771, and recorded April 15, 1771, York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83): 19–24; Dickinson's appraisement is dated August 17, 1778, *ibid.*, 401. Transcripts in York County Records Project, Department of Historical Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va.

4 Harwood Ledger A, Andrews's account for 1786 and 1787, folio 76; Hallam's dated January 14, 1786, folio 48. Read this document on Colonial Williamsburg's digital library at *www.pastportal.com*.

5 March 23, 1770, *The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter*, 372.

6 Cited in Edmund S. Morgan, *Virginians at Home*, 54.

7 This section is largely a paraphrase of Gretchen Schneider's "Public Behavior at the Governor's Palace," which includes full citations for all the direct quotations given here. Another valuable source concerning the education of women in the colonial and early federal periods is Tori Eberlein, "To Be Amiable and Accomplished."

8 Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 118, citing Richard Beale Davis, ed., "The Colonial Virginia Satirist: Mid-Eighteenth-Century Commentaries on Politics, Religion, and Society," American Philosophical Society, *Transactions*, n.s., 57, pt. 1 (1967): 48.

9 William Robinson to the Bishop of ___ [sic], November 20, 1760, in William Stevens Perry, ed., *Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church*, 464. A satirical and pseudonymous manuscript dating from about 1760, addressed to printer William Hunter and signed "Tim Pastime," gives virtually the same version of the governor's temper tantrum; Rockefeller Library, Williamsburg, Va., pp. 20–21.

10 Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 127.

11 Fithian, Diary, June 15, 1774, cited in Morgan, *Virginians at Home*, 76.

12 Richard Parkinson, *A Tour in America in 1798, 1799, and 1800*, 2: 440, 418–420, cited in Fritz Hirschfeld, *George Washington and Slavery*, 56.

13 Duc d'Orléans, April 1797, quoted in Hirschfeld, *Washington and Slavery*, 56.

14 Bushman, *Refinement of America*, 83.

15 *Ibid.*, 88–89.

16 See the discussion on dance, especially the minuet, on p. F-5.

17 "Crambo" was a word game for four or more players. Play began with a person writing down a single line of verse and passing it on to the next player. The second person had to write a line that created a couplet, and he or she passed the poem to the third player. That person then continued the plot of the new poem with a line. The game continued as a botched meter or bungled rhyme eliminated one player after another. See David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues & Polite Letters in British America*, 165–168.

D. Personal Apparel

> *One thing I must Desire of thee and do Insist that thee oblige mee therein that thou make up that Druggett Clothes, to go to Virginia In and not appear to Disgrace thyself or Mee for tho I would not Esteem thee the less to come to Mee in what Dress thou Will, yet these Virginians are a very gentle, Well Dress'd people, & look Phaps More at a Man's Outside than his Inside, for these and other Reasons pray go very Clean, neat & handsomely Dressed to Virginia.*
>
> Peter Collinson to John Bartram, February 17, 1737

In nearly any era, clothes do make the man, woman, or child. Appearances, as Hyacinth Bucket might say, certainly do matter. In the eighteenth century, it also mattered what people thought on first meeting a person. To continue with yet another cliché, a picture is worth a thousand words. Several prints and paintings in this manual illustrate the power of superficialities. See especially "High Life Below Stairs," p. P-5, with its long, explanatory caption. The portraits of Robert III and Frances Carter on p. P-7 show two of Virginia's loftiest inhabitants of the colonial period. On a lower social level (but still quite affluent and very presentable), merchant Elijah Boardman sat for the wonderful painting by Ralph Earl reprinted on p. P-9.

A very pious Anglican woman, Margaret Hornsby of Williamsburg, was of two minds about how to dress. The wife of a wealthy merchant and firmly in the town's upper-middling social rank, she could afford fine clothing, but her religious bent made her avoid fancy apparel on the grounds of vanity. As her nephew remembered it:

> *How frequently have I heard her [his aunt, Mrs. Margaret Hornsby] lament the inattention and neglect of others in preparing to meet God. She conceived if she made a better appearance it might have more influence and prevail with some to seek the better country—and from this motive dressed in rich though not gaudy apparel, but to her mortification, found her subject but little more regarded in her fine than common clothing.*
>
> "Autobiography of Rev. Henry Fry," in *Memoir of Col. Joshua Fry* (Richmond, 1880), 84

Of course, men's clothing also reflected rank. In the section called "Objects by Social Rank," we have included photographs of four men drinking rum. That liquor is the commonality among the four. Details of setting, clothing, and drinking vessels unite and separate these men. Compare and contrast the four scenes on pp. O-20–21.

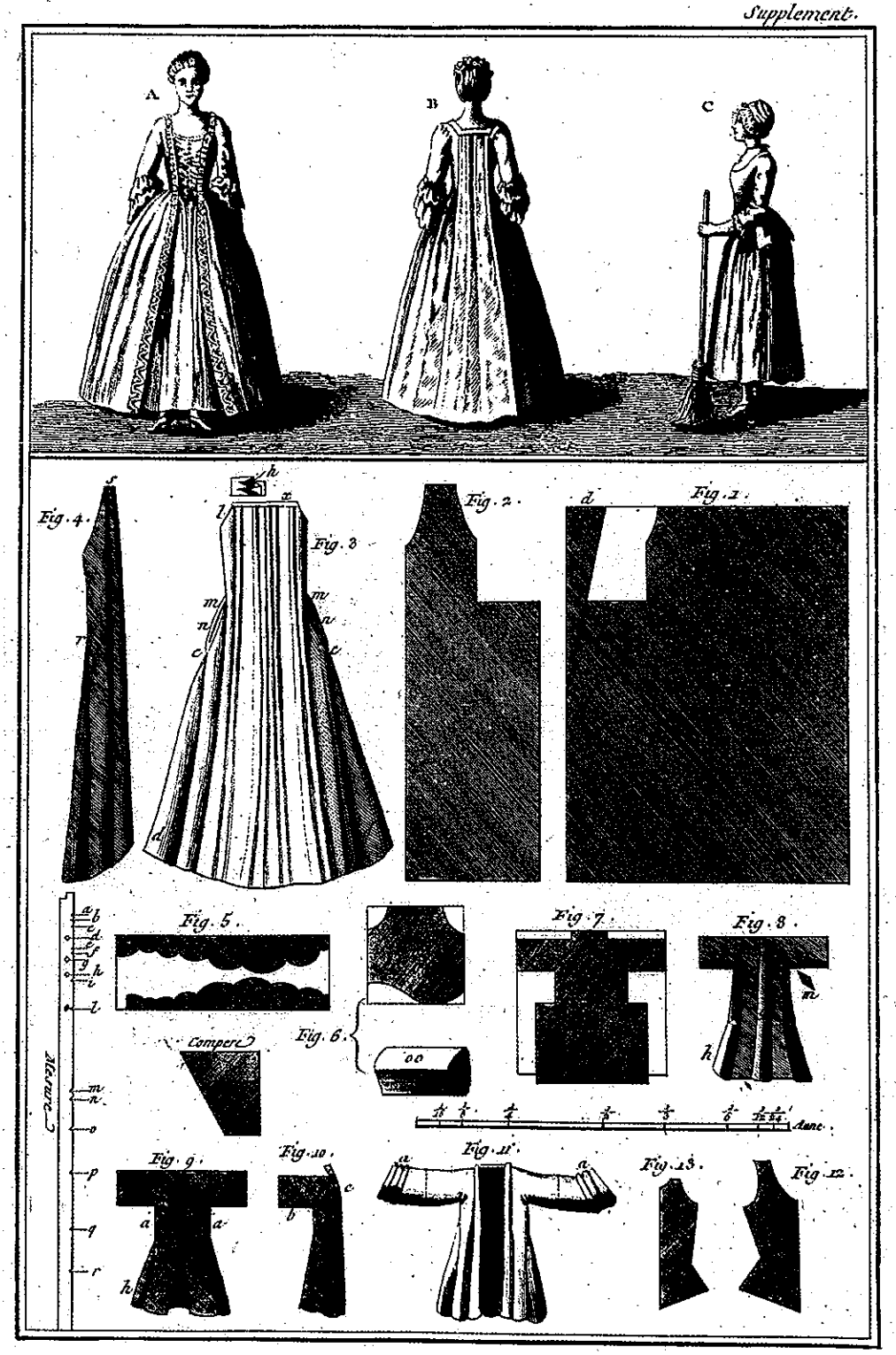
> *The dress of the Gentlemen in Winter consists of broad and other woolen cloths. In summer they wear duroys, Taffities, or cottons manufactured in their own country. The Ladies are very fond of Chintz and other East India goods which are prohibited in England. They also wear several kinds of silk particularly Lute strings, taffities and Persians in summer, and in a morning they are frequently dressed in Virginia cottons. Fashion reigns here with despotic sway. New modes are imported full as soon as they are conveyed in Counties at a distance from London. The ladies generally wear a great number of rings upon their fingers which are seldom of any value. And indeed I have seen but few jewells or even paste of superior quality since my residence in this Country.*
>
> Thomas Gwatkin, circa 1773

> A Command Performance
>
> *you must have one Suit of handsome full-dressed Silk cloaths to wear on the King's birthday at the Governor's, the only time you will have to appear fine in the whole year, but then it is expected that all English Gentlemen attend and pay their respects.*
>
> Stephen Hawtrey to his brother Edward, March 26, 1765[1]

Fashion Terms before 1775[2]

Ladies' Wear:

Gown. The word most often used during the eighteenth century for a lady's dress. Most gowns had sleeves reaching or just covering the elbow, a low neckline (often filled in with a neck handkerchief), and a front opening. The openings generally took one of two styles; they either met in the center and fastened with hooks or pins, or they had a separate, triangular **stomacher** that filled in the center front. The gown's skirt was full and sometimes open in front to reveal a matching or contrasting **petticoat.** The bodice back was either closely fitted to the body or hung from pleats at the shoulders to form a "sack back." For



Couturiere.

117

This plate from the supplement to Denis Diderot's Encyclopédie *illustrates the front and back of a fashionable gown as well as the apparel of a woman from the lower ranks. It also gives the pattern for how the clothing is constructed. "Couturiere," Planches (1777) 12: 255.*

work, women sometimes wore petticoats and loosely cut short gowns that were held around the body by the apron. Typical materials used in Virginia to make gowns were lustring, a light, crisp silk; damask, a fabric patterned in the weaving and often silk; printed cottons such as chintz and calico; worsted, a fine, hard-surface wool; holland, a fine linen that was sometimes striped; and satin, a smooth fabric usually of silk.

Petticoat. A long, skirt-like garment. It was generally worn beneath the gown and often meant to show in front. Sometimes, for very informal wear or work, women wore petticoats with a shift and short gown, jack, waistcoat, or stays. Worn this way, the petticoat functioned as what we would today call a skirt.

Underpetticoats provided greater warmth and added fullness to the gown's skirt. Materials: fabric that matched or contrasted with the gown, or quilted silk or wool.

Shift. A sleeved undergarment worn beneath the gown. Frequently its material showed as ruffles at a lady's neck and elbows. English-speaking persons generally did not use the term *chemise*, the French word for this garment. Material: white linen or fine cotton.

Stays. A stiffened undergarment that usually laced up the back. Stays shaped the body, forming a conical silhouette and a straight line from bust to waist, pushing the shoulders back and creating an erect posture. They were worn over the shift and beneath the gown. Occasionally, however, they served as an outer garment; prints show English women laboring in fields wearing a shift, petticoat, and stays. Stays were considered an essential part of fashionable ensembles although written sources suggest that not all Virginia women wore them every day. Virginia milliners and storekeepers offered a wide variety of stays for sale, including some for children as young as three months old. In addition, local staymakers made these garments to order for their customers. English and Americans did not use the French word for this garment, *corset*, until the end of the eighteenth century. In the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, they used the term *bodys*, from which the word *bodice* is derived. Material: typically linen or worsted (wool) stiffened with whalebone, wood, or metal.

CLOTHES MAKE THE MAID

Miss Besty Lee . . . but lately entered her twenty sixth year . . . is a well set maid, of a proper height, neither high nor low . . . she sits very erect; places her feet with great propriety, her Hands She lays carelessly in her lap, & never moves them but when she has occasion to adjust some article of her dress, or to perform some exercise of the Fan—She has a full face, sanguine Complection, her Nose is rather protuberant than otherwise . . . her carriage neat & graceful, & her presence soft & beautiful.—Her hair is a dark Brown, which was crap'd up very high. & in it she had a Ribbon interwoven with an artificial Flower—At each of her ears dangled a brilliant Jewel; She was pinched up rather too near in a long pair of new fashioned Stays . . . so high that we can have scarce any view at all of the Ladies Snowy Bosoms . . . they are extended downwards so low that . . . Walking, must, I think, cause a disagreeable Friction of some part of the body against the lower Edge of the Stays. . . . I imputed the Flush which was visible in her Face to her being swathed up Body & Soul & limbs together—She wore a light Chintz Gown, very fine, with a blue stamp; elegantly made, & which set well upon her—She wore a blue silk Quilt [petticoat]—In one word Her Dress was rich & fashionable—Her Behaviour such as I should expect to find in a Lady whose education had been conducted with some care & skill; and her person, abstracted from the embelishments of Dress & good Breeding, not much handsomer than the generality of Women—

Fithian Diary, July 4, 1774

Hoops. Undergarment worn over the shift to hold out the gown's skirt. Most fashionable dress and ball gowns required hoops. Printed sources indicate, however, that women did not wear hoops while working. During the Elizabethan period women wore a foundation garment called a *farthingale*, but this term should not be used for eighteenth-century hoops. The English and the colonists did not generally use the French word for hoops, *paniers*. Material: bands of cane or whalebone joined by linen.

Alexander Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" contains a scene in which Belinda's dressing table is inventoried and reported to hold myriad imported goods. The poet makes it seem that the entire purpose of international trade was female adornment.

Unnumber'd Treasures ope at once, and here
The various Off'rings of the World appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious Toil,
And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring Spoil.
This casket India's glowing Gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
And Tortoise here and Elephant unite
Transform'd to Combs, the speckled, and the white.

Aprons. Worn for all but the most formal occasions. Working aprons were of solid, dark colors, checked or striped. Dressy aprons were made of silk, sheer cotton or fine linen, sometimes embroidered. Most aprons were tied with narrow tapes, not wide sashes, hence the expression "apron strings."

Waistcoat. A lady's vest-like garment. It opened in front, sometimes had sleeves, and generally fitted close to the body. Some waistcoats functioned as an undergarment for additional warmth; others served as outer garments and were worn over the shift with a petticoat. Material: linen or silk, often quilted for warmth.

Cap. A head covering. Most grown women wore variously styled caps for all but formal occasions when they more frequently wore ribbons, flowers, or pearls in their hair. Material: linen, cotton, lace.

Hat. A head covering often worn over the cap. Hats came in a variety of styles, but one of the most popular had a broad, flat brim and a shallow crown. When riding, women often wore a hat styled like the man's cocked hat. Material: straw and similar plaited fibers, silk-covered straw, woven horsehair, felt.

MEN'S WEAR:

Suit (or suit of clothes). An ensemble consisting of coat, waistcoat, and breeches. All parts of the suit were considered essential if a man were attending a social function or conducting business. The coat and waistcoat were left off only when a man was doing hard physical labor. The parts of the suit sometimes matched in color, but frequently the waistcoat was of a contrasting, fancier fabric. Materials: broadcloth (a fulled wool), silk, velvet or linen.

Coat. An outer garment. The formal or dress coat was collarless throughout most of the eighteenth century. The coat underwent gradual style changes, becoming narrower and more cut away in front toward the end of the eighteenth century.

Frock. A collared coat, less closely fitted to the body. Frocks were for informal and country wear.

Jacket. A man's garment cut shorter in length than the coat.

Waistcoat. A vest-like garment that buttoned down the front. It was worn over the shirt and beneath the coat. It evolved from knee length around 1700, to thigh length around 1750, to waist length by 1800. The backs of waistcoats were often made with inexpensive fabric because a man did not remove his coat during formal wear. If desired, sleeves were attached or tied in place to provide warmth. Sometimes an **underwaistcoat** was worn to provide even greater warmth.

Breeches. Pants ending in buckled or tied bands below the knees. When coats and waistcoats became shorter, revealing the breeches front, the fly opening was covered with a **fall**, either a narrow flap covering just the front opening or a full piece of material extending from side seam to side seam. Materials: any fabric matching the suit; cotton velvet; shag (heavy wool plush); linen or silk (especially for summer wear); knitted silk; and leather for working, riding, or country wear.

In this drawing, Benjamin Henry Latrobe depicts Alix, a slave belonging to Bathurst Jones. Alix, mixing a bowl of punch, wears a suit of livery that is a sign of status for both men. The livery, composed of specific colors, advertises Jones's ownership of Alix; for the slave it indicates his servitude and his place among the upper hierarchy of household servants.

Trousers. Long pants. Sailors, some country men, and armorers and drummers in the military wore long pants during the eighteenth century. They were not considered fashionable until around 1800.

Shirt. A garment worn under the waistcoat and coat. It had long sleeves, a front-opening placket (sometimes ruffled), and sometimes a collar. Material: linen, cotton, checks and osnaburg (a coarse linen).

Cap. A head covering used when the wig was removed. Caps were also worn by all classes of men in informal and work situations. Sailors and laborers frequently wore knitted caps for warmth and protection out of doors. Materials: linen, silk, knitted wool.

Wigs are as essential to every person's head as lace is to their clothes; and although understanding may be deficient in the wearer, as well as money, yet people dress'd out look pretty; and very fine Gentlemen, thus embellished, represent those pots upon Apothecaries shelves, which are much ornamented but always stand empty.

"The History of Male Fashion—Upon Wigs," *London Chronicle*, March 1762 (courtesy of Regina Blizzard)

Hat. A head covering usually of felted wool or fur. Several styles of hats were worn in the eighteenth century, but the most fashionable was the cocked hat, which had its brim turned up on three sides. *Tricorn* is a modern word for the cocked hat. When an edging of braid decorated the brim, the hat was referred to as being "laced." Materials: felted wool or fur, straw, or "chip."

OVERGARMENTS:

Cloak. A cape-like garment worn by men and women for warmth over their suits or gowns. Cloaks came with or without hoods. There were many variations in length, from short to long, each with its own specific name, such as *cardinal* and *capuchin*. A cape during the eighteenth century referred to a turned-down collar of any size. Materials: broadcloth, warm napped woolens, tightly woven worsted wool for its ability to shed water.

FOOTWEAR:

Shoes. Both men's and women's shoes usually were fastened by buckled straps over the instep. In the seventeenth century and occasionally in the eighteenth century some shoes were tied with string, ribbons, or thongs, although the majority of fashionable eighteenth-century shoes were buckled. Most men's shoes were leather; women's shoes were either leather (black, blue, or green) or fabric, especially silk (satin and brocade) and worsted (hard-surface wool such as calamanco or stuff). Fabric shoes came in many colors—one advertisement lists calamanco shoes in eleven colors![3]

Stockings. Knitted from any of the natural fibers—silk, wool, cotton, or linen[4]—stockings came in a variety of colors, although white was worn with fashionable dress.

Understockings provided additional warmth when necessary.

Garters—either tapes or ribbons—were tied around the leg to hold up stockings.

This view of a poor woman and her children is by William Henry Pyne and is one of many figure studies he published as a subscription series between 1802 and 1807. Pyne's sketches show various facets of everyday life in early nineteenth-century England and are valuable for the light they shed on the daily activities of ordinary people. This sketch is no. 5 in the group labeled "Cottagers" from a reprint titled Picturesque Views of Rural Occupations in Early Nineteenth-Century England, All 641 Illustrations from Ackermann's Edition of the "Microcosm" *by W. H. Pyne (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977).*

IT'S STILL CALLED THE DIDEROT EFFECT!

Why on earth did I ever part with it [his old, worn, and favorite dressing gown]? It was used to me and I was used to it. . . .This new one, stiff and rigid as it is, makes me look like a mannequin . . . now I look like a rich loafer, and nobody can tell by looking at me what my trade is. . . .

I was absolute master of my old dressing gown, but I have become a slave to my new one. . . . A pox on the rascal who discovered the art of making a piece of ordinary cloth seem precious by the simple expedient of dyeing it scarlet! And may the devil take an article of clothing so precious that I have to bow down to it! Give me back my ragged, humble, comfortable old wrapper!

My friends, see to it that you hold fast to your old friends. And, oh, my friends, beware of the contamination of sudden wealth. Let my example be a lesson to you. The poor man may take his ease without thinking of appearances, but the rich man is always under a strain.

Listen, and I will tell you what ravages Luxury has made since I gave myself up to the systematic pursuit of it.

My old dressing gown was in perfect accord with the rest of the poor bric-a-brac that filled my room. A chair made out of woven straw, a rough wooden table, a cheap Bergamo tapestry, a pine board that served for a bookshelf, a few grimy engravings without frames, tacked by the corners to the tapestry, and three or four plaster casts that hung between the engravings—all these harmonized with my old dressing gown to make a perfect picture of honest poverty.

Now the harmony is destroyed. Now there is no more consistency, no more unity, and no more beauty.

I have seen my Bergamo tapestry compelled to give up its place on the wall where it has hung for so many years to make room for a damask wall covering.

Two engravings that were not without merit . . . were shamefully exiled. . . .

My straw chair has been relegated to the vestibule; its place has been usurped by an armchair covered with Morocco leather.

Homer, Virgil, Horace, and Cicero have relieved the thin pine board of the weight that used to make it bow down in the middle, and are now shut up in an inlaid cabinet—of which they are more worthy than I.

A huge mirror fills the space over the mantel of my fireplace. . . .

The wooden table still held its ground, protected as it was by a great heap of pamphlets and loose papers piled up helter-skelter. This encumbrance seemed likely to preserve it in safety for many a long day from the humiliation that threatened to descend upon it. But notwithstanding my natural laziness, Fate at last worked its will with my table: the papers and pamphlets are now neatly stacked in the drawers of an expensive new desk.

The remaining space between the top of my new desk and Vernet's seascape, which hangs directly above it, was displeasing to the eye on account of its blankness, so this void was filled by a pendulum clock—and what a clock! A clock chosen by the wealthy Mme. Geoffrin, made of bronze inlaid with gold!

Then there was an empty corner beside the window. There was just room for a secretary, and one was put there.

But there was still an unpleasant bit of bare wall between the writing shelf of the secretary and the bottom of Rubens' fine portrait, a space that was promptly filled by two small paintings . . . you see, I have even gone in for sketches!

Thus it was that the edifying retreat of a philosopher was transformed into the scandalous likeness of innkeeper's private sitting room.

Of my former modest surroundings I have kept only one reminder: an old braided carpet. This pitiable object, I know very well, hardly goes with my other splendid furnishings. But I have taken an oath, which I shall never break, that this carpet shall remain where it is, because the feet of Denis the Philosopher shall never soil one of La Savonnerie's masterpieces. I will keep my old rug, just as a peasant, taken from his cottage to be a servant in the king's palace, carries his wooden shoes along with him. Every morning when I come into my study, sumptuously robed in scarlet, I shall look down at the floor and I shall see my old braided rug. It will remind me of what I used to be, and Pride will have to come to a standstill at the threshold of my heart.

Denis Diderot, "Regrets on Parting with My Old Dressing Gown," 1772[5]

1 Florence M. Hawtrey, *The History of the Hawtrey Family*, 1: 146.

2 This glossary of fashion terms is reprinted from the "Interpreter's Handbook," prepared in the 1980s by Linda Baumgarten, curator of textiles.

3 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), February 15, 1770.

4 Linen stockings were referred to as thread stockings during the period.

5 Similarly, Benjamin Franklin wrote of his wife's acquiring a silver spoon and china bowl for his morning porridge; see Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, 145.

Dinner and Its Preparation

Other portions of this manual examine the various levels of kitchen equipment available to different ranks of colonial society; see the discussion of furnishings on pp. B-2 and B-8, inventories on pp. R-2–16, and illustrations in the "Objects by Social Rank" section.

Generally, the first extra pieces of cookware to be acquired after the ubiquitous iron pot were a frying pan and another iron pot of a different size. In contrast to slow cooking in a pot, the frying pan offered a means to cook meats, eggs, and vegetables quickly. Baking ashcakes directly on the hearth required no utensils. An alternate method for baking loaf bread was to place an iron pot upside down over the dough and cover the pot with hot coals. A piece of meat could be roasted by rigging up a wooden spit or dangling the meat from a string attached to the wooden trammel bar with which even some of the most ordinary chimneys were equipped. However, the higher one's economic and social place the more elaborate and sophisticated one's kitchen. This, in turn, influenced the type of food that kitchen produced. For some households, such as that of the Maryland ferryman encountered by Dr. Alexander Hamilton in 1744, fashionable food was not a concern; for others it was a prime consideration. As Mark R. Wenger has noted, "Increasingly, food itself came to represent a self-conscious expression of gentility."[1]

The frontispiece to The British Housewife *by Martha Bradley, circa 1770, documents some of the furnishings of a middling to upper-middling kitchen during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.*

Virginia's gentry prided themselves on the tables that they set for their guests. Robert Beverley noted in 1705, "the gentry pretend to have their Victuals drest, and serv'd up as Nicely, as the best Tables in London."[2] In 1732, William Hugh Grove remarked on the fondness of the upper ranks for cauliflower, artichokes, broccoli, and cucumbers—exotic vegetables that distinguished the more affluent from their less fortunate neighbors. Grove continued his observations, noting, "The gentry at their tables commonly have five dishes or plates, of which pig's meat and greens is generally one, and tame fowl another; beef, mutton, veal or lamb makes another."[3] The lavishness and variety of gentry dining tables became hallmarks of gentility and hospitality, as suggested by William Byrd's diary entry of March 24, 1711, when he bragged during a visit from Governor Spotswood, "We had eight dishes beside the dessert every day." Conversely, the failure to do so could lead to censure as was the case with Governor Nicholson in the early eighteenth century when critics referred to him as "scandalously penurious . . . having but one dish of meat at his table."[4]

The increased emphasis on food and its presentation meant a ready market for cookery books that not only described how foods should be prepared and presented, but also how they should be laid out on a properly arranged dining table. However, cookbooks in the first half of the eighteenth century were written primarily by men who were professional cooks. It was only in 1747 that the most famous cookbook of the period made its first appearance: Hannah Glasse's *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy.* Published in London, the first edition was offered for sale at a shop at the corner of Fleet Ditch: Mrs. Ashburn's "China Shop," an interesting marketing juxtaposition.

Mrs. Glasse's tome signaled a shift in writing styles employed in these publications. While other women had written cookery books before 1747, Mrs. Glasse aimed her

work at the expanding middle ranks and gentry. People at these social levels might use women cooks who understood the basics of food preparation but needed plain, detailed direction to prepare more sophisticated dishes to suit their employers' (or, in a slave-owning society, their owners') culinary aspirations. As Mrs. Glasse notes in her preface: "The great Cooks have such a high way of expressing themselves that the poor Girls are at a Loss to know what they mean."[5] These "great Cooks" were men writing in such a way as "to preserve the mystery of their craft by using special old-fashioned chef's jargon, which must have been quite opaque to a half-educated servant."[6] This was certainly not Mrs. Glasse's intention, and the continuing popularity of her book into the nineteenth century demonstrates how successfully it achieved its objective of demystifying the art of cookery. Other women followed Mrs. Glasse's lead, including Martha Bradley, Elizabeth Raffald, and Alice Smith; all appealed to gentlemen and ladies wanting to demonstrate their awareness of the latest in fashionable cuisine and its proper presentation.

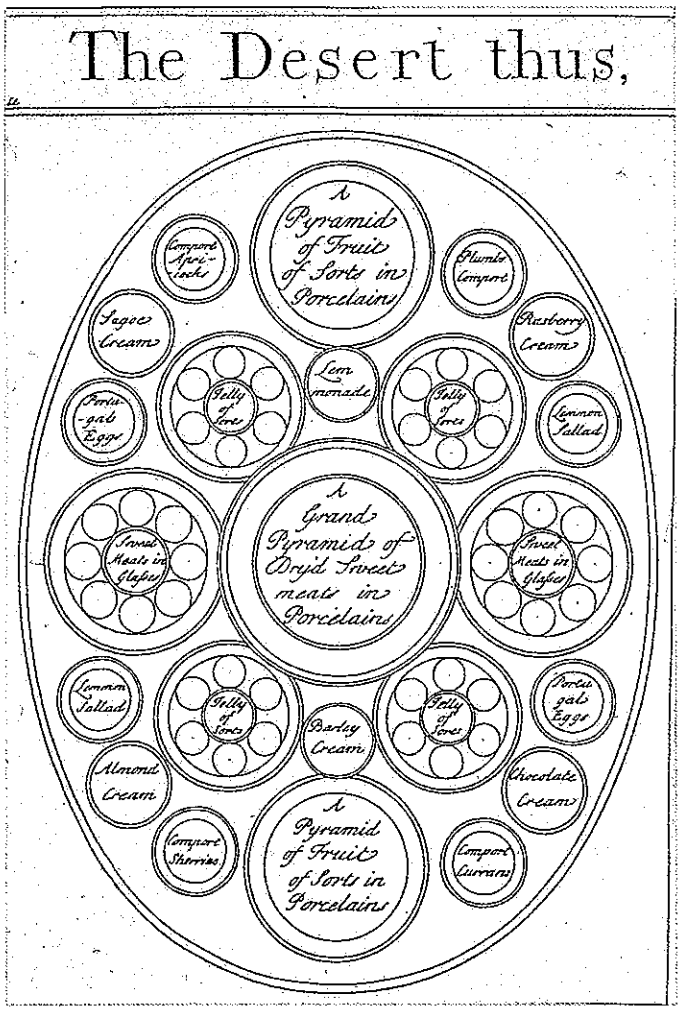


Diagram from Charles Carter's The Complete Practical Cook *(1730). Cookery books, such as Carter's, allowed eighteenth-century consumers to prepare and serve fashionable dishes in their own dining rooms. Diagrams ensured that tables were arranged in an up-to-date manner.*

While breakfast, dinner, and supper were the usual meals eaten in eighteenth-century Virginia, dinner was the main culinary event of the day and generally served between 2 and 4 P.M.[7] The time might slide an hour forward or backward depending on the work schedule of the head of the household. If company was expected, dinner might be served later. During this period, families generally dined together. Many people worked in or near their homes and commonly had dinner at home. Families living in houses with dining rooms usually served dinner in that room. Members of the gentry had more leisure time and spent more time entertaining guests at the table than persons of lesser rank.

The higher ranks within colonial society also had the financial wherewithal not only to provide an appropriate architectural setting for meals but also to acquire the increasing number of specialized items related to drinking and dining. Beginning about 1715, well-to-do residents in the Chesapeake began to accumulate specialized household furnishings that set them apart from the ordinary sort—including matching sets of imported cane chairs, elaborate looking glasses, individual cutlery, ceramic punch bowls, and teaware. By mid-century, when these gentlefolk dined, they sat on sets of matching chairs pulled up to dining tables set with matching sets of china and cutlery, specialized beverage glasses, and serving dishes in dining rooms that also contained buffets or sideboards, prints, maps, and candlesticks.[8]

> Altogether the evidence from Plymouth, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the Chesapeake permits us to picture roughly half of the colonial population at mid-century eating from plates with knives and forks while sitting at tables. A smaller group of this knife-and-fork population ate from some kind of refined earthenware, like creamware, which imitated the prized surfaces of imported porcelains. The rest of the knife-and-fork group ate from coarse earthenware, pewter, or wood. A tiny population dined on imported porcelains.[9]

Most, however, did not. Dr. Alexander Hamilton, invited to share a meal with a ferryman and his family in Maryland in 1744, found he had "no stomach" for their way of dining. Their meal was "a homely dish of fish without any kind of sauce. . . . They had no cloth upon the table, and their mess was in a dirty, deep, wooden dish which they evacuated with their hands, cramming down skins, scales, and all. They used neither knife, fork, spoon, plate, or napkin because, I suppose, they had none to use."[10]

The Service of Meals

It seems logical to assume that most wealthy eighteenth-century Chesapeake residents acquired manners to complement their sets of matched tablewares. As entertaining became more elegant and meals grew increasingly complex, dinner table procedure changed from the older English service to the French service (or French fashion as it was sometimes called). In either case, the term *the Honors of the Table* referred to the dinner table procedure. The French service, well established in France before the end of the seventeenth century, was the most likely form of meal service practiced at gentry tables in England and America by the early decades of the eighteenth century.

In both the English and French services the food was placed on the table before the diners sat down to eat.[11] The mistress sat at the head, or top, of the table and the master sat at the foot, or bottom. Contemporary sources do not indicate that the head of the table had a particular location in the dining room, but it is likely that the mistress sat where she could keep an eye on servers and others who entered the room. When only males were present, the host sat at the head of the table. Print sources and some prescriptive literature suggest that seating arrangements varied considerably from the late seventeenth through the early nineteenth centuries. Sometimes men and women sat opposite one another; at other times they sat alternately around the table; and, occasionally, the women sat at one end and the men at the other.

In the English service, practiced in England by the seventeenth century, the "lady of the house" served all of the food "where the best bits were" which gave her "an opportunity of showing with what satisfaction she waited on her friends." As meals became more complex, this manner of serving became cumbersome. Cookbook author Alice Smith concluded that the English service was more "suited to times of plainness and simplicity" and that the "present custom is fitter for our extravagant entertainments."

French service was more appropriate for formal dinners where many guests were present. The mistress began the "honors" by helping those nearest her; her husband, or whoever sat at the foot of the table, did the same. Everyone was expected to help him or herself to the nearest dish or send "his plate to the person who sits near what he likes." This procedure required both sexes to master the art of carving. To assist with acquiring this skill, some cookbooks and other prescriptive literature of the period included detailed illustrations of the best ways to cut and serve meat, fish, and poultry. Polite gentlemen inquired what wines or other beverages the lady or ladies sitting near them desired and signaled a footman or waiting boy to bring the desired drink from the sideboard table.

Beginning in the seventeenth century, well-to-do, English households sat down to a meal that consisted of two or three courses. By the eighteenth century, the first course featured several large cuts of meat (generally roasted), whole fowl, and fish, supplemented with a variety of made dishes containing additional meats. During the winter months, dinner often began with soup. The soup tureen was set on the table at the beginning of the meal, and the hostess served her guests. After the soup plates were removed, the tureen was replaced by a "remove," generally a fish or meat dish. Vegetables were prepared as side dishes, but also were used as garnishes on dishes of meat. Vegetables (which varied seasonally), meat and seafood pies, and made dishes of mixed ingredients might appear at either the first or second course. Hard rolls were laid directly on the tablecloth or inserted into a folded napkin at each place setting.

The second course consisted of lighter dishes containing smaller cuts of meat, fowl, fish, and seafood dishes, along with puddings, tarts, and sweet pies. After the second course the cloth was removed and desserts (jellies, sweetmeats, syllabubs, fruit, nuts, and cheese) were placed on the table. In some households the jellies and sweetmeats were placed in the center of the table on a glass pyramid. These accompanied (but did not replace) the second course. Beverages served with each course usually included a variety of wines, ale, and beer.

In North America, some colonists followed the English meal plan of two courses followed by dessert on special, formal occasions. A bill for a dinner for the governor of New York at Obadiah Hunt's tavern in April 1738 lists thirteen dishes served at the first course and an equal number served at the second. The third course consisted of tarts and cheesecakes,

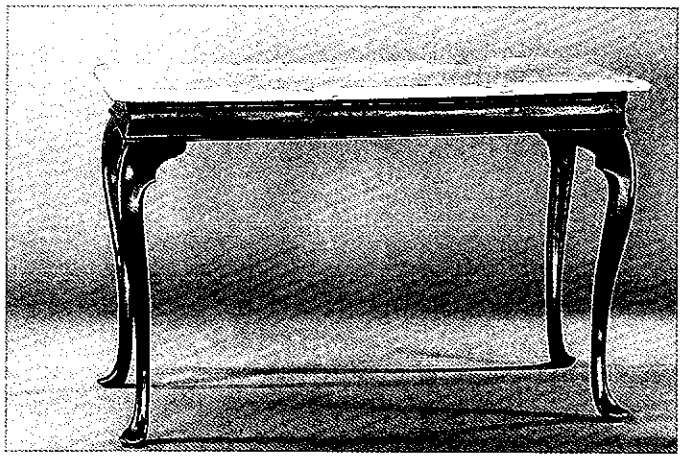
This hedgehog of marzipan (marchpane *is the period term sometimes used) is decorated with slivered almonds to simulate the animal's fur. It is made according to Hannah Glasse's receipt "To make Hedge Hog" in* The Art of Cookery *(1747). Such an elaborate dessert could be found only on the most fashionable tables in eighteenth-century Virginia.*

"Sweetmeats of Sundrys with Cheese butters & Apples." Beverages served at this meal included wine, punch, cider, and beer. At places such as the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, it is likely that the English meal plan was practiced.

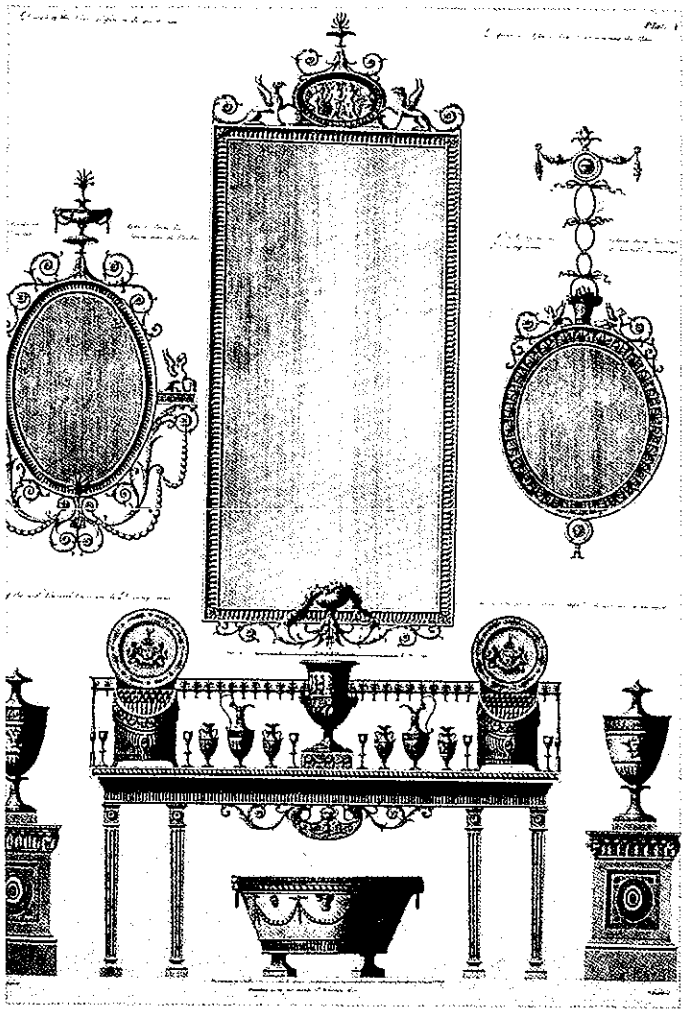
By the middle of the eighteenth century, standard practice changed in Virginia and elsewhere in America. Instead of a second course consisting of a combination of lighter dishes and sweets, Americans chose to make it a true dessert course of sweet dishes only. This change is suggested by a number of eighteenth-century observations from individuals such as Edward Kimber (1742/3), William Black (1744), François Jean, marquis de Chastellux (1780), Harry Toulmin (1793), and Frances Baylor Hill (1797), among others.

At these dinners, a Virginia ham was often the standing top dish, balanced at the foot of the table by roast beef, veal, venison, or a leg of lamb. Domestic fowl—including chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys—supplemented the meat dishes throughout the year. Fish, seafood, and game birds—including wild turkeys—were popular, seasonal foods. From mid-spring through late fall, a variety of cooked and fresh vegetables appeared on the table. Green salads dressed with vinegar and olive oil were also common. From late fall until the next spring, root vegetables were served as garnishes to meat dishes or served in separate dishes. Meals at this time of the year often began with soup. Pickled vegetables were served year-round but predominated in the winter and early spring months when fresh vegetables were no longer available.

For the second course, fresh fruits in season were supplemented with sweet puddings, pies, jellies, cakes, custards, cheesecakes, biscuits, sweetmeats, and preserved fruits. In some households, fruits and nuts were served separately after the cloth was removed.



Sideboard Table (1930-9), Palace Dining Room. This marble slab table, circa 1735–50, was probably made in eastern Virginia. It represents the "Side Board wth Marble Slab" called for in the list of standing furniture at the Palace as recorded in the 1770 Botetourt inventory. It provided the staging area for beverages served in the dining room.



Robert Adam's proposals for various furnishings for Kenwood's dining room (Lord Mansfield's house surrounded by Hampstead Heath, north of London) included a sideboard table, knife boxes, wine cooler, pedestals, and the looking glass on the right of the engraving. See Robert and James Adam, The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam, *1: no. 11.*

Apparently, no set conventions directed particular combinations of food and drink during the meal, but a variety of wines, beers, ales, and cider were offered to dinner guests at different households. However, plain water was not regularly served at formal meals until the nineteenth century. Dinner often concluded with drinking and a round of toasts, after which, the lady of the house determined when to invite her female guests to join her in the parlor for tea.[12] The master and his male guests generally remained at the table and continued to drink until they decided to join the ladies.[13]

Setting the Table

Linen cloths covered dinner tables in gentry houses. Table scenes in a number of English sketches and engravings indicate that early place settings were similar to ours. A fork, with tines usually turned up, was to the left of the plate, and the knife, with the cutting edge toward the plate, was to the right. The soupspoon, placed on the table only if soup was served and with the bowl face down, was to the right of the knife. When space permitted, dessert spoons, knives, and forks remained on the sideboard table with the dessert plates until the dessert course was served. Otherwise, these items were kept on a side table.[14] Teaspoons were placed on the tea tray that was taken to the parlor following dinner. This cutlery was often entirely of silver or had silver handles and steel blades and tines. Silver forks generally had three or four tines. (See "Objects by Social Rank" section, p. O-8, for a comparison of eating utensils.) The increased number of tines probably coincided with changing usage of flatware. Broad, rounded-end knives were used for cutting and conveying food to the mouth, while two-tined forks were used for spearing the food and holding it in place while it was being cut. The added tine or two seen in period forks after mid-century suggests that, among the upper ranks of society, diners were beginning to use forks to convey food to their mouths. At the same time, the continued production of rounded-end knives hints that at least some members of the gentry continued to use a knife for that purpose.

"Fasting in Lent" (1996-77) illustrates a gentry dinner about to be served. The footman prepares to set a fish on the table, while the diners anticipate it and the other foods already before them. The fashionable dining room is equipped with a sideboard table against the back wall, as well as a carpet and wallpaper.

The serving dishes were placed on the table according to a symmetrical arrangement, varying according to the number of guests and the size of the table. Alice Smith used the term *the Oeconomy of a Table* to refer to this symmetrical arrangement. All of the dishes for the first course were already in their prescribed locations when the guests seated themselves at the table. A simple dinner might have as few as two or three dishes and a party plan as many as twenty-one. An odd number of dishes was preferable. Although the menus varied according to the number of guests, a rule of thumb suggested that for a dozen diners, nine dishes offered adequate variety, for eighteen people, fifteen dishes.

Many popular cookbooks included diagrams showing how to arrange the dishes. These actually minimize the complexity of table arrangements because they do not show the separate placement of the accompanying sauces. Bills of fare often directed that vegetables be used to garnish meat dishes. Exceptions included asparagus, broccoli, and occasionally peas,which were generally served in separate dishes. English cookbooks dictated that the number of dishes in each course had to be the same, but no evidence suggests that colonial housewives were so precise.

Dinner for the Middling Sort

Most surviving evidence informs us only about what and how the gentry ate. When we interpret the lives of the Geddy, Powell, and other successful middling families in Williamsburg, we can assume that they had begun to participate in the consumer revolution.[15] It is unlikely, however, that they had acquired either the quality or, in some cases, the quantity of amenities possessed by their betters. Still, the large dining rooms at the Geddy and Powell houses indicate the intentions of these families to publicize their prosperity. Even so, the built-in beaufet[16] in the Geddy dining room and shelves in the closet off the Powell dining room were not filled with the number of matching sets of china and glassware and the amount of plate and cutlery that graced the dining and sideboard tables in the marble-mantled and walnut-trimmed dining room at the Peyton Randolph House. Although they undoubtedly had acquired manners to match their sets of tableware, women like Mrs. Geddy and Mrs. Powell were not as likely to feel as poised in performing the "honors of the table" as were Mrs. Randolph and Mrs. Wythe. Philip Vickers Fithian provides confirma-

tion of the anxiety that accompanied the role when an individual was unused to playing it. On Christmas Day 1773, with all the Carter males absent from dinner, the New Jersey tutor noted: "there was no Man at Table but myself. —I must carve—Drink the Health—and talk if I can!"[17]

Little evidence survives about specific dinner foods eaten by the middling sort in the Chesapeake. Some of the food that Mary Ambler ate while visiting Baltimore in the late summer and fall of 1770, however, suggests that the dinners served at the middling boardinghouse where she stayed were far simpler than the ones Mrs. Ambler presided over at her well-furnished house at Jamestown. The boardinghouse dinners consisted usually of only one meat (chicken prepared in a variety of ways, veal, beef, or mutton), two or three vegetables, and a sweet.[18]

According to English historian Lorna Weatherill, people in the middling ranks ate well but simply as illustrated by period graphics of meals with plain food on the table. She theorizes that few households had the time or the items necessary to produce the elaborate sauces, pies, and confections found in period cookery books.[19]

The practice of using a fork to steady the food being cut and a knife to convey food to the mouth persisted among the middling ranks well into the nineteenth century.[20] As noted above, the shapes of the implements used by knife-eaters differed from the silver knives and forks generally used by the gentry. Forks made of silver usually had three or four tines that were not as pointed as the less expensive two-tined, steel forks, while the ends of the blades on the knives used by knife-eaters were rounded.[21]

Families at the lower end of the social scale had more limited choices in the types of food available to them. Devereaux Jarratt observed, "Our food was altogether the produce of the farm or plantation, except a little sugar, which was rarely used. . . . We made no use of tea or coffee for breakfast, or at any other time; nor did I know a single family that made any use of them. Meat, bread and milk was the ordinary food of all my acquaintance. I suppose the richer sort might make use of those and other luxuries, but to such people I had no access."[22]

The level of furnishings within the houses of the lower ranks was also limited. However, by about 1750, even poor families began to acquire nonessential possessions, and some of their simple houses contained a table, chairs, individual knives and forks, inexpensive ceramic tableware, several kinds of cookware, and a teapot. The important word to emphasize here is *some*, since a number of poor whites and blacks never acquired more than the most basic belongings.

Also see, "Where in the World?" on pp. P-2–3, for the worldwide origins of the numerous components required for a stylish dinner, and the print called "Tasting" on p. P-8.

CHRISTMAS DINNER AT NOMINI HALL

We dined at four o-Clock—Mr Carter kept in his Room, because he breakfasted late. . . . —There were at Table Mrs Carter & her five Daughters that are at School with me—Miss Priscilla, Nancy Fanny, Betsy, and Harriot, five as beautiful delicate, well-instructed Children as I have ever know!—Ben is abroad; Bob & Harry are out; so there was no Man at Table but myself.—I must carve—Drink the Health—and talk if I can! Our Dinner was no otherwise than common [at Nomini Hall], yet as elegant a Christmas Dinner as I ever sat Down to—The table Discourse was Marriage; Mrs Carter observ'd that was she a Widow, she should scruple to marry any man alive; She gave a reason, that She did not think it probable a man could love her grown old when the world is thronged with blooming, ripening Virgins; but in fact Mrs Carter looks & would pass for a younger Woman than some unmarried Ladies of my acquaintance, who would willingly enough make us place them below twenty!

Fithian Diary, December 25, 1773

Tea

Introduced into England in the 1650s,[23] tea first arrived via Dutch ports and then became more directly available thanks to Charles II's marriage to Catherine of Braganza. The new queen's dowry included the Port of Bombay and trade connections with the Orient. In addition, her personal preference for the new drink gave tea both royal cachet and eventually a feminine association.[24] Samuel Pepys mentions his introduction to the beverage in 1660: "And afterwards did send for a Cupp of Tee (a China drink) of which I never had drank before."[25] Tea remained expensive, but nonetheless quickly became a symbol of gentility throughout Britain and her American colonies. It indicated one's position within the upper ranks of society. The up-to-date Duchess of Lauderdale was ordering teacups as early as 1672, and even a century later a Frenchman wrote during a visit to England in 1784, that tea "gives the rich an opportunity to show off their fine possessions: cups, teapots, etc., all made to the most elegant designs."[26]

The same may be said of America. Indeed, a French traveler, in 1781, wrote that Americans "use much tea,"[27] and there is ample data about the quantities and varieties of tea equipment and accessories owned, used, and enjoyed in the colonies.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, tea with its accompanying equipage gave an aspiring hostess the opportunity to demonstrate her familiarity with this fashionable beverage. However, fashion did not necessarily equal cost, even for the wealthiest households. In 1771, Robert Carter Nicholas ordered "a Sett Cheap Tea China to contain a doz.

Tea Cup and Saucers a doz. Coffee Cups & Saucers, a Slop Bowl, Milk Pot & two Sugar Dishes." Despite his desire for cheap teaware, Nicholas nonetheless wanted the ceramics to be "very Strong & pretty."[28] He may have felt that the proper equipage and its appropriate use compensated for a low monetary value.

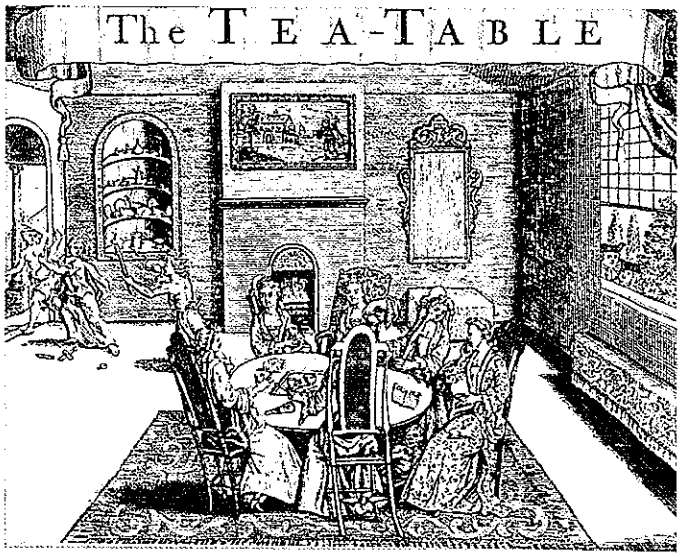
By the time Nicholas ordered his tea china, the beverage had been known in America for roughly eighty years.[29] The first Williamsburg reference to a tea-related object appears in Jean Marot's estate inventory of 1718 in which a "Tea Table & furniture" (i.e., tea equipage) were valued at £1.15.0. Inventories from areas beyond Williamsburg document tea-related items beginning in the 1710s. For example, the 1714 inventory of William Churchill of Middlesex County lists a "Tea Kittle" in the kitchen, while the 1728 inventory of Arthur Allen of Surry County lists a "tea table and furniture" worth £2.10.0 in the "Hall." Both Churchill and Allen were members of the gentry, the circle to which Marot catered at his tavern. While William Byrd II refers to "milk tea" in the entry for September 21, 1710, in his earliest surviving diary[30] regular supplies of tea were not guaranteed until 1713, the year that the East India Company negotiated right of access to the Port of Canton.[31] This direct access guaranteed regular shipments and may be the reason that tea-related items do not begin to appear in Virginia inventories until after that date, and then primarily within the upper tiers of society.

> *My Wife being entertain'd with Tea by the Good Women she visited, we could do no less than the like when they visited us; and so we got a Tea-Table with all its Appurtenances of China and Silver. Then my Spouse unfortunately overwork'd herself in washing the House, so that we could do no longer without a Maid.*
>
> "Anthony Afterwit" [Benjamin Franklin],
> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 10, 1732

However, the middling ranks entered the realm of tea-drinkers fairly soon after 1713. Excavations at the Thomas Everard House turned up delft tea and coffee cups dating to John Brush's tenure at the site in the 1720s. While Brush's 1727 inventory curiously does not include any ceramics, it does list a tea table, suggesting that tradesmen and their families were enjoying the relatively new drink to the extent of purchasing specialized furniture to accommodate it. A survey of other Williamsburg inventories dating to the 1720s reveals tea-related objects beginning to appear in a range of households along with other items relating to coffee and chocolate. Tea, however, became the most popular beverage, both at breakfast and as an after-dinner drink.[32]

The items required for preparing and serving tea varied depending upon the amount of money a family had to expend and upon their social position as well as their social aspirations. While tea should not be overlooked as a beverage first and foremost,[33] it was surrounded by an assortment of household accoutrements that ranged from furniture to metals to ceramics. As tea drinking became more widespread, the type and variety of objects surrounding it became more specifically identified with tea. In the process, tea moved from the category of merely beverage to that of a separate social event. Perhaps that increased emphasis on the beverage and its attendant luxury goods caused some to view tea drinking as a sign of moral decline.[34]

As for the necessary equipage, Virginia inventories document the presence of tea-drinking equipment during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, as noted above. Kettles were no longer just kettles; they became teakettles. Tables began to be specifically identified as tea tables. Teapots appeared in silver forms for the wealthy, with pewter and ceramic alternatives for those with less money to spend. In addition to tea tables, which could be easily moved from room to room,[35] tea boards (what we would today call trays) held the various items needed for tea and made them more easily carried as a group. As the century progressed, more specialized items appeared in the colony to assist with the serving of tea: teaspoons, milk jugs, slop bowls, kettle stands and heaters, and tea chests. Porcelain began to be used for teapots and the accompanying teaware. However, even in the most fashionable households a tea service did not necessarily have to match, although matching sets became popular after mid-century.



The Tea Table, *circa 1710. This English print illustrates ladies gathered around a tea table where "Chit Chat" (the open book on the table) reigns supreme. Despite tea's feminine associations, this does not prevent some gentlemen from lurking outside the window in hopes of overhearing snippets of conversation.*

While we know that ladies left the table after dinner and retired to the parlor or drawing room for tea,[36] we have only a few period accounts of how events transpired. Usually the wife or eldest daughter prepared the beverage with leaves from a tea chest. These chests (*caddy* is a post-colonial term) usually contained two canisters, one for green tea and the other for black, and occasionally a box for sugar. Hot water for brewing the tea was available from a kettle or, after about 1750, a fashionable tea kitchen or tea urn.[37]

Over their tea table, ladies discussed the latest news, fashions, and any other items of interest. Gentlemen, who remained in the dining room to imbibe various forms of alcohol following the ladies' withdrawal, usually joined the tea table after a certain period of time, and then both sexes conversed.[38] From one of these gentlemen, we learn an important signal that was part of serving tea: "I partook of most excellent tea and I should be even now still drinking it, I believe, if the [French] Ambassador had not charitably notified me at the twelfth cup, that I must put my spoon across it when I wished to finish with this sort of warm water."[39] Another poor soul, unaware of the practice of placing a spoon over his cup when satiated, resorted to secreting his teacup in his pocket until tea was concluded.[40]

Men were certainly welcome guests at the tea table, yet the service of tea remained very much a female-oriented activity. Gentlemen who ordered tea items occasionally requested advice from their female relatives. Charles Carroll of Maryland did so in a 1760 letter: "Pray my Compliments to my young lady Cousins and tell them that I Desire their Taste in my Tea Chest it is a piece of Peculiarly Lady's Furniture."[41]

Besides feminine identification with the beverage, tea accessories often had Chinese or chinoiserie decorative motifs, evoking the drink's country of origin. In some cases this led to an association of female activities with chinoiserie design in other domestic areas besides the parlor. For example, hand-painted Chinese wallpaper appears in English country houses in the eighteenth-century, but primarily in ladies' bedchambers and dressing rooms.[42]

Lower down the social ladder, tea was still a favored drink even if the middling sort's tea furniture was less opulent. Earthen- and stoneware took the place of porcelain with incomplete services that were not as nicely matched or coordinated. Regardless of one's economic position, teaware could be found throughout the full range of colonial society. Archaeological fragments of teacups and other specialized equipment have been found even in eighteenth-century Virginia slave quarters. These were possibly castoffs from owners, or they could have been purchased from the slender earnings that slaves sometimes accumulated. What is not clear is whether or not slaves actually drank tea from these vessels. In surviving documents, no record has yet been found proving that tea was distributed to slaves as rations, although, once again, it is possible they purchased small amounts from local merchants.

Tea was an important feature of eighteenth-century social life. As the poem "A Lady's Adieu to Her Tea-Table"[43] attests, it was a beverage that refreshed and an activity that provided an opportunity for socializing (although not to the extent of sacrificing liberty). Its presence can be detected in nearly every level of society. It is no wonder that it was an effective vehicle for political and economic protest in the years before the Revolution.

> *Tuesday, February 28th, 1775. This is the last day Tea is allowed to be drank on the Continent, by an act of Congress. The ladies seem very sad about it.*
>
> *Journal of Nicholas Cresswell*, p. 58

Statements about the "rituals" of taking tea or the "tea ceremony" appear to be assumptions without reference to period sources. Material culture connected with tea is plentiful, as are contemporary prints and paintings that depict families or groups of friends at tea. Surprisingly, no prescriptive literature from the eighteenth century stipulates how tea should be taken; no self-help books describe how one should behave during the drinking of tea. Even anecdotal evidence is scarce. Two statements by French visitors substantiate the custom of placing a spoon across the cup to stem the flow of tea.[44] One of those same visiting aristocrats noted that in the Philadelphia households he visited "a mahogany table is brought forward and placed in front of the lady who pours the tea."[45] These two simple actions do not constitute a ritual or ceremony.

Is it possible that because taking tea was a family activity that writers of etiquette books omitted it?[46] Alternatively, given the strong association of tea and females, could it be that women were responsible for showing their husbands, sons, daughters, brothers, and others the proper forms at the tea table? If nearly everyone in the middling and higher ranks of society learned about tea drinking at home, nothing written was necessary. Few women in eighteenth-century America published any original writings, and none is credited with an etiquette book. This remains one of the minor secrets of colonial life. Tea gained social (and, later, political) importance, but the appropriate behaviors, if ever written down, have not survived. As with other matters of demeanor and deference, it seems that the authorities expected the general rules of politeness to cover all social occasions; they were general, not specific.

Like so many other individual and interpersonal actions and behaviors from times past, eighteenth-century

tea drinking remains something of a mystery, a lacuna in historians' knowledge of the past. A coherent research strategy has yet to be determined.

See illustrations of Virginia tea tables, p. Q-7; teapots, p. Q-1; and the print "Morning," p. P-8.

Punch and Other Alcoholic Drinks

Various types of wine and ales were the usual accompaniment to gentry meals. They were served individually from a sideboard table as called for by diners. Wineglasses were not put on the table for each diner before the meal as they are today. However, after dinner the serious drinking began when rounds of toasts were called for.

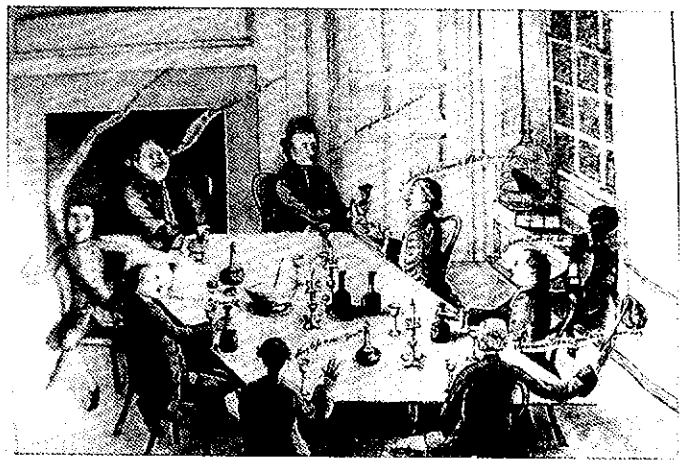
According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term *toast* was in use by the late seventeenth century[47] and referred to "A lady who is named as the person to whom a company is requested to drink; often one who is the reigning belle of the season."

Punch, like tea, found its way to Europe from the Orient[48] in the seventeenth century. There is some disagreement as to whether punch was a native drink of the Far East or a concoction put together from native ingredients by visiting Europeans. Regardless of its origins, references to the drink occur as early as 1665 in the writings of English travelers, and by the 1680s, with the development of stable trading patterns with the Far East, punch quickly made its appearance in England. However, not until 1696 does the first mention of bowls made specifically for punch appear in period documents.[49]

The word *punch* probably derives from the Persian word *panj* and the Hindu *panch* meaning "five" and possibly refers to the number of ingredients found in the drink—arrack, water, lemon or lime juice, sugar, and spices—a mixture that some have referred to, with cause, as "pugilistic."[50] Arrack could be one of two alcoholic liquids: "a distilled concentrate of the vegetable juice called 'toddy' which flows by incision from cocoa-trees in Goa; or if bought in Batavia, was made from a distillation of rice and sugar."[51] However, there were substitutes, such as aqua vitae, brandy, and rum, that could be used in place of arrack.

The first punch bowl to appear in a Williamsburg inventory belonged to William Sherman, whose estate was inventoried in 1708. In an estate worth only £16.14.0, the bowl (with a cock) was valued at £1.5.0, a large proportion of such a small property. However, Rob Hunter has observed that "punch bowls were the most highly valued ceramic objects in both domestic households and taverns."[52] Hunter goes on to note the "16 china Bowls" valued at roughly £1 apiece in Anthony Hay's 1771 inventory, the "5 china Bowls" worth £5 in Peyton Randolph's 1776 inventory, and the "Crackt China punchbowl" in gaoler John Carter's 1742 inventory. The presence of these objects indicates the importance of punch as a ceremony among the gentry and middling sort in Williamsburg as it was throughout male Anglo-American society.

The making and partaking of punch provided an opportunity for a variety of competitive behaviors. While the setting may have been genteel (at least in gentry households), the results of over-consumption could be less so. Dionysian activities in the dining room might contrast drastically with the gentility of the tea drinking in the parlor. The bowls, glasses, and ladles were fashionable accompaniments for serving punch, and, as noted above, the bowls were among the most expensive ceramics in both domestic and commercial contexts.



"Mr. Peter Manigault and His Friends." Ink and wash drawing by George Roupell, Charleston, S[outh] C[arolina], circa 1750 [original at Winterthur Museum]. The host (on the left, addressing "Howarth") and seven officers and gentlemen friends exchange toasts and show off their clubical manners in a room so architecturally standardized that it could equally be Manigault's parlor or a private entertaining room at a fashionable city tavern. An inscription on the back dispels the mystery. This particular punch party was held "at the House of Mr. Manigault," either his town house or "Steepbrook" at Goose Creek. It hardly mattered. The furnishings alone (including the caged bird and the liveried waiter) defined the event and distinguished the company. Eighteenth-century American scenes seldom depict so comprehensively all the elements necessary to the kind of genteel performance shown in this drawing, including its setting, props, costumes, and gestures. Even the performers' lines—"Pray, less noise Gentlemen" and "Squire Isaac your Wig, you Dog!"—have been scripted by the participants' long instruction in the arts of civility and rehearsed over a lifetime of similar encounters with social equals. (Caption quoted from Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds., Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century, *640.*

Gentlemen had different ways of making punch: lemons might be substituted for limes, brandy for rum, the amount of sugar to be used, etc. Each man remained confident that his was the best concoction.[53] While drinking encouraged sociability, punch also provided for competition: Who could hold his liquor best? References to intoxication are often found as decoration on eighteenth-century punch bowls, and period descriptions document the practice of over-imbibing. As in the case of tea drinking, no prescriptive literature describes the ideal way to drink punch and make toasts.

Interestingly, tea and punch are both products of the seventeenth century, the former associated with women and the latter with men. Tea was the best opportunity to display one's exquisite taste and up-to-date wares. Punch was an arena for display as well, but in a masculine setting, that is, the dining room, and in masculine behavior. It is not surprising that while men could join women at tea, women, at least ladies, did not join men at punch, or toddy, as it was often called in the latter part of the century.

By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, punch was falling from favor. Some viewed it as old-fashioned and vulgar. Non-alcoholic beverages, such as lemonade, replaced it. Interestingly, the decline of punch parallels the decline of the patriarchal household as discussed in Rhys Isaac's *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790.*[54]

One bottle of Arrack, the last of my store,
(For your sake and mine, I would wish it were more)

From my cave, where quite bury'd in sawdust it lay,
Restor'd once again to the light of the day,

To the friends of the muse, whose benevolent care
Our labours reward with a plum, or a pear,

The poet presents—and, lest you mistake it—
He send you moreover instructions to make it—

As the bottle is big, and the liquor is rough,
Four lemons, I doubt will be little enough:

For sugar, you know it depends upon taste,
But 'twill take, in mind, half a pound at the least:

Let your water be boil'd; and, when it is cool,
Pour in just two quarts—an infallible rule—

Then stir it three times; the business is done.
(If you have not a ladle, make use of a spoon)

Fill your glasses all round; and—you know what should follow—
Long life and good health to the sons of Apollo!

Massachusetts Spy (Boston), October 13, 1774
(courtesy of Mark Sowell)

"After the English Dinner," circa 1814, illustrates the less-than-flattering view that some Frenchmen had for the Englishman's custom of remaining in the dining room with his male guests after the ladies had withdrawn to the parlor for tea. The proximity of the chamber pot to the dining table was less than appealing to the French as well as to our modern sensibilities. (British Museum)

See the "Objects by Social Rank," pp. O-20–21, for photographs of four men imbibing a bit of rum. We have worked to ensure that their clothing, body language, setting, and drinking vessels plainly reflect the social rank of each.

Two illustrations of punch making appear in this manual. See Latrobe's sketch of "Alix," a liveried slave, stirring up a bowl of punch, p. D-4; and Bunbury's painting "The Country Club" in which an Englishman makes punch, p. P-10.

It is the Hero's Name, and blooming Lass
That give new Flavour to the circling Glass

Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon), December 29, 1774[55]

"To Your Health!": Toasts and Toasting

Punch and toasts were inseparable. Drinking toasts was an intoxicating, sometimes merely ceremonial custom in colonial Virginia. Though at times, toasting seems to have been fairly informal, it usually called for a different beverage for each round of toasts. First came the pro forma loyal toasts—to the king, the governor, and, in time, to the Continental Congress—sometimes then to "absent friends." Often additional toasts were made to the health of a lady—sometimes to one not at the table. (When Philip Fithian was pressed to make a toast, he usually named his beloved "Laura," Elizabeth Beatty, back home in New Jersey.[56]) Even in the most casual circumstances, when Colonel Robert Carter and Fithian dined alone, for example, they drank the loyal toasts.

That same perceptive diarist, Fithian, left a telling description of a self-conscious, unrefined toaster.

> Dined with us one—one—Mr—Mr—I forget his name—I know his trade tho': An Inspector [of tobacco]—He is rather Dull, & seems unacquainted with company for when he would, at Table, drink our Health, he held the Glass of Porter fast with both his Hands, and then gave an insignificant nod to each one at the Table, in Hast[e], & with fear, & then drank like an Ox—The Good Inspector, at the second toast, after having seen a little our Manner "Gentlemen & Ladies (but there was none in Womans Cloathing at Table except Mrs Carter) The King"—I thought that during the Course of the Toasts, he was better pleased with the Liquor than with the manner in which he was at this Time obliged to use it.[57]

Obviously, the tobacco inspector was not accustomed to or at ease with the refined company at dinner at Nomini Hall. As a guest, he was invited to give the toast, but he was not familiar with the proper form of the custom.

At public dinners, toasts were more extensive and elaborate, each followed by a round of applause; consequently, the procedure took a great deal of time and a river of wines and liquors.

In 1746, a ball and supper were held at the Capitol to celebrate victory at Culloden. The ball and supper concluded with numerous toasts.

> A great Variety of the choicest and best Liquors, in which the Healths of the King, the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke, and the rest of the Royal Family, the Governor, Success to His Majesty's Arms, Prosperity to this Colony, and many other Loyal Healths were cheerfully drank, and a Round of Cannon, which were reserv'd to the Capitol for this Purpose, was discharg'd at each Health, to the number of 18 or 20 Rounds, which lasted 'til near 2 o'Clock. The whole Affair was conducted with great Decency and good Order. . . . All the Houses in the City were illuminated, and a very large Bonfire was made in the Market-Place, 3 Hogsheads of Punch given to the Populace; and the whole concluded with the greatest Demonstrations of joy and Loyalty.[58]

After 1765 toasts took a more political turn—so much so that *royal healths* became an unpatriotic phrase, and *loyal healths* was soon replacing it.[59]

A mock, heroic battle resulted when two young Virginia women had set their caps for the same officer of a British man-of-war stationed at Hampton Roads in 1768:

> *Betsy [Blair] gave her Toast at Supper Mr. Sharp (a Lieutenant on Board the Rippon) Miss Sally [Sweeny] for a while disputed with her, at length it was agreed to decide it with pistols when they should go to bed. No sooner had they got upstairs than they advanced up close to each other, then turning short round, Back to Back, marked three steps forward and fired; so great was the explosion and so suffocating the smell of Powder that I quitted the Room, till by Betsy's repeated shouts I soon learned she had got the better of her antagonist. Both survive.*

Anne Blair letter, 1768

Storage and Display of Objects Relating to Food and Drink

Objects used in serving food and drink have had a varied storage and display history. From the Middle Ages until the mid-seventeenth century, impressive ceramic and metal pieces were displayed on case furniture called *court cupboards*. By the late seventeenth century the terms *sideboard* and *buffet* were both used to denote an area set aside for the serving of beverages. It might consist of a tiered cupboard, a freestanding table, or a table built into a recess.

In the seventeenth century, the French came up with an innovation. They added doors to recesses with built-in tables, usually with a drop leaf, and installed shelves above the work surface. These, too, were referred to as *sideboards* and *buffets*. The doors allowed for display but could also be closed and locked for secure storage.[60]

By the second quarter of the eighteenth century, sideboard tables emerged as the preferred English furniture form for serving beverages and displaying silver in dining rooms. The built-in cupboard, formerly referred to as a *buffet*, was modified and assigned a new function and a slightly different name—*beaufait* or "*bowfat*," as in Lord Botetourt's 1770 estate inventory.

With the substitution of glazed doors for solid-panel ones, these new, improved cupboards became the repositories of fashionable ceramics. This development also led to female associations for this storage area, as opposed to the masculine connotations of the sideboard with all its alcoholic beverage paraphernalia.

About mid-century, as the availability and variety of tableware and drinking vessels expanded, closets became a regular feature of the finest dining rooms. They were used to store and secure items related to the serving of food and drink. The Peyton Randolph dining room, added about 1755, illustrates this trend; one closet seems to have held ceramics and glassware, and the other silver and flatware. Display was confined, for the most part, to the sideboard.

Some households clung to older fashions. To display or not to display may have been related to a person's geographic and/or economic situation. For example, Dr. George Gilmer installed a corner cupboard with a glazed sash window in his dining room in 1752. (His house was later incorporated into the St. George Tucker House, and Gilmer's dining room is now known as the Blue Room.) In some rural dwellings, as at Gunston Hall, bowfats remained popular while urban housing in the middling range, as at the Geddy House, continued to use them as well. In other cases, it seems to have been the personal preference of the owner, regardless of current fashion.

For some consumers, a piece of case furniture fulfilled the function of a built-in cupboard. Beaufaits sometimes are listed in household inventories, indicating a freestanding cupboard for household ceramics, glass, silver, and pewter. Similarly, the corner cupboard with an open top section for display or a glazed door, such as the reproduction cupboard in the hall of the Gaol, could fulfill the same function. (See illustrations of storage pieces in the "Objects by Social Rank" section, p. O-19.) As with built-in cupboards, these pieces rarely appear in inventories of gentry households, but they show up in households below the very top tier. For the very fashion-conscious, a new type of furniture form emerged: the china case or cabinet.

Whether or not they had cupboards, most aspiring households continued to use sideboard tables as the primary area in dining rooms for mixing alcoholic beverages throughout the second half of the eighteenth century. As the century drew to a close, the table began to change—doors and drawers were added. These storage features were especially important as closets began to disappear from dining rooms at this time. With doors and drawers, the sideboard table came to be called simply the *sideboard*. While its form changed over time, its significance did not, and it still underscored the importance of the beverages that accompanied a fashionable gentry meal.[61]

1 Pat[ricia A.] Gibbs, "Eighteenth-Century Virginia Food and Meal Service"; and Wenger, "The Dining Room in Early Virginia," 150. This section draws heavily on these two documents.

2 Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia,* 291.

3 Gregory A. Stiverson and Patrick H. Butler, eds., "Virginia in 1732: The Travel Journal of William Hugh Grove," 34, 29.

4 "Charges Against Governor Nicholson," 381.

5 Hannah Glasse, *"First Catch Your Hare—." The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy, By a Lady,* xviii.

6 *Ibid.* This statement is even more applicable to a slave society.

7 Gibbs, "Eighteenth-Century Virginia Food and Meal Service."

8 See "Where in the World?" pp. P-2–3, for more specifics about the dining room at the Randolph House.

9 Bushman, *Refinement of America,* 77, citing studies by James Deetz, Marley R. Brown, Lois Green Carr, and Lorena S. Walsh.

10 Bushman, *Refinement of America,* 76, citing Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress,* 13.

11 Modern table service, called *Russian service* or *service à la russe,* where waiters carry the serving dishes around the table to each guest, was introduced into America about 1840.

12 See the discussions under the headings "Tea," pp. E-6–9, and "Punch and Other Alcoholic Drinks," pp. E-9–11.

13 See pp. O-20–21 for illustrations of four rum imbibers and a brief discussion of their social differences.

14 A sideboard table provided an area primarily for serving beverages at a dinner table; a side table provided a space for extra plates, flatware, and, sometimes, extra dishes of food. See Robert Roberts, *The House Servant's Directory,* 48–53.

15 This certainly is indicated by archaeological remains uncovered at these sites, for example, the teaware found at the Geddy as illustrated in the color plates on pp. P-12–13.

16 See the detailed discussion of storage and display features on p. E-12.

17 The Christmas entry from Fithian's diary is quoted in full on p. E-6.

18 "Diary of M. Ambler," 152–170. It should be noted that Mrs. Ambler, in Baltimore to undergo smallpox inoculation, observed dietary restrictions as part of the process, and on certain days was not allowed to eat fats. See Gibbs, "Eighteenth-Century Virginia Food and Meal Service," 13.

19 Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660–1760,* 146–147.

20 As late as 1852, at least one etiquette book stated, "If possible the knife should never be put in the mouth at all, and if at all, let the edge be turned outward." See E. Hutchinson, *Ladies' Indispensable Assistant,* 125.

21 Persons used to eating with forks who have tried knife-eating with reproduction eighteenth-century knives find the transition fairly easy. But it is likely that someone in the eighteenth century, who had grown up as a knife-eater, would have found fork-eating an awkward experience.

22 Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia,* 46, citing "The Autobiography of the Reverend Devereaux Jarratt, 1732–1763," 346–393. For a more recent description of Jarratt's family background and emotional makeup, see David L. Holmes's foreword to *The Life of the Reverend Deveraux Jarratt.*

23 Englishman Thomas Garway published a list of tea's beneficial attributes sometime after 1657. Therefore, tea must have been available on at least a limited basis for some time for Garway to come to its defense. For the revolutionary nature of hot drinks, see Peter Brown, *In Praise of Hot Liquors.* Brown also describes various aspects of tea, from the different types to its availability to its social and status implications.

24 Coffee was associated with men and especially with mercantile interests. Consuming coffee outside the home—especially at urban coffeehouses—was the norm. Tea on the other hand remained home-centered and associated with all things feminine.

25 September 25, 1660, Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys,* 1: 253.

26 François de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, *A Frenchman's Year in Suffolk,* 18.

27 Claude C. Robin, *New Travels through North America: in a series of Letters . . . in the Year 1781* (Boston, 1784), cited in Rodris Roth, "Tea Drinking in 18th-Century America," 23.

28 Robert Carter Nicholas to John Norton, Norton Papers, Folder 49, October 14, 1771, enclosure.

29 Roth, "Tea Drinking in 18th-Century America," 64.

30 Elizabeth Pitzer Gusler, "All the Appendages for an Handsome Tea Table," 101–117.

31 Brown, *In Praise of Hot Liquors,* 56.

32 According to Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace in *Consuming Subjects,* 22, the total quantities of tea imported into Britain increased 500 percent between 1721 and 1760. The popularity of tea among all social groups may also be due, at least in part, to economic factors. Cup for cup, tea cost much less than either coffee or chocolate; therefore, it appealed to leaner household budgets. Outside the economic realm, other factors probably also contributed; for example, tea was the easiest to prepare; Brown, *In Praise of Hot Liquors,* 63, 58. No one has written of the following benefits of the three imported beverages, but it seems logical that a hot drink was a warming and effective stimulant for denizens of drafty, underheated houses in wintertime; it could also be a vehicle for calorie-laden sugar and nutrient-rich cream or milk.

33 Indeed, in the 1750s, Samuel Johnson described himself as "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker who has for 20 years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating leaf; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening; with tea solaces the midnight; and with tea welcomes the morning"; quoted in Brown, *In Praise of Hot Liquors,* 60.

34 Thomas Turner, *The Diary of Thomas Turner,* 159. See also, McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, eds., *Birth of a Consumer Society,* 28–29.

35 Before the evolution of the more specialized parlor/passage/dining room house plan, it is likely that the Chamber served as a withdrawing area where ladies took tea; Mark R. Wenger, personal communication, October 19, 2000. However, the portable nature of tea equipage meant that the beverage could be taken in any location that weather and inclination allowed—either inside or out.

36 During non-importation associations, of course, tea was not to be consumed. Regardless of political turmoil, some people probably also offered coffee after dinner because of personal preference.

37 See the illustrations of tea kitchens on p. Q-7.

38 Jonathan Swift gives a fictional account of socializing over the tea table in "The Ladies at Their Tea," in Dialogue III of his *Polite Conversation.*

39 Claude Victor Marie, Prince de Broglie, "Narrative of the Prince de Broglie," trans. E. W. Balch, *Magazine of American History,* 1 (April 1877): 233, cited in Morrison H. Heckscher and Leslie Greene Bowman, *American Rococo, 1750–1775,* 79.

40 Ferdinand Marie Bayard, *Travels of a Frenchman . . . 1791,* 93, cited in Roth, "Tea Drinking in 18th-Century America," 73.

41 As quoted in Gusler, "All the Appendages for an Handsome Tea Table," 105.

42 Personal communication with Ian Gow, curator, National Trust for Scotland, November 14, 2000. For the association of the contents of a woman's dressing table with imported goods from exotic lands, see a stanza from Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" on p. D-2.

43 This poem from the *Virginia Gazette* appears in full under the heading "Coming of the Revolution" on p. A-13.

44 La Rochefoucauld, *A Frenchman's Year in Suffolk,* 18; Robin, *New Travels through North America,* cited in Roth, "Tea Drinking in 18th-Century America," 23.

45 Bayard, *Travels of a Frenchman,* 47, cited in Roth "Tea Drinking in 18th-Century America," 76–77.

46 Carson, *Ambitious Appetites,* 29. Cathleene B. Hellier, in her study of eighteenth-century deportment, has not found the taking of tea discussed in prescriptive literature of that period either; personal communication, March 15, 2000. According to Peter Brown, director of Fairfax House, York, England, the earliest English tea instructions date from 1808. We have not yet seen the book, but will try to obtain a copy and update staff.

47 The first specific reference comes from Congreve's *The Way of the World,* 1700.

48 For a discussion of punch and other alcoholic beverages in England, see Peter Brown and Marla H. Schwartz, *Come Drink the Bowl Dry,* especially pp. 45–54 for punch.

49 *Ibid.,* 47.

50 *Ibid.,* 45.

51 *Ibid.*

52 See Robert Hunter, "An Exploration into 18th-Century Punch Bowls," Research Files, Department of Collections.

53 Printed period cookery books do not give recipes for punch, but family manuscript cookbooks occasionally do. For example, see the Tucker family's Barbados Lemon Punch in Nancy Carter Crump's *Hearthside Cooking,* 79.

54 Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia,* 302–305.

55 This simple couplet comes from a long article called "Reflections on the Absurdity, Folly, and Inconsistency of various fashionable Customs and Ceremonies practiced in publick and private Companies."

56 See Fithian, *Diary,* January 3, March 12, and July 13, 1774.

57 Fithian, *Diary,* July 12, 1774.

58 *Virginia Gazette,* July 18, 1746, cited in Jane Carson, *Colonial Virginians at Play,* 94. See also memorandum in Research Query File by Patricia Gibbs dated August 6, 1975, Rockefeller Library, Williamsburg Va.

59 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), October 20, 1774.

60 The Scots were much fonder of these features, referred to as *buffet niches* and *cupboards,* than their English neighbors to the south. However, *buffet cupboards* underwent something of a transformation in use, form, and name.

61 Betty Crowe Leviner, "Buffet or Bowfat?" 754–761; Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor,* 24, 27, 60, 70; and Peter Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration in England, France, and Holland,* 231–239.

F. Music and Dance

Cultures around the world and throughout time had and have their own kinds of music and musical instruments. Music is an important marker of each civilization's identity. We continue to associate certain sounds, forms, and instruments with specific cultures and eras. Colonial Virginia's melodies and rhythms had several geographic and cultural points of origin.

Vocal music, sometimes called "the first art," prevails in any civilization. Singing either alone or as a group is the simplest and most frequent musical activity. Lifting the voice fulfills many purposes. It can help pass the time, accompany physical labor, soothe tempers, lull children to sleep, relay news, and preserve cultural information, and often serves as a form of worship. Oral traditions carry both music and poetry from generation to generation and move readily from one locale to the next.

Early Virginia's diverse ethnic make-up created a rich musical scene. Native Americans chanted, beat skin-covered drums, and danced ceremonial steps on important occasions that demarcated their hunting and farming seasons. African dance movements, rhythms, and harmonies came to the colony directly from the continent or indirectly via the Caribbean islands. Immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Germany, and other European subcultures brought along their musical repertoires, preferences, and talents when they came to the New World. These musical cultures did not collide but coexisted; the result was not conflict but welcome variety and creative fusion.

Music hath charms to sooth the savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
William Congreve, "The Mourning Bride," 1697

From every house a constant tuting may be listened to upon one instrument or another, whilst the Vocal dogs will no doubt complete the howl.
Landon Carter Diary, 1771

"All the Divertisment One Could Wish"

by Barry Trott

reprinted from Colonial Williamsburg Interpreter *15, no. 1 (March 1994): 1–4, 10. Another valuable source of information is John W. Molnar's "Music in the Colonial Perod," Colonial Williamsburg Research Report 117.*

In truth, music was as commonly heard in colonial Virginia as it is today, where we are bombarded with background music virtually everywhere. However, music in eighteenth-century Virginia was not a passive background to life, but a participatory activity. Virginians not only attended the occasional performances of various types of music, they also played, sang, and danced for their own amusement throughout the colonial period.

One indicator of the highly participatory nature of popular music in eighteenth-century Virginia is the large number of references to musical instruments. Wills and inventories of many Virginians list musical instruments, as do notices in the *Virginia Gazette*. Violins predominated, but flutes, reed instruments, guitars, keyboards, horns, and drums are also represented. Many tavern keepers had instruments on hand for patrons: James Shields kept "in the Barr . . . one old fiddle, one old Hautboy [oboe]." As in English taverns, the patrons no doubt sang catches or rounds as well as popular drinking songs to the accompaniment of these instruments. Notices of runaway servants and slaves frequently mention the ability of the runaway to play an instrument. An advertisement in the December 22, 1768, *Virginia Gazette* noted the arrival of "120 healthy servants," one of whom "plays well on the French Horn, flute and other instruments," a skill that added to his value. In 1757 Philip Ludwell Lee advertised for the return of Charles Love, professor of music and dancing, who had fled his employ (taking with him Lee's bassoon!).

More commonly, music teachers were self-employed and advertised their services in the *Gazette*. Music teachers such as Cuthbert Ogle of York County, John Victor, Charles Leonard, and Francis Russworm between them taught many instruments, including flute, violin, guitar, and keyboard. Children learned music from an early age, both through formal instruction and on their own. Music masters usually provided formal instruction, though Robert Carter [III of Nomini Hall] instructed his daughter on the guitar as her music teacher was unfamiliar with that instrument. Carter himself was an accomplished musician who owned and played the flute, harpsichord, pianoforte, organ, and armonica (musical glasses), as well as the guitar. The journal of Philip Fithian, tutor to the Carter children, contains many references to the musical life at Nomini Hall. Other children seemed to have picked up music naturally. William

FRANCIS RUSSWORM,

BEGS Leave to acquaint the young Gentlemen in and about Williamsburg that he shall open School on Monday the 3d. of June, at Mr. Singleton's House [Bassett Hall], to teaching the VIOLIN, GERMAN and COMMON FLUTES. His Terms may be known by inquiring at the Post Office. . . .

❖ He will wait upon young Ladies at their own Homes, to teach them to dance a Minuet after the newest and most fashionable Method.

Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon), May 16, 1771

Downman wrote his brother in 1752 that "my little Rawleigh is a very brisk boy and sings mightily. He can sing almost any of the common tunes our fiddlers play."

Like their English counterparts, Virginians could draw on a wide range of sources for their musical entertainment. Published collections of popular songs such as the *Musical Entertainer* and the *Musical Miscellany* were offered for sale at the printing office, as was John Gay's *Beggar's Opera,* still popular in 1770, forty years after its premier. In 1764–65 the daybook of the printing office lists the sale of two collections of Scottish songs then in fashion. Other music was imported as well. In 1771, Philip Lee wrote to his brother, a London merchant: "I wish you would send me every year, instead of newspapers if you can't both, the best new minuets, songs and Country-dances, both music notes and words." Colonel John Waller of Spotsylvania County had a copy of Thomas D'Urfey's *Wit and Mirth or Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719) in his library. Robert Bremner's *Keyboard Miscellany* was owned by both Thomas Jefferson and Martha Washington, and no doubt its tunes were played at both Monticello and Mount Vernon. Jefferson's large collection of music included not only chamber works but also country-dances and two volumes of drinking songs, including the tavern favorite "Nottingham Ale." Robert Beverley's 1734 estate inventory included volume two of *The Dancing Master* (1728), the penultimate edition of this collection of dance music originally published in 1650 by John Playford. The collected papers of the Carter family from Shirley plantation contain two boxes of music from the latter part of the eighteenth century. The music displays a variety typical of the period, including eight ballad opera scores, several keyboard studies, a collection of Scots songs by Allan Ramsay, country-dances, and many single sheet songs bound together.

Periodicals also published songs and dance tunes. Songs on such subjects as the Boston Tea Party, American liberty, aging, friendship, harmony, mourning, women, love, and "The British Herring Fishery" can be found in the *Virginia Gazette.* In May 1768 William Rind advertised in the *Gazette* for subscribers to *The Gentleman's Magazine.* Circulated widely throughout the colonies, this periodical presented articles on a variety of subjects, held poetry contests, and regularly printed songs and dance tunes. Between 1744 and 1755, 125 songs and dances were published, revealing a cross-section of British popular music drawn from contemporaneous ballad operas, English and Scots songs, and public garden concerts, as well as new compositions and pieces composed for special occasions.

Another popular English music tradition, printed broadsides, also made their appearance in the colonies. Although no references exist to the publication of broadsides in Williamsburg, numerous examples survive from colonies to the north and south. Printed on single sheets, broadsides were sold individually by the printer and also offered "very Cheap to travelling traders." Boston printer Nathaniel Coverly advertised "verses of popular interest for sale by the Groze or the Dozen." In 1713 Cotton Mathew lamented that "people are much corrupted by foolish Songs and Ballads which the Hawkers and Peddlers carry into all parts of the Country." Nonetheless, the popularity of the broadside continued to spread. The *Virginia Gazette* for October 7, 1737, notes an entertainment to be held on St. Andrew's Day in Hanover County. Among other contests, "a Quire of ballads to be sung for by a number of songsters, the best to have the prize, and all of them to have liquor to clear their windpipes." Dancing and fiddling contests were also scheduled, as well as an entertainment with "Drums, trumpets and Hautboys &c."

Ballads and tunes also survived in the oral tradition. Though there is no written record of such transmissions in North America until the ballad collectors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began their work, there can be no doubt that music was passed on orally from player to player in taverns, homes, and elsewhere. A ballad tells a story in song form, and the Virginia Folklore Society's collection *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* lists fifty-one songs collected in early twentieth-century Virginia. All of them are variants of originals dating to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including thirty-six versions of "Barbara Allen." The stories of the songs range from unrequited love ("Barbara Allen") to requited love ("The Bailiff's Daughter of Slington"), religious stories ("Dives and Lazarus"), sex, treachery, and murder ("Lord Randall," "Matty Groves," "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight"). Undoubtedly, the early colonists brought many of these songs with them to the New World, where in the course of time they were changed from the original. These changes could be either the result of faulty memory or the intentional substitution of local persons, places, or events to fit the basic story line and make it more interesting.

As has been mentioned above, Virginians not only sang but also played a wide variety of instruments. More than twenty different types of musical instruments appear in Virginia sources, in inventories and wills, offered for sale,

Theres the Church fam'd for its noble Organ of one hundred tones, touch'd by the modern Orpheus—the inimitable Pelham!

Alexander Macaulay, 1783 journal

either privately or in the *Virginia Gazette*, used in performances, in advertisements for lessons, or in journal references.

The violin (or fiddle) may have been the most popular instrument of the colonial period. In her Colonial Williamsburg research report on musical instruments, Mary Goodwin lists 126 references to the violin (or members of that family and the viol family) in Virginia from 1624 to 1795. The *Virginia Gazette* for November 19–26, 1736, advertised a fiddling contest to be held in conjunction with a St. Andrew's Day fair in Hanover County, "a fine Cremona fiddle to be played for." Inventories and wills from all over the colony list violins, and the violin is frequently mentioned in runaway slave and servant notices. Prominent Virginia fiddlers include Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry (who is said to have entertained patrons of his father-in-law's tavern with his playing). Several merchants in Williamsburg sold fiddles, along with strings and bows.[1]

Williamsburg stores also regularly offered flutes and fifes for sale. Generally, the German or transverse flute superseded the English or common flute (recorder) in preference during the eighteenth century. Both instruments were played in Virginia, and tutors for both were available in Williamsburg. Fifes and tin whistles could be purchased at Greenhow's Store as well, and the military use of the fife is well documented by the many notices seeking fifers for militia groups in the 1770s.

Another popular instrument of the period that causes some confusion today is the guitar. The baroque guitar, predecessor of today's Spanish-style guitar, was most popular in England during the Restoration (King Charles II played, as did his brother James). It is certainly possible that guitars made their way to Virginia at this time, although no sure record exists. In the early eighteenth century the English guitar (often referred to simply as guitar) became popular and remained so through the end of the century. A member of the cittern family, the English guitar had a pear-shaped body and ten strings.[2] Two fine examples belonging to Colonial Williamsburg are on display in the Wallace Museum. It was not related to the Spanish-style guitar. The numerous references to guitars in colonial America generally make no distinction as to the style of the instrument.[3]

WANTED, to buy or to hire,
AN orderly Negro or Mulatto man, who can play well on the violin. Whoever has such a one may have good wages, or a good price, and ready money if to be sold . . . or apply to
WILLIAM FEARSON

Virginia Gazette (Rind), September 14, 1769

RUN away from the Subscriber, the Negro Boy so well know in this City by the Name of FIDDLER BILLY, who is of a yellowish Cast, smart, and likely. He belongs to the Estate of Edward Nicholson, deceased; and I hired him of Mr. Benjamin Weldon, the Executor. Whoever delivers him to me shall have 20s. Reward, besides what the Law allows; and I herby forewarn all persons for harbouring him.
WILLIAM FEARSON

Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon), November 4, 1773

Keyboard instruments enjoyed wide popularity in eighteenth-century Virginia; Benjamin Bucktrout [advertised that he could] repair keyboard instruments. Harpsichord, spinet,[4] piano forte, and organ could all be found in Virginia homes, and keyboard music dominated many music collections. Like the guitar and mandolin, the keyboard was used as an accompaniment to singing as well as for solo or ensemble works. Several appear in Williamsburg estate inventories,[5] and one seems to have found its way into the home of silversmith James Geddy, prompting [the following poem].

On Miss ANNE GEDDY singing, and playing on the SPINET

WHEN Nancy on the spinet plays
I fondly on the virgin gaze,
And wish that she was mine;
Her air, her voice, her lovely face,
United, with such excessive grace,
The nymph appears divine!

A smile or kiss, or amorous toy,
To me can give but little joy,
from any maid but she;
Corelli, Handel, Felton, Nares,
With their concertos, solos, airs,
Are far less sweet to me!

Ye fates, who cause our joy, or grief,
Oh! give my wounded heart relief,
Let me with her be blest;
Oh! Venus, soften the dear maid,
Oh! Cupid, grant they powerful aid,
And pierce her youthful breast.

Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon), April 14, 1768[6]

The most noted keyboardist in all the colonies was probably Peter Pelham, who for about fifty years served as organist at Bruton Parish Church. Besides his duties as organist, Pelham also influenced music in Williamsburg as a teacher and as director of *The Beggar's Opera* when it was first performed in the town.

Various reed and brass instruments could also be heard in colonial Virginia. John Greenhow offered bugles and hunting horns for sale at his store in Williamsburg. The French horn was played in concerts and at dances, and several notices in the *Gazette* mention runaways who played the instrument. Bassoons and clarinets are mentioned along with the trumpet for use in military bands for the "harmony and discipline of the corps." Oboes (often called *hautboys*) are also found in many inventories, including that of tavern keeper James Shields.

Benjamin Franklin's invention, the armonica, found a place in Virginia. George Washington noted in his journal that he spent £0.3.9 "to hear the Armonica." Robert Carter's playing of his "harmonica" overwhelmed Philip Fithian, who called it "the most captivating instrument I have ever heard." The armonica, an improvement over a series of tuned "musical glasses" set into a wooden box (an example of the latter is at the Wallace Museum), was a series of tuned glasses mounted on a turning spindle and played with moistened fingers.

Among other instruments, the banjo (or *banger, banjar,* etc.) appears in several eighteenth-century accounts of African-American music. Jefferson referred to the banjar as coming to the colony from Africa. Fithian noted "several Negroes and Ben and Harry [sons of Robert Carter III] playing on a banjoe and dancing." The predecessor of today's five-string banjo, the early banjo had a variable number of strings and was used primarily as a rhythmic accompaniment to dancing and singing.[7]

Other instruments mentioned in Virginia documents include drums (military and civilian uses), bagpipes (listed in at least one runaway notice), pedal harp (for sale in Norfolk), and Jew's harp (found in excavations in both Jamestown and Williamsburg).

Music indeed played an important part in the lives of all classes of Virginians in the eighteenth century. From planter to slave, Virginians entertained themselves with songs and tunes, and the interaction of the English and African cultures led eventually to new forms of music in America. The rigid categorization of music so prevalent today was less common in colonial Virginia. A drinking song with a rousing chorus knew few class boundaries. Truly, Virginians delighted in music of all sorts.

* * *

Both social and performance art, dance in colonial Virginia was inseparable from music.

> *Virginians are of genuine blood—they will dance or die!*
> Fithian Diary, August 24, 1774

The frequently quoted New Jersey visitor to Virginia well understood his hosts. Fithian's jocular remark, above, succinctly explains just how important dancing was to colonial Virginians. Dancing was integral—nay, essential—to the social life of the day.

As Virginia's capital city and home of the governors, Williamsburg served as the gathering place for gentry, burgesses, wealthy merchants and ambitious lawyers from all over the colony. Accompanied by wives, marriageable daughters, servants, and slaves, they traveled to town several times a year to rub elbows with the upper echelon of urban society.

During Publick Times (when the courts were in session and the Meeting of the Merchants was in progress) there were assemblies and balls several times a week. Such events were well publicized in the local newspapers, and it seems that these occasions were well attended. Balls held at the Governor's Palace were by invitation only, and only the highest social rank was asked. Naturally, guests at Palace balls put on their very best suits and gowns and their most correct behaviors. Silks, brocades, laces, feathers, ruffles, jewels, and flowers vied for attention.

Much less formal affairs were private dances given in homes and at various local taverns. Public dances, by paid admission ticket, were held at the Capitol and at taverns. Sometimes tavern keepers arranged these as profit-making endeavors. Otherwise a local dancing master rented the space, hired musicians, brought in refreshments, sold tickets, and pocketed the proceeds. For either occupational group, it was an excellent supplement to their income.

Dancing instructors, either male or female, were the hub of all this social activity and training. Without them, the system would not have succeeded. Children began dancing lessons at an early age. If they lived outside of town, an itinerant dancing master made a circuit, traveling from plantation to plantation and staying for some predetermined amount of time to give lessons to neighborhood children. In towns, especially Williamsburg, children of the middling ranks and above probably went to the dancing master's home or a room he or she rented specifically as a dance space. Lessons were not just for the young—adults took instruction also. Every year, new dances came into vogue, and dance-crazed Virginians always wanted to know the steps to the latest ones. In addition to teaching the new

dances, dancing masters and mistresses taught deportment, social skills, and good manners.

Until the very end of the eighteenth century, every ball or assembly began with the highest-ranking couple dancing the stately minuet. This was the time for them to show off and to let it be seen just how thoroughly they had mastered that intricate dance. When the first couple completed their minuet, the pair next in rank began their dance, and so on through several more couples. Viewers freely critiqued each couple's minuet; these were performances, not social dances in the strictest sense of the word.

The minuets completed, country-dances could begin. These were in either of two configurations, either long-ways (long lines of people, partners facing each other) for any number or small line dances for a specific number, usually three or four couples. Perhaps some of the earlier round or circles dances still remained, but by mid-century long-ways dances were most popular. Around 1770, cotillions became popular in the colonies. One collection of these dances was published by Giovanni Gallini and included instructions for their performance. Cotillions, done in square formations, continued to be popular throughout the rest of the century and reached their peak just after the Revolution. Cotillions may be considered the "great grand-daddy" of present-day square dances, except that they were not "called" as squares are. By the name of the dance, en courant dancers knew the pattern; it was truly a faux pas to join a set and then make a mistake, addling the others in the figure.

They [Virginians] are immoderately fond of dancing. . . . Towards the close of an evening, when the company are pretty well tired with country dances, it is usual to dance jiggs; a practice originally borrowed, I am informed from the Negroes. These dances are without any method or regularity: a gentleman and lady stand up, and dance about the room, one of them retiring, the other pursuing, then perhaps meeting, in an irregular fantastic manner. After some time, another lady gets up, and then the first lady must sit down, she being, as they term it, cut out: the second lady acts the same part which the first did, till somebody cuts her out. The gentlemen perform in the same manner.

Andrew Burnaby, *Travels through the Middle Settlements of North America in the Years 1759 and 1760*

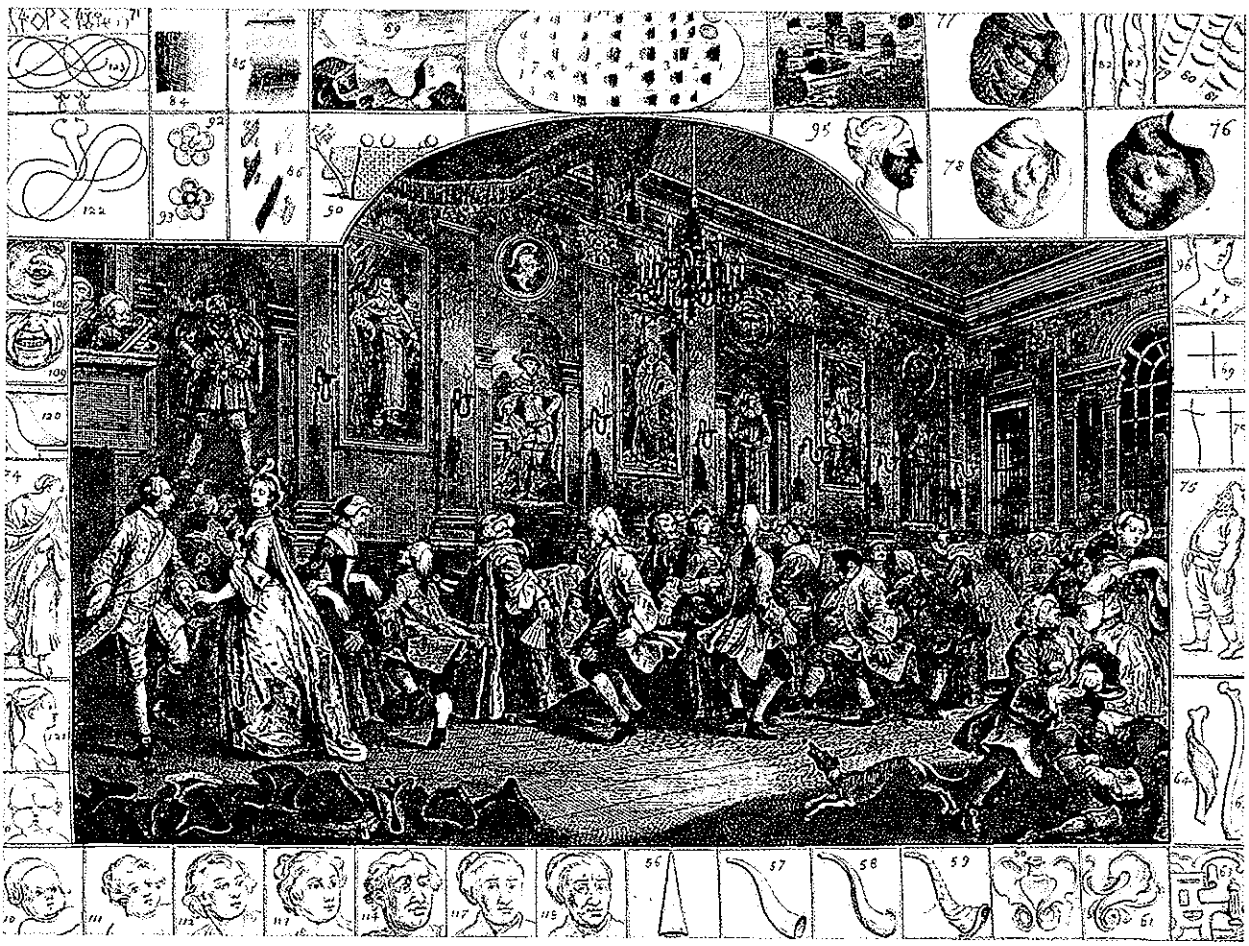


Plate II of Hogarth's "Analysis of Beauty" (1972-409, 106) shows a very grand and formal ballroom illuminated by chandeliers and sconces. The dancers are in the middle of a long-ways set and execute their moves with varying degrees of success.

Country-dances consisted of a variety of steps: setting, skipping, skipchange, contretemps, minuet, pas de Bourrée, chassé, rigadoon, and balancé, to name only a few. Similar patterns included rights and lefts, right and left hands across, heys, crossover heys, figure eights, out at the side, hands four, and allemand.

Reels and heys are actually the same. *Reel* was the Scottish term; *hey* the English. This is simply weaving in a figure-eight pattern. Eighteenth-century reels are not to be confused with the Virginia Reel. The Virginia Reel, like the waltz, did not come into vogue until the nineteenth century. Virginia and Scottish reels are mentioned in sources dating from the Revolutionary period, but they were actually country-dances.

John Playford first published dance steps, patterns, and music. His book, *The English Dancing Master,* dates from 1651. Sales were so brisk that he continued with various editions through 1728 and was succeeded by his son. Other dance instructors saw the money to be had and "leapt on the bandwagon" with their own dance-instruction books. Thompson, Walsh, Bride, and Johnson were among those who followed in Playford's footsteps for the next century and a half. Through such publications, we know what dances were popular and the music to which they were stepped. The books clearly show which were the most popular dances by repeating them over and over in subsequent editions and newer publications.

In the third quarter of the eighteenth century two other Englishmen wrote about deportment and the steps for country-dances. In 1752, Nicholas Dukes published his "how-to" manual titled *A Concise & Easy Method of Learning the Figuring Part of Country Dances by Way of Characters To Which is Prefixed the Figure of the Minuet.* Matthew Towle chose a shorter title for his 1770 work; he called it *The Young Gentleman and Lady's Private Tutor.* Attentive reading of these and other contemporary works gives a very clear picture of eighteenth-century dance steps as well as hinting at the glittering social occasions at which the steps were put on display.[8]

Governor Gooch, shortly after his arrival in Williamsburg in 1727, wrote to his brother back home in England about Virginians' general politeness, and he singled out their love of and skill at dancing. As he put it, "The Gentm. and Ladies here are perfectly well bred, not an ill Dancer in my Govmt."[9]

Public balls (as opposed to private ones) were not so public as we might expect. When "admission was by ticket, for which one paid a price . . . the cost in itself excluded many, and judging by the complaints of the 'mechanics,' some who could afford to pay had been left out. The tickets to concerts by the St. Cecilia Society in Charleston were also intended to exclude the unrefined. The managers of the concerts defined the city's elite population by issuing tickets to a certain group of gentlemen, who in turn invited ladies. The assemblies enabled the chosen group to recognize one another and to come together to enjoy pleasures attainable only in a select and genteel company. Exclusivity implied a desire to create an artificial social environment, one that could not exist without consciously denying admission to coarse and vulgar people."[10]

NOTICE is hereby given
To the LADIES and GENTLEMEN,
THAT the Subscriber purposes to have a BALL, at the Apollo, in Williamsburg, once every Week, during the Sitting of the General Assembly and Court.

Alexander Finnie.
Virginia Gazette, February 27, 1752

1 An antique violin is illustrated in "Objects by Social Rank," p. O-4.
2 John Gosling's estate inventory from 1658 includes "A Cittron & Case," York County, Deeds and Wills 3 (1657–62), 24.
3 For an illustration of an eighteenth-century guitar, see "Objects by Social Rank," p. O-4.
4 *Spinet* is the period term defining a small size of harpsichord.
5 For Dunmore's Schedule of Losses, see Hood, *Governor's Palace,* app. 3, p. 298.
6 [Unfortunately, no further details about music in the Geddy household have as yet come to light. Also compare this description of Ann Geddy with Fithian's assessment of Betsy Lee on p. D-2. The verses above seem insipid today but were well within the conventions of eighteenth-century love poetry. Fithian's comments are both franker and more detailed because he was recording his own reaction to a new acquaintance, not a lover; he also made note of her good points that could not compensate for her innate mediocrity. Ed.]
7 See the illustration of a banjar in "Objects by Social Rank," p. O-4.
8 This section is largely a paraphrase of Dorothy M. Poucher's 1984 research paper, "Dance in 18th-Century Williamsburg," which includes more contemporary works on the subject than the excerpt here.
9 William Gooch to Thomas Gooch, December 28, 1727, cited in "Questions & Answers," 6, no. 3 (June 1985): 2.
10 Bushman, *Refinement of America,* 51.

G. Work and Gentility

Some urban tradesmen, especially in Williamsburg, met with financial success. Making money could lead to social mobility—but being rich did not automatically guarantee it. How one made a living certainly influenced his or her rank in society.[1] Williamsburg's obvious success stories include Benjamin Powell, James Geddy, Anthony Hay, Humphrey Harwood, and their descendants. The occupations of these men—two undertakers, a silversmith, and a cabinetmaker—were especially profitable in the capital city. Benjamin Powell provides an excellent example: he began his career as an ordinary wheelwright, and, by the end of his long and successful life, he had the honorific "Gent." added to his name in official records.[2]

Not every occupation had so much potential—either for revenue or for general esteem within the community. Butchers, laundresses, fishermen, overseers, and other physical laborers were not so "respectable" as members of the legal and medical professions, of course, and not even on a par with tavern keepers or blacksmiths. Those men and women whose work centered on fashionable items and matters of taste and style were obliged to dress and behave in ways acceptable to their fashion-seeking customers. Tutors, governesses, housekeepers, dancing masters, and other instructors had necessarily to conduct themselves according to the mores of refined society. While they were in fact working people, their services required them to emulate their clientele rather than other tradespeople.

In this, as in so many other instances, exceptions prove the rule. Charles Hansford, for example, was a highly esteemed Yorktown blacksmith who wrote poetry.[3] During her long widowhood, Catharine Blaikley worked as a midwife, delivering several thousand babies, both black and white. James Barrett Southall, proprietor of the Raleigh Tavern, was well thought of in town and eventually served on the committees of safety and in other public offices as well.

Account books and guardian accounts indicate that ordinary families paid for schooling and dancing lessons and bought books and other genteel objects for children. These expenditures and efforts were not in vain; for example, daughters of Benjamin Powell and James Geddy married into the gentry. Two of Anthony Hay's sons went on to distinguished legal and journalistic careers. Yet, never let it be thought that the first generation could accomplish such social strides; hard workers like Harwood, Geddy, and Hay remained solid middling sorts all their lives.[4]

Probate inventories give us an indication of just how some Williamsburg tradesmen lived.[5] Printer William Rind lived with his family and employees in the Ludwell-Paradise House on Duke of Gloucester Street. The same building apparently served as both his residence and printing office. The 1773 inventory of Rind's estate shows that the main rooms for the family's use had been decorated with high-style furniture and furnishings. Besides his valuable printing equipment and supplies and the usual household items, Rind's inventory lists two dozen chairs, a desk, and tea table all of mahogany; silver spoons and tongs; Queens china; "Tea Board and Tea Chinea" valued at ten shillings; and a copper coffee pot. The Rinds lived and worked in relative comfort, and at least some of their rooms were fashionably and even opulently furnished.

Conditions at the Ludwell-Paradise House contrast with George Wells's combination house and shop. His probate inventory (included in the "Probate Inventories, Advertisements, and a Lottery" section, p. R-14) dates from 1754, and indicates an adequate but by no means luxurious style of life. Wells's appraisers organized their list room by room, showing that the decedent and his family (in the eighteenth-century sense of total household) shared a house with four rooms on the main floor and a sleeping area above stairs. One of the downstairs rooms apparently served as his shoe-making business location; in it about £7 worth of leather and tools are enumerated. While the Rinds furnished at least one parlor with mahogany furniture, Wells had old-fashioned items like seven leather chairs, six other chairs with wooden seats, two more with rush bottoms, and a couch. Nevertheless, Wells owned some valuable status symbols: china tableware, a tea chest and pot, spoons and a punch ladle of silver, "Yellow Curtains & Rods" for one of the beds, four cribbage boards, "2 small Looking glasses 1/3," and eight gold rings worth £3.10.11. Because the inventory lists six beds and bedsteads with all the components, it appears that apprentices, journeymen, or other employees lived in the same house. (No slaves are mentioned in the inventory, only the English servants.) Compared to the Rind probate information, Wells's inventory reflects an earlier mid-century style of living, suitable for an honest, competent workingman with a desire for comfort but little effort to attain luxury and fashionability.

This newspaper article describes the effects of lightning that struck the house of James Smith, a tailor in Prince Edward County. Read carefully, it also relays very interesting details about the material lives of ordinary working people and some of their indoor activities.

In the room below the lightning passed along a shelf covered with pewter, where it melted part of some basons and spoons, and many plates. A looking-glass on that end was broke into pieces, and some part of the frame dashed against the back of the chimney at the opposite end. The lightning also went through a cask of beer, and tore out on each side part of a stave about twelve inches long and two inches broad. The hoops were of iron, and one of them was broke, but showed no particular mark of the cause. Mary Smith, wife of . . . James Smith, stood ironing some clothes at a table near the end which was struck, with her back toward the chimney, and a box iron in her hand. She was knocked down, and for half an hour after showed no sign of life. . . . The box iron which she was using showed no mark of lightning, but a pair of sleeve [buttons?] were no where to be found. James Smith himself, sitting on the work board, was struck across his thighs, but no mark appeared. He felt he says as if ham strung. . . . A young man who was lolling on a feather bed, near the wall where the lightning struck, with his legs resting on the work board, got a pretty large mark above one of his knees, like a bruise. A boy about 12 or 13 years of age, standing near the table above mentioned, sifting meal, was knocked down, and appeared lifeless for at least a quarter of a hour. . . . He wore at the time a pair of breeches of green plains, the left thigh of which was torn into pieces by the lightning; and two metal buttons, which was on the waistband, were torn off, and only a small part of one of them could afterwards be found; the other entirely disappeared—This day James Smith and his wife, like pious Christians, publickly returned thanks to the Supreme Being for their wonderful escape.

Virginia Gazette, July 18, 1766

This interior gives an idea of how a combination living and working space for a relatively successful, urban tradesman could be arranged. Although he lives in a garret room, this man—probably a gold chaser—owns several items that announce a certain level of genteel aspirations: the curtained bed, the upholstered backstools, and the looking glass. See Charles Saumarez Smith, Eighteenth-Century Decoration: Design and the Domestic Interior in England, *106.*

While quantification of objects found in inventories gives us insights into the general levels of material consumption among differing ranks of colonial society, it does not always allow us to see a particular individual's quirks or unusual consumer choices. Catharine Blaikley's prayer book is a good example (see page P-11). Left a widow in 1736, Mrs. Blaikley continued to make her way in the world as a midwife, and she occasionally also took in a lodger. One of the last acquisitions before her death on October 24, 1771, was an elegantly bound prayer book with her bookplate inside the front cover. Was it a gift? From whom? If she bought it for herself, why did she wait until the end of her life to acquire this object? And why such an expensive binding?

Likewise, Matthew Ashby's silver watch and several items of tea equipage startle the reader of his inventory.[6] They do not seem to fit with the rest of the inventory and appear to be out of place in the home of a person living on his otherwise rather spartan level. Had the watch belonged to a relative? Did he receive it as a legacy? Perhaps he was holding it as collateral to cover payment due him for some carting work. We can only guess at the real reasons, but the presence of Blaikley's prayer book and Ashby's watch and teaware demonstrates the potency of documents and surviving artifacts. Specifics breathe life into dead statistics.

Some of the most extraordinary colonial objects were made for Masonic Lodges. Virginia Freemasons came from both the gentry and middling artisan ranks. Jon Butler's recent work, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776*, includes the following analysis of Freemasonry in the colonies:

> Freemasonry, the international semisecret "Free and Accepted Masons" who established a Grand Lodge in London in 1717, offers a glimpse at the sometimes peculiar fascinations of wealthy, educated men in colonial cities. Freemasonry constituted a "speculative" fraternity whose secrets revealed a deep interest in learning and philosophical discourse. Freemasons emphasized mystical as well as rational sources of human knowledge and an ethics that transcended traditional Christianity. They mixed stories about Druidic secrets with "Hermetic" philosophy derived from the writings of the alleged sixth century B.C. Egyptian magus Hermes Trismegistus. They put forward a deep faith in scientific rationalism, especially in geometry, which they regarded as a universal language unbounded by national borders and religious doctrine.
>
> The surface egalitarianism of Freemason ritual, with its stress on brotherhood, fellowship, and courtesy, belied its initiates' desire for authority and status. A series of "degrees"—

Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason—introduced new handshakes, whispered secrets, and occult knowledge that carried initiates toward greater social standing and authority. These symbols served as metaphors for their own rise inside the upper echelons of colonial society.

A complex material culture accompanied colonial Masonic rituals. Masons paraded before the public to advertise their status, wealth, and semisecret knowledge. *The Pennsylvania Gazette* described Philadelphia Masons who opened a new Masonic hall with a parade as "all new cloathed with Aprons, white Gloves and Stockings, and the officers in the proper Cloathing and Jewels of their respective Lodges, with their other Badges of Dignity." And Masons knew dignity when they sat. The Masonic Master's chair, made by Benjamin Bucktrout of the Anthony Hay shop [sic] in Williamsburg, Virginia, about 1770, replete with all of Freemasonry's major symbols, is the single finest chair known to be made in colonial America.

Colonial Masonic lodges demonstrated strongly local urges inside both the colonial and British Masonic worlds. They used British guides to Masonic ritual and acknowledged the supremacy of London's Grand Lodge. But once established, they operated with a strong native flavor, and rituals differed substantially from lodge to lodge in the colonies, as was true in Britain as well. The result was a series of British-inspired secret societies that flourished among colonial elites prepared to promote universal principles of human understanding in colonial lodges that were themselves different from place to place.[7]

After Breakfast Mr Lane left us, He was drest in black superfine Broadcloth; Gold-Laced hat; laced Ruffles, black Silk Stockings; & to his Broach on his Bosom he wore a Masons Badge inscri'd "Virtute and Silentio" cut in a Golden medal! Certainly he was fine!

Fithian Diary, March 3, 1774

The records of Williamsburg's Lodge of Masons actually show that not only elites belonged—tavern keepers, merchants, printers, doctors, middling tradesmen, and visiting frontiersmen all joined together in this secret society (although, it must be conceded, under the leadership of Williamsburg's leading light, Peyton Randolph).

Several color illustrations included in this manual apply to people of the working sort. "Making Good in the New World," p. P-1, shows the extremes in the working life of immigrants. Ralph Earl's portrait of the merchant Elijah Boardman is printed on p. P-9. Merchants had particularly high potential for making fortunes. Hogarth's painting of the "Distrest Poet" (p. P-4) and the "Journeyman Parson" on p. P-6 indicate living conditions similar to George Wells's Williamsburg residence and shoe shop. Catharine Blaikley's Book of Common Prayer can be admired on p. P-11. See also the inventory Catharine herself compiled upon the death of her husband in 1736, pp. R-7–8.

1 See Daniel Defoe's statement about English tradesmen of the seventeenth century, quoted above, p. A-4.
2 See Powell's biographical file in the York County Records Project, Department of Historical Research. We are grateful to Mark R. Wenger for bringing this telling example to our attention.
3 Charles Hansford, *Poems*, ed. James A. Servies and Carl R. Dolmetsch (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1961).
4 Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 32–42.
5 Several probate inventories (some appraised) are included on pp. R-2–16 of this manual. They were chosen to represent a variety of social ranks, time periods, and both urban and rural households. Rind's inventory and appraisement is not reprinted in this manual. It comes from York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83): 197–199; typescript in the York County Project, Department of Historical Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va.
6 See pp. R-8–9 for Ashby's inventory.
7 Jon Butler, *Becoming America*, 178–179.

H. Tea and Social Rank

"Keeping Up with the Randolphs"

This section examines the differences in material consumption among ranks by focusing on the drinking and serving of tea. What types of ceramics, flatware, linens, and furniture might different households have used when serving tea in their homes? While the objects may have been similar, their forms and materials varied greatly and identified an individual family's place in the social and economic hierarchy of their community.

The full equipage needed for serving tea in an eighteenth-century home consisted of a teapot, bowls, saucers, slop bowl, milk jug, sugar bowl and tongs, teaspoons and spoon tray, tea canisters, a kettle or kitchen for hot water, and a tea table. Some families were able to purchase all of these items; others had to make do with what they could afford.

Early in the century, before achieving widespread popularity, tea was a beverage restricted to the upper tiers of British and colonial society, a group that could afford silver teapots and imported porcelain bowls and saucers. These early, tea-related items were physically small because of the high cost of tea. However, by mid-century, import duties were lowered and sailing vessels had become larger, thus making tea and teaware more widely available. As the price of tea went down, teapots and tea bowls became somewhat larger.

Also, the second quarter of the century began to see the increased production of a variety of consumer goods, including items related to brewing and serving tea. This increased availability meant that teaware, made from more affordable materials, such as earthenware, found its way into a wider economic range of households. In other words, Mrs. Annabell Powell might not have the means to purchase an English porcelain teapot such as the one that Mrs. Betty Randolph owned, but Mrs. Powell could still afford a fashionable Staffordshire pot, less costly but every bit as up to date. (See the "Style Changes" section for "Teapots," p. Q-1; "Hot Water Equipment," p. Q-6; and "Tea Tables," p. Q-7; as well as the color illustrations of archaeological fragments of Geddy teawares and similar items, pp. P-12–13.)

Just as the elaborateness of teaware depended upon a family's financial standing, so did the furniture associated with tea. Tea trays with elaborately carved rims were within the grasp of only the wealthiest families while less ornate examples were available to middling families. The same holds true with the intricate china table illustrated in the "Style Changes" section, p. Q-7. It would have been found in only the grandest of colonial dwellings.

In a sense, tea was a leveling and shared activity within colonial society. From the highest to the lower middling ranks, tea equipage was recognizable in terms of form and how each piece functioned. Individuals ranging from Catharine Blaikley to Elizabeth Wythe knew how to take tea. The variables were the types of wares and their settings. The materials used and the fashioning of the forms determined the cost of the final products, which in turn determined who could afford them.

For some, ongoing purchases of fashionable teaware were a way of staying up to date; this may have been the Geddys' motivation. New teaware certainly cost less than a new set of tableware. For others, a teapot and a few bowls and saucers were as much as their pocketbooks would allow. Only the wealthiest Virginians could have afforded the tea service and the room setting that we see in the conversation piece of the Willoughby de Broke family, reproduced on p. P-10.

Keeping Body and Soul Together—Consumption at the Lowest Levels of Society

As always, our information is skewed toward the gentry and the powerful. Objects and written records were each more likely to be preserved if they were associated with famous names and success stories. Life on the lower levels of society can be examined to a certain extent by the quantification of public records and careful archaeological analysis. An annotated bibliography of recent archaeological work, dealing mostly with sites occupied by slaves, is included in the "Topical Bibliographies" section, p. N-1.

This Latrobe drawing shows slave women working in the field under the watch of a white overseer. Graphics of eighteenth-century slaves in the Chesapeake are rare, and this view provides us with a unique glimpse of field hands.

"'In the Middle of this Poverty Some Cups and a Teapot': Furnishing the African-American Presence at Colonial Williamsburg"

by Martha Katz-Hyman

Curators and historians use many sources to learn about the material culture of eighteenth-century Virginia. Most of these concern themselves exclusively with objects purchased and used by its European residents, but information about slaves' material world is found in many of the same sources. These sources fall into four major categories: legal records, personal records, business records, and archeological recoveries.

Because slavery was a function of legal status, public documents contain a great deal of information about slaves and their ownership but relatively little information about material goods. Probate inventories, which are the primary documents in planning Exhibition Building furnishings, are of limited use in this instance because they do not, except in very rare cases, record slaves' personal property[1] but rather record what masters provided for their overseers or for slaves to do their work.[2] Some masters left a favored slave a bed, tools of their trade, money, or even their time, in their wills, but this was unusual.[3] Trial proceedings, primarily those from the surviving records of Virginia's oyer and terminer courts, reveal, through the lists of stolen goods, what slaves thought were valuable and useful goods to steal.[4]

Personal records—letters, diaries, and travelers' accounts—have a wealth of information about slaves, their lives, and their material world. Although seen through the eyes of white observers, they give important information that is not available in any other format. In a letter written February 10, 1773, Thomas Everard ordered "4 Strong Great Coats for Negros 2 for men about the House and 2 for Lads Postillions" from merchant John Norton in London. Joseph Ball, a Virginian living in London in the 1740s, wrote often to his nephew and plantation overseer, Joseph Chinn, with detailed instructions regarding the slaves on his plantation, "Morattico," in Richmond County. In February 1744, he directed that in case of illness, "let them [the slaves] ly by a Good fire; and have Fresh Meat & broth; and blood, and vomit them, as you shall think proper; though I think both to be proper in most Cases. I would have no Doctor, unless in very Violent Cases: They Generally do more harm than Good." George Washington was concerned with his slaves' clothing, for in 1788 he asked Clement Biddle in Philadelphia to purchase "German and British Oznaburgs of the best quality, suitable for making Negroes shirts and shifts."[5]

Frances Baylor Hill of "Hillsborough" in King and Queen County, Virginia, wrote in her diary in June 1797, that she and her mother "went over the river to see Phill who was very ill when we got over he died in about an hour, his pour wife was greatly distress'd I never was sorry'r for a negro in my life." Some of these journals also record payments made to slaves for goods and services. Philip Vickers Fithian, tutor to the children of Robert Carter of Nomini Hall in Westmoreland County, noted in January, 1774, that he "gave Martha who makes my Bed, for a Christmas Box, a Bit, . . . I gave to John also, who waits at Table & calls me to Supper a Bit." Francis Taylor, an Orange County, Virginia, planter, noted in his diary many monetary transactions in which he bought chickens and produce from his slaves and paid them for extra work.[6]

Travelers to the New World, especially those who visited Virginia and other southern states in the years right after the American Revolution, did not hesitate to express their views on slaves and slavery. Very often these views included descriptions of slaves and their living conditions. Julian Niemcewicz, a close friend of Polish general and patriot Tadeusz Kosciuszko, wrote the following during a visit to Mount Vernon in 1798:

> We entered one of the huts of the Blacks, for one can not call them by the name of houses. They are more miserable than the most miserable of the cottages of our peasants. The husband and wife sleep on a mean pallet, the children on the ground; a very bad fireplace, some utensils for cooking, but in the middle of this poverty some cups and a teapot. . . . A very small garden planted with vegetables was close by, with 5 or 6 hens, each one leading ten to fifteen chickens. It is the only comfort that is permitted them; for they may not keep ducks, geese, or pigs. They sell the poultry in Alexandria and procure for themselves a few amenities.[7]

The accounts of eighteenth-century travelers to Africa offer insights into cultural traditions that may have persisted in America. For instance, in 1745 Marchais, a French traveler, observed on Guinea's Grain Coast:

> These Houses resemble, pretty much, our Mountebanks Stages in Europe. The Front is open, and the Floor has a Jutting-out of five or six Foot broad, where the Negros, laid on Mats, pass the Day with their Wives and Family. The Walls of these Chambers are of a red Clay near a Foot thick. The Roof, raised like a Tent, is covered with Reeds, or Palm-Leaves, so close inter-

> woven, as to admit neither Sun nor Rain. To the Right and Left are two Estrades, or Benches, one Foot high and four broad: On these they lay Mats a Foot thick, which they cover with Cotton-Cloth, or Calico, and surround with Curtains of the same. At the upper-End of this Room they place their Trunks, or Boxes, and hang their Arms upon the Wall.[8]

Almost 100 years later, in 1830, the executors of Captain Hugh Crow of Liverpool, England, published the memoirs of his travels to the west coast of Africa, and in particular Bonny, the imperial capitol of the Ibo, the area from which many of Virginia's slaves were taken. In these memoirs Captain Crow noted "most of the hard articles such as lead and iron bars, chests of beads, and marcelas (a kind of coin), they bury under the floors of their houses. Much valuable property is secreted in that way."[9] Here is evidence that the root cellars found archaeologically at so many eighteenth-century slave sites may in fact be an African cultural tradition that was brought to the New World and survived.

Business records, including account books of both merchants and craftsmen, are the third major source of information, and reveal the types of goods purchased in Tidewater Virginia for slaves' use. Purchases of shoes, stockings, livery, hats, blankets, and tools for the use of slaves are commonly found in these account books, and the frequent use of the same descriptive terms for these goods—"Negro shoes," "plaid hose for Negroes," "Negro cotton"—indicates that these were common items whose definition was well-understood by residents of the region. For example, the account books of William Allason, a merchant in Falmouth, Virginia, reveal numerous sales of all kinds of goods for the use of slaves: hoes, shoes, oznaburg, and plaid stockings to name just a few items. Likewise, plantation account books record purchases for the slaves, such as Robert Carter's purchase of shoes for the "people" at Old Ordinary Quarter in November 1773.[10]

It is one of the anomalies of eighteenth-century Tidewater Virginia slavery that even though slaves were regarded as property and bought and sold like livestock, they were also active participants in the region's market economy. The pages of these same account books also record payments made directly to slaves for goods and services and record credit purchases slaves made for themselves. It is impossible to know the details of cash sales to slaves because the records of such sales were usually not associated with the name of a particular individual, but those slaves who ran credit accounts—and there were more than just a handful—purchased a variety of goods. Between 1760 and 1768, Colchester, Virginia, merchants Glassford & Company kept a running account with Jack, a slave who belonged to Mr. Linton's estate in Colchester. Jack obtained, among other things, textiles, liquor, knives, cooking equipment, and tools in exchange for his work as a carter and carpenter. Another slave named Jack, also a carpenter, purchased an iron pot from William Allason in 1776.[11]

Another type of business record were the advertisements for runaway slaves. They constitute one of the best sources for information about the physical appearance and skills of slaves and the clothing and goods they used. It is apparent from a close reading of these advertisements that slaves wore a variety of clothing, from the basic "uniform" of field hands, to the much more elaborate wardrobe worn by household and personal servants. References in these advertisements to slaves "clothed in the usual manner of labouring Negroes" or to "the usual negro dress" suggest that there was a general basic standard for slave clothing. The more elaborate clothes listed in the advertisements ("a pair of shoes with buckles"; "new brown cloth waistcoat, lappelled, lined with white taminy, and yellow gilt buttons"; "white linen shirts . . . and osnabrug trousers") indicate that slaves obtained a much greater variety of clothing than is generally assumed.[12]

Because so many of these advertisements list slaves' skills, they are important sources for determining what tools may have been at a slave quarter. In March 1770 Joshua Jones placed the following advertisement in the *Virginia Gazette*: "RUN away from the subscriber, In York county, about the 11th or 12th of November last, very black Negro man named BEN . . . by trade a carpenter, and understands something of the coopers business. . . . He took with him sundry carpenters and coopers tools. I expect he will endeavour to pass for a freeman, as he can read tolerably well."[13] That Ben was a carpenter and cooper means that there probably were tools for making at least hogsheads, tubs, and other barrels; pails; and other such items, at the slave quarter where he lived and presumably worked. Listing reading and writing as among his skills suggests that there may have been writing implements or a book or two at the quarter. Thus a close inspection of these advertisements provides clues to material goods not previously thought to have been at a slave quarter.

The fourth major source of information about eighteenth-century Tidewater Virginia slave material culture is archaeological recoveries. These objects, ranging from seeds and bones (both animal and human) to intact ceramic vessels and pewter spoons, reveal information about diet and culture that is not covered by documentary sources. . . .

Two potentially valuable sources of information—one visual, one written—turn out to be of limited help in understanding the material culture of eighteenth-century Tidewater Virginia slaves. These sources are slave narratives and period illustrations. Eighteenth-century slave narratives are rare and deal primarily with the experience of slavery in an episodic way (i.e., there is little description of clothing,

food, possessions, etc.). They were thus of relatively little value in learning about material culture, although they were very valuable in learning about experiences of enslaved Africans.[14] Considerable time was spent attempting to locate prints, paintings and other visual records of eighteenth-century Virginia slave life. There are many eighteenth-century visual representations, both English and American, of individual slaves, but there are almost no period visual sources that illustrate the environment in which slaves lived and worked, the material goods they used in their everyday lives, or how these objects were arranged within a particular living or working area.

All of these sources tell us a great deal about how slaves acquired their clothing, food, and furnishings. Moreover, they give us some idea of how they were used. Masters issued clothing, blankets, and food on a more-or-less regular schedule: clothing was issued in the spring/summer and fall/winter, blankets in the fall, and food was issued weekly or seasonally. Masters also supplied slaves with the tools and clothing necessary to do their jobs, but these remained the property of the master, unlike issued items, which both master and slave considered the slaves' property. Some slaves were fortunate to receive hand-me-down clothing, cooking utensils, and even furniture from their masters, but this was not common. Slaves made things for themselves and bartered and sold these goods both to their masters and on the open market. Especially on rural plantations, slaves had their own plots of land and grew their own produce and also took advantage of nearby streams, rivers, and woodlands to catch fish and trap animals. They also acquired goods by theft, a crime for which they were sometimes prosecuted and sometimes not. And, in what will be a surprise for most visitors, slaves acquired goods by purchasing them with money they earned from tips or gifts, from the sale of produce or animals (primarily chickens), from the sale of their own products, like baskets, or their own labor. With this cash they purchased a variety of goods, ranging from fabrics and ribbons to tools, liquor, and food. All of these goods were the same types of things purchased by whites and free blacks.

It is also important to understand that the condition of slavery did not mean that all slaves lived in impoverished material circumstances. Slaves lived at all levels of the economic ladder, in circumstances that ranged from the meanest poverty to the fairly comfortable. Two examples illustrate this point. Aron Jameson, a slave of Joseph Ball, was sent back to the colony from London in 1754. Ball wrote to Joseph Chinn that Aron was bringing with him

> a small chest, & a box, containing a seabed, a Large Matress stuffed well with flocks and stitched with tufts, and a bolster filled with feathers, the Mattress & Bolster both besides their Ticks having Ozenbrigs cases; and two new coverleds, and other old Bedcloths, and Three suits of wearing cloths (one new) and Two pair of new shoes; and several pair of stockings, a pair of boots, and Twelve shirts Eight of which are New, a small iron Pot & hooks and Rack to hang it on, an Iron skillet, a copper sauce pan, an old Bridle & Saddle, a Cheese, a Narrow ax, a Tin pint pot, Three hats, Twelve Neckcloths, two Handkercheifs, one Violin and some spare strings, a small spit, an old pewter basin, Two pair of sheets, and several other things which Aron very well knows of.[15]

In addition, Ball specified how Aron was to be treated and where he was to sleep:

> I would have him used kindly Especially this year, and not put into the crop for any part of a share; but I would have him work at the How but not constantly this year, for perhaps he may not be able to bear it, not having been used to hard Labor; but you may between whiles Imploy him about one odd Jobb or other; . . . His Beding is Quite New & Clean and I would have it kept so; and to that End would have him to ly in the Kitchin Loft when he is at Morattico; and in some Clean Place when he is in the Forrest. I would forthwith after his arrival have one of the worst of my old Bed steads cut short & fit for his Mattress, and have a cord and hide to it. . . . He must have his own Meat to himself in a Good Little powdering Tub to be made on purpose; and he must have his own fat & Milk to himself and be allowed to Raise fowl.[16]

By contrast, Ferdinand-Marie Bayard described the following scene in 1791:

> A box-like frame made of boards hardly roughed down, upheld by stakes, constituted the nuptial couch. Some wheat straw and cornstalks, on which was spread a very short-napped woolen blanket that was burned in several places, completed the wretched pallet of the enslaved couple.[17]

In these two descriptions there is a great contrast in the physical circumstances of the individuals: Aron has more property at his own disposal than many free white families of the period, while Bayard's unnamed couple barely have a decent place to sleep. But their legal status is the same: they

are all the property of another person. This legal status, and not their material status, is what made them slaves.

And, as we discuss slavery in eighteenth-century Williamsburg and Tidewater Virginia, we need to understand that in the course of their daily work, as slaves tended fields, prepared food, cleaned houses, did errands, sewed clothes, constructed houses, joined furniture, printed newspapers, piloted boats, played musical instruments, and administered medical treatments, all of the objects they encountered each day were part of their material culture. This means that tools from England, ceramics from China, fabrics from Europe, and goods made right in Williamsburg were part of the material world of Williamsburg's enslaved population. And once we understand that the entire range of available goods were part of a slave's world, we also understand that slaves both used and owned objects that were indistinguishable from those used and owned by the free whites and blacks around them.

However, although we know, in a fairly specific way, how slaves acquired their own possessions, we have very little information about how these things were arranged and used in daily life. There are no known visual records of the interior of eighteenth-century Virginia slave quarters, and the few surviving slave narratives from that period do not really discuss the appearance of the interiors of these spaces. Even travelers' accounts, while superficially helpful in understanding some aspects of slaves' lives, fail to adequately convey the material world in which slaves lived. In addition, we have only a few clues—most of them archaeological—to tell us how these European objects might have been used in non-European ways. With care, intelligent use can be made of later cultural practices, stories, and songs to interpret now-lost customs and rituals. But we cannot "retrofit" the material culture of a later period on an earlier one, i.e., use the existence of an object or an object-centered tradition to argue that it "must" have its roots in an earlier form. Therefore, although we now know a great deal about the material culture of Tidewater Virginia's eighteenth-century enslaved population, there are still many questions that remain.

* * *

Not only archaeological assemblages but other objects as well can be useful for examining the material culture of the poor. Prints, paintings, and sketches sometimes help, and several are reproduced in this manual. Hogarth's "Distrest Poet," reproduced on p. P-4, shows the poverty of a struggling English writer. Matthew Ashby's inventory, discussed above, is on pp. R-8–9. Pyne's sketch of a poor woman with her children appears on p. D-5.

1 In the eyes of the law, slaves were chattel and technically could not own property; however, the fact that slaves' personal property does not appear in probate inventories is probably due to one of the following factors: 1) slaves' personal goods were considered by both blacks and whites to belong to the slaves and therefore not subject to inventory; 2) white owners felt that the items owned by their slaves were of no value and therefore did not include them in probate inventories; or 3) slaves' personal items were included in the value listed for the slave himself/herself.

2 See, for example, the probate inventory for James Shields, taken between December 1750 and January 1751, which included "At the Quarter," "45 head of old Cattle; 13 Yearlings and 5 Calves; 10 Head of Hogs; A parcel of Carpenters tools; 1 Bed & furniture; 6 Dishes; 1 Iron Pot; 2 Mares and 2 Colts; 1 Whip Saw; 1 Cross cut Do. [ditto]; 1 Gun; 1 Wheat Sifter; 5 Milk Pans; 1 Grindstone; a Parcel of Coopers Tools; 1 Case & 11 Bottles for Do.; 25 Negros; a Parcel of Corn Tobacco and Pease." No value was given. York County, Wills and Inventories 20 (1745–59): 198–200.

3 Charles Smith, the minister of Portsmouth Parish in Norfolk County, wrote the following in his will, written in 1771 and recorded in 1773: "I give unto my Grand Daughter Abigail Taylor Five Hundred & Twenty Pounds Currency & my Mollatto woman Mary & my New Bible. . . . I Give unto my Mollatto woman Mary three Months of Her Time fifty Pounds in Money and my Old Bible with the Spinning and Weaving Gears and implements in or about the house with her Clothes &c." Norfolk County Records, Will Book 2 (1772–88): 11, CWF Microfilm M–1365–21.

4 For example, see the proceedings of the trial of Will and Cambridge, who were found guilty on February 14, 1747, of breaking and entering and stealing two pieces of linen from Thomas Hornsby, 12 pairs of cotton stockings and 24 silk purses from Armistead Burwell, and nine pairs of shoes from the Honorable William Gooch, Esq. York County Court Order Book, February 14, 1747, OW (19), 489–490.

5 Thomas Everard, Williamsburg, to John Norton and Sons, London, February 10, 1773, in Frances Norton Mason, ed. *John Norton and Sons: Merchants of London and Virginia; Being the Papers from their Counting House for the Years 1750 to 1795* (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1937), 300–301; Joseph Ball, London, England, to Joseph Chinn, Virginia, Ball Letterbook, 1743–59, February 18, 1743/44, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. (microfilm M–21, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation); George Washington to Clement Biddle, April 4, 1788, in George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources*, 39 vols., ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931–44), 29: 458.

6 Frances Baylor Hill, "The Diary of Frances Baylor Hill of Hillsborough[,] King and Queen County Virginia [1797]," ed. William K. Bottorff and Roy C. Flannagan, *Early American Literature Newsletter* 2, no. 3 (Winter 1967): 33; Philip Vickers Fithian, *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1957), p. 54; Francis Taylor diary, 1786–99, Library of Virginia, Richmond (microfilm M–1759, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation). Used by permission of the Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

7 Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, "Under Their Vine and Fig Tree: Travels through American in 1797–1799, 1805 with Some Further Account of Life in New Jersey," trans. and ed. Metchie J. E. Budka, *Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society at Newark* 14 (Elizabeth, N. J.: Glassmann Publishing Co., 1965), 100–101.

8 Thomas Astley, comp., *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels . . . Comprehending Everything Remarkable in Its Kind in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America . . .* (London: 1745; reprint, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1968), 2: 527–528 (page references are to reprint edition).

9 Hugh Crow (edited by the Executors), *Memoirs of the Late Captain Hugh Crow of Liverpool Comprising a Narrative of His Life Together with Descriptive Sketches of the Western Coast of Africa, Particularly of Bonny* (Liverpool: G. and J. Robinson, 1830; reprint, London: Frank Cass, 1970), 251.

10 William Allason Papers, 1757–1804, Falmouth [Va.] Store, Ledge G, September 1768–October 1769, Library of Virginia (microfilm M–1144–8, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation); Robert Carter III, Nomini Hall Waste Book, 1773–83, September 18, 1773 (Special Collections, microfilm M–50, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation). The use, by slave owners, of the term *people* for enslaved African Americans was common throughout the Chesapeake in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

11 The account began in 1760 and ended in 1769. John Glassford and Company papers, Records for Virginia, Colchester [Va.] Store (hereafter Glassford papers), Ledgers A-B, D-I, November 9, 1760–August 26, 1769, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. (microfilm M–1442–8–11, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation); William Allason daybook, June 11, 1773–June 18, 1777, Allason papers, Falmouth [Va.] Store (microfilm M–1144–4, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation).

12 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), March 8, 1770, November 8, 1770, May 7, 1767, December 13, 1770, and *Virginia Gazette* (Hunter), July 15, 1752, all in Lathan A. Windley, *Runaway Slave Advertisements: A Documentary History from 1730s to 1790*, vol. 1: *Virginia and North Carolina* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983), respectively, pp. 78, 88, 52, 88, and 28. On slave clothing, see Linda Baumgarten, "'Clothes for the People': Slave Clothing in Early Virginia," *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* 14, no. 2 (November 1988): 27–70, and Linda Baumgarten, "Plains, Plaid, and Cotton: Woolens for Slave Clothing," *Ars Textrina* 15 (July 1991): 203–222, for thorough documentation of the types of clothing worn by slaves, seasonal variations in this clothing, special types of clothing worn by slaves (such as livery), variations in clothing between house slaves and field hands, and the lengths to which owners went to make sure that this clothing was serviceable but obtained at the best price.

13 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), March 22, 1770, in Windley, *Runaway Slave Advertisements*, 1: 78–79.

14 Olaudah Equiano's narrative, *The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African. . . .* (Reprint of 1837 ed.; New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), although very descriptive of African life, customs, and material culture, is not as useful in understanding the material life of enslaved Africans.

15 Joseph Ball, Stratford, England to Joseph Chinn, Morattico, Richmond County, Virginia, "Letter Book, 1743–1759," April 23, 1754, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation microfilm M–21); transcript in the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Library.

16 *Ibid.* See the reproduction bedstead on p. O-17.

17 Ferdinand-Marie Bayard, *Travels of a Frenchman in Maryland and Virginia With a Description of Philadelphia and Baltimore in 1791*, . . . trans. & ed. Ben C. McCary (Williamsburg, Va.: Ben C. McCary, 1950), 13.

Groups Uninterested in the Consumer Revolution

Some people chose not to participate in the new consumer revolution on religious or economic grounds; others did not because of their geographic location or ethnic backgrounds.[1]

The have-nots could not participate in the consumer revolution. Those who could barely afford necessities obviously lived outside the realm of fashionability. Delicacy of language and manner, extensive wardrobes, and the rapid changes of fashion details were trivial concerns compared to their cold, hungry children and scrawny livestock. People without disposable income do not consider the style of their lives, only the standard of living. Peasants—of the Old World agricultural sort—and others on the margins of the pre-industrial world certainly made choices about stockpiling food, dressing more warmly, keeping the weather out of their houses, and getting more comfortable beds. But this was not yet fashion. In most of the world until the late nineteenth century, folk or traditional culture coexisted with the more modern consumer society and its concerns for gentility and social mobility.[2]

> *Sir—My Daughters Betty L. Carter and Harriot Carter your former Scholars are not to attend you any longer. I myself and Wife are of the opinion that Dancing is not a Christian Qualification—; that if there be no Evils in the Act of dancing it is often productive of a Revel—and it is admitted by every denomination of Christians that there is no Reveling in the New Jerusalem.*
>
> Robert Carter III to Francis Christian, dancing master, 1779

Regardless of their financial means, some Virginians chose to stay true to traditions. Their grounds for this decision varied; religious, ethnic, political, or geographic reasons might apply.

Among Protestant denominations, Baptists particularly condemned consumerism, luxury, and vice of many kinds. "The major part of our neighbors and families, perhaps careless in sin and unconcerned in iniquity, many reveling in vice and Luxury."[3] These dissenters were to follow specific rules about personal attire, especially the women congregants. Neither men nor women were allowed to wear gold, and women were not permitted to deck themselves out with "high crown'd caps, Rolls, Necklaces, Ruffles[,] Stays & Stomagers."[4]

> *another cause . . . why not only beef, mutton, and pork, but all kinds of victuals are so dear, is luxury. What can stand against this? Will it not waste and destroy all that nature and art can produce? If a person of quality will boil down three dozen of neats' tongues, to make two or three quarts of soup, (and so proportionably in other things) what wonder that provisions fail? Only look into the kitchens of the great, the nobility and gentry, almost without exception; (considering withal, that 'the toe of the peasant treads upon the heel of the courtier;') and when you have observed the amazing waste which is made there, you will no longer wonder at the scarcity, and consequently dearness, of the things which they use so much art to destroy.*
>
> John Wesley, *Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions*, 1773

> *How can the price of pork and poultry be reduced? Whether it ever will, is another question.*
>
> *But it can be done (1) by letting no farms of above an hundred pounds a year; (2) by repressing luxury; whether by laws, by example, or by both. I had almost said, by the grace of God; but to mention this has been long out of fashion.*
>
> John Wesley, *Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions*, 1773

> *after you have gained . . . all you can, and saved all you can, wanting for nothing; spend not one pound, one shilling, or one penny, to gratify either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life; or, indeed, for any other end than to please and glorify God.*
>
> John Wesley, *Sermon on the Danger of Increasing Riches*, 1790

> *We [observe] the abundant increase of luxury, both in meat, drink, dress, and furniture. What an amazing profusion of food do we see, not only at a nobleman's table, but at an ordinary city entertainment; suppose of the shoemakers' or tailors' company! What variety of wines, instead of the good, home-brewed ale, used by our forefathers! What luxury of apparel, changing like the moon, in the city and country. . . . And luxury naturally increases sloth, unfitting us for exercise either of body or mind. Sloth, on the other hand, by destroying the appetite, leads to still farther luxury. And how many does a regular kind of luxury betray at last into gluttony and drunkenness; yea, and lewdness too of every kind; which indeed is hardly separable from them!*
>
> John Wesley, *An Estimate of the Manners of the Present Times*, [1782]

Some items of furniture associated with people who eschewed or could not afford the latest styles are illustrated in the "Objects by Social Rank" section of this manual. See especially the lowest armchair on p. O-6 and the two lowest ranking beds on p. O-17.

One Englishman's disdain for modern Christmas customs appeared in the newspaper at the end of 1774. He was a self-proclaimed traditionalist and disliked any change in the way the December holiday was celebrated. His scornful remarks began "I am an old Fellow, and confess that I like old Things." New, elegant food items like tea, French sauces, Continental wines, and exotic spices came in for his particular condemnation; he damned them as "the Luxuries of France and India."[5] To his taste, these seemed weak and meager substitutes for the robust English ale and solid roast beef on Christmas dinner tables of his youth.

Luxury is a word of uncertain signification, and may be taken in a good as well as a bad sense.

David Hume, *Political Discourses*, 1752

Do not waste any part of so precious a talent, merely in gratifying the desires of the flesh; in procuring the pleasure of sense, of whatever kind; particularly, in enlarging the pleasure of tasting. I do not mean, avoid gluttony and drunkenness only: An honest heathen would condemn these. But there is a regular, reputable kind of sensuality, an elegant epicurism, which does not immediately disorder the stomach, nor (sensibly at least) impair the understanding; and yet (to mention no other effects of it now) it cannot be maintained without considerable expense. Cut off all this expense! Despise delicacy and variety, and be content with what plain nature requires.

John Wesley, *Sermon on the Use of Money*, 1760

1 For discussion of Baptists in the eighteenth-century Piedmont Southside of Virginia, see Ellis, "Dissenting Faith," 23–40. Chappell, "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley," 27–57.

2 Jan de Vries, "Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: Understanding the Household Economy in Early Modern Europe," 94.

3 May 1789, circular letter, Roanoke Baptist Association Minute Book, Lib. of Va., accession no. 23600, cited in Ellis, "Dissenting Faith," 34.

4 Upper King and Queen Baptist Church, September 16, 1780, cited in Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 383, note 6.

5 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 29, 1774.

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http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/eames, an on-line exhibit of the work of Charles and Ray Eames from the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

http://encarta.msn.com, an on-line encyclopedia.

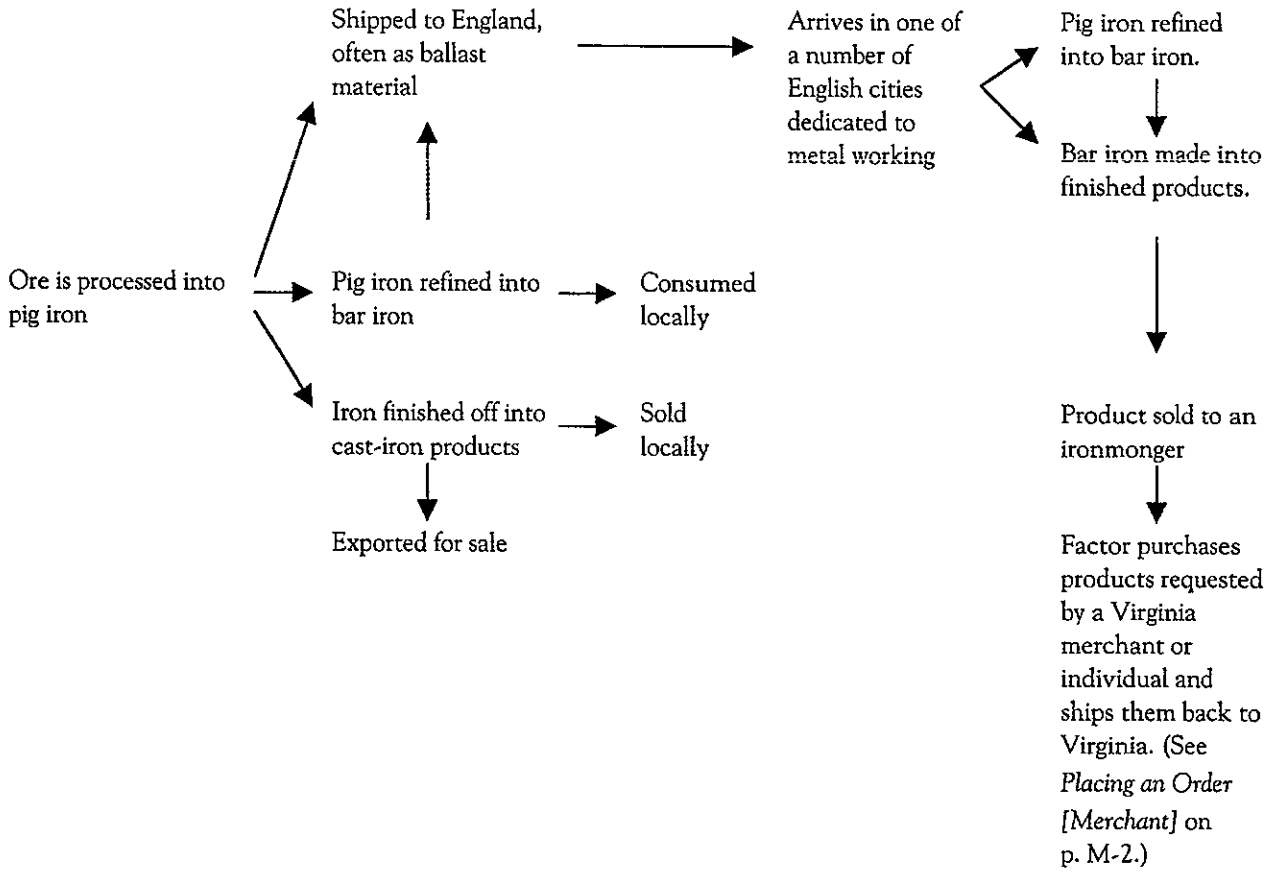
www.bartelby.com, reference works and "great books" online.

www.pastportal.com, Colonial Williamsburg's digital library.

www.taimur.net, biography, designs, and advertisements of Tommy Hilfiger.

*This bibliography does not include works cited in Cathleene B. Hellier's selected bibliography on dance and deportment or in the annotated bibliography on the archaeology of slave sites compiled by Anna Agbe-Davies.

Virginia Iron in the Empire



Investors are gathered to start up an iron furnace. They come from both sides of the Atlantic.

£5,000–6,000 required for start up.

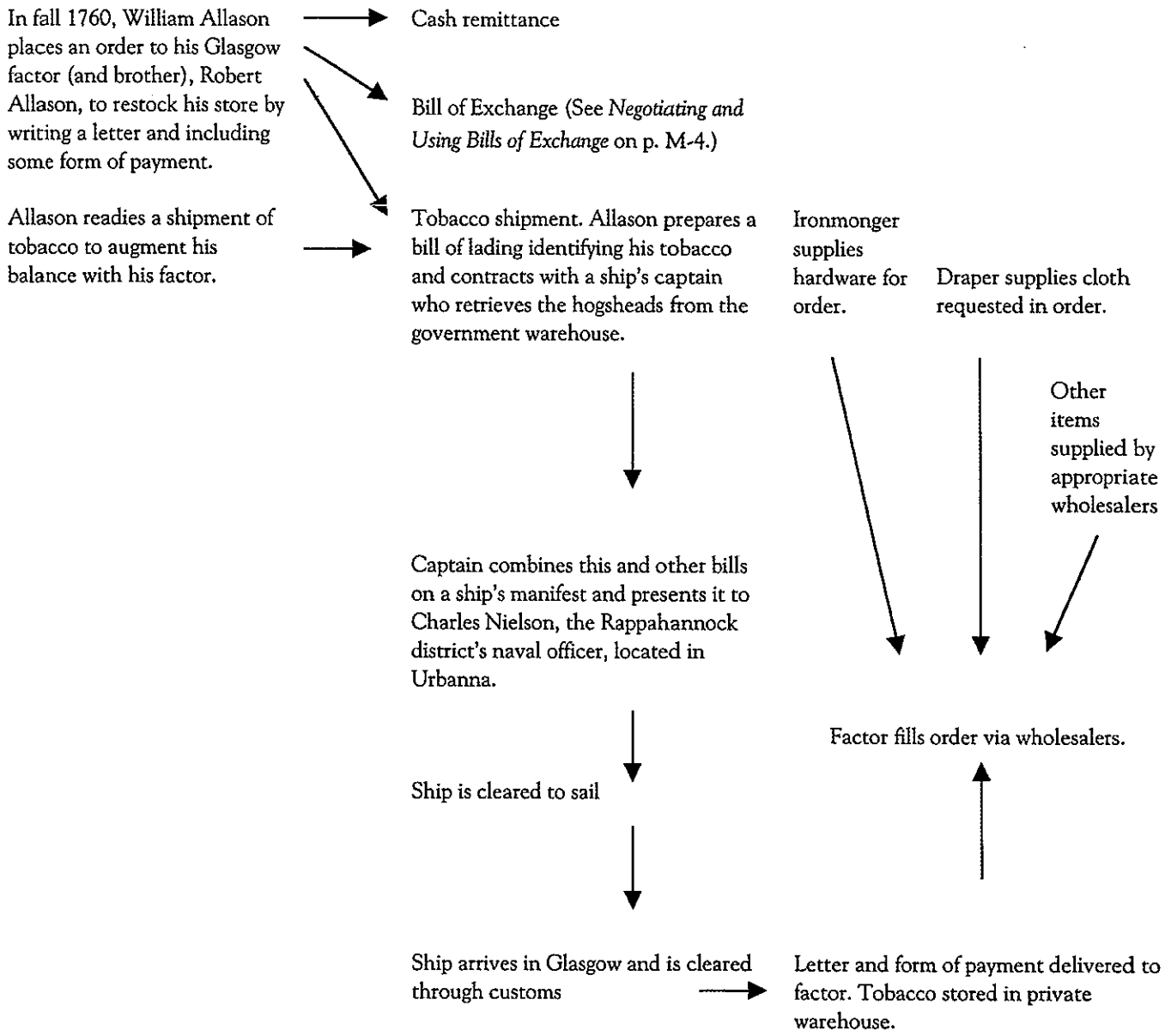
Adequate transportation system (rivers), fuel (charcoal), ore, water power and labor needed to run a blast furnace.

Captain contracted in Virginia to transport iron to England. Cargo had to be cleared through customs at the locale's naval district.

Localities could include Sheffield, Staffordshire, Birmingham, London, or Bristol.

Taxes on an imported commodity often determined the port of entry.

*Placing an Order (Merchant)**



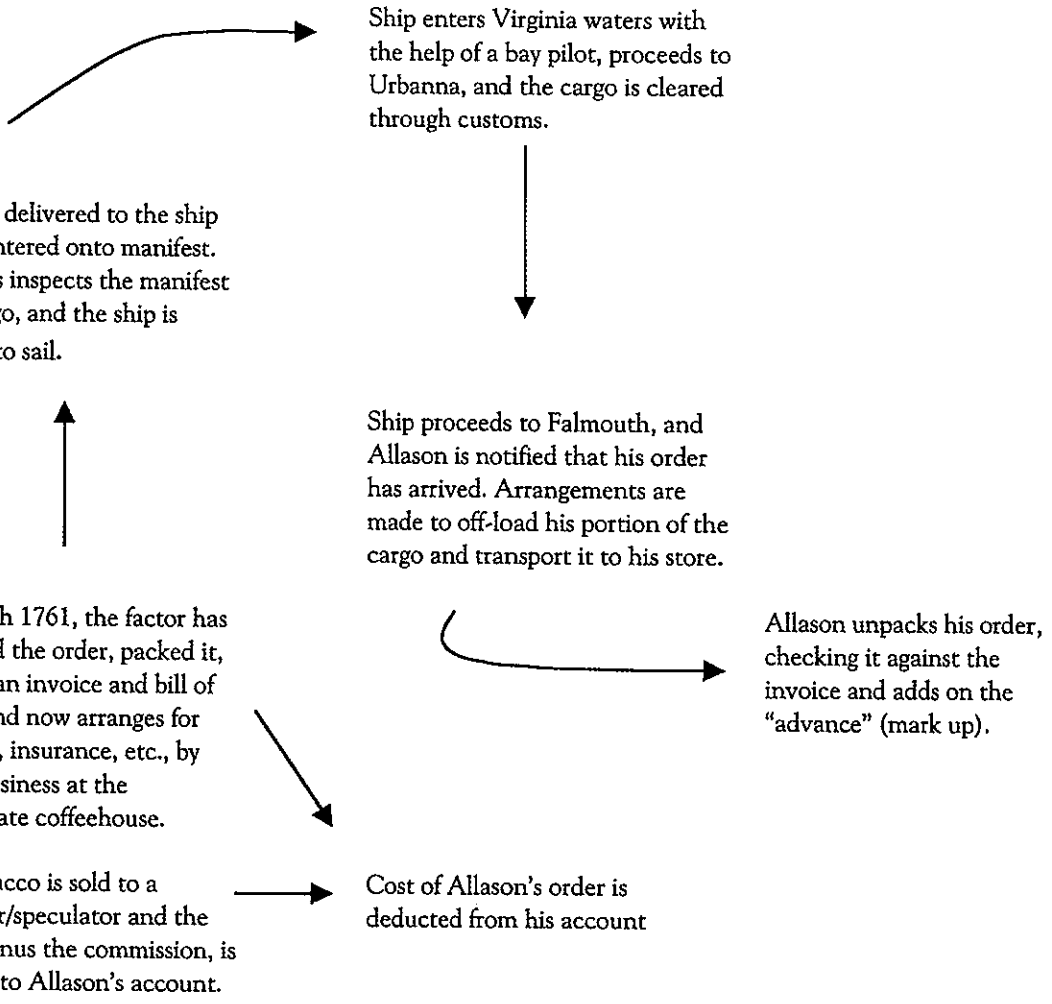
A financial relationship with the factor must already be established.

This sequence holds true for most transatlantic interactions, whether conducted in London, Bristol, or another port.

The naval officer was the crown's customs officer for a region. He maintained a list of all exports, which were included in the colony's annual report to the Board of Trade

In this example, the bill of lading serves as receipt for the payment. Specie or a bill of exchange are the two other forms of payment. On rare occasions, a merchant might have sufficient credit on the factor's books to cover the costs.

* Source Note: This flow chart is based on a letter from William Allason to his brother Robert, sent in 1761.



Most coffeehouses catered to specific businesses and business was regularly transacted there. Lloyd's coffeehouse in London, for example, catered to shipping underwriters.

The naval officer maintained a list of all imports, which were annually reported to the Board of Trade.

The advance covered the costs incurred in fulfilling the order, as well as providing for a fair profit. The amount varied, but was generally 100%. Merchants sometimes charged less for "ready money."

Negotiating and Using Bills of Exchange

25 October 1774

(Just before the Continental Association goes into effect)

This is the first day of the fall Meeting of the Merchants, scheduled to coincide with Public Times

1 November 1774

Margaret Hunter draws up an order for English goods from the firm of Whitacre & Hutter with a value of £100 sterling.

→ **Hunter** searches out a person with English mercantile connections and settles on Robert **Prentis**. Hunter (the **payer)** and Prentis (the **drawer)** negotiate the price of a bill of exchange that will be used to pay for her order. They agree to a charge of £125 Virginia money.

→ **Prentis** draws up three identical bills of exchange instructing his sterling connection in London, **Malecha & Sons** (the **drawee**), to pay **Whitacre & Hutter** (the **payee**) out of his personal balance with the firm. These are given to **Hunter,** who pays him either in specie, credit, or an agreed-to commodity.

↗ **Hunter** gives one bill to **Captain Pettengell** of the *Cole.* →

→ **Hunter** gives one bill to **Captain Powers** of the *Bruton.* →

↘ **Hunter** gives one bill to **Captain Pittman** of the *Atrefact.* (Whose ship goes down. Bummer.)

Hunter's books are kept in Virginia money. If she has no financial connections in England, she needs to find someone who will convert her Virginia money into English.

The final cost of a bill was influenced by the current rate of exchange (£135 being par in the fall of 1774), the length of time a bill had to be paid by, the amount of sterling money available as capital, the economic climate (the crisis had driven the rate up from 125 to 135; bad for the colonists), the integrity of the payer, etc.

The bill would stipulate a "usance," or period of time that dictated when the money would be paid. Virginia bills generally had a usance of 60 days.

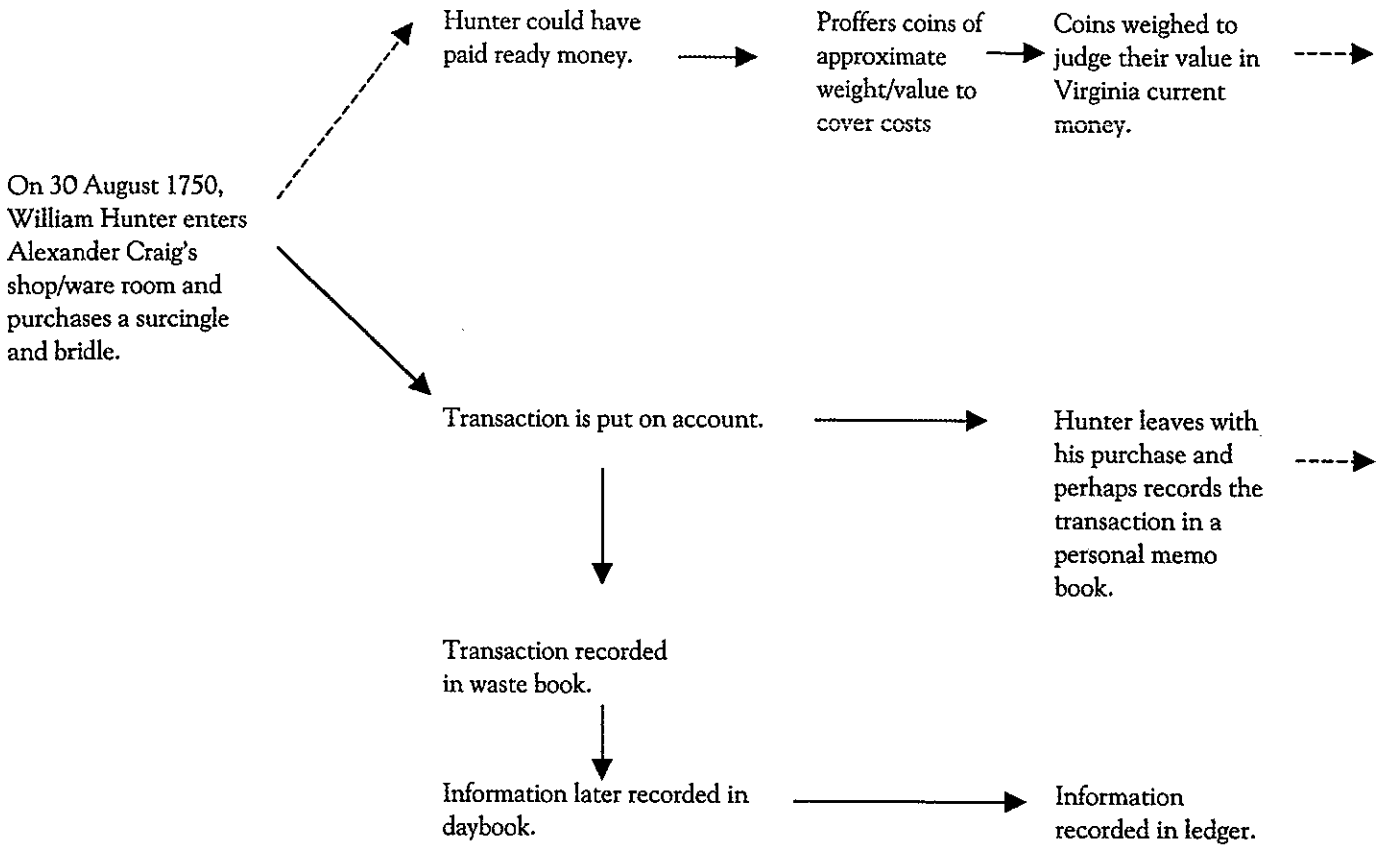
Multiple versions of the bill are sent to insure that at least one reaches its destination. Once one is presented for payment, the others are void.

13 December 1774	24 December 1774	13 February 1775
	→ **Captain Pettengell** arrives and delivers his bill, which is destroyed because it no longer has any value.	
Powers arrives in London and delivers the bill to **Whitacre & Hutter,** who promptly take the bill to **Malecha & Sons.** They receive it, provide Whitacre & Hutter with a receipt and file it away.	→ **Whitacre & Hutter** continue to work to put together Hunter's order.	→ The bill now due, **Malecha & Sons** pay **Whitacre & Hutter** out of **Prentis**'s credit balance. **Whitacre & Hutter,** now paid, finish **Hunter**'s order and send it off.

Presumably, the order for goods would accompany the bill, though it could be sent separately if the payer had an established relationship and could be trusted. Malecha & Sons sit on the bill, as they have a usance of 60 days. In effect, they have use of the money it represents as a loan for that length of time

Sometimes bills were not paid. Perhaps the drawer didn't have enough money in his account to pay the bill. In cases where a bill was not honored, the payee would have to return the bill to the payer with a protest and the payer (Hunter, in this case) would have to start all over or seek legal redress.

*Making a Purchase at a Trade Shop**



Account must have been established prior to a credit transaction.

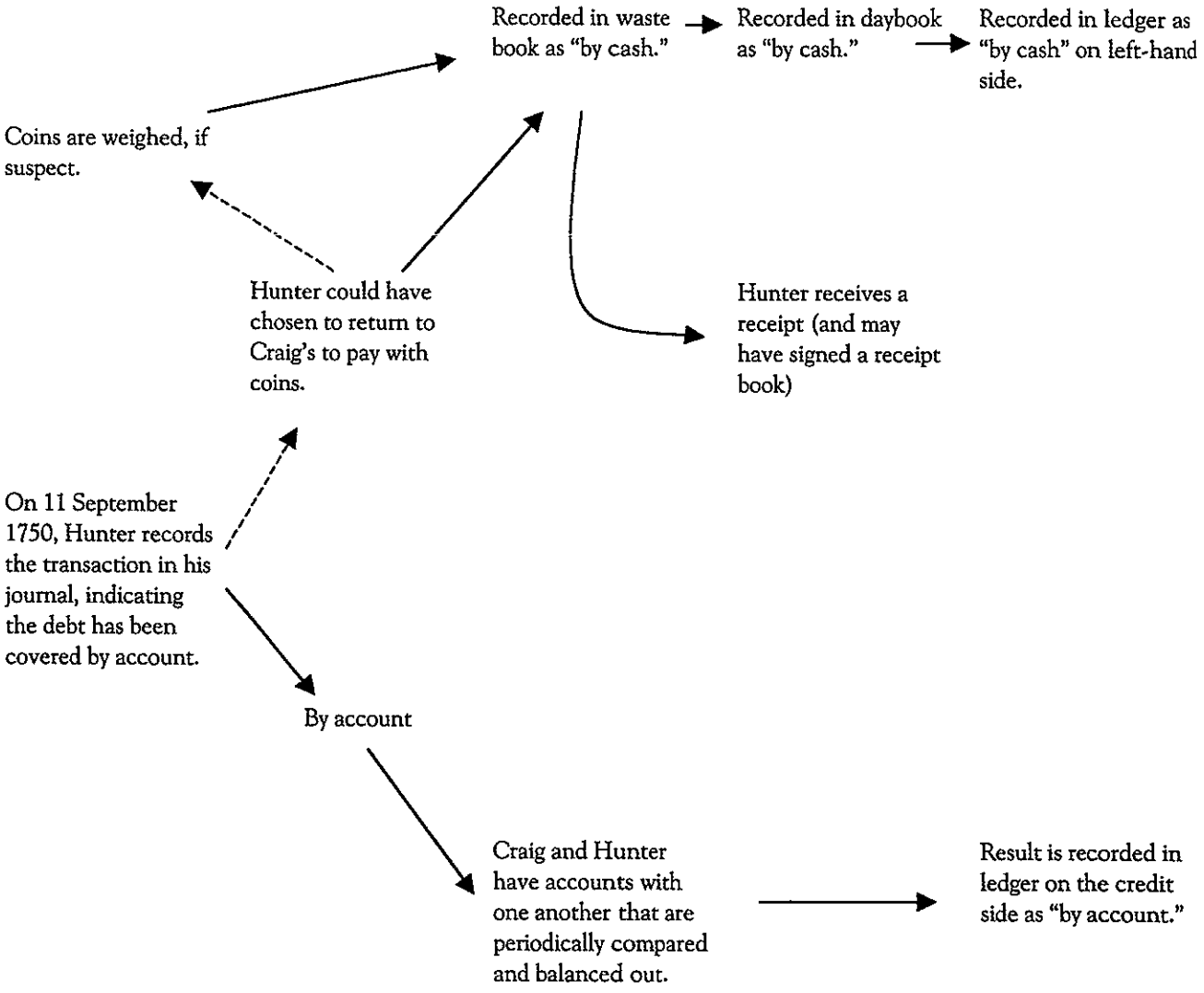
Waste book is a cheap stitched book kept at the point of sale. As the day's transactions are transferred to the daybook, they are crossed out in the waste book.

The daybook is a fair copy of the waste book and is kept either in the counting room or in a desk at home. The daybook is a chronological accounting of a shop's business.

A coin's value was in the amount of silver or gold it contained. The face value was only a point of departure of what the coin should be worth.

Ledgers were set up by account.

*Source Note: This example is taken from the Alexander Craig and William Hunter daybooks.

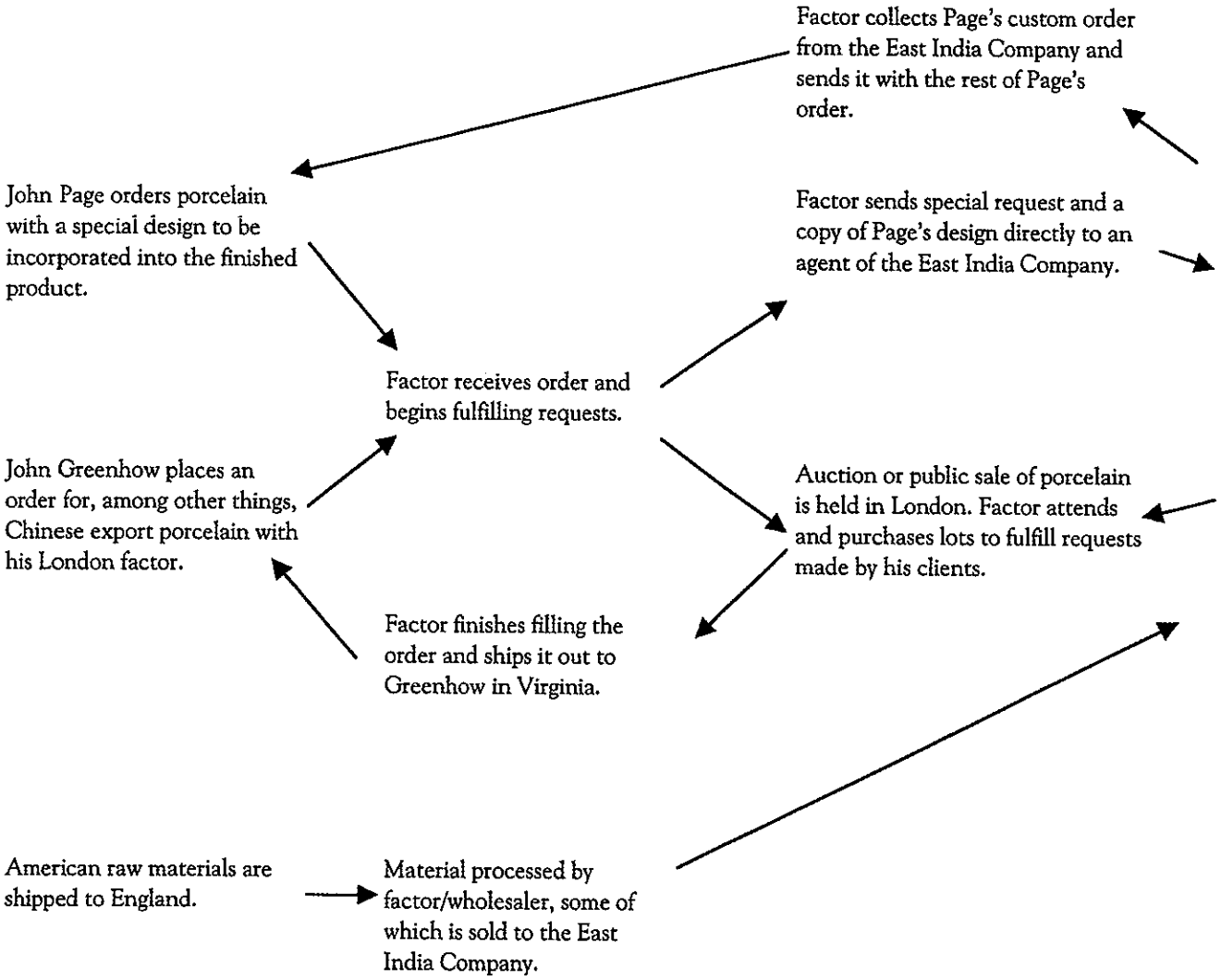


Balancing book debt can also be done through a third party.

Receipt books, daybooks and ledgers were admissible as evidence in debt cases.

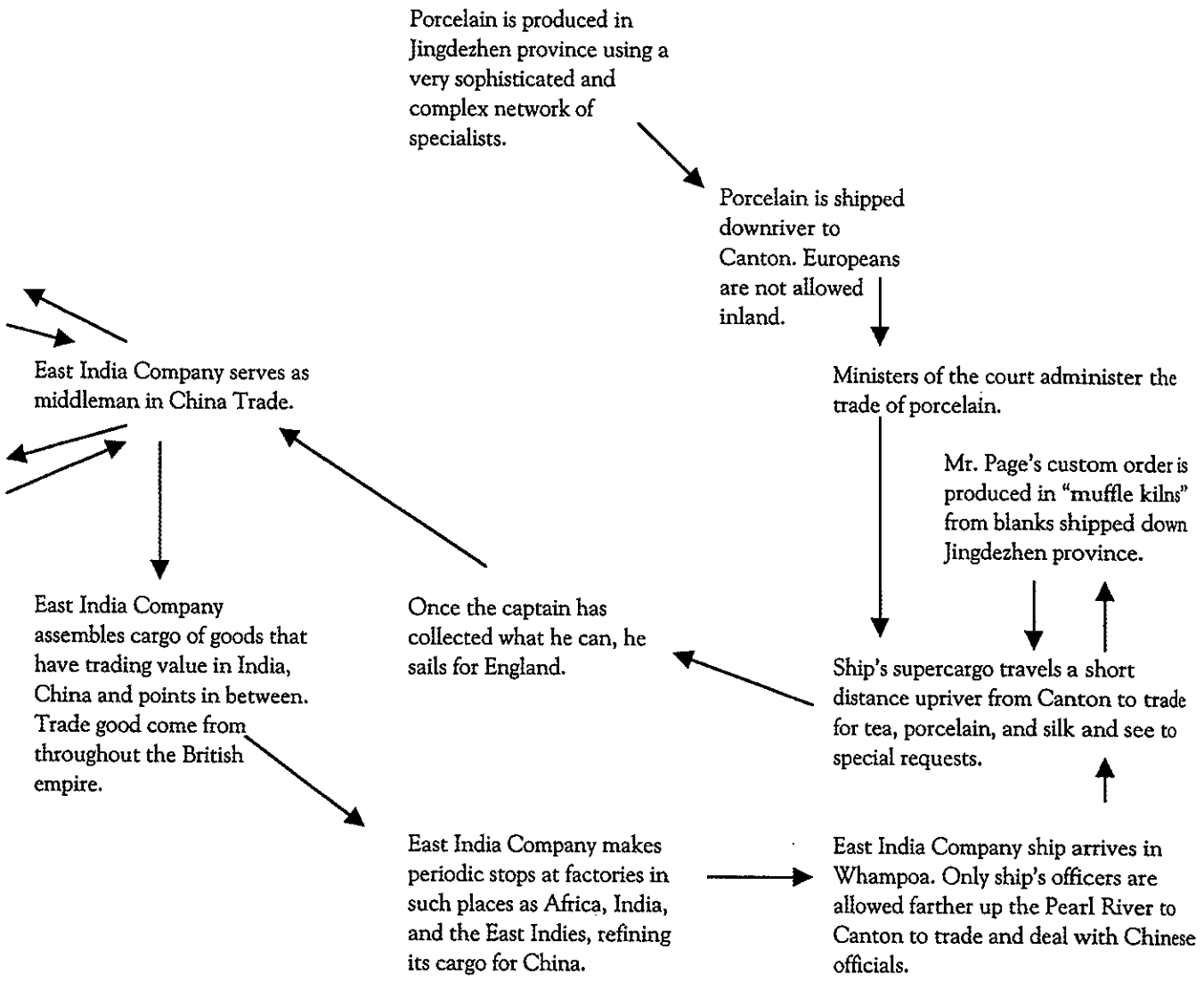
Once a page in a ledger is filled up (or a new year begins), the account is forwarded to another page or a new folio.

Importing Chinese Porcelain



See Placing an Order (Merchant) *on p. M-1 for a more in-depth review of the sequence of ordering goods from England.*

Like Page in this hypothetical example, many of the gentry ordered porcelain directly through their London factors. In August 1752, George Gilmer, Sr., wrote Bristol merchant Walter King telling him, "Mrs. Gilmer is perfectly satisfied with your conduct about her China and desires you will take your own time. I have just finished a closet for her to put it in."



Silver, fur, and ginseng were some of the items most in demand in China.

Officially, the East India Company held a monopoly on Britain's trade in the Asian and Indian markets.

"Factory" described a trading office or location.

Tea and spices were the primary items driving the East Indian trade.

Chinese factories were called "hongs."

The supercargo—the ship's officer in charge of commercial concerns—acted as trading agent and was responsible for fulfilling orders prepared at the London headquarters.

Slave Archaeology

This annotated bibliography was compiled with assistance from Anna Agbe-Davies of the Department of Archaeological Research.

Deetz, James. *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life.* Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977.

This short and chatty book about historical archaeology in North America is an old favorite—easy to read and understand, delightfully broad yet sufficiently detailed. Among the many achievements of this little book is the seventh chapter, "Parting Ways," an early exposition about the study of African-American sites, which often have few documentary sources to help interpret the archaeological record.

Edwards-Ingram, Ywone. "The Trash of Enslaved African Virginians." *Colonial Williamsburg Interpreter* 20 (Winter 1999/2000): 9–12.

In this article, Edwards-Ingram relies on eighteenth-century written records as well as analysis of several archaeological sites to show how to differentiate between African-Virginian and Anglo-Virginian cultural practices.

Franklin, Maria. "Rethinking the Carter's Grove Slave Quarter Reconstruction: A Proposal." In *The Written and the Wrought: Complementary Sources in Historical Archaeology, Essays in Honor of James Deetz. Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers,* 79 (1995): 147–164.

Harvey, David, and Gregory Brown, eds. *Common People and Their Material World: Free Men and Women in the Chesapeake, 1700–1830.* Colonial Williamsburg Research Publication. Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1995.

This collection of papers from a 1992 conference at Colonial Williamsburg includes several articles relevant to the study of the ordinary populace of the colonial capital. See especially those in Session I: Standards of Living, Session III: Folkways and Formalities, and Kevin Kelly's conclusion, "Was There an American Common Man? The Case in Colonial Virginia."

Katz-Hyman, Martha B. "'In the Middle of this Poverty Some Cups and a Teapot': The Furnishing of Slave Quarters at Colonial Williamsburg." In *The American Home: Material Culture, Domestic Space, and Family Life,* edited by Eleanor McD. Thompson, 197–216. Winterthur, Del.: Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, 1998.

An earlier version appears in "The Poor: Keeping Body and Soul Together—Consumption at the Lowest Levels of Society," on pp. I-2–5.

Kelso, William M. "Report on Exploratory Excavations at Carter's Grove Plantation, James City County, Virginia (June 1970–September 1971) . . . with additional data on continued excavations September 1971–March 1972." Ed. R. Neil Frank, Jr. Research Report, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va., 1972).

Leone, Mark P., and Parker B. Potter, Jr., eds. *The Recovery of Meaning: Historical Archaeology in the Eastern United States.* Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988.

This important collection of essays is highly theoretical. Four directly deal with the colonial Chesapeake or the early South. Mark P. Leone writes about merchant capitalism in Annapolis. Barbara J. Little studied the Greens, a family of Annapolis printers, and discusses the impact of cultural change on craft in that time and place. Charles E. Orser, Jr., considers the spatial arrangements of (mostly antebellum) plantations and what they reveal about the power hierarchy. Theresa A. Singleton presents a study of agriculture and the labor system of the coastal South from North Carolina to northern Florida during the period 1740 to 1880.

McGuire, Randall H., and Robert Paynter, eds., *The Archaeology of Inequality.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1991.

The specialized and dense essays in this volume about so-called "social archaeology" are almost entirely theoretical in nature. Archaeologists, anthropologists, and social historians alike are still learning how to include all races, genders, and classes in their work. Leland Ferguson's article, "Struggling with Pots in Colonial South Carolina," has particular relevance to the colonial Chesapeake. In it, he analyzed early folk pottery (usually called "colonoware") to discern distinctions between slave and elite foodways and other cultural tensions. The numerous differences, according to Ferguson, result from African Americans' resistance to the plantation system and the institution of slavery.

Samford, Patricia. "The Archaeology of African-American Slavery and Material Culture." *William and Mary Quarterly,* 3d ser. 53 (1996): 87–114.

Shackel, Paul A., and Barbara J. Little, eds. *Historical Archaeology of the Chesapeake.* Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1994)

The eighteen essays in this comprehensive and beautifully illustrated volume deal with a variety of expected topics from colonial landscaping and town planning to foodways and ceramics, as well as reassessments of slave sites at Mt. Vernon and in the Virginia Piedmont.

Singleton, Theresa A. "The Archaeology of Slave Life." In *Before Freedom Came: African-American Life in the Antebellum South,* edited by Edward D. C. Campbell, Jr., with Kym S. Rice. Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia for the Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond, Va., 1991.

This essay, part of the museum's exhibition catalog, concerns the living conditions of slaves throughout the South. The author addresses some of the most pressing recent questions and problems, setting out theories and possible solutions. Although nearly a decade old, this essay is still fresh and relevant to artifact analysis now under way.

Select Bibliography on Eighteenth-Century Deportment

(courtesy of Cathleene B. Hellier)

Primary Sources

Fielding, Henry. "An Essay on Conversation." 1743. *The Works of Henry Fielding.* Edited by William E. Henley. London, [1903].

Garretson, J[ohn]. *The School of Manners, or Rules for Childrens Behaviour: At Church, at Home, At Table, In Company, In Discourse, at School, abroad, and among Boys, with some other short and mixt Precepts.* 4th ed. London: printed for Tho. Cockerill, 1701; Reprinted London: Oregon Press for the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1983. [This source continued to be published with only minor alterations throughout the eighteenth century, often appended to other publications.]

Jones, Erasmus. *The Man of Manners or Plebian Polished.* (London, 1737; Reprinted, Sandy Hook, Conn.: The Hendrickson Group, 1993. [This appears to have been written for a dual audience. It has genuinely useful information for the "plebian," but is written in a way that would amuse the "polished."]

Stanhope, Philip Dormer, Lord Chesterfield. *Letters to his Son by the Earl of Chesterfield on the Fine Art of becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman.* Edited by Oliver H. G. Leigh. New York: Willey Book Co., 1901 [or any other edition].

Towle, Matthew. *The Young Gentleman* and *Lady's Private Tutor.* Oxford, 1770.

Washington, George. *Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation: A Book of Etiquette.* Williamsburg, Va.: The Beaver Press, 1971. This document appears in full in the section called "Manners, Education, and Conversation."

Secondary Sources

Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.

Hemphill, C. Dallett. *Bowing to Necessities: A History of Manners in America, 1620–1860.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

———. "Manners for Americans: Interaction Ritual and the Social Order, 1620–1860." Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1987.

Shields, David S. *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America.* Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., 1997.

Wildeblood, Joan, and Peter Brinson. *The Polite World: A Guide to English Manners and Deportment from the Thirteenth to the Nineteenth Century.* London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.

O. Objects by Social Rank

This section, our so-called "Sears & Roebuck Catalog," consists of illustrations of various goods—things that were necessary or nice to have or highly fashionable—available in the colonial Chesapeake. We have tried to be both general and specific in arranging this section; that is, our categories apply to all social ranks ("sleeping arrangements," "lighting," "seating," "transportation," etc.), but the objects shown are ranked according to social level based on quality, fashionability, and expense. Articles associated with the highest social level are at the top of the page. (We found that metaphor simply irresistible.)

Price ranges for the various items are approximations, since it is impossible to state exact figures in most cases. Please use the prices given here as rough guidelines only.

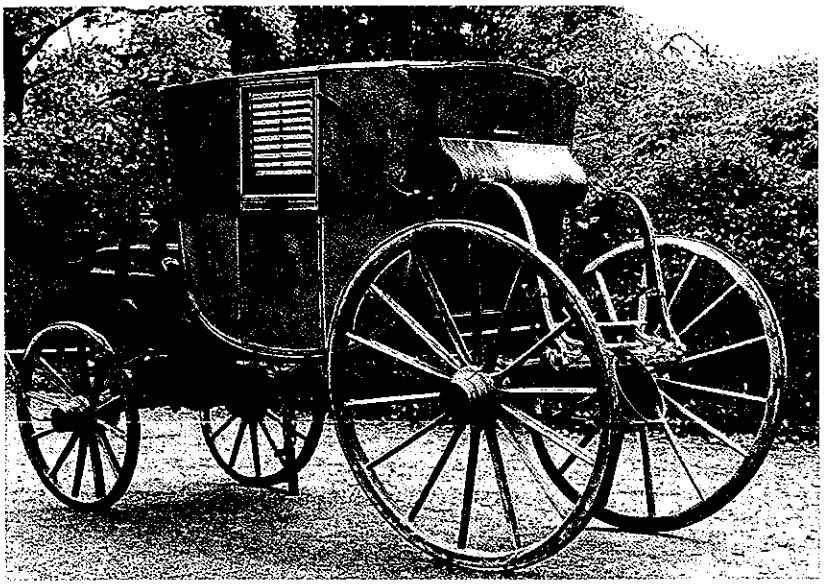
Accession numbers for antiques in the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation collections appear in parentheses; for example, the guitar illustrated on the top of page 4 of this section has the accession number (1984-254).

Following the "Objects by Social Rank" section, you will find another group of color illustrations discussed in the text. These we felt had to be reproduced in color, although the individual objects are discussed at various points in the resource manual. This section includes "Where In the World?" a large photograph of the dining room at the Peyton Randolph House ready for an eighteenth-century-style dinner. To the illustration we have added the geographic origins of many items of furniture, furnishings, food, and drink to indicate the numerous worldwide contributions to a gentry dinner.

Beginning with a photograph of several teapots (page Q-1), we take up the issue of style changes by comparing various items over the course of the eighteenth century.

The "Buying Respectability" story line team sends out a hearty "Huzzah!" to the many curators, tradesmen, photographers, and other staff members at Colonial Williamsburg who helped select, rank, and describe the items illustrated here.

Transportation



This traveling coach (as distinguished from a town coach) is English and dates to the last quarter of the eighteenth century. It is stylish and well made but not elaborately decorated. Such a vehicle protected occupants from cold and wet weather on long journeys, while simultaneously demonstrating the wealth and status of its owner. Cost: £100 to £200.

The riding chair was a light, one-horse, two-wheeled vehicle used extensively in America and England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. It could also be called a chaise, but that term was used more often in the northern colonies than in the South. While a riding chair did not protect travelers from the elements as a coach did, it was a convenient form of travel because of its maneuverability and the fact that it required only one horse. Cost: £20 to £30.

A light, two-wheeled vehicle, a horse-drawn cart could be used to transport people and goods, and it could be fitted with a cover to protect travelers from cold, rain, and sun. While functional, a cart was neither fashionable nor genteel. Cost: £8 to £15.

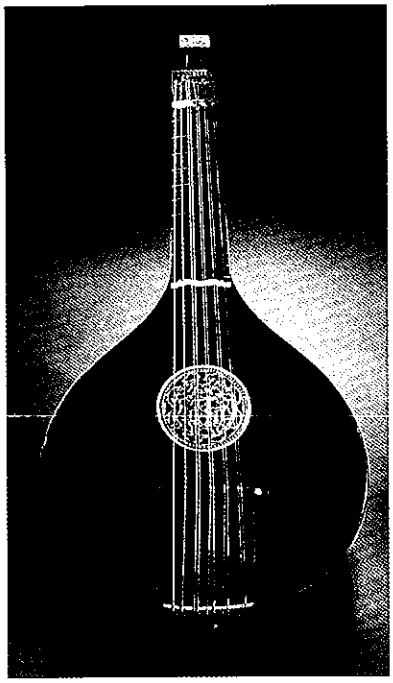
Transportation

The road wagon pictured here in a nineteenth-century photograph is typical of vehicles used in the eighteenth century for agricultural, migration, and freighting purposes. People traveling with these wagons most often walked unless they were sick or injured, because the vehicle was loaded with cargo. In Virginia, wagon makers and wheelwrights produced the wooden components for road wagons, and blacksmiths supplied the ironwork. Usually four to six horses drew a road wagon, which could transport two to three tons of cargo despite its relatively light construction. Cost: £20 to £30 for the vehicle and £10 to £15 for each horse.

Owning a horse meant that transportation would be easier and quicker than traveling by (human) foot. Of course, horses cost a certain amount to maintain, as did the saddles and tack needed to ride comfortably and safely. The value of horses varied enormously depending upon bloodline, use, age, and condition. Cost: racehorse, £60 to £70; carriage horse, £30 to £50; workhorse, £10 to £15; Virginia-bred horse, £4 to £5.

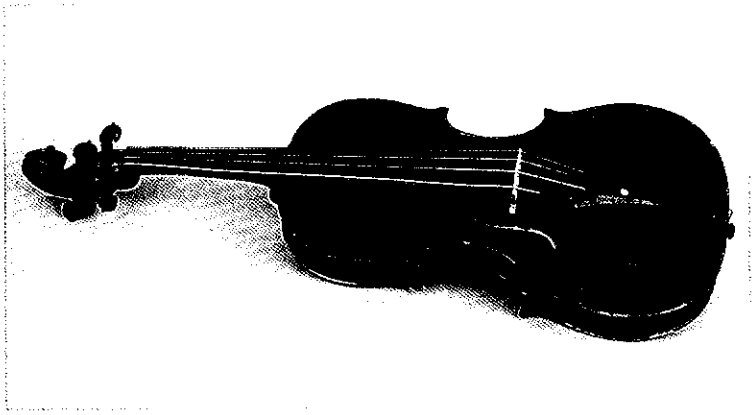
Naturally, traveling on foot was the cheapest way to get from one place to the next. Although walking for pleasure was certainly an eighteenth-century pastime among the genteel, only the very poor walked out of necessity.

Musical Instruments



This guitar (1984-254) was made in London about 1765–75 by J. N. Preston. Imported and rather scarce, guitars were fashionable instruments that required specialized training and a good deal of practice. While gentlemen and ladies both played guitars, the instrument has a stronger feminine association. Several period portraits depict refined young ladies with guitars in hand. Despite the gentry connection, guitars seem not to have been as expensive as violins and fiddles. The example shown here has watch-key tuning at the end of the fret board, a more sophisticated method of tuning the instrument. Cost: The only local inventory reference to a guitar gives the value at £2 in 1783.

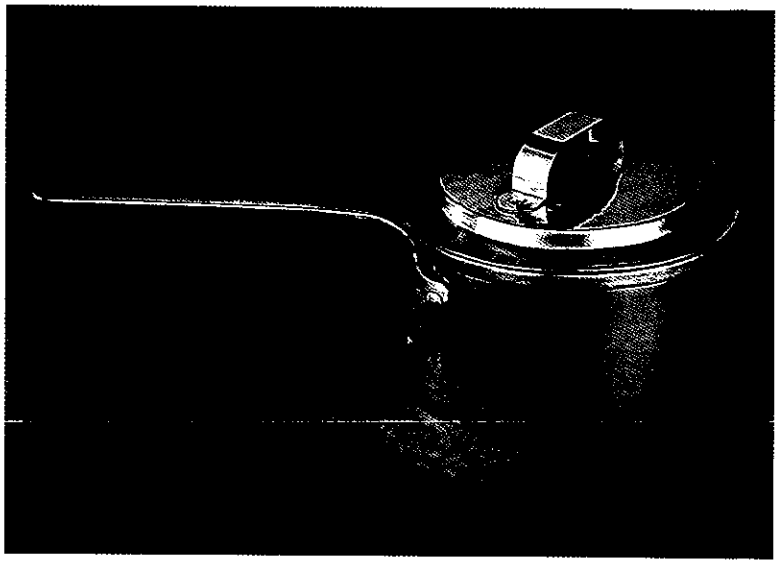
This violin or fiddle (1998-32) was made in England about 1760–70. While not exclusive to upper ranks, as were guitars, a violin still required training and practice, and prices varied widely. African Virginians and Euro-Virginians both played fiddles, but it was not considered appropriate for a white woman to take up either the violin or fiddle. Violins could be included as part of a musical group or played as solo instruments. The tune of a single fiddle sometimes accompanied impromptu dances of the eighteenth century. Cost: £1 to £13.



The *banjar* or *banjo* shown here is a detail from the painting "The Old Plantation" (1935.301.3), probably depicting a nineteenth-century South Carolina scene. Late in the eighteenth century, slaves in America constructed the first banjos, which were reminiscent of African stringed instruments. Like various drums, rattles, and other instruments from the early Southern plantations, a banjar could be constructed from "found" objects—in this case a large dried gourd, some bits of wood for the neck and pegs, and gut or wire strings. Cost: little or nothing, given the availability of materials and the time to make it.

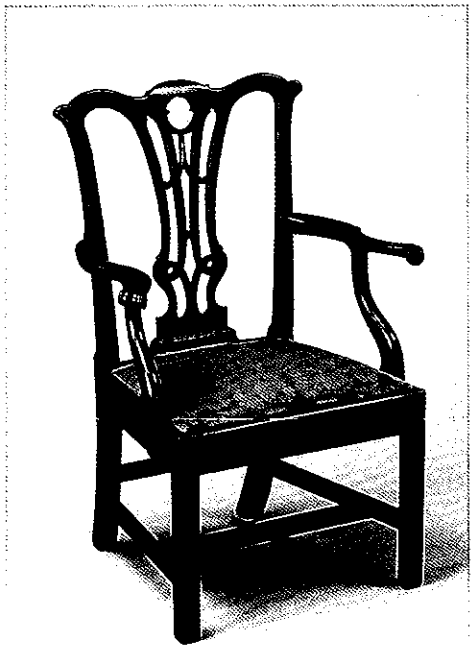
Cooking Implements

Copper cookware, such as this stew pan (R1980-69, based on 1938-97), allowed for the even heat needed to create delicate sauces as well as other fashionable dishes influenced by French cuisine. Not everyone had the awareness of these new styles in cookery or the money to indulge in them. Thus, up-to-date cookery also demonstrated one's claims to gentility. An early example comes from Samuel Pepys's diary entry for November 3, 1661: "At night my wife and I had a good supper by ourselfs, of a pullet=hashed; which pleased me much to see my condition come to allow ourselfs a dish like that." Cost: £0.15.0 to £3.0.0 (depending on size).

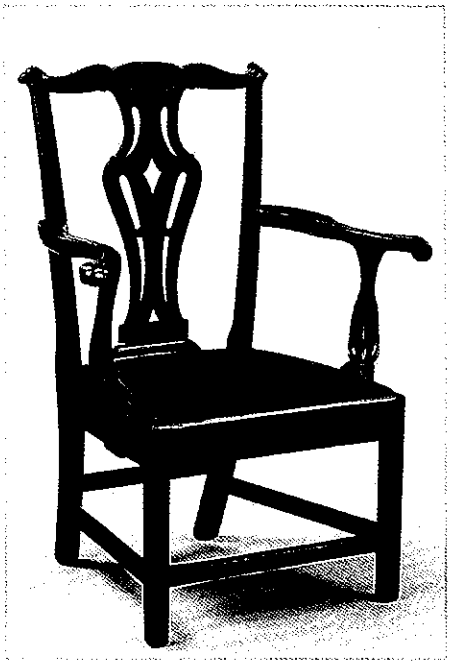


This iron pot (01067-02PB) dates to the last quarter of the eighteenth century. It came from the cellar of the James Hubbard site (where the house burned on April 4, 1797). Cast-iron cookware was essential in every kitchen during the colonial period, regardless of the status of the household. The very poorest may have had no other cooking equipment at all. Some lower middling families got by with only a few pieces of cast-iron, while the more affluent owned multiples and specialized forms (such as Dutch ovens, frying pans, gridirons, etc.). The social significance arises from the variety of cooking methods additional cookware allowed. Cost: £0.5.0 to £1.0.0 (depending on size).

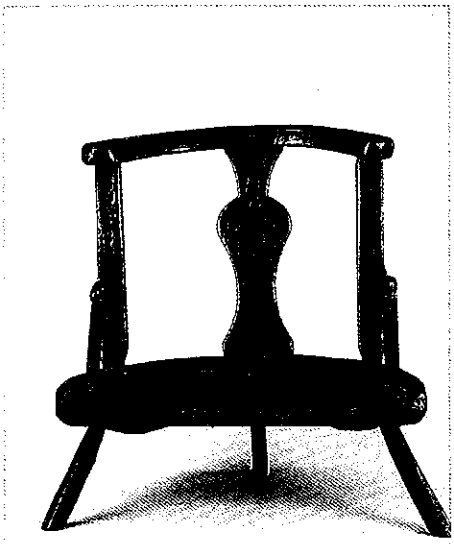
Seating



This armchair (1953-567, 6) was probably made in Baltimore, Maryland, sometime between 1770 and 1790. The primary wood is mahogany; the secondary is southern yellow pine. With its three-dimensional carved and pierced splat, the chair would have been found only in the homes of the relatively well-to-do. Cost: £1.15.0.

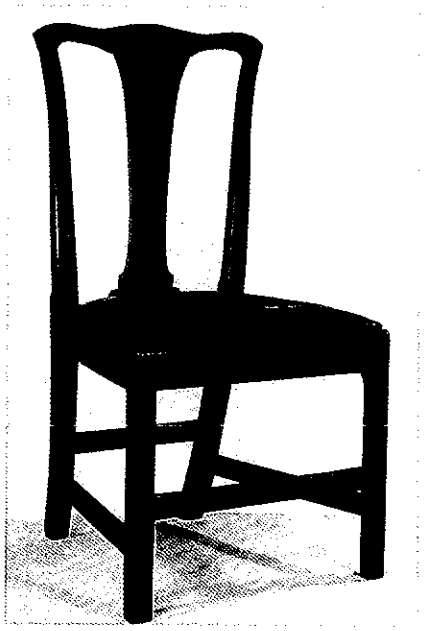


This mahogany armchair (1967-72, 8) dates to 1760–1790 and was made in Frederick, Maryland. While it shares similarities with the preceding example, its execution is less sophisticated, as are its proportions. Chairs of this sort appeared in upper-middling to middling households. Cost: £1.4.0.

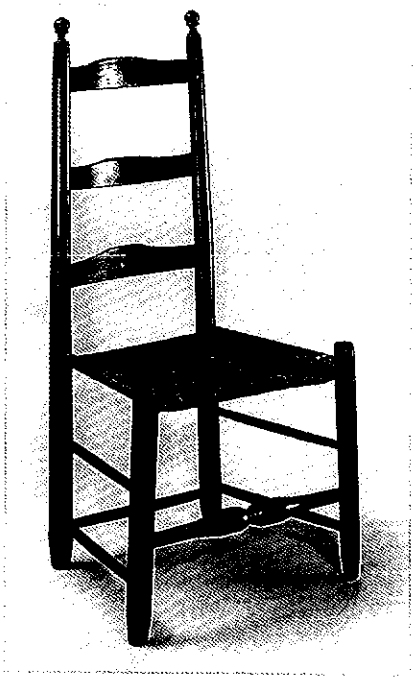


This armchair (1995-108) is a surprising example from the Chesapeake, probably Annapolis. Dating to roughly 1780, it is a rare American interpretation of a British vernacular chair-making tradition with its thick, shaped features and three short legs. It is a functional piece with few pretensions to fashionability. Cost: £0.2.0.

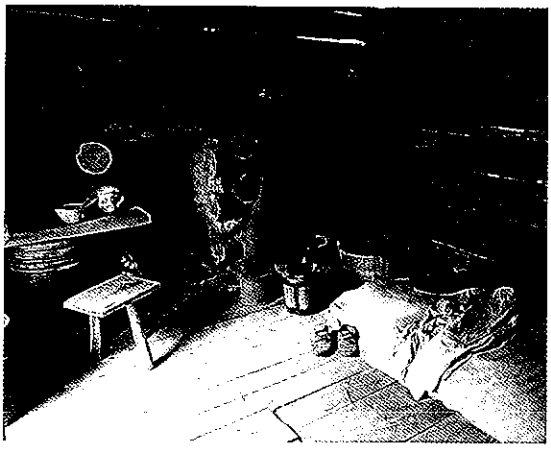
Seating



This side chair (1982-119, 1) was probably produced in Virginia's southern Piedmont sometime between 1760 and 1785. Made of walnut (primary wood) and yellow pine (secondary wood), this splat-back chair shows an understanding of proportions but is very much in the "neat and plain" style favored by the affluent in colonial Virginia. Cost: £0.16.0 to £0.18.0.



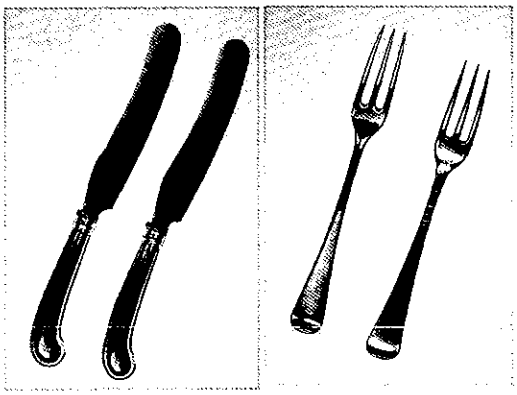
This ladder-back side chair (1948-9, 6) is one of a set of six made probably in Maryland or Virginia any time between 1740 and 1790. With its simple turnings and woven bottom—originally made either of rush, split ash, or split oak—it provided inexpensive seating in middling to lower-middling houses. Cost: £0.8.0.



This three-legged stool, a reproduction, could be made at home with only rudimentary carpentry skills. Three legs, as opposed to four, meant that the stool would balance more easily on an uneven floor such as one of packed earth. Cost: £0.0.4 to £0.0.6.

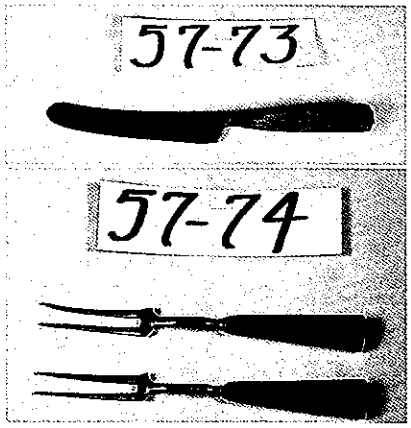
The stump of a tree cost only the labor required to cut it. While lacking finesse of any kind, it was a step above squatting or sitting on the floor or bare earth. Cost: nothing except the sweat of one's brow and a strong back to move it.

Eating Utensils



These silver knives (1940-205, 13, 14) and forks (1940-205, 64, 65) were made in London, the knives about 1760–85 (blades by S. Smith and Son) and the forks in 1770–71. The three-tined forks could lift bites of food from plate to mouth, but the shape of the blades indicates that these knives could be used for that job as well. Contemporary etiquette condoned knife-eating. Only the upper social ranks bought flatware of this kind. Cost: £0.10.0 to £0.12.0 a piece.

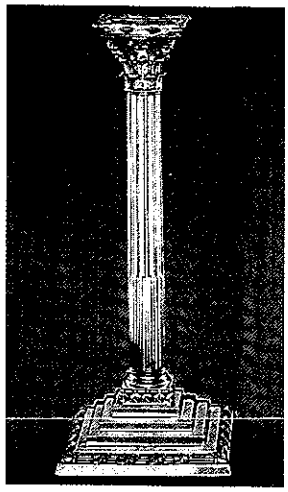
This knife (1957-73) and these forks (1957-74, 1 and 2), all of steel and wood, date from sometime between the late eighteenth century and the mid-nineteenth. Two-tined forks speared chunks of meat and steadied them for cutting. Diners then used knives to put morsels into the mouth. Middling to upper-middling households used items like these. (Handles could also be horn or dyed bone.) Cost: £0.1.0 to £0.1.6 a piece.



For some, spoons were the only necessary flatware and the only kind they bought. (Nearly anybody could carve rough wooden or horn spoons, in which case no money was involved.) This pewter example (1953-1090) is English and was made between 1740 and 1770. For utility, no doubt households at every social level above bare subsistence used spoons like this. Cost: £0.0.6.

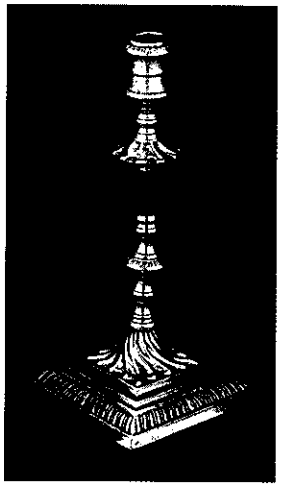
The poorest made do with their fingers. A crude family invited Dr. Alexander Hamilton to share their dinner, but he declined because "their mess was in a dirty, deep, wooden dish which they evacuated with their hands. . . . They used neither knife, fork, spoon, plate, or napkin because, I suppose, they had none to use."

Lighting Devices

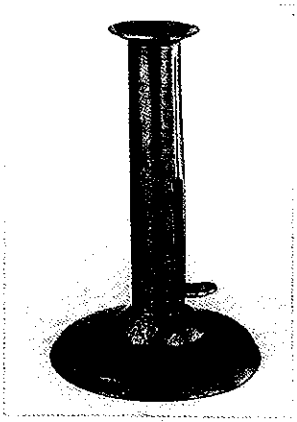


This sterling standard stick (1945-5, 1) in the form of a Corinthian column is one of a set of four. Produced in London, it is the work of John Robinson and bears the date letter for 1761–62. Made of precious metal in the latest neo-classical taste, this type of stick could be found only in the wealthiest of colonial households. Cost: £2.0.0 to £2.10.0.

Brass candlesticks were fashionable, but still relatively cheap. Cast in molds, styles could be changed fairly quickly. This example (1983-273) from the third quarter of the eighteenth century has a swirling flute on its lower stem, which rests on a square, gadrooned base. Sticks of this type could be found in the public rooms of a middling to upper-middling family and in secondary spaces of an elite household. Occasionally, they were gilt (referred to as *French plate*) and thus made to appear more expensive. Examples of these appear in Anthony Hay's inventory: "6 French plate Candlesticks £9.0.0" (£1.10.0 each). He also had "24 Brass Candlesticks" worth 105 shillings (about £0.4.6 each), roughly a fifth of the cost of one of the French plate sticks. Cost of a brass candlestick: £0.4.0 to £0.4.6. Cost of a French-plated brass stick: £1.10.0.



This iron candlestick (1972-319) was the cheapest type of stick available in eighteenth-century America. Made from sheet iron, its style changed little over the century. This stick was made in England, probably Birmingham, sometime between 1765 and 1820. It has a convenient mechanism for lifting the candle as it burns down, thus allowing for maximum burning time. Cost: £0.1.0 to £0.1.6.



For many, the light of a fire was the only source of illumination after dark. As late as 1853, Frederick Law Olmsted, while staying in a North Carolina tavern, was told that he didn't need a candle because his room had a fire. Cost: dependent on supply of firewood.

Kitchen Hearths

The Palace kitchen represents the most sophisticated type of kitchen available in colonial Virginia. A bar grate, fueled with coal, provides the heat source for cooking various dishes and is supplemented by a stewing stove fueled by charcoal, located to the right of the fireplace opening (out of range for this photograph). The stew stove is of masonry construction and parged or plastered over. Trivets of different heights sit over the stew holes to regulate the heat under the copper pans. Spits are used for roasting meats, and there is a clock jack that mechanically rotates for even cooking. Such equipment made it possible to prepare high-quality food. It also set the Palace kitchen apart from others in town by allowing the governor's cooks to prepare foods in large quantities. Botetourt wrote of having fifty and more people for dinner.

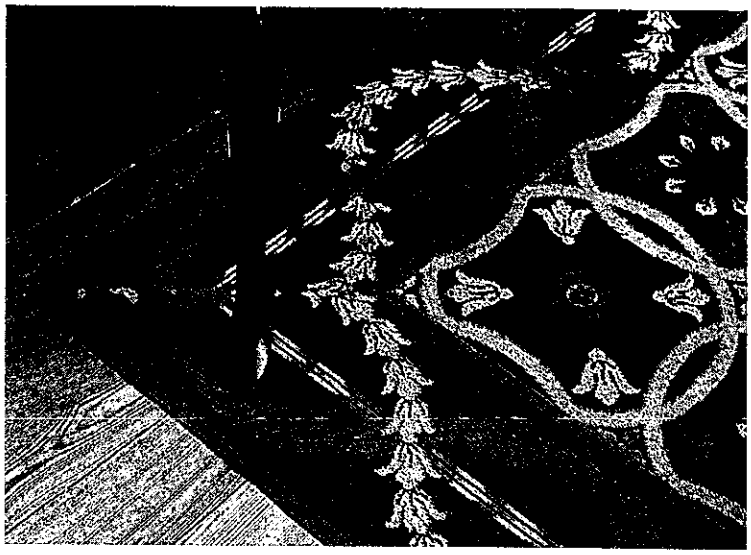
The Wythe kitchen hearth has a lug pole (an iron bar built into the throat of the chimney) to suspend pots. S hooks make it somewhat possible for the cook to adjust the level of the pots over the fire.* Andirons with hooks on the outer surface hold a spit for roasting meat; the spit can be lowered or raised as needed. Under the spit, a drip pan catches juices from the meat. A Dutch oven, the cast-iron pot with lid on the left in the photograph, is for baking breads and pies on the open hearth. Other specialized metal wares, like the copper saucepan beside the Dutch oven, allow for more even heat to make sauces and "ragoos." Foods prepared in kitchens like this ranged from the very plain to those that required recipes.** This hearth is fairly sophisticated, but the cook still worked hard, bending low and lifting heavy pots.

In this rudimentary open hearth, a pot hangs from a lug pole, so the primary method of cooking is stewing. Because the cast-iron pot cannot be lowered or raised, the level of the fire on plain iron dogs determines the heat. For specialized items like skillets and pots of several sizes, the cook pulled out coals to make separate fires for the vessels. The work is hot and backbreaking, involving stooping over an open hearth and lifting heavy pots.

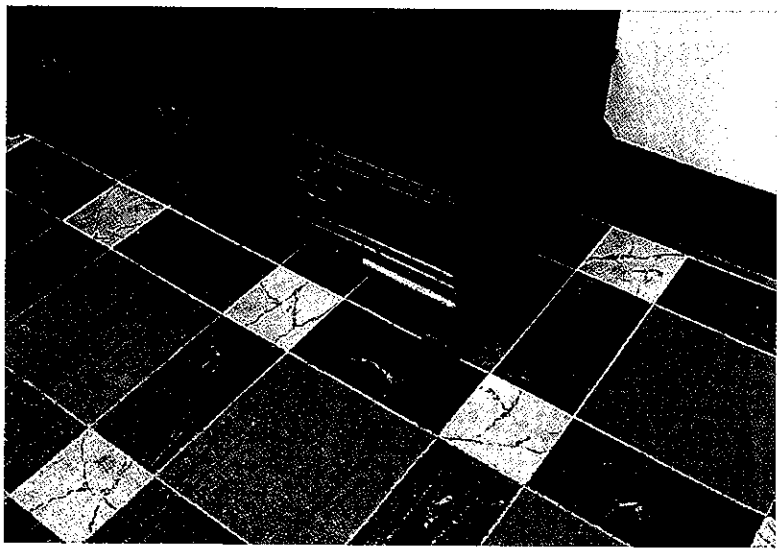
* A more up-to-date crane can be seen at the Powell kitchen.

** George Wythe bought Hannah Glasse's cookery book at the Printing Office in 1764.

Flooring

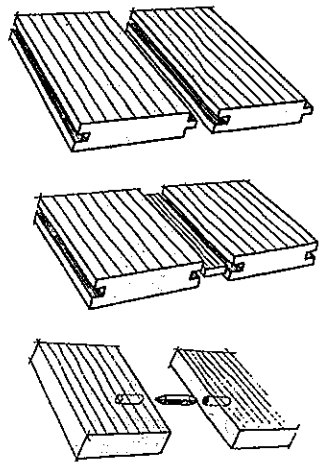


The most expensive option for covering floors was carpets (but not rugs; rugs were used on beds during the colonial period). By the third quarter of the eighteenth century, a variety of carpet types was available: Scotch, Kilmarnock, Kidderminster, and Wilton. The reproduction shown here is a Wilton carpet with a design taken from a Robert Adam point paper. A fitted version, based on evidence of eighteenth-century tacks located around the perimeter of the room, is installed in the Everard parlor. Such tacks were used to secure wall-to-wall carpeting. Also note in this illustration the color of the floor. It has been left *white*, to use a period term; that is, it has been left its natural color with no wax or varnish.



Floor cloths could be used to protect flooring as well as add a decorative element to a room. When they appear in inventories, they are usually located in passages and dining rooms within gentry and upper-middling houses. The pattern shown in this reproduction was taken from John Carwitham, *Various Kinds of Floor Decoration . . .* (1739).

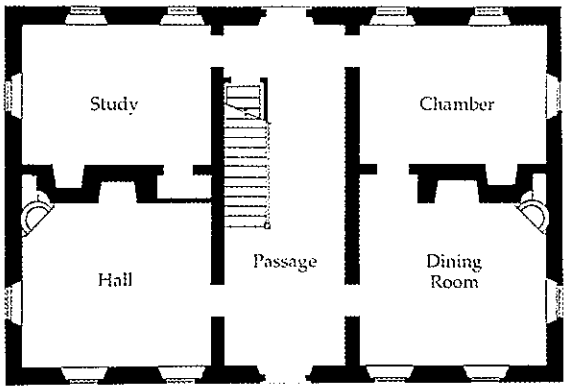
For those who could afford wooden flooring, there were several options. One was the self-explanatory face-nailed floor (24 to 30 shillings per square, i.e., 100 square feet). For a smoother appearance, there were more sophisticated methods to secure floorboards. This diagram illustrates those techniques: tongue and groove (29 to 30 shillings per square), spline (36 to 37 shillings per square), and dowel (45 to 46 shillings per square). An example of dowel flooring can be seen in the Everard House.*

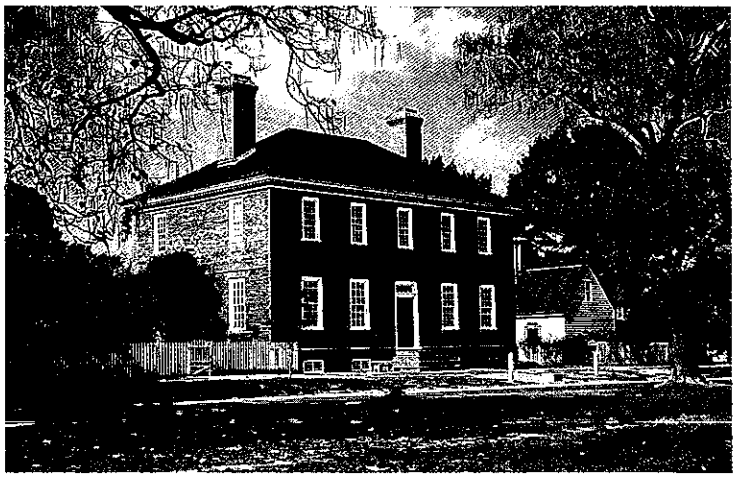


floor, flooring
Floorboard joint details: tongue and groove (*above*), spline (*center*), dowel (*below*)

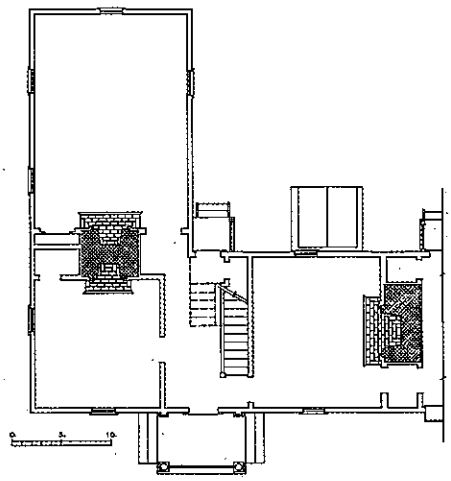
*Prices based on information in *The Rules of Work of the Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia,* 1786, ed. Charles E. Peterson (Princeton: N. J.: Pyne Press, 1971). Drawing from Carl R. Lounsbury, ed., *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 143.

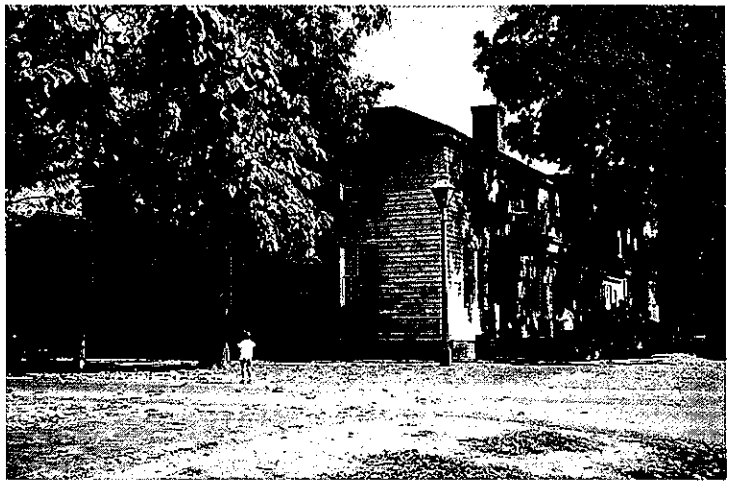
Elevations and Floor Plans





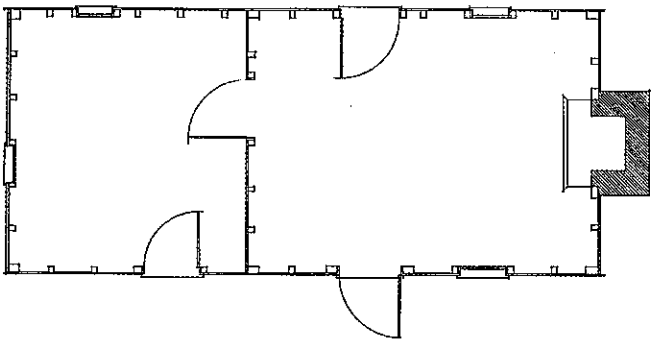
The Wythe House is one of the finest private houses in Williamsburg. Of brick, its symmetrical facades encase a double-pile plan that epitomizes Georgian house design. Inside are ten specialized spaces, far exceeding the accommodations of most colonial Virginians. Two large passages give access to each room and could be used as living spaces in the summertime. The old-fashioned term *hall* has been retained, but it serves as a parlor. Across the passage is the dining room. Behind it and connected by the one doorway not associated with the passages is the first-floor chamber. The remaining room below stairs is the study. Above stairs, the plan is replicated with rooms used as chambers and a workspace. Built-in interior shutters help control light and heat. Cost: approximately £1,000 to £1,500

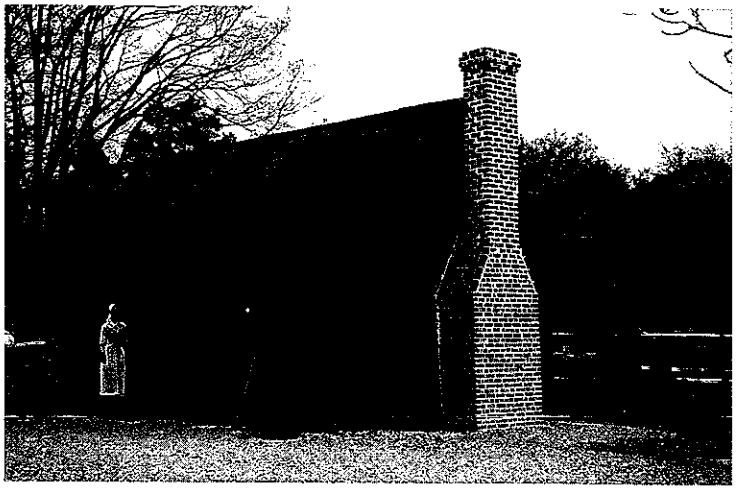




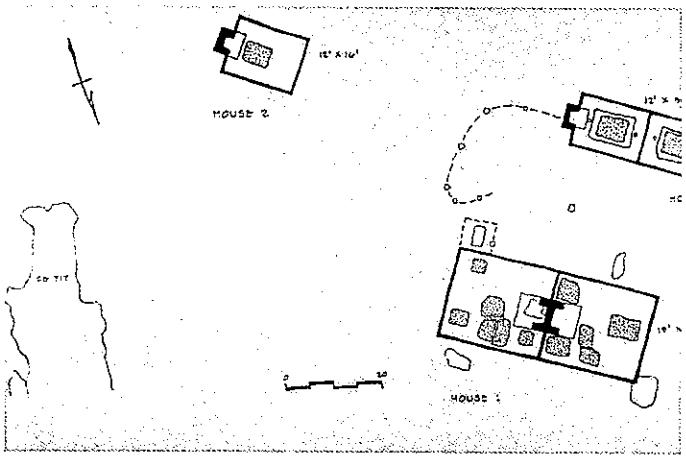
The Geddy House would have been considered luxurious by a great many colonial Virginians. The structure is painted white, and the green exterior shutters afford security and help shield the interior from sunlight. There are two interior chimneys for fireplaces that provide heat on both floors. The three-room plan plus a stair passage downstairs allows for spaces dedicated to specific activities. A large dining room could accommodate fashionable dining. A smaller parlor provided the setting for tea and other intimate social occasions, while the third room served as a chamber. Above were more chambers for children and possible visitors. Cost: approximately £200 to £400.

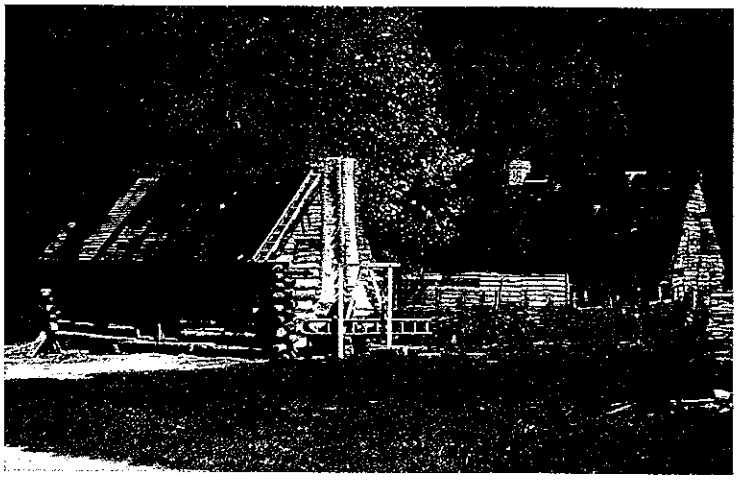
Elevations and Floor Plans





The reconstructed Tenant House is the step between the Geddy House and the Overseer's House. It has a brick chimney, a raised wooden floor, and glazed windows, although the interior walls are unplastered. Its siding consists of riven boards, as does the roof, the former left unpainted and the latter covered with tar to help make it waterproof. With this two-room plan, some specialization of daily activities is possible, as well as a modicum of privacy. Only the larger room is heated. Cost: approximately £50 to £150.





Carter's Grove Slave Quarter, Overseer's House. This reconstructed, one-room house with its packed-earth floor and root cellar before the hearth, unplastered walls, and wattle-and-daub chimney represents the housing that the majority of Virginians, black and white, inhabited in the colonial period. It is easy to forget that this was the norm in period housing because most dwellings that have survived belonged to the middling and upper classes. This one room served a multitude of purposes—from cooking to eating to sleeping—and made privacy an impossibility. Cost: approximately £30.

Wall Treatments

Peyton Randolph House Parlor

While paneling was going out of style in some new dwellings at mid-century (the Wythe House, for example), many colonial Virginians still preferred a more traditional approach. When they remodeled, Peyton and Betty Randolph retained floor-to-ceiling paneling in their parlor, as well as in nearly every other room in their home. This was the most expensive way of finishing out an interior, although not necessarily the most fashionable in the 1750s.

Everard House Dining Room

Like the Wythe hall, the Everard dining room has plaster walls covered with wallpaper and a modest cornice. However, the area below the chair board is wainscoted or paneled, a more expensive method of finishing than merely painting or papering.

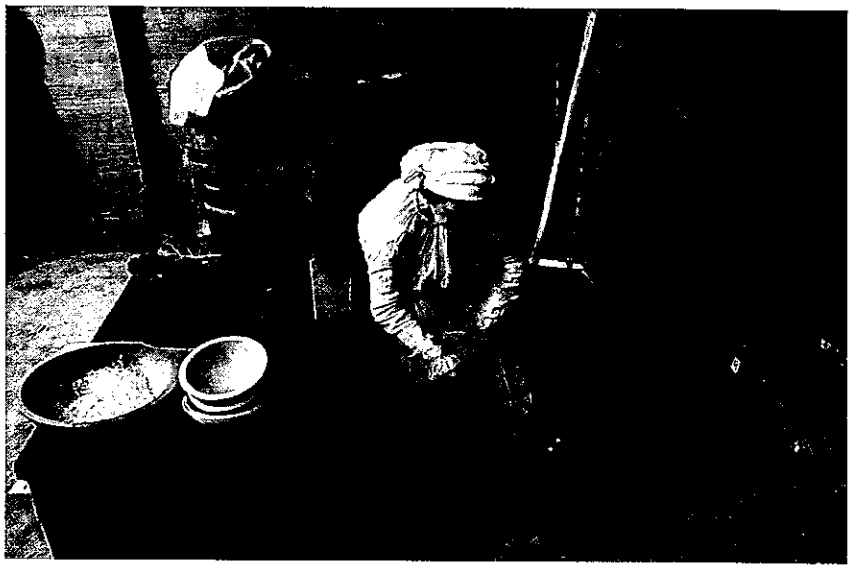
Wall Treatments

Wythe House Hall

One of the two main entertaining spaces at the Wythe House, the hall has plastered walls, a modest cornice, chair board, and washboard. The red damask wallpaper and red sandstone mantel, however, emphasize the importance of this room. The area under the chair board has been painted in the same ochre color as the woodwork in the room and simulates flush paneling found in some gentry houses, such as Kenmore. The technique used at the Wythe House is less costly.

Wetherburn's Tavern Great Room

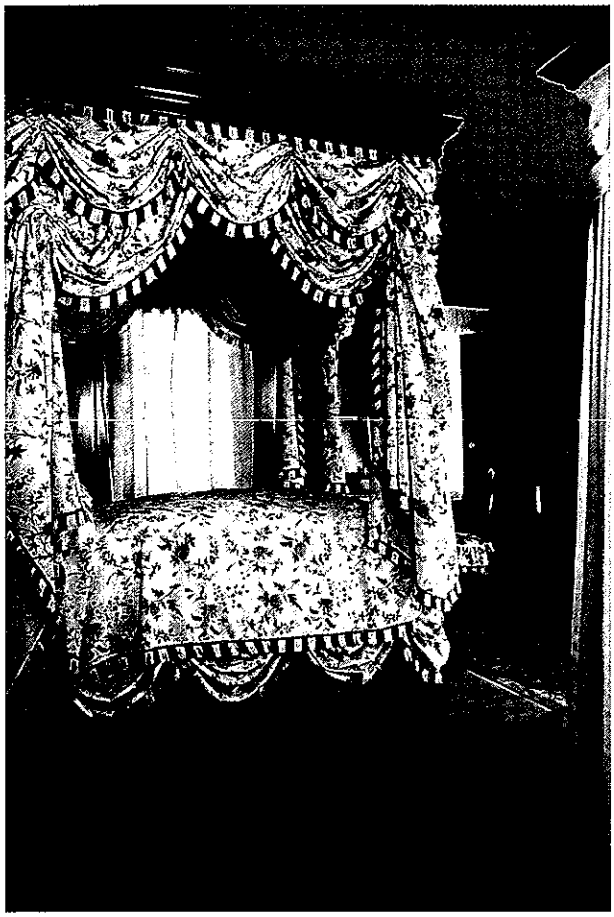
This plain plaster interior has no cornice, only a chair board and a washboard (both to protect the plaster from damage). Despite its lack of ornamentation (with the exception of the spectacular fireplace surround opposite this view), this type of room finish was a definite improvement in comfort and appearance over riven boards. The light-reflective white plaster also enhanced living conditions.



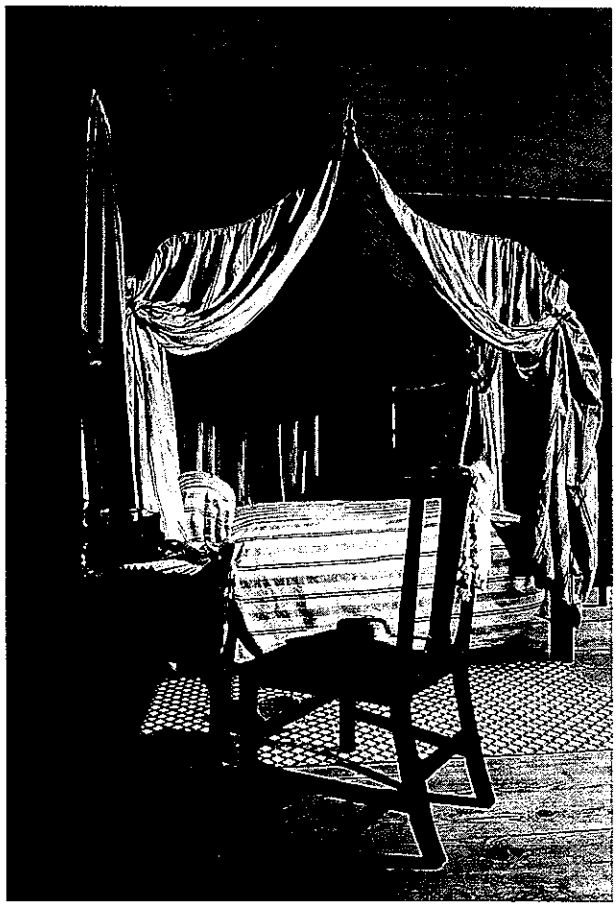
St. Mary's City Interior

The least expensive wall treatment was to do nothing and leave the framing and the backs of the riven siding exposed. Besides resulting in a crude appearance, this lack of finish made it difficult to keep out drafts and dust.

Sleeping Arrangements

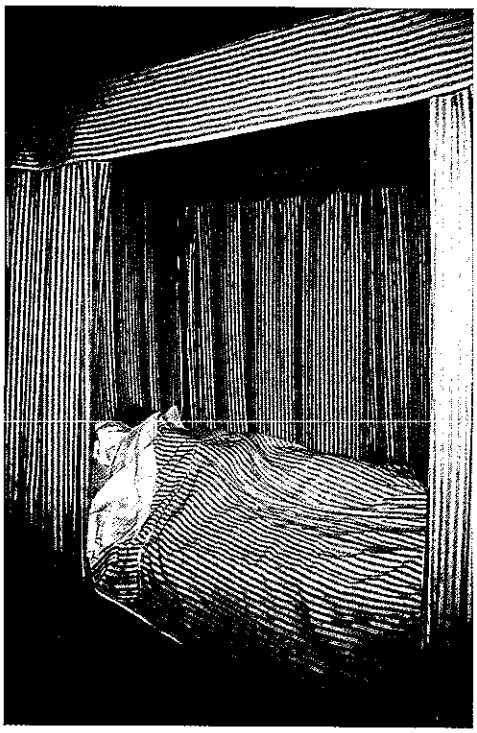


This reproduction bedstead is based on an antique (1978-30) made by Samuel White of Petersburg, Virginia, circa 1795. The textile is a reproduction India chintz ("Cannes Grenat") in a style taken from Chippendale's *Director* and trimmed with handwoven fringe. This mahogany bedstead with cornice, fringed and festooned valances, drapery curtains, and matching counterpane is one of the most expensively outfitted beds in the Historic Area. Only the wealthiest in Virginia could afford this level of comfort and beauty. Total value of this bedstead and furniture: £22.10.0.



This field bedstead (1998-2) was possibly made in Petersburg between 1780 and 1800. It has reproduction red-and-white striped textiles with check fringe based on an antique example in the Colonial Williamsburg collection. Although much more expensive than low-post bedsteads (primarily because of the extensive use of fabric), this bedstead and furniture is worth £17.10.0, just £5 less than the most valuable bed illustrated above.

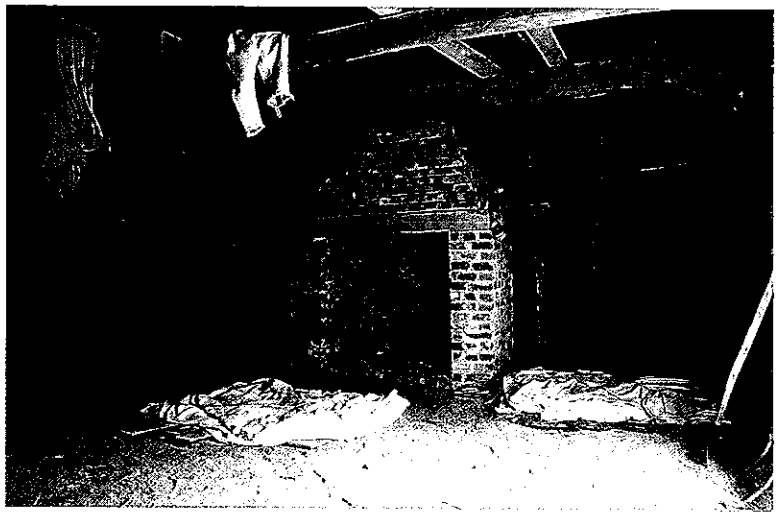
Sleeping Arrangements



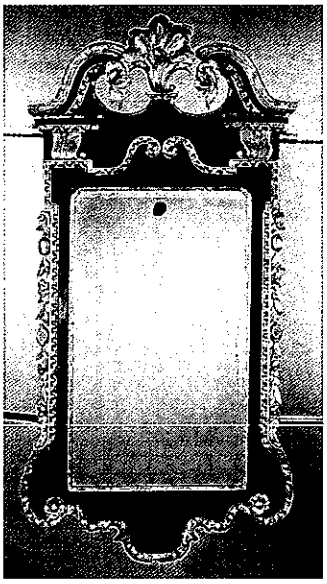
This high-post American bed (1952-633) dates to roughly the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The very simple tan-and-white striped bed furniture of Holland cloth (linen) appears in graphic sources of the same period. The bedstead has no cornice, and the valance is tacked directly to the lath or tester frame seated on top of the bedposts. The railroaded valance has no shaping and droops in places. Cost: £5 to £6.

A low-post bedstead with ropes to support the bed (stuffed with tow [short or broken fiber], straw, or some other inexpensive material) was a more comfortable arrangement that also lifted the sleeper up off the floor. This low-post bed was based on an antique (1956-567) but then cut down. Secondhand bedsteads were furnishing realities for poor whites as well as blacks. The bedstead, bed, bolster, and blanket have a combined value of approximately £2.7.0 to £3.0.0.

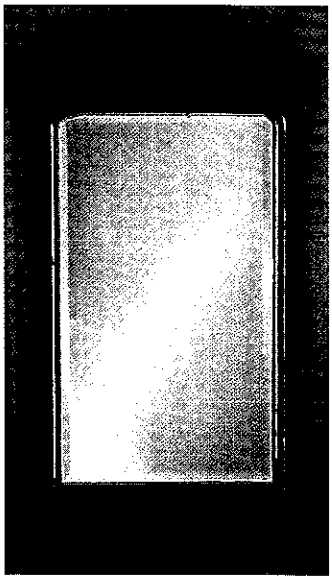
For those at the bottom of the social and economic ladder, a blanket on the floor (wooden or packed earth) was the extent of sleeping accommodations. The value of the blanket is 5 to 10 shillings. A bed (what we would call a mattress) might also be placed directly on the floor and would add £1 to the value.



Looking Glasses

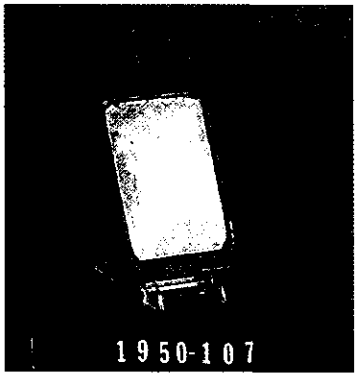


This looking glass (G1990-296) is an English example that dates to roughly 1765. With gilding and walnut veneer, it measures 60" by 30 ½" and would have been affordable to very few. It probably hung in the parlor or dining room of a gentry house. Cost: £10.



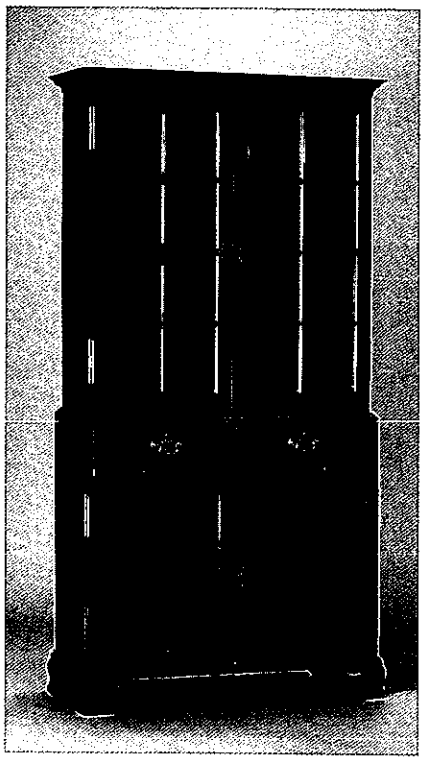
Covered with a mahogany veneer, this looking glass (1930-96) was made in America, probably Philadelphia, and, given the John Elliott label glued to the back, dates to 1753–61. Its dimensions are 40 ½" by 21 ¼". Its smaller size and less ornate finish made this glass less expensive than the example above, but it still would have been available to only some colonial consumers. Cost: £3.

This looking glass (1946-79) could be either American or English. It dates to 1740–60, is 22 ¾" by 12", and framed with walnut veneer on pine. While relatively elegant in terms of its dimensions, its small size and minimal ornamentation make this a fairly affordable object even for lower middling families. Cost: £0.18.0.

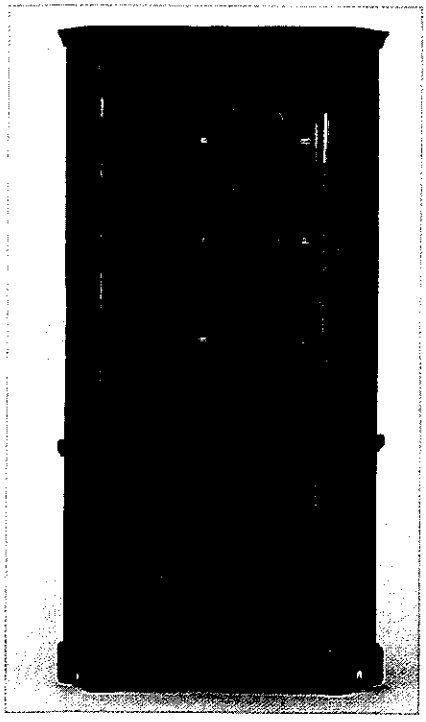


This modest, little glass (1950-107) is actually recycled. A broken piece from a larger looking glass has been placed in a plain, white pine frame, which could have been made at home. This is an object that a poor white or slave could have fashioned from discarded fragments that were then placed in a homemade frame. Cost: £0.0.10.

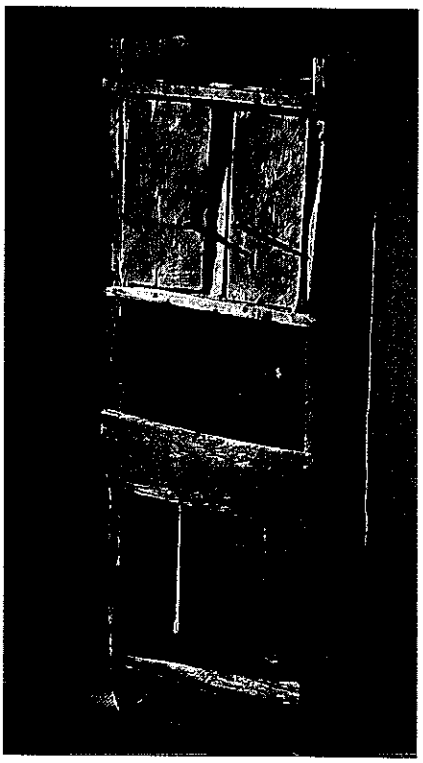
Storage Pieces



Dating to the last quarter of the eighteenth century and made in the lower Chesapeake, this glazed cupboard (1966-412) or beaufait is equipped with storage, display, and security. Because all doors and drawers are fitted with locks, objects can be put in it for safekeeping and storage. The glazed doors on the top half of this case piece allow the display of ceramics and metals. The cupboard is also fitted with a slide below the drawers, which, when pulled out, provides space to set objects being removed from the cupboard or being returned to it. This item would have been found only in the homes of families that were upper middling or above. Cost: £5 to £6.



This corner cupboard or beaufait (1930-123) dates to the mid-eighteenth century and was probably made south of the James River. Its open top, framed by a late-baroque molding, allows for the display of household items while the bottom offers hidden storage behind the raised-panel door. However, the cupboard provides security in neither the top (which has no door) nor the bottom (which has no lock). It is the type of case piece that middling families would have used to display their tableware. Cost: £1.



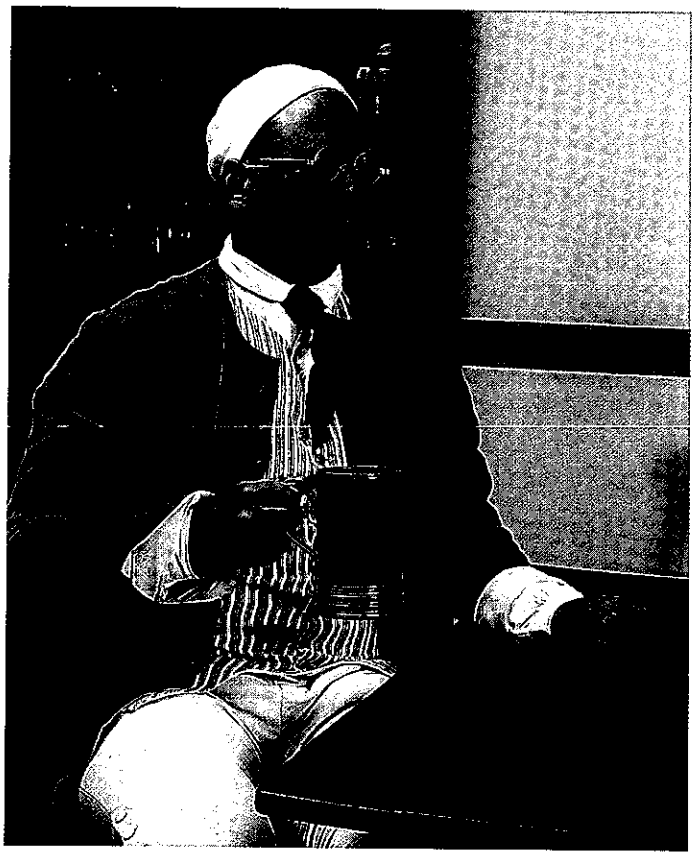
As a storage piece, this type of cupboard (1990-249) was probably available to even the poorest families, or at least to those with any woodworkers. Constructed of oak, it possibly was made in Amherst County sometime between 1760 and 1840. Cost: £0.4.0.

Drinking Vessels

While rum is a common element in all four of these illustrations, this elegant gentleman tops the societal pyramid. His silk suit, fine linen shirt, and expensive ring proclaim his status, as does the interior of this fashionably appointed dining room. Behind him is an up-to-date sideboard table as well as stylish, neo-classical wallpaper. From an air-twist-stem glass, he drinks rum punch mixed in the bowl on the sideboard.

This gentleman is not quite so well-to-do. Although he wears a wig, his clothes, while presentable, are not made of such expensive materials and are not quite as well tailored. His room is less fashionable, and his rum punch is served in a simpler glass.

Drinking Vessels

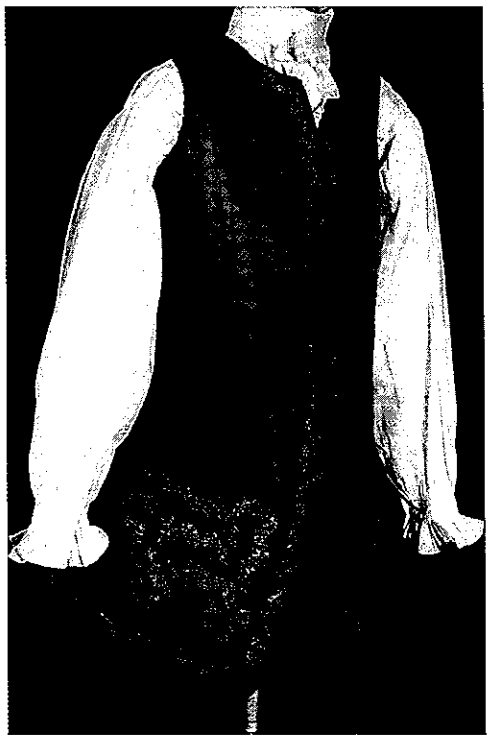


Here, a tradesman sits in the Middle Room (public dining room) at Wetherburn's Tavern. Attired in his work clothes, he enjoys a draught of rum from a brownware mug. Given his clothing, his cap, and his mug, there can be no question that he belongs to the middling or lower classes.

This African American drinks his rum out of doors beside the Wetherburn's Tavern well house. Having drawn the water from the well, he mixed his rum, sugar, and well water in a gourd that he had grown, dried, and cut into a dipper or cup. His clothing, his drinking vessel, and the setting all mark his station in colonial life.

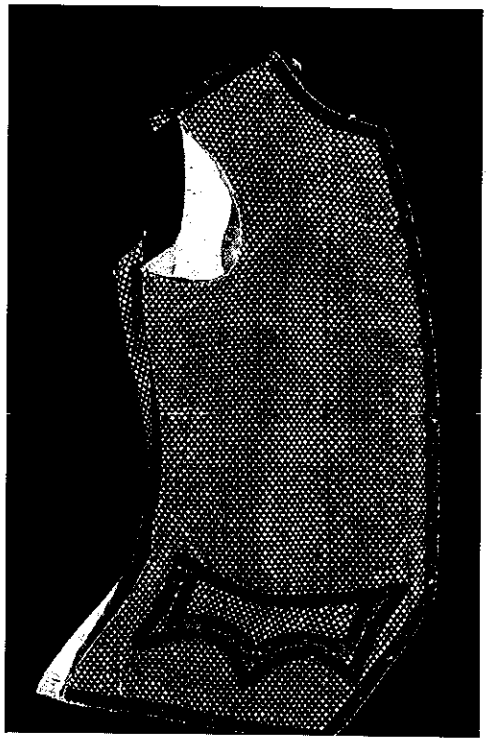
Waistcoats

This sleeved, collarless waistcoat (G1991-476) is English and dates to about 1740. It is made of cream-colored silk satin and heavily encrusted with a bold, baroque scrolling design of silver-gilt needlework down the front edges, around the pocket flaps, at the front hem, and around the edges of the sleeves. In addition, it has twenty-two thread-covered metal buttons down the front and fifteen functional buttonholes. Only those at the very top of colonial society could afford this type of waistcoat with its back of plain satin and a black silk wig bag tacked to the center back lining. Even the richest man reserved garments of this caliber for very special occasions. Cost: £50 to £70.

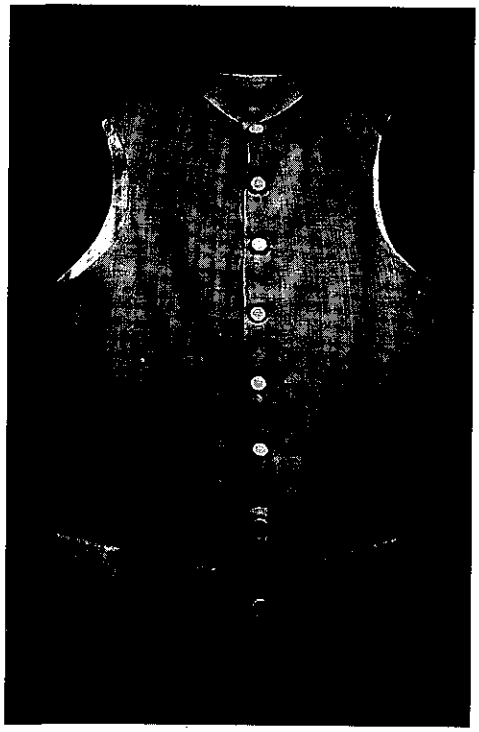


Slightly less elaborate, this sleeveless and collarless waistcoat (1960-708) is also English and dates to approximately 1745–65. Constructed of bright yellow silk satin, it is trimmed down the fronts, along the hems, and around the pocket flaps with 1 ½-inch wide silver tinsel woven tape or galloon. There are seven buttons and eleven metallic welt buttonholes. The back is made of yellow tabby worsted. While not quite as lavish as the sleeved waistcoat above, ownership of this type of waistcoat was certainly restricted to the upper classes. Cost: £4 to £10.

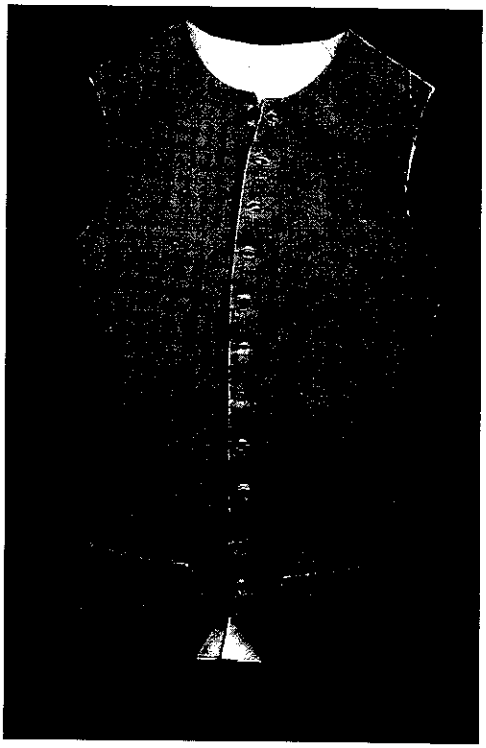
Waistcoats



More sober, but still fashionable, this collarless waistcoat (G1989-429) is English, circa 1760. The fabric is silk voided velvet with a cream background and green velvet in an overall lattice pattern with black dots where the green lines intersect. Metallic silver tape outlines the front edges and the scalloped pocket openings. The front closes with thirteen buttons, each covered with a cross of metallic thread. In the center of each button are five sequins, encircled by eight more. The buttonholes are finished with light cream, dark cream, and dark black or brown threads. The back of the waistcoat is orange wool with a center back seam opening with a two-inch vent. While still an expensive example, it is considerably less elaborate than the two waistcoats above. Members of the middling sort could afford this kind of garment, while it was also suitable for gentry wear. Cost: £1.5.0 to £3.0.0.

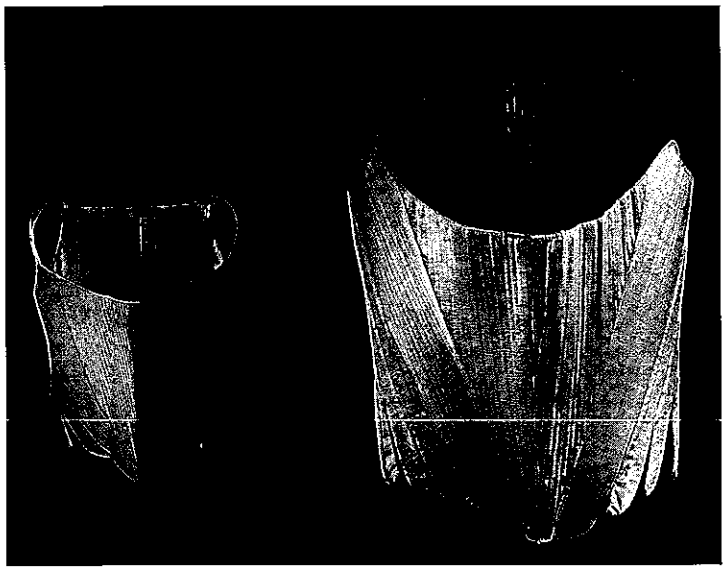


Made of brown wool twill, this waistcoat (1952-113) has a small standing collar, eight buttonholes (the buttons are replacements), and a cotton back. It is American and dates to roughly 1800. With its plain materials and simple construction, it is a type that individuals ranging from middling to lower class wore everyday. Cost: £0.18.0 to £0.20.0.



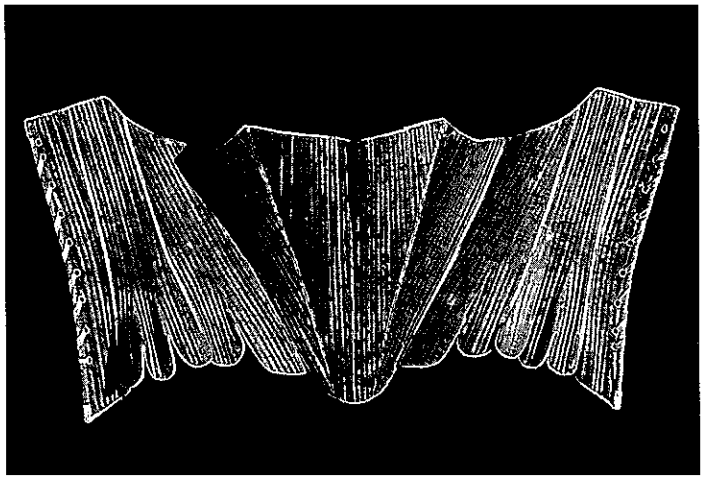
This coarse linen waistcoat is an unnumbered reproduction made by the Costume Design Center. It has relatively inexpensive pewter buttons and is a generic design appropriate to the late colonial period. Both slaves and poor whites wore waistcoats of this type. Cost: £0.8.0 to £0.18.0.

Stays



This pair of child's stays (1994-27, on the left) is made of cream-colored silk (ribbed tabby) and lined with a thin cream-colored silk tabby. Finely stitched and boned with back-lacing eyelets and narrow shoulder straps, these stays were made in England circa 1775. Only the wealthiest individuals could afford their intricate construction and costly materials. Cost: £5.

Made for an adult between 1770 and 1785, these boned stays (1960-729) are English. While finely sewn and of ivory silk satin trimmed with white silk grosgrain ribbon, this pair does not exhibit the costliness of material and detail as those above. However, they are of a type that would have been worn by well-to-do women. Cost: £1.12.0 to £1.16.0.



This pair of stays (1966-188) dates to 1740–1760 and could be either English or American. They are boned and made of lavender calamanco (faded to pink), lined with natural linen, and trimmed with white kid leather. They were suitable for a woman from middling to upper-middling social rank. Cost: £0.10.0 to £0.16.0.

Dating to the 1770s, these English stays (1993-329) are the kind worn by females of the lower classes. Made of heavy brown leather with punched holes in rows at the back and front, they were laced with leather thongs. There is no attempt at elegance or gentility with this object, merely utility and durability. Cost: £0.2.2 to £0.4.0.

K. Consumption and Non-consumption as a Political Statement

The introductory essay includes many details about consumer activity surrounding the Stamp Act, Townshend Duties, and the coming of the Revolution. See pp. A-11–13.

Abstaining from tea, because of its tax contribution to British coffers, became the rallying cry of Patriots. Some suggested

> If the Gentlemen and Ladies of the first Rank will use their Influence and Example to abolish this pernicious Custom of drinking Asiatick Teas, and introduce and persevere in using our own, they will have the Self-pleasing Satisfaction of having emancipated their Country from the basest Slavery and Tyranny of Custom, and erecting a Monument to Common Sense, which will merit the Praise of unborn Generations.
>
> PHILO-ALETHEIAS

After his appeal to social emulation, above, "Philo-Aletheias" went on at some length, including a long list of homegrown herbal substitutes for Indian and Chinese teas. Such homegrown brews as "clover with a little camomile," sage, mint, and sassafras also had medicinal benefits, curing whooping cough and other ailments.[1]

Yorktown Tea Party

The Inhabitants of York after having been informed that the Virginia, commanded by Howard Esten, had on Board two Half Chests of Tea, shipped by John Norton, Esq; and Sons, Merchants in London, by Order of Mess[rs]. Prentis and Company, Merchants in Williamsburg, assembled at 10 o'Clock this Morning, and went on Board the said Ship, where they waited some Time for the Determination of the Meeting of several members of the House of Burgesses in Williamsburg, who had taken this Matter under Consideration. A Messenger was then sent on Shore, to inquire for a Letter from the Meeting; but returning without one, they immediately hoisted the Tea out of the Hold and threw it into the river, and then returned to the Shore without doing Damage to the Ship or any other Part of her Cargo

November 7, 1774

Note: that this Evening, the Congress having, by their Advertizement published in the Philadelphia Packet that the drinking tea not imported since the Association, could be now indulged, we began again to drink it this afternoon, and if it was of an inebriating nature, the Company would have got drunk with it, for there were ten people in the Company, and not one of them could be satisfied with but two dishes. I would have gone so far as to have refused it forever in order to punish that rascally company, the East India Company, who became mere Panderers to the Ministers who have been so ill disposed to the freedom of America.

Landon Carter's diary,
April 28, 1776

Brutus Galvanizes the People

By the 1770s the gentry used both oratory and newspapers to promote their political agenda among their "inferiors." Here "Brutus" offers his opinion of the 1774 Association and notes that this article "is adapted to the understandings, and intended for the information of, the middling and lower sorts of people."[2]

Perhaps some of you may now tell me it is a dispute with which you have nothing to do, as you do not make use of that commodity [tea], and the duty cannot affect you. But you will go farther perhaps, and tell me, that the high-minded gentlemen are the occasion of the present confusion, and are bringing you in to difficulties to support their extravagance. . . . Can you suppose the gentlemen of all America would be so mad as to risk their lives and fortunes merely to save the trifling duty of three pence per pound of tea . . . ? Deceive not yourselves then, nor let others deceive you; listen to no doctrines which may tend to divide us; but let us go hand in hand, as brothers, as fellow sufferers in the same cause, firmly united to defend our rights and liberty.

"Brutus," *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie),
July 14, 1775

What, then, is the American, this new man? . . . He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater.

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur,
Letters from an American Farmer, 1782

1 *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), January 13, 1774.

2 "Brutus" assumes his (gentry) opinion carries weight with the lower ranks, whom he hopes are as easily swayed as the Mr. Morison whom Hamilton encountered. See Hamilton's description of Morison on p. C-1.

"Making Good in the New World"

This hand-colored line engraving, titled "A Design to represent the beginning and completion of an American Settlement or Farm" (1985-27), was published in London in 1768. It illustrates what some immigrants expected in the way of a successful life after their arrival in the American colonies. On the far left is a lumber mill with a log cabin to the right in the middle distance. The mill suggests one of the ways of making a living in America with the log cabin providing rude housing for the newly arrived. However, for those who worked hard and made good, the reward eventually was the imposing house seen in the right background. As Benjamin Franklin wrote in *A Proposal for Promoting Useful Knowledge among the British Plantations in America* (1743), "The first drudgery of settling new colonies, which confines the attention of people to mere necessaries, is now pretty well over; and there are many in every province in circumstances, that set them at ease, and afford leisure to cultivate the finer arts, and improve the common stock of knowledge."

"Where in the World?"

Despite the rallying cry of "English goods were ever the best," not everything in a colonial household came from the mother country. Certain items may have come through English ports, but they were grown or manufactured elsewhere. Let's examine how "English" a gentry dining room was in colonial Williamsburg.

Architecture

Paneling and Walnut Trim: Virginia

Paint: English pigment; linseed oil probably domestic

Window Glass: England

Marble Fireplace Surround (not shown): probably Italy

Furniture

Sideboard Table: Virginia (attributed to Edmund Dickinson); marble top probably Italy

Dining Tables: America

Armchairs and Side Chairs: Chesapeake

Looking Glass: England

Silver

Salt Cellars: London (David and Robert Hennell)

Salt Spoons: London (unidentified)

Punch Strainer: London (William Plummer)

Pair of Salvers: London (William Peaston)

Covered Cup: London (Benjamin Bentley and Robert Timbrell, possibly the "great silver cup" listed in Sir John Randolph's will)

Cruet Stand and Casters: London (Samuel Wood)

Candlesticks: London (William Cafe)

Silver Flatware: London

Glass, Ceramics, and Linen

Tablecloth and Napkins: Britain (Irish linen appears in Randolph's inventory)

Ceramics on Table: China (porcelain from the *Nanking* cargo)

Glassware: London

Food and Beverages

Wine: France

Lemons: West Indies or Mediterranean

Rum: West Indies

Sugar: West Indies

Spices for Punch: Such as nutmeg and cloves from the West Indies and cinnamon from Ceylon

Salt: Probably sea salt, imported

Oil: Mediterranean

Vinegar: Could be made at home or was available domestically or imported

Dry Mustard: Domestic, even homegrown

Black Pepper: Ceylon (cayenne pepper was homegrown, especially during the war)

Turtle Soup: Local (based on extensive turtle remains found on site); ingredients include cayenne pepper and other domestic herbs, cloves from West Indies, mace (the outer covering of West Indian nutmeg), and Madeira wine (from Portuguese islands off the coast of Morocco)

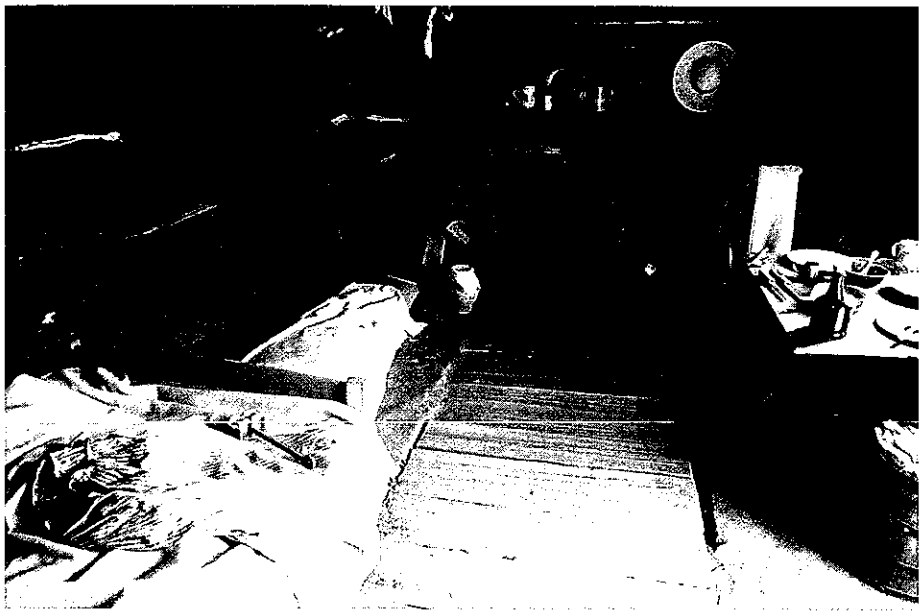
Scalloped Oysters: Local shellfish seasoned with blade of West Indian mace

Shoulder of Mutton stuffed with oysters and garnished with carrots: local

Pigeons: "Squabbing Homers," a breed from Europe, garnished with Virginia pears

Beef Pie: Locally grown meat and probably locally grown wheat for the flour in the piecrust, although some Italian grains were beginning to be imported late in the colonial period

Sweet Potatoes: West Indies as point of origin, although grown in the Chesapeake—perhaps even at home—during this period



A simple one-room house with a loft, the interior of the overseer's house at the Quarter at Carter's Grove is similar to the level of material comfort experienced by the majority of Virginians in the eighteenth century. Although this reconstructed dwelling illustrates the living conditions of a black overseer, many whites shared this level of surroundings: earthen floors, unplastered walls, and unglazed windows. While the furnishings may seem incredibly primitive, such rude interiors were the norm and a definite improvement over the living conditions of the poorest people. Incidentally, the reproduction bedstead is based on a reference to furnishings for a slave taken from the Joseph Ball Letterbook: "I would forthwith after [Aron Jameson's] arrival have one of the worst of my old Bed steads cut short & fit for his mattress, and have a cord and hide to it" (Joseph Ball, Stratford, England, to Joseph Chinn, Morattico, Richmond County, Virginia, "Letter Book, 1743–59," April 23, 1754, Library of Congress).

The "Distrest Poet," painted by William Hogarth, illustrates a garret room in London in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. It gives an idea of how one room functioned as the entire living space for a poor family. The woman does her mending in front of the fireplace, which both heats the room and helps dry the laundry. No doubt, all the cooking and tea preparation occurred there, as well. (Note the teapot and tea bowls on the mantelshelf.) The poet tries to write at a table in front of the leaded casement window. While the family is obviously a poor one (note the empty hanging cupboard next to the door), there are aspirations to gentility as indicated by the man's banyan (a fashionable garment of "undress"), wig, and sword. Birmingham [England] Museum and Art Gallery.

Painted by John Hesselius in 1761, Charles Calvert of Prince Georges County, Maryland, is shown at age six. The boy wears a pink satin suit and a plumed and trimmed hat. Kneeling at his side is his body servant in livery. The slave's suit, although elegantly and fashionably cut, is nonetheless a badge of servitude. Only the wealthiest of colonial families could have afforded the clothes depicted here, both for the son of the family and his personal attendant. This portrait is in the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art.

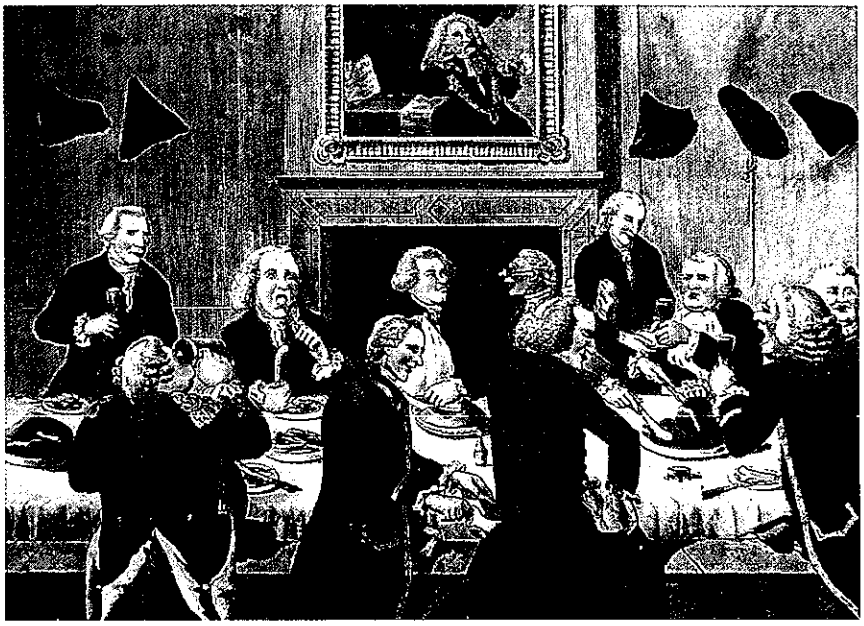
The work of John Collett, "High Life Below Stairs" (G1991-175A) satirizes the behavior of servants in their own quarters (below stairs) aping the fashionable behavior and posturing of their masters. Occupying center stage is a lady's maid who is having her hair done by a footman. She wears fashionable clothes, particularly the fine apron of cotton lawn over her skirt, red shoes, and a ribbon around her neck, but she sits beside a table with a torn and tattered cloth and rests her foot on a broken earthenware basin. The man dressing her hair wears a fashionable ring on his little finger, which contradicts the suit of livery that clearly identifies him as a servant. The woman standing at the table wears a plain striped scarf fastened around her shoulders with an artificial flower ornament. Perched on her nose is a pair of spectacles, available to a wider variety of customers (even servants) with the eighteenth-century growth of the precision optical trade in England. The couple on the left takes advantage of what the market has to offer in the way of leisure activities. Most conspicuous here is the English guitar, an extremely popular instrument for genteel ladies during this period. Collett's use of the instrument hints at the pretension to gentility that the availability of such goods could bring to the lower classes. The buckles on the man's shoes and breeches also point to relatively easy access to consumer items. Collett satirizes the musical couple by depicting the dog "singing" along with them. The dog stands on several pieces of music and a print, ironically titled "Solomon in all his Glory." The little girl's doll rests on a copy of *Pamela in High Life,* Samuel Richardson's popular novel. This little girl, looking up at the adults, puts a fancy feather in the simply dressed hair of her doll. Even though the primary purpose here is to mock those who aspire to genteel behavior and appearances, "High Life Below Stairs" provides visual documentation of the ways the consumer revolution gave people lower down the social and economic scales access to material goods.

"A Master Parson with a Good Living." This hand-colored line engraving (English, circa 1760) from the British Museum shows the interior of a well-appointed dining room in the dwelling of a Church of England clergyman. The room is outfitted with wallpaper, a window curtain, a portrait, a carpet, a wall sconce, and other genteel furnishings. The fashionable scene shows the family gathered around the linen-covered table for a dinner prepared according to the latest cookery book. Note the boned rabbit in the center, silver salts, soup tureen, and individual flatware. A liveried footman serves wine to the diners.

"A Journeyman Parson with a Bare Existence." A companion piece to the print above, this colored mezzotint (English, circa 1760; 1971-476) reveals a grimmer side of life for clergymen who occupied a poorer "living," as clerical posts were known. This parson and his family are aware of the fashionable accoutrements required to demonstrate gentility, for example, the tablecloth, the window curtain, and the books. Also they are relatively well dressed. Unfortunately, they live in an old-fashioned cottage (note the leaded, casement windows), suffering from minimal maintenance.

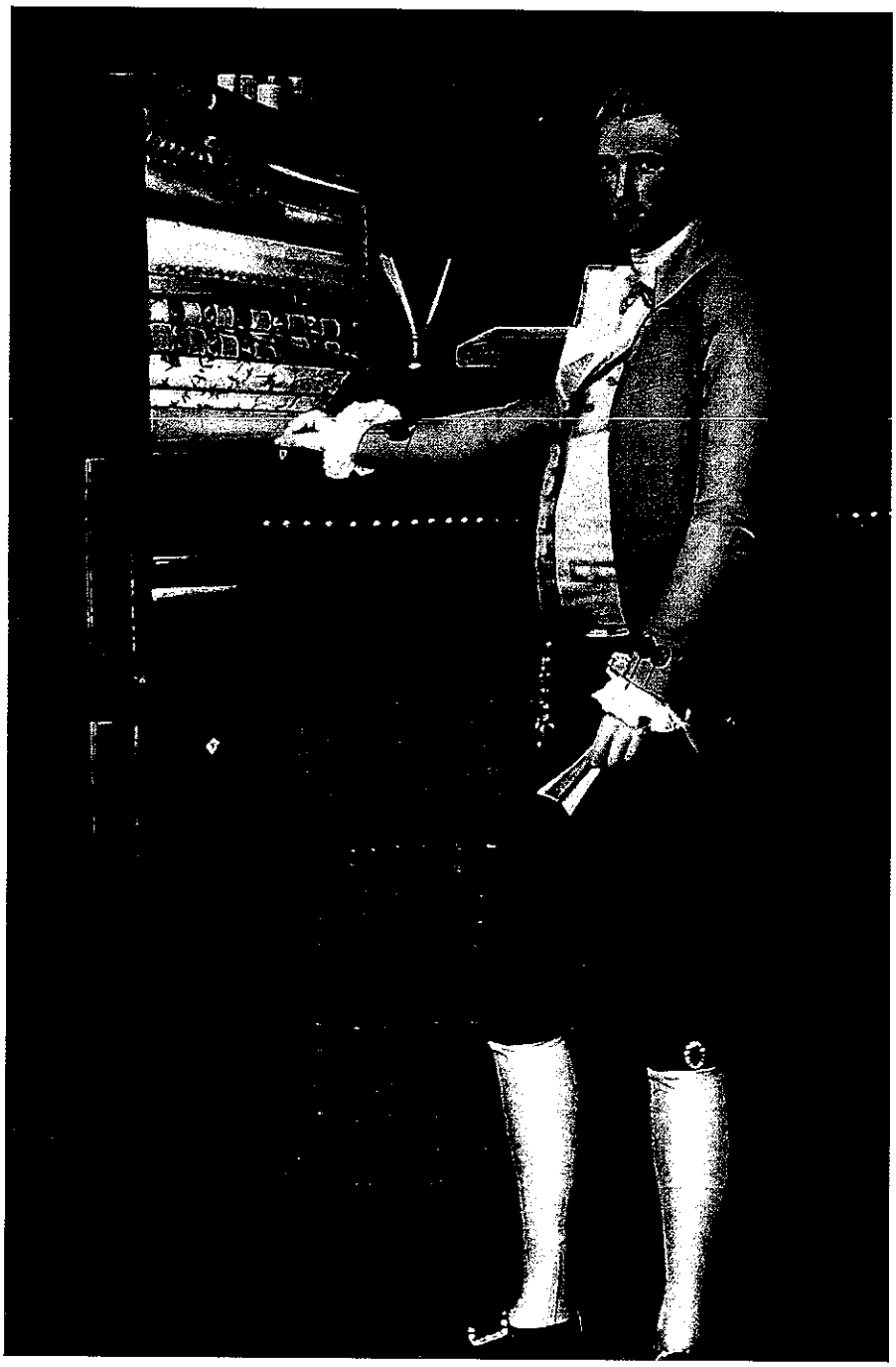
This painting of Frances (née Tasker) Carter (1956-237) of Maryland is the work of itinerant artist John Wollaston, Jr., and dates to the 1750s, possibly around the time of her marriage in 1754. It is the companion or pendant portrait to that of her husband below. Mrs. Carter wears a shimmering white gown decorated with pearls and lace, which complements her husband's fancy dress. While it is the portrait of an undoubtedly refined young lady, as a work of art it does not exhibit the urban sophistication and polish of her husband's. Mrs. Carter was painted about a decade before the family moved to Williamsburg.

Attributed to fashionable English painter Thomas Hudson (although it is more likely the work of someone in Hudson's circle), this portrait of Robert Carter III of Nomini Hall was executed about 1750 when Carter was in England. He is shown in a mid-seventeenth-century-style suit, fashionable dress for a masquerade ball in the 1750s. Being painted by an English artist in this pose asserts Carter's access to money, education, and the upper levels of society. The portrait is in the collection of the Virginia Historical Society.



A satiric print published in 1784, this hand-colored line engraving called "Tasting" (1964-472, 4) is one of a series of four on the senses. It shows a group of gentlemen partaking of a private dinner in a London club. (Note the hats hanging on the wall.) One diner is shown pocketing a tidbit for later, while his companion on the left sees to it that the nuncheon gets the proper sauce. Despite the broad humor displayed in the foreground, the print is valuable for the display of different foods as well as the custom of serving individual drinks at the table, whether wine or beer.

Dated January 7, 1758, and titled "Morning" (1962-288), this print gives a good illustration of a genteel tea service. While there is no cloth on the table, the young lady (in fashionable dishabille) holds a teacup and saucer in her right hand while the left rests on a napkin. Another cup and saucer are on the tray along with a teapot, sugar dish, sugar tongs, milk jug, and slop bowl.

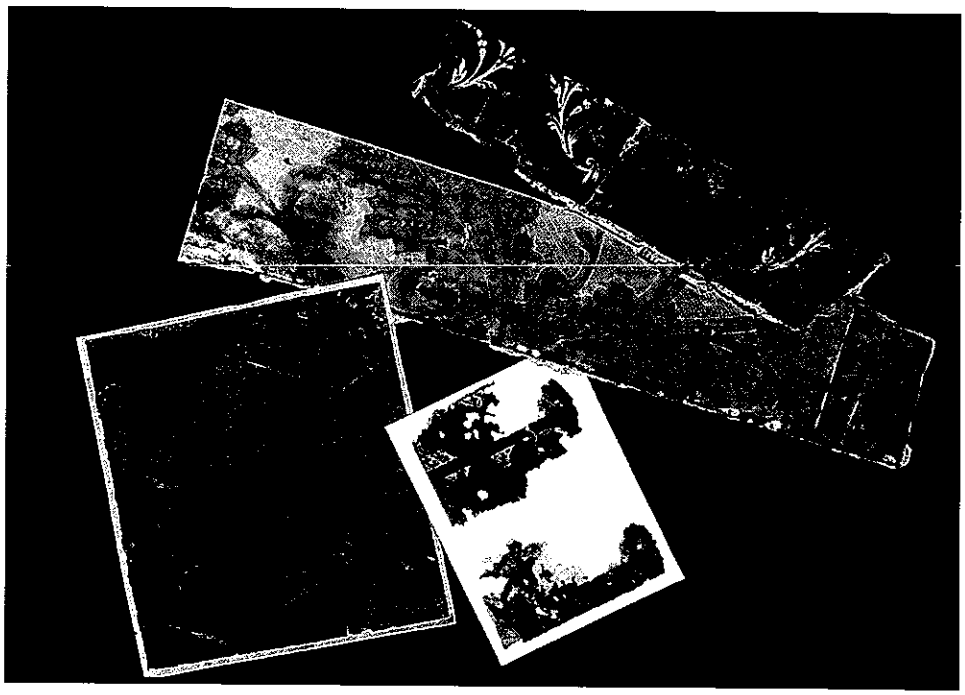


This portrait of Elijah Boardman, painted by Ralph Earl in 1789, shows a successful merchant in his counting room while his shop can be seen through the open door. Boardman is fashionably and elegantly dressed, as if to show off the sartorial fruits of his labors. He is also advertising, in effect, the fabrics offered for sale in his store. From New Milford, Connecticut, Boardman became active in state and national politics and served in the state legislature and as a U. S. Senator from 1821 until his death two years later. The portrait is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

"Lord Willoughby de Broke and His Family" by Johann Zoffany, English, circa 1770. This conversation piece, as a painting of this type is known, shows an aristocratic family at tea in a very comfortable interior. The teawares are arranged on a tray placed on a cloth-covered, tripod table that has been brought out into the middle of the room. The wife, in her elaborate gown, sits on an expensively upholstered chair. The floor is covered with a Turkey carpet. A coal fire burns in the grate. There is a painted landscape above the mantel. The window is covered with a drapery-style curtain that has been let down, probably to prevent drafts. The scene conveys a sense of the family's material wealth as well as the affectionate and companionable nature of their relationship. Private collection.

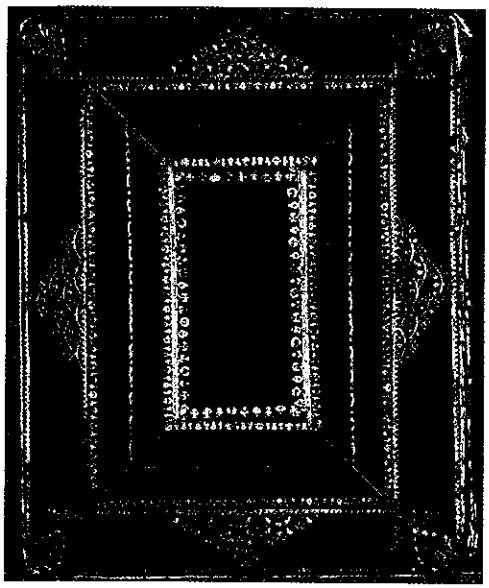
Henry Bunbury painted this tavern interior, "The Country Club," in the 1780s. A man stands before a sideboard table preparing punch. He is in the process of squeezing fresh lemon juice into the bowl that has a ladle already in place. Note the glasses to the right of the bowl. Private collection.

These four fragments are the only surviving examples of early wallpaper found in Williamsburg. The top two come from the Thomas Everard House: the yellow (1951-351) from the dining room and the blue (1951-352) in the first-floor chamber. Both papers are of English manufacture and date to roughly 1770–90. Paint analysis revealed trim colors in shades of stone and ochre in the two rooms and the back parlor. For this reason, curators and architectural historians decided to paper the back parlor as well, although no direct physical evidence was found. The reproduction paper copies a document paper from St. Mary's Manor in Maryland.



The red fragment (X1976-88) was found on the second floor of the Robert Carter House in the southeast room and raises an intriguing question about Carter's 1762 wallpaper order in which he specifies a crimson paper for a parlor. (See his order quoted under the heading "Furnishing a Multiroom Home," in the "Architecture and Furnishings" section.) Did he change his mind when the paper arrived or did he see the best bedchamber serving also as an informal sitting room in which Mrs. Carter might receive family or close friends?

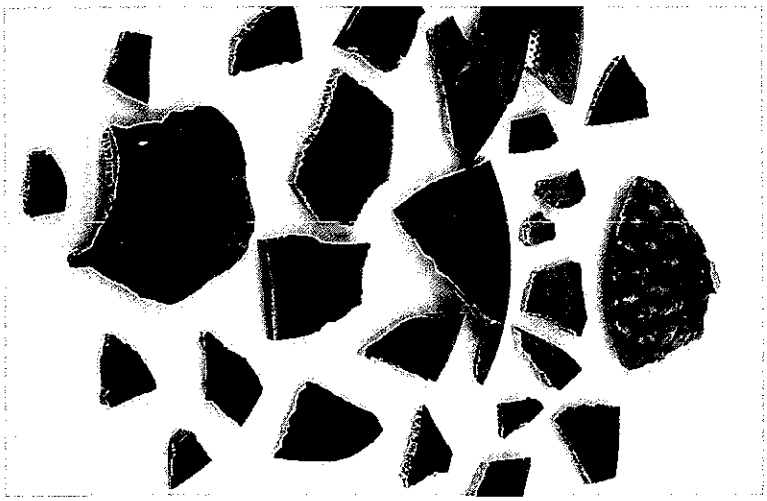
The largest fragment (1938-223, A) was taken from the wall of a cupboard in the Nicolson Store in 1938. A French paper dating from 1780–1820, its design features a light brown trellis woven in diagonal patterns around which wind green vines and leaves with clusters of grapes. This paper is thought to be the same design that Jefferson ordered in 1790 for use in a downstairs bedchamber at Monticello.



Published in Oxford in 1769 by T. Wright and W. Gill, this Book of Common Prayer (1991-1756) belonged to Williamsburg midwife Catharine Blaikley. The book is simultaneously an expression of piety and a display of some opulence with its red leather binding and gold tooling. Inside the front cover is Catharine Blaikley's bookplate with the date 1770.

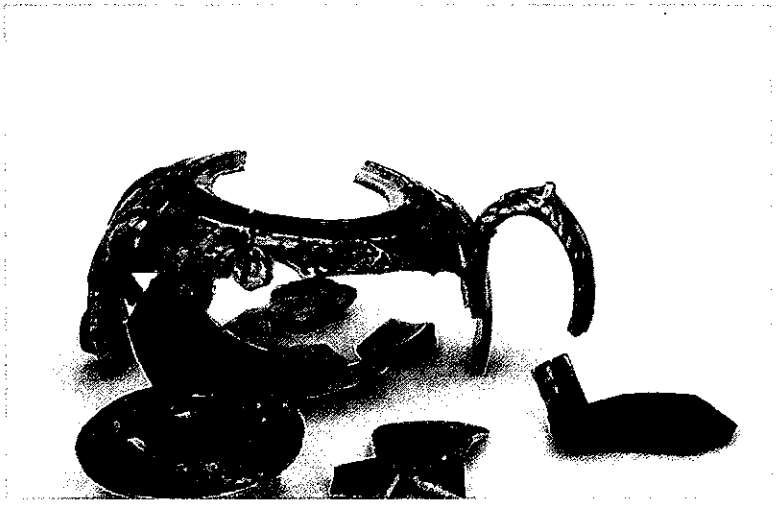
Geddy Teawares

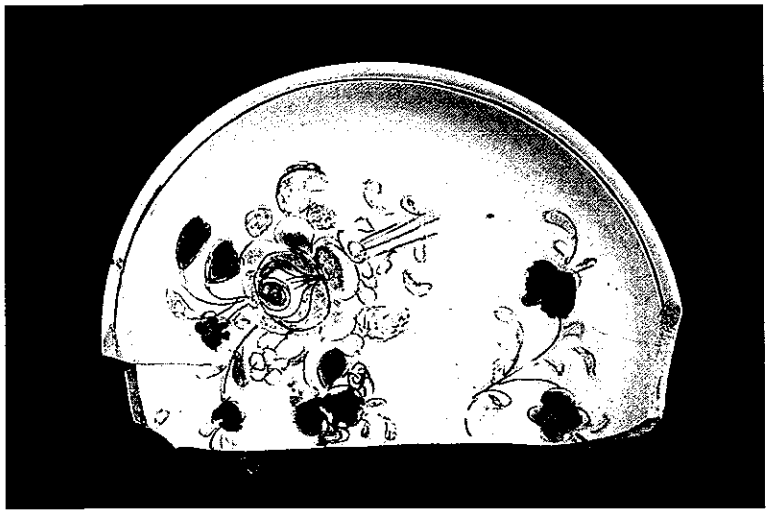
Archaeological evidence from the Geddy site certainly suggests how quickly styles changed. Several different types of teawares, found during different excavations conducted at the site, are illustrated below. Objects from Colonial Williamsburg's archaeological collections are compared with complete objects from the curatorial collections.



01637-19BB and 01639-19BB: Produced during the third quarter of the eighteenth century, these examples of refined earthenware are wheel thrown and known as green glazed wares. These particular patterns depict melon and pineapple motifs. The surfaces are molded and glazed.

01665-19BB: This teapot is another type of refined earthenware known specifically as tortoiseshell ware. However, it has a molded exterior surface of fruit and foliage accompanied by a background pattern of circles and dots. Green and brown dominate its color scheme. This particular type of teapot is extremely rare. Its survival in the ground is the only evidence that such an example was ever in Williamsburg.

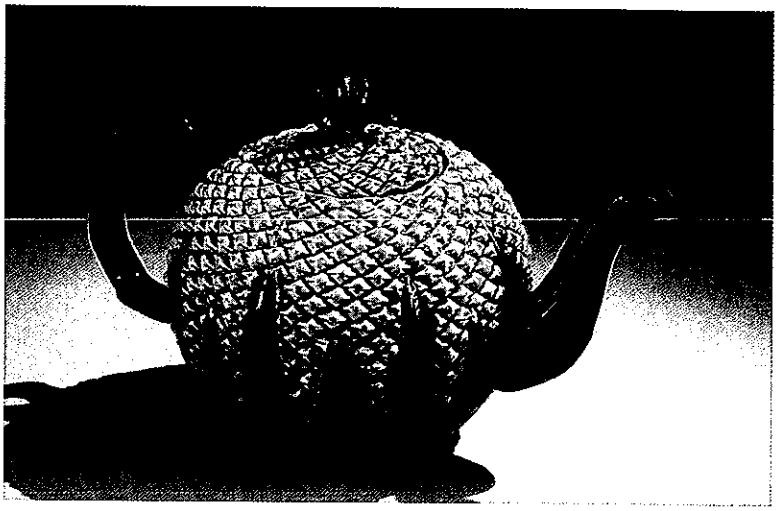




While the body of this example (01193-19BB) is white salt-glazed stoneware, the saucer has been decorated with a floral design that makes it more fashionable.

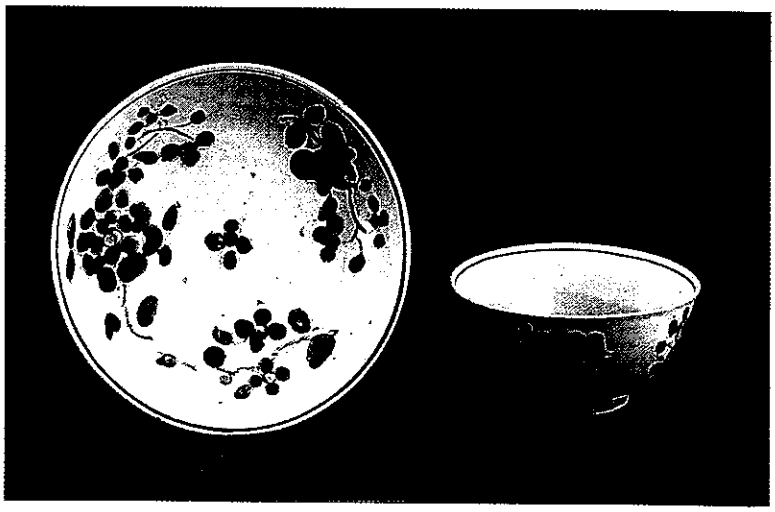
Geddy Teawares

An examination of different types of teawares demonstrates how quickly styles changed within a very short period of time. Teawares reflected style changes more quickly than did dinnerware, probably because of cost. A full set of dinnerware was more expensive than a set of teaware. A middling family could demonstrate its awareness of changing fashion with a relatively small outlay of money.



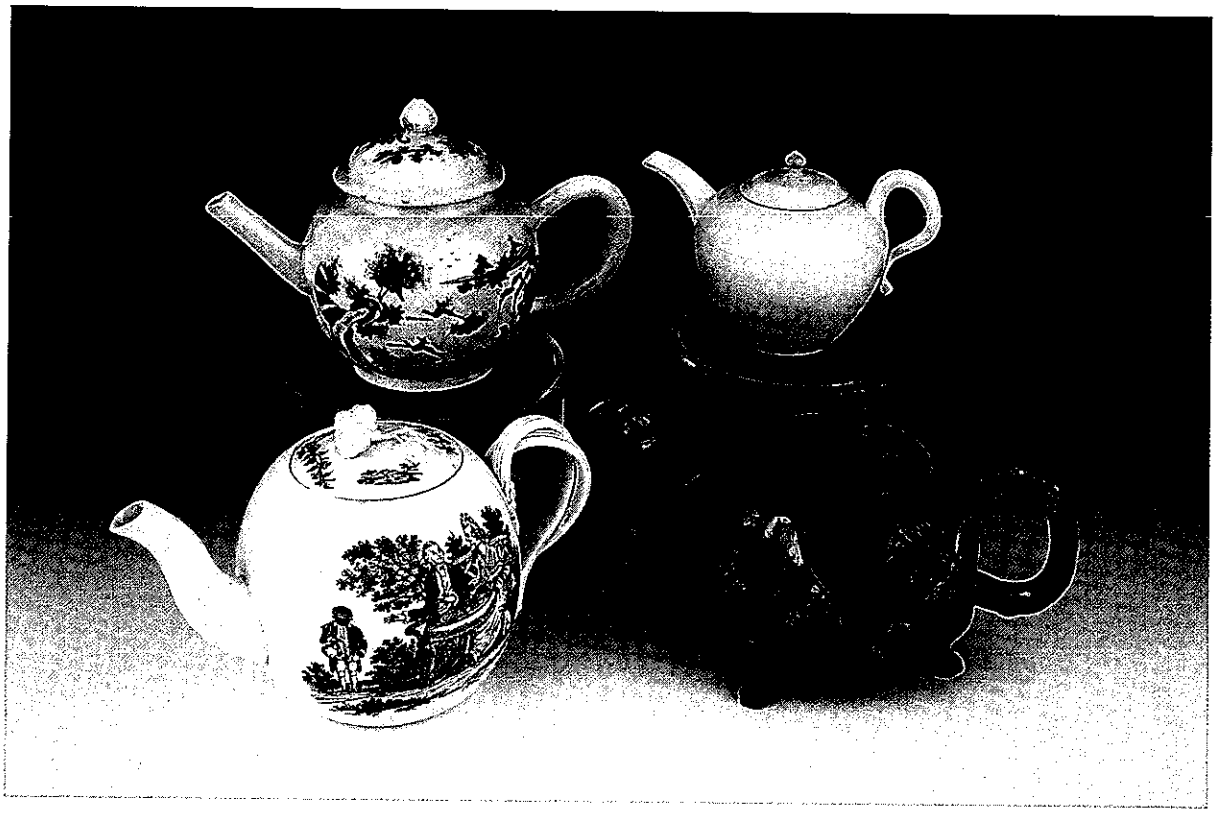
While not an exact copy of the Geddy example, this Staffordshire teapot (1996-101, A&B) is closely related. It has a press-molded body and gold and green glazes. It dates to roughly 1760–70.

Although of a slightly different shape than the Williamsburg example, this teapot of circa 1765 (1956-378, A&B) displays a similar tortoiseshell glaze of splashed green, manganese brown, and gray on a cream-colored ground.



This English salt-glazed stoneware teabowl and saucer (1972-212, A), dates to circa 1750 and has polychrome decoration of blue, green, yellow, and red flowers and leaves.

Teapots



These teapots show a range of styles popular in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Fashions in ceramic tea equipage changed more frequently, and families often had more than one set (as evidence at the Geddy site indicates).

The white salt-glazed example (1953-188, A&B) dates to mid-century and was made in England. It is a plain, standard type that was safe in terms of fashion (there are no molded and applied forms or patterns to go out of style) and could be mixed with other designs.

The pot (1960-428, A&B), in the lower right corner, was made in Staffordshire, England, about 1760. It has a tortoiseshell glaze of mottled manganese and sprigging of leaves and grape clusters attached to a pattern of vines. It sits on three lion-paw feet.

In the lower left-hand corner is a creamware teapot (G1990-205, A&B) with a transfer-printed design known as "the tea party" scene. This example also was made in Staffordshire, circa 1780.

The remaining teapot (1967-520, A&B), a hard-paste porcelain, was made in China during the second half of the eighteenth century. Unlike the three preceding examples, Chinese porcelain teapots remained in style and were desirable symbols of fashionable gentility throughout the century. They could be used with matching cups, saucers, sugar bowls, etc., or mixed with other types of teawares.

Plates

Woodenwares, known as treen, were still in use during the late colonial period, primarily by the poor and certainly not by the fashionable. The plate on the right (1930-314) is an example of such wares.

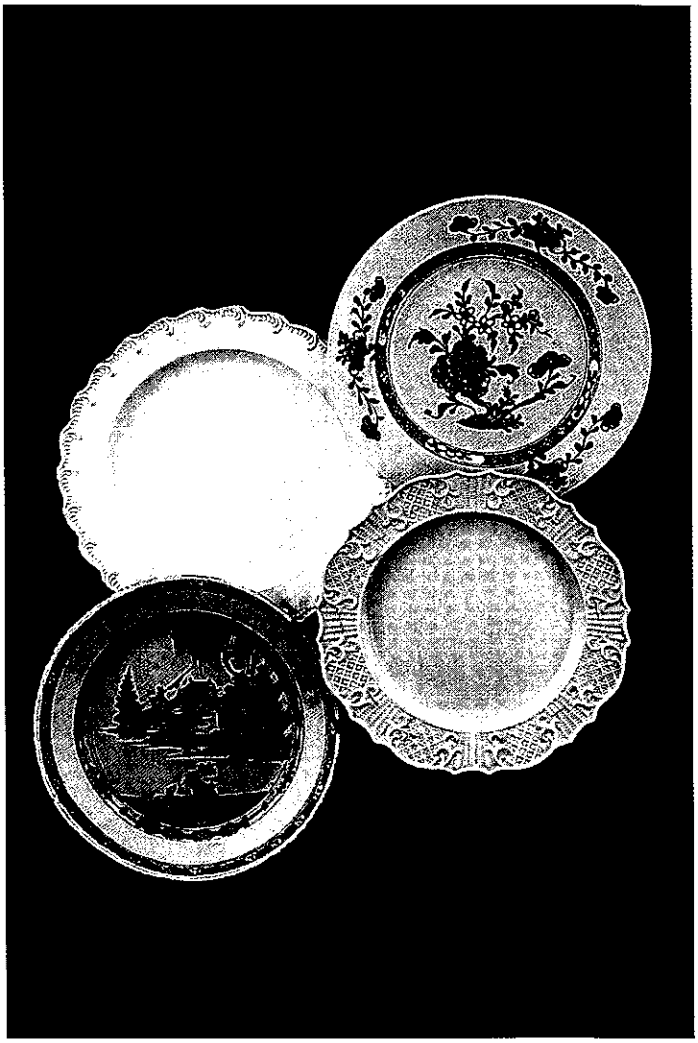
The pewter plate (1959-12, 6) is one of a set of twelve made by Jonas Durand II of London during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. While pewter remained in demand throughout the period (George Wythe ordered "three dozen plates of hard metal" in 1768), it generally was not used for genteel dining.

The plate (1987-535, 1) in the upper right-hand corner is a piece from the *Nanking* cargo and dates to roughly 1751. It is made of Chinese hard-paste porcelain, which remained fashionable throughout the eighteenth century. The only type of ceramic more costly and more stylish than Chinese porcelain was English porcelain.

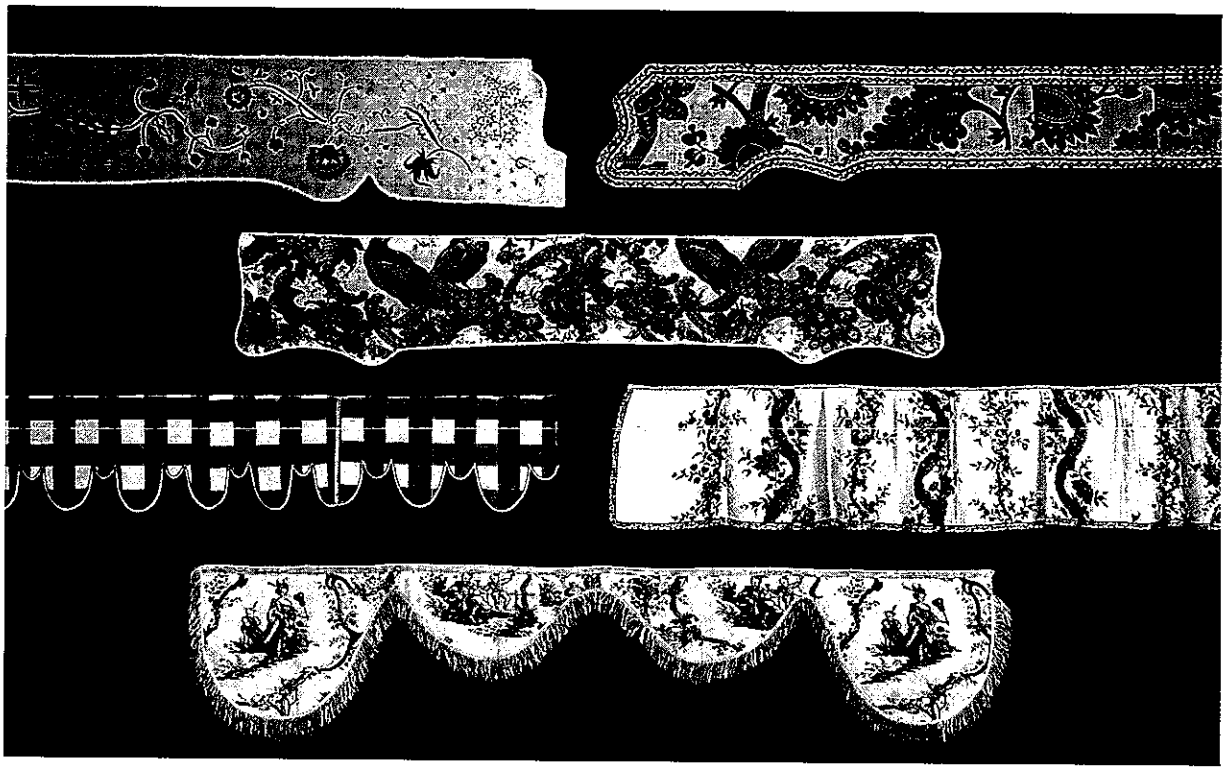
In the lower left-hand corner is a plate made of tin-glazed earthenware, otherwise known as delft. Made in London in 1775, it is part of a twenty-two-piece dinner set. The design reflects the continuing fashionableness of oriental-style ceramics, even those of English manufacture. Earthenware, however, was less costly than porcelain.

The plate (1976-110, 13) in the lower right-hand corner is made of white salt-glazed stoneware from Staffordshire, circa 1760. Dinner services represented a more expensive entertaining investment, and relatively plain whitewares, whether stoneware or creamware, remained in fashion longer than style-bearing teawares.

Creamware, a type of white, lead-glazed earthenware, entered the market in the late eighteenth century. The plate (G1974-48, 1) in the upper left-hand corner is one of twelve and dates to approximately 1800.



Bed Valances



The shape, decoration, and type of textile used in the upper valances of high-post beds changed as fashions changed. This grouping of six valances covers the period from 1740 to 1800.

Top row, left: This unlined valance is made of linen (warp) and cotton (weft) and embroidered with wool (crewels). It is American and dates between 1740 and 1780. Embroidered in multicolored crewels, it displays a variety of stitches that include chain, satin, stem, herringbone, French knot, buttonhole, long and short, and outline.

Top row, right: The valance is cotton and resist-printed in blue with large leaves, sunflowers, and undulating stems. Shaped and bound in resist-dyed tape, the valance dates to 1740–60 and could have been made in either America or England.

Second row: This cotton valance dates to circa 1765. The cotton textile, manufactured in Middlesex, England, features a red copperplate print with rococo patterns of different fowl.

Third row, left: This cotton valance (1960-894, 16) dates to the second half of the eighteenth century and could be from England, France, America, or India. Its red-and-white check is done in a tabby weave. A narrow tape woven in a pattern of red, white, and blue cotton binds the scalloped edge.

Third row, right: Another printed copperplate on cotton, the valance (1964-35, 4) is decorated in stripes of undulating floral ribbon interspersed with blossoms, C-scroll chains, and flowering vines. It is printed in blue with contemporary block-printed tape and dates from 1770–80.

Bottom row: The valance (1960-174) is made from linen and cotton done in a tabby weave, circa 1765. This copperplate depicts oriental figures printed in red. The valance has a silk fringe and is faced in linen.

Gowns

The earliest of the four gowns pictured here, this yellow silk example (1994-87) is English and dates to circa 1740. The wide hoops under the skirt indicate its relatively early date; so do the full sleeves. Within a few years, the extreme dimensions of these hoops went out of style for most occasions. However, for appearances at court (an event experienced by only the very rare colonial), this type of silhouette remained in favor throughout the century.

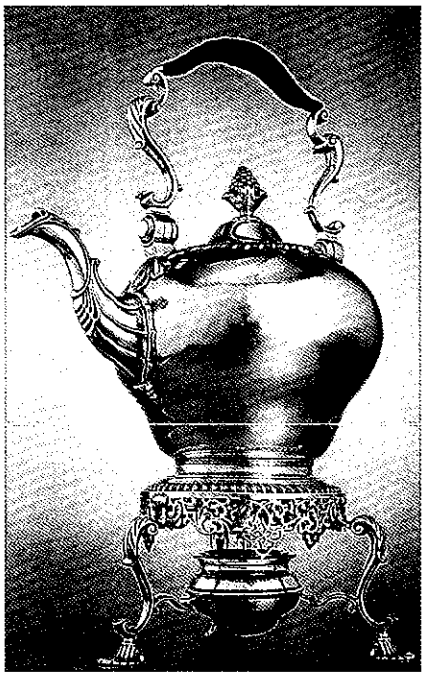
Slightly later in date (circa 1745–1750), this brocaded silk gown (1947-506) was made in England. The fabric, attributed to Spitalfields, bears a pattern of large, naturalistic sprays of roses, carnations, and others flowers with a cream weft-float, floral sub-pattern (a design dating from mid-century). The gown has a fitted bodice with a linen lining and a skirt with a much narrower silhouette. The center back, cut in one piece with the skirt, is stitched down in pleats that fall loose below the hips (referred to as an "English back"). Although this gown would be appropriate for important occasions, it would not serve for the most formal events, such as appearances at court.

Gowns

This English gown (1988-223) of brocaded worsted damask (from Norwich) dates between 1750 and 1765. Made as an open robe with a fitted bodice, the gown has a symmetrical floral pattern with bold sprigs of orange-red, magenta, green, and blue. Its skirt has a more modest width than the example above, and the gown could be worn for more occasions. It is a type that would have belonged to a middle-class woman or a lower-middling individual with aspirations of fashionability.

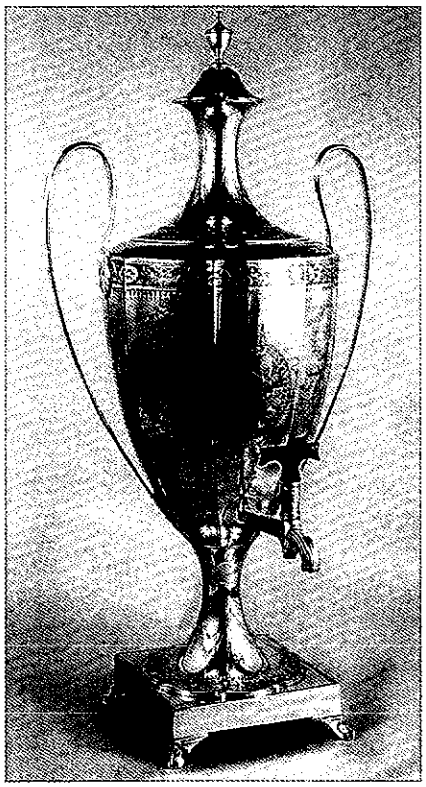
Made of block-printed cotton, this English gown dates to 1775–85. The textile design includes undulating and intertwining vines with thin floral trails with pencil blue and over-printed green. The gown has a polonaise skirt (which first made its appearance in the late 1760s), tighter sleeves without a cuff, and a deep, prominent neckline.

Hot Water Equipment



This silver teakettle with lamp (1967-643, a-c) has a date letter for 1751–1752. London silversmith Alexander Johnston made this stylish item. With its pierced and gadrooned decoration, woven cane cover for the handle, and elaborate base for the accompanying lamp, the kettle was the height of teatime fashion at mid-century.

This silver-plated rococo tea urn (1972-41) was probably made in Sheffield about 1765. Fewer than fifteen years later in date than the kettle above, it shows a revolution in form. Instead of a utilitarian kettle (albeit a silver one), this urn or tea kitchen makes it much easier for the hostess to prepare tea at the table because she had hot water at hand in a genteel and functional container. The heating element, a metal core heated separately and put in the body of the urn, kept the water hot.

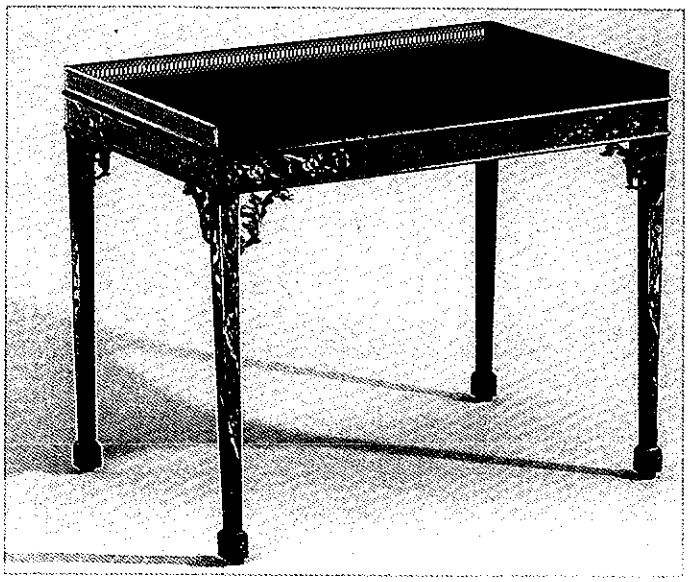


While the technology did not change by the 1780s, the ornamentation for a tea urn definitely had. This tea kitchen (1958-461), a restrained and refined example of neo-classicism, offers a marked contrast to the preceding example's exuberant rococo style.

Tea Tables

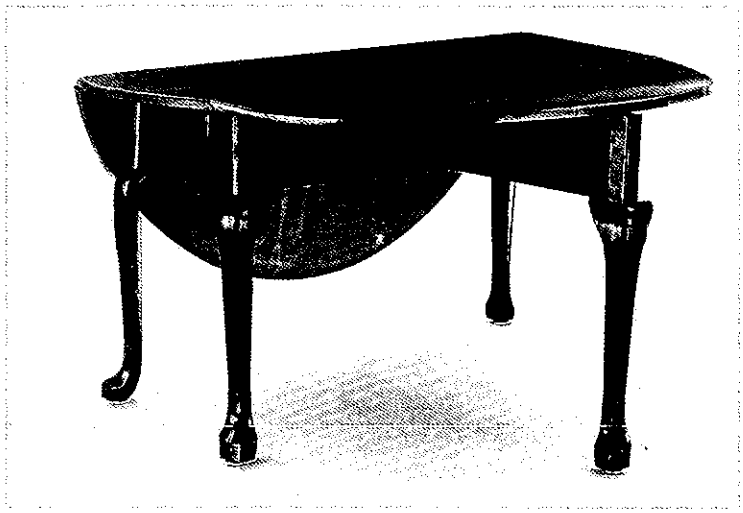
This rectangular tea table (1978-11) is a Williamsburg example that dates to 1735–45. Made of black walnut with oak and yellow pine as secondary woods, it exhibits the curved legs and pad feet of the late baroque style. This table descended in the Galt family until 1978 when Colonial Williamsburg acquired it.

Made entirely of black walnut, this round or pillar tea table dates to circa 1765 and was made in Norfolk. The top tilts up, allowing the table to be stored against the wall or in the corner of a room. Tables of this type first came into fashion in the 1740s, but did not become really popular until the late 1750s.



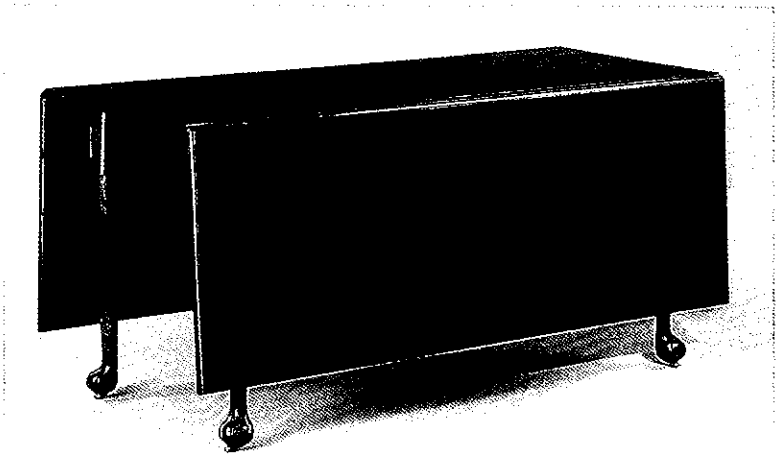
This table (1991-431) is a type known as a china table. In 1762, Thomas Chippendale described this variety as having a dual function; they could be used "for holding each a Set of China, and may be used as Tea-Tables." This example dates to approximately 1765–75. It is highly decorated, compared to the Galt table, and exhibits straight, tapered legs, block feet, and the extensive decoration that characterizes items associated with tea in the later colonial period. (See also "China Tables," an illustration from Chippendale's *Director,* in the main body of this manual in the section about tea.)

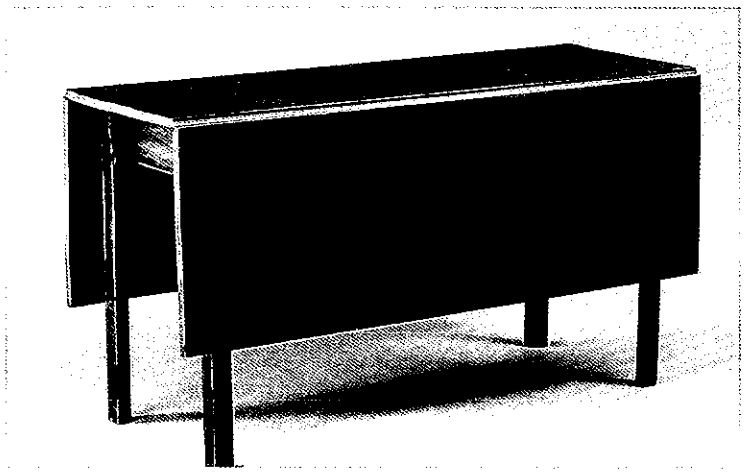
Dining Tables



This dining table (1930-24) dates to approximately 1730–60 and probably was made in Virginia. Constructed of walnut with secondary woods of oak and yellow pine, its curved legs, pad feet, and oval top all attest to the table's relatively early date.

This dining table (1986-233) was made in eastern Virginia around 1760. It has secondary woods of oak and yellow pine, and its primary wood is mahogany. Somewhat transitional in style, it has a rectangular top and ball-and-claw feet. The original casters are a rare survival.

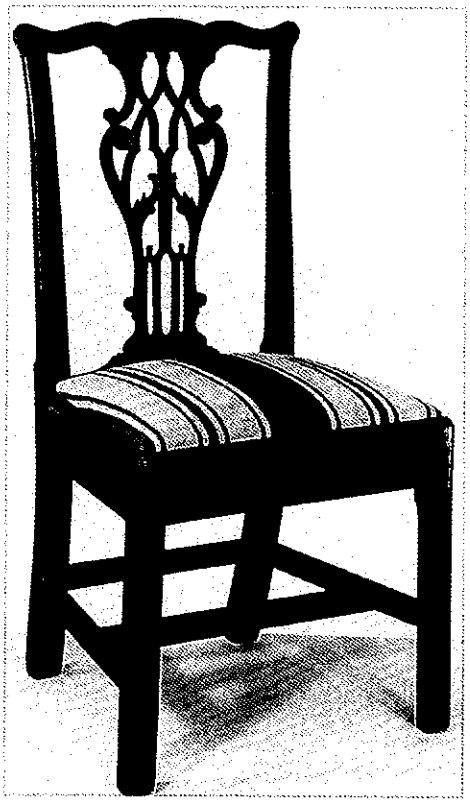




This dining table (1981-187), also made in eastern Virginia, dates to circa 1760–1770. Made of mahogany with yellow pine secondary wood, the table has a rectangular top and straight legs. In gentry and upper-middling inventories, tables of this type usually appear in pairs.

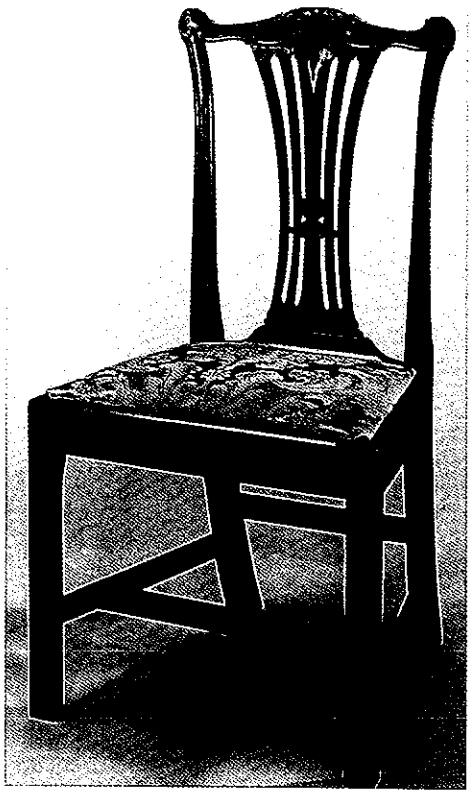
Dining Chairs

This Georgetown, Maryland (now Washington, D. C.) example (1992-131) dates to roughly 1755 and is made of walnut with yellow pine. Its mid-century date is apparent because of the solid splat, curved legs, and trifed foot.



This Fredericksburg, Virginia, chair (1930-23, 1) is made of walnut and dates to circa 1770. One of a set of six surviving chairs, its straight legs and pierced, rococo splat are evidence of a date slightly later than the preceding example.

This side chair (1965-184) is constructed of black cherry and has oak as its secondary wood. It was made about 1775, possibly by Williamsburg cabinetmaker Edmund Dickinson with carving by George Hamilton. With the exception of the splat and the crest rail, it is not substantially different from the preceding example. However, a closer examination of the crest rail reveals a carved anthemion, floral ornamentation in a flat, radiating cluster (also called honeysuckle ornament). This design element is one of the earliest examples of neo-classical decoration in Williamsburg seating furniture.



R. Inventories, Advertisements, Scheme for a Lottery, and Indian Trade Goods

These inventory examples illustrate economic ranges, life cycles, urban and rural contrasts, and individual preferences. First, however, it is essential to establish what inventories really tell us, why they were taken, and so on.

Estate inventories were part of the probate process for settling the estate of a decedent (the deceased owner). Usually inventories were appraisements; that is, the value of each item is listed, because the worth of the estate is the financial point of making the list in the first place. If the decedent left a will, the items specifically given to legatees are usually left off the inventory; sometimes, however, an item is listed and may even be given a value along with the notation that it had been designated to an individual in the will.

The three or four individuals who took the inventory were called the appraisers and had been appointed by the county court to do that particular job for that particular estate. They usually lived near the decedent, so that traveling to fulfill their duty was not a hardship. (On certain occasions, historians have speculated where in the community a decedent lived, based on the known residences of his/her appraisers.) Typically, too, one or more of the appraisers belonged to the same profession as the decedent—a wigmaker's goods were inventoried and/or appraised by another wigmaker, for example, presumably so that the designations and worth of these trade-specific items were accurate.

By law in colonial Virginia, inventories excluded real estate (land, houses, barns, and so forth). Fixed items were not included either. This means that architectural fittings like built-in cupboards and fireplace surrounds did not figure in estate inventories; neither did permanently attached sconces or chandeliers and other such furnishings. Outside inventories excluded fixed machinery (cider presses, grindstones, tanning vats, and similar equipment.)

Also, some but not all inventories excluded personal items like clothing, jewelry, and portraits. The widow was entitled to her clothing and special family items ("heirlooms," as we might call them today) as her paraphernalia. These items were not included in the inventory or appraisement or even mentioned in the will of the decedent. Often the clothing of the decedent and other family members was left out, as in the case of Peyton Randolph's inventory (below) which mentions none of the Speaker's wardrobe. (On the other hand, some shorter and less valuable inventories listed personal apparel and little else, seemingly because that was all that comprised the estate. See the inventories of Simon Williams and White Eyes, below.) Items belonging to and/or used by the decedent's slaves were nearly always omitted. Obviously, each slave had at the least some clothing, a pair of shoes, a blanket or some other kind of bedding. Rarely were such goods included in estate inventories.

Essential items with little apparent value seem also be purposefully left out. The best example is probably wooden spoons, without which no kitchen could function, but these items almost never show up in probate documents.

The prices listed in appraisements were the second-hand or resale value of the items, presumably what the goods could be expected to bring in at an estate sale or public auction.

Peyton Randolph's Inventory and Appraisement, 1776

Peyton Randolph's inventory and appraisement is dated January 5, 1776. Mr. Speaker and his lady obviously lived luxuriously, fashionably, and well in their house on Nicholson Street in Williamsburg. Betty Randolph undoubtedly kept most of these objects and slaves at the Randolph House during her widowhood. Source: York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83), 337–341.

INVENTORY AND APPRAISEMENT OF THE ESTATE OF PEYTON RANDOLPH ESQR. IN YORK COUNTY TAKEN JANR. THE 5TH. 1776

12 Mahogany Chairs £15. 2 Mahogany tables £8	£ 23. 0. 0
1 Card Table £2. 1 Marble Table £2	4. 0. 0
1 Side Board Table 20/ 1 Carpet 20/	2. 0. 0
4 looking Glasses £20 1 pr. End irons £2	22. 0. 0
5 China Bowls £5. 5 China Mugs 15/	5. 15. 0
8 doz: red and white China plates £6 22 Do. dishes £5	11. 0. 0
1 Blue and White China Tureen 20/ 11 Blue & White dishes £4	5. 0. 0
4 Blue & White China Sauce boats 10/ 2 Do. potting pots 15/	1. 5. 0
21 Custard Cups & Patty pans 10/ 6 Scollop Shells 15/	1. 5. 0
12 Egg Cups 6/ 13 Blue and white Coffee Cups & Saucers 10/	0. 16. 0
18 Blue and White China Plates 22/ 5 Beer Glasses 5/	1. 7. 0
4 fruit Baskets 20/ 1 Queen China Mug & Sugar dish 2/	1. 2. 0
1 Marble Bowl 15/ 15 Water Glasses 30/	2. 5. 0
10 Wine Glasses 12/ 5 punch Do. 5/	0. 17. 0
1 Mahogany Tray 10/ 9 Decanters and 4 Baskets 25/	1. 15. 0
1 Do. Case containing 2 Bottles 25/	1. 5. 0
1 round Mahogany table 26/ 1 plate Warmer 12/	1. 18. 0
492 Oz: plate @ 7/6	184. 10. 0
1 plate Basket and 2 knives Do. 10/ 3 1/2 doz: knives and forks Do. £5	5. 10. 0
1 Mahogany tea Board 7/6 Japand Waiters 10/	0. 17. 0
1 Chariot and 8 Harness	60. 0. 0
5 Chariot Horses £230 3 Cart Do. £25	255. 0. 0
1 Mare and Colt £40 1 riding Horse £30	70. 0. 0
1 Phaton £15 5 Cows £20	35. 0. 0
2 Carts and 1 Tumbrill and Harness	20. 0. 0
11 Frying pans at 3/	1. 13. 0
25 Bushels Salt at 3/	3. 15. 0
a parcel Wool 40/ a parcel Hemp and Flax 10/	2. 10. 0
a parcel Lumber in the Store house 20/	1. 0. 0
5 Bushels Malt 15/	15. 0
4 old Scythes 10/ 1 Bedstead 15/ a Cross Cut Saw 15/	2. 0. 0
10 old Sacks 5/ a parcel of Tallow 25 a pr. Stilliards 12/6	2. 2. 6
a parcel Corks 50/ a pipe of Sower Cyder 40/	4. 10. 0
48 Table Cloths £46.15 36 Towells £2.11	49. 6. 0
9 Napkins 18/ 11 pr. Sheets £16.10 2 pr. Virginia Do. £2	19. 8. 0
6 pr. pillow Cases 15/ 2 Side Board Cloths 5/	1. 0. 0
a parcel Queens China Ware & Sundry Articles Sent to Wilton	5. 0. 0
a Sett of Ornamental China	20. 0. 0
1 doz: Mahogany Chairs	24. 0. 0
2 fire Screens £5 1 Card table £2	7. 0. 0
1 Wilton Carpet £10 1 Tea table 20/ 1 Do. 30/	12. 10. 0
1 Sett China & Tea Board £3 1 Ditto & Do. 40/	5. 0. 0
1 Looking Glass £10 1 pr. Tongs, poker Shovel & Fender 20/	11. 0. 0
1 Black Walnut press £3	3. 0. 0
5 Flax Wheels 2 Check Reels & 2 Common Reels	5. 0. 0
A dressing table and Glass £5 a Desk and Book Case £7	12. 0. 0
6 old Chairs £3 1 Easy Chair 20/	4. 0. 0
a Small Cabinet & a parcel old China	2. 0. 0
a Fender & pr. Tongs 3/	0. 3. 0
1 Sett old Blue damask Curtains 30/ 2 pr. Window Do. 30/	3. 0. 0
Sundry Articles in Mrs. Randolph's Closet	3. 0. 0
1 Warming pan & pr. Scales & Weights 10/ 2 Spinning Wheels 15/	1. 5. 0
1 Coal Skuttle 5/ 8 pewter dishes 40/	2. 5. 0
2 doz: pewter plates £3 a parcel of old pewter 20/	4. 0. 0
3 Copper Kettles £15 8 Copper Stew pans £5	20. 0. 0
1 Safe 30/ 5 pales 10/ 2 fish Kettles and Covers £3	5. 0. 0
1 Bell Metal Skillet 15/ 1 Marble Mortar 20/	1. 15. 0
1 Small Marble Mortar 5/ 1 Brass Mortar 5/	10. 0
1 Grid Iron 2 dripping pans & 2 frying pans 25/	1. 5. 0

3 Iron potts 40/ 1 Tea Kettle 15/ 1 Do. 15/	3. 10. 0
1 Jack, 2 Spitts and a pr. Kitchen Dogs	5. 0.0
8 Stone Butter pots, 7 Milk pans and 1 Stone jug 30/	1. 10. 0
1 Iron ladle, 1 Chopping knife and flesh fork	5. 0
23 Candle Moulds 23/ a parcel Old Copper and tin Ware 20/	2. 3. 0
11 Chamber pots 3 Wash Basons, 35 Wine and 8 Beer Glasses	2. 10. 0
2 dish Covers, 3 tin Kettles, 8 Sauce pans, 5 Cake Moulds & a Cullender	1. 10. 0
a parcel Brooms and Brushes 20/ 4 Spades 20/	2. 0. 0
29 Hoes, 1 Chopping knife 6 Scythes & Stones & 3 Cuttg knives	5. 0. 0
100 lb Brown Sugar 45/ 150 lb Coffee at 1/3 £9.7.6	11. 12. 6
part of a Box Glass 20/	1. 0. 0
35 yds Green Cloth at 10/ £12.10. 40 yds Cotton £5	17. 10. 0
7 dutch blankets £3.10 10 yds Crimson Cloth £7.10	11. 0. 0
About 30 yds. Green planes at 2/9 £4.2.6. 20 Ells Ozn$^{br.}$ 25/	5. 7. 6
7 Sifters 9/ 4 pr. Coarse Shoes 24/ 3 Jack lines 9/	2. 2. 0
6 Flat Irons & a pr. Broken Dogs 12/ 1 pine Table 3/	15. 0
a parcel wine in Bottles containing about a pipe	60. 0. 0
4 Jugs 8/ 1 Butter Pot 2/ a Box & 1/2 Candles 60/	3. 10. 0
a firkin Butter 40/ 5 flasks Oil 10/	2. 10. 0
30 Gallons Rum £7.10.0 a parcel Lumber 5/	7. 15. 0
2 Soap Jars 15/	10. 0
6 Mahogany Book presses at 30/	9. 0. 0
1 Do. Writing Table £3 1 large Mahogany table £5	8. 0. 0
1 Round table 15/ 1 paper press 10/	1. 5. 0
1 Chaffing dish 5/ 1 dry rubbing Brush 3/	8. 0
1 Clock £5 1 pr. Back Gammon tables 10/	5. 10. 0
1 old pine table 8/ 6 Mahogany Chairs 40/	2. 3. 0
1 Lanthorn	10. 0
1 Dressing Table Glass and Toilet	2. 10. 0
6 Mahogany Chairs £6 1 Bed Table £1.10	7. 10. 0
1 China Bason and Bottle 20/	1. 0. 0
1 Bedstead and Suit Cotton Curtains	15. 0. 0
1 Do. and Do. Virginia Cloth do.	10. 0. 0
4 pr. Window Curtains 40/ 1 old Carpet 10/	2. 10. 0
1 Sett Callico Curtains 50/ 5 Quilts £5	7. 10. 0
1 Chintz Bed Cover £3	3. 0. 0
8 Feather Beds, 7 Bolsters & 9 pillows	40. 0. 0
4 hair Mattrases £6 10 Counterpanes £12	18. 0. 0
3 Wool Do. £3 6 pr. New Blankets £9 7 old Do. £4	16. 0. 0
51 yards Irish Linnen @ 5/ £12.15 25 yards @ Do. £6.0	19. 0. 0
1 ps. Fustian Dimity 25/ 100 lb. Wt. Sugar £7.10	8. 15. 0
a parcel Sylabub & Jelly Glasses, 4 Salvers, 8 Water Glasses 22 Wine Do. and 3 Glass Candlesticks	3. 0. 0
1 Corner Cupboard & a parcel physik	5. 0. 0
1 Japann'd Tea Board 5/ 3 Globe Candle Sticks 30/	1. 15. 0
1 Screen 30/ a Trussel and 4 old Trunks 20/	2. 10. 0
4 Mahogany Chairs £4 1 dressing Glass 30/	5. 10. 0
1 Carpet 5/ 1 old Fender Shovel and Tongs 3/	8. 0
1 Bedstead & Suit Virginia Curtains and Window Curtains	10. 0. 0
a mahogany press £3	3. 0. 0
1 pine Table and Looking Glass 15/ 3 old Chairs 15/	1. 10. 0
2 Bedsteads 15/ 1 Fender 5/ 3 Chairs 15/	1. 15. 0
1 Bedstead 10/ 1 old Chest drawers 15/	1. 5. 0
1 pine Table 5/ 1 Floor Cloth 20/ 1 passage Do. 8/	1. 13. 0
5 Hoes, 1 Dung fork, 1 Garden Rake and Spade	15. 0
1 Wheel Barrow 8/ 1 pr. Money Scales 10/	18. 0
8 doz: Bottles at 30/ Gro:	1. 0. 0
About 100 Bushels dust Coal	2. 10. 0
A parcel old Casks and Tubs	10. 0
1 Steel Mill	3. 0. 0
a Library of Books as pr Catalogue	250. 0. 0
	[subtotal] £1578. 14. 6
Negroes	
Johnny	100. 0. 0
Jack	25. 0. 0
Billy	100. 0. 0
Watt	100. 0. 0
Braches	10. 0. 0
Ben	80. 0. 0
Cesar	25. 0. 0
George	30. 0. 0
Henry	30. 0. 0
Sam	40. 0. 0

William	30. 0. 0
Bob	25. 0. 0
Cosar	30. 0. 0
Watt	25. 0. 0
Eve	100. 0. 0
Charlotte	80. 0. 0
Aggy	60. 0. 0
Succordia	10. 0. 0
Little Aggy	60. 0. 0
Kitty	20. 0. 0
Betsey	10. 0. 0
Lucy	60. 0. 0
Katy	20. 0. 0
Peter	15. 0. 0
Betty	100. 0. 0
Roger	60. 0. 0
Moses	60. 0. 0
Wmsburg Sct. [?]	£2883. 14. 6

In Obedience to an Order of York Court dated the 20th of November 1775 We the Subscribers being first Sworn before a Magistrate of Said City have Appraised the Estate of Peyton Randolh Esq: as Within

J. Dixon
Wm. Peirce
Alexr. Craig

Returned into York County Court the 15th day of July 1776 And Ordered to be Recorded
Examd.

Teste
Thos: Everard Cl. Curr.

Frederick Bryan's Inventory and Appraisement, 1771

Frederick Bryan's inventory and appraisement from 1771. This probate record illustrates the essential goods for a rural person of the middling or upper-middling rank. Note the livestock, tools, and slaves (the last valued £1,213). The total estate amounted to £1,645.18.0. Source: York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83), 31–33.

Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of Frederick Bryan deceased taken March 26th 1771

Stock.				
13 Yearlings	@ 15/	9.	15.	0
19 Cows, 3 Calves, & 2 Young steers		54.	0.	0
4 two Years old	@ 25/	5.	0.	0
18 Cows at 50. 1 Calf at 10/		45.	10.	0
11 Steers	33.	0.	0	
5 Sows 50/. . 1 Do. 15/ .4 Do. 80/		7.	5.	0
20 Shoats £5. . 5 Do. 37/6 . 13 Ditto 39/		8.	16.	6
1 Bay Horse £10. . 1 Do. £16		26.	0.	0
1 Sorrel Horse £16. . 1 Do. £20		36.	0.	0
1 Young Mare £12. . 1 old mare and Colt £5		17.	0.	0
47 head Sheep at 10/. . 10 Lambs at 6/		26.	0.	0
1 Cross Cut saw 7/6. 1 old spade 2/6		0.	10.	0
5 broad hoes 3 Axes, 2 wedges, 1 ox Chain & 1 Fluke hoe		1.	7.	6
1 Fluke hoe 10/. . 2 Iron Wedges 7/6		0.	17.	0
1 Double Chair and Harness 12£. 1 single Do. & Do. 6£		18.	0.	0
1 Old saddle 10/. 1 Grindstone 10/		1.	0.	0
6 spades 6/. 1 Ox Cart, Yokes, Chains &c. 4£		4.	6.	0
1 Cart body 10/. . 1 plough 30/. . . 9 hoes 3/		2.	3.	0
1 Mahogany Desk £5 . . . 1 large Walnut Tables 50/		7.	10.	0
2 Small oval Tables 50/. . . 1 Clock £10		12.	10.	0
1 Dozen Walnut Chair £6. .2 Looking glasses 60/		9.	0.	0
1 Map of Virginia 5/. . . 1 Walnut Desk 70/		3.	15.	0
1 Tea Chest 20/. . . 1 Easy Chair £5		6.	0.	0
1 Mahogany Tea Table 30/		1.	10.	0
1/2 doz: Leather Chairs 30/. . . 1/2 doz: Rush Do. 6/		1.	16.	0
1 Case Bottles 10/. . . 1 Pair Iron Doggs 10/		1.	0.	0
1 Stand for a Candle 1/3 Backgammon Tables 20.		1.	1.	3
1 Square walnut Table 5/. . . 1 Looking Glass 10/		0.	15.	0
2 Pair tongs and 1 shovel 5/ 1 pair Iron Dogges 7/6		0.	12.	6
1 Bed, Bedstead blankets, Sheets Counterpin, Curtains &c.		10.	0.	0
1 Do. Bedstead blankets, Sheets Counterpin, &c.		5.	0.	0
1 old Oak Tea Table 7/6. . 1 square pine Table 5/		0.	12.	6
1 Spinning Wheel 7/6. .1 warming pan 7/6		0.	15.	0
1 Old Chest 1/3. 1 Trunk 1/3		0.	2.	6
1 Bed, bedstead, bolster sheets, blankets Rug &c.		5.	10.	0
1 Bed, bedstead, bolster pillow & Sheets		4.	10.	0
1 Bed, bedstead, bolster pillows blankets sheets & mattrass		8.	0.	0
1 pair Iron Dogs 7/6. .2 old Box Irons 4/		0.	11.	6
1 Bed, bedstead, bolster pillows blankets sheets &c.		5.	0.	0
1 square pine Table 2/6. 1 small Looking Glass 7/6		0.	10.	0
1 Cloose stool Chair and pan 20/. . 1 Pair Iron Doggs 5/		1.	5.	0
1 Black Leather Trunk 7/6. . 7 silver Tea Spoons 21/		1.	8.	6
1 Dozen Table Spoons and 1 Soop Spoon		10.	0.	0
2 Silver Tumblers 40/. . . 2 silver salts 40/		4.	0.	0
3 China Bowls 20/. . . Glass China & Earthen ware 15/		1.	15.	0
1 Bottle slide, 1 Tureen, 1 Tea pot, & 1 Glass salt		0.	7.	6
1 Japand plate and warmer		0.	5.	0
1 Dozen pewter plates		0.	15.	0
9 Stone Butter pots, & 3 Juggs		1.	0.	0
1 Spice Morter 7/6. 1 Stand Cruets 7/6		0.	15.	0
22 China plates 25/. . . 1 Pair spring stilyards 2/6		1.	7.	6
1 Pair Brass Candlesticks 5/. . . 1 butter pot & 1 Jug 5/		0.	10.	0
4 Old Rum hoghds 12/. . . 1 Steel Coffee Mill 6/		0.	18.	0
3 Iron pots & hooks 12/6 . .2 Gridirons 7/6		1.	0.	0
3 Pott racks 12/. . . 1 Bell metal Skillet 7/6		0.	19.	6
1 Spitt 2/6 . . . 1 Homony Pestle 3/		0.	5.	6
1 Frying pan 1/3 . . . 1 old Table 2/6		0.	3.	9
10 Pewter Dishes 25/. . . 1/2 dozen Milk pans 2/		1.	7.	0
1 Copper Kettle 30/. . . 1 small Brass Do. 10/		2.	0.	0
3 Washing Tubs 2 pails & 1 piggon		0.	10.	0
1 Corn Barrel & 1 half Bushell		0.	5.	0

23 Yellow plates, 1 Stone Dish & 1 fruit Do.			0.	12.	6
1 Case Bottles 10/ . . . 2 Boxes Glass £5			5.	10.	0
1 Surveyers Chain 5/. . 1 pewter pint pot 3/			0.	8.	0
	[subtotal]		£420.	9.	6
1 Silver Tankard wt. 29 oz. @ 6/oz.			8.	14.	0
1 Silver Punch Ladle			0.	7.	6
1 Gunn			2.	5.	0
2 doz: Table Knives & forks			0.	12.	0
1 Table Cloth			0.	10.	0
	carries to the otherside		£432.	18.	0
Negroes viz.		Brought Over £			
Providence £60. Juba £30			90.	0.	0
Lucy £50. . Will £50. . Judith £50			150.	0.	0
Ned a Carpenter and his Tools			83.	0.	0
Phill. £55. . Sam £35. . Tom £40			130.	0.	0
Will £45. . Billy £70			115.	0.	0
Dumb Lucy £40. . her Children Frank and Roger £40			80.	0.	0
Celia £40. . her Daughter Nanny £25			65.	0.	0
Old Betty	15.		0.	0	
Hannah £40. . her Daughter Flora £30			70.	0.	0
Easter £50. . her Daughter Milley £25. . Do. Phillis £20			95.	0.	0
Sall. . £45 her Children, Rachael, 45£ Toney £30					
Grace £25. . Suckey £15. . Harry £10			170.	0.	0
Jenny, Judiths Daughter £25. . . Dick £20			45.	0.	0
George £45 . . . Mildred £30			75.	0.	0
Old Mary £5. Peter £25			30.	0.	0
			£1213.	0.	0
	Personal Estate from the other side		432.	18.	0
			£1645.	18.	0

In obedience to an order of York Court bearing the date 18th day of March last We the Subscribers (being first Sworn) have met and appraised in Current Money the Personal Estate and Slaves of Frederick Bryan deceased amounting as above to one thousand Six hundred and forty five pounds eighteen Shillings Current Money

John Ferguson
John Dickeson
William Moody
Phillip Birt

Returned into York County Court the 17th day of June 1771 and Ordered to be recorded

Exam

Teste
Thos. Everard Cl. Cur.

William Blaikley's Inventory, 1736

William Blaikley's estate was not appraised. It is an early (1736) room-by-room inventory for a Williamsburg household. The document was drawn up and taken to the court in Yorktown by Blaikley's widow, Catharine Blaikley, the Williamsburg midwife. The Blaikley House on Duke of Gloucester Street, Catharine Blaikley's leather-bound and gilded Book of Common Prayer (see color illustrations section), and her tombstone in Bruton Parish Churchyard are three important artifacts relating to this family. Source: York County, Wills and Inventories 18 (1732/3–40/1), 312–316.

June the 30th, 1736
A trew Inventory of the Eastate [*sic*] of William Blaikley Deceased of whats Lying on this side of James river.

in the great Chamber up Stairs
two beds with all furniture one Large black trunk & one white table with a muslin twilite upon it five rush bottom Chairs with red fraims two pr. of old white window Curtains one Stone Chamber pot one small Japan box

in the Little Chamber up Stairs
one bed with all furniture one Stone Chamber pot one Japan tea table five rush bottom Chairs with black wallnut fraims six Small pictures with gilt fraims two hair trunks one red Chest with a parcel of books one pair of white window Curtains

In the Closett up Stairs
one old deal box with no Lid one Childs wicker Cradle and baskett broke a Little

in the passage up Stairs & upon the Stairs
one Large Quillting fraim one Small Dito one hair trunk one deal Chest two old pictures one Eight day Clock

in the Chamber below Stairs
one bed with all furniture five rush bottom Chairs with black wallnut frames one Cain Elbow Chair one ovell table one pair of white window Curtains one Corner Cubbard one pair of Iron Dogs one old fire Shovel one pair of Iron tongs one Stone Chamber pot one Large picture black fraim four Small Dito one Looking Glass one Earthen Sillibub pot

in the Chamber Closett
one Copper tea kettle a Copper chacolet pot one Coffee pot one old Coffee mill a Small Stone jar a Copper pot a warming pan three Indan baskets one meal barrell one old Search

in the parlow below Stairs
one bed and all furniture Six rush bottom Chairs black fraims one blackwallnut dressing table one Small Chest of drawers a Dressing glass black fraim one Duch table a pair of white window Curtains a Stone Chamber pot a Small red trunk five pictures

in the hall
one Large ovel table one Small Dito nine Chairs blackwallnut bottoms one Desk one japan tea table & one tea bord one pair of bellows a pair of iron dogs a fire Shovel and tongs one Iron trevet one pr of old green window Curtains a Large pickture & fourteen small Dito one large looking glass & one Chimney glass a Large blackwallnut bofett which is a moveable whats in the bofett six Chaine plates ten delf plates six Chine Cups & seaven Saucers one China Slop bassen one puter teapot a Stone tea pot a cract Stone milk pot a Stone Slop basen two glass Salts one glass decanter two glass cruetts one Salver three Silver Casters Six Large Silver Spoons twelve Silver tea Spoons one Silver Cup a pair of Silver tea tongs a Cork Scrue a wine glass a Earthen punch bowl & some broken Stone ware a punch Ladle one dozen of Case knives & forks

in Mr. Blaikleys Closett
one hamburg Chest one old Clock a looking glass a little box one Old box three new hilling hoes a new hachet a tin Lamp two mens Saddles & bridles one pr. pistills & holsters Sword & gun two baskets a parcell of wachmakers things an iron Crow with other Lumber & a mans Cain in the desk some raisers and other Small things

in the Little room by the hall
one Small bedsteed & bed bolster & green rug and four old Chairs

in the back passage
one Cract Stone tea pot a Stone drinking mug a butter Dish two hair brooms a Scrubing brush a Childs Chair a white poronger without a handle

in the Kitchen
four Iron pots with hooks one Large brass Kettle a Copper Scellet a Copper Sauspan a tea kettl two Iron pot racks three Spits one iron travet one grid iron Seaven Scuers one old Jack a hominy morter & iron pestle a Large pr of iron Dogs wth hooks an iron Dripping pan an old frying pan two pr of Small Smoothing Irons two box irons & three heaters five brass Candlesticks one pr of brass Snuffers one pr of iron Dito a pair of tongs an iron flesh fork & brass Scimmer a tin basting ladle two pails one Stone jugg a woden Chair two knives & some old forks thirteen pewter Dishes two old pewter basens four Dozen & half of pewter plaites some earthan pots a meal Sifter a basket a Old brass kettle to put Ashes in a mush Stick a pewter cheese plait and pewter pey plait

in the Kitchen Loft
a Small Ladder a pewter Still a Childs go-Cart a pr of old bellows three old spining wheals a Small iron Curtain rod a beefs hide a garden rake two old hoes and a parcel of Old iron and Other Lumber

in the Seller
two Stone jugs three old tubs a bear Cask some butter pots & three earthan milk pans a little pan to rost Coffee an Old table a little box a Candle box a parcel of bottles & vials

in the Stable
A hors rack a broken Chest that holds ashes and two Split plank

in the hen house
tow [*sic*] old Chests

Negroes about the house Nanny Lucy and hannah a Cow a horse some Corn a parcel of old books a new Suite of Duroy mans Closs and Mr: Blaikleys Linning & Closs that he wore and another parcel of old Close and Shoes

the household Linning
Six pair of Sheets 14 pair of pillow Cases 14 table Cloths 13 towels and Six brown ozenbrigs towels a Suite of white Cotton bed Curtains and two ozenbrig wallets two Counterpains not finished a fiddle and bow a parcel of Old gimp Lace and two side Saddles a pr of hand mill Stones a Large basket a pr of old Garden Sheers

this Inventory Sent to york Court by Catherine Blaikley August the 20 Day 1736

At a Court held for York County September the 20th 1736 This Inventory of the Estate of William Blaikley decd. was presented in Court and order'd to be Recorded

Examd: Test.
Matt. Hubard Cl. Cur.

Matthew Ashby's Inventory and Appraisement, 1771

Matthew Ashby's inventory and appraisement is dated 1771. This free African American's estate includes indications of the occupations of both Matthew and his wife. It also lists high-style items like a silver watch worth £3 and a tea board valued at 5 shillings. This inventory, with a total value of just over £80, was taken only two years after Ashby had paid Samuel Spurr the considerable sum of £150 for his wife and children. The source is York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83), 34–36.

Inventory of the Estate of Matthew Ashby Deceased viz.

1 Bed bolster pair Sheets and Counterpin	6.	0.	0
1 Do. Do.	5.	0.	0
1 Do. Do. and 1 Sheet	3.	15.	0
1 Do. and Bedstead and Rug	3.	0.	0
6 old Chairs	0.	10.	0
1 Round Table	0.	10.	0
2 Ironing Tables	0.	12.	6
1 Tea Board	0.	5.	0
3 Tea spoons and Tongs	0.	12.	6
1 Chest and 2 Trunks	1.	10.	0
a parcel of old Books	0.	8.	0
2 Looking Glasses and 1 Cupboard	0.	10.	0
1 Silver Watch	3.	0.	0
Parcel old Pewter	2.	0.	0
5 Iron potts and 2 Kettles	5.	0.	0
2 Tea Kettles	0.	15.	0
1 Marble Morter	0.	10.	0
1 Iron Do.	0.	2.	0
1 Skillet	0.	5.	0
Parcel Tin Ware	0.	15.	0
4 Tubs and 8 pales	1.	0.	0
7 Trays	1.	5.	0
2 Soap Jars	0.	15.	0
4 Pair flat Irons	0.	12.	6
1 Spit Grid Iron frying pan Ladle and Skimmer	0.	7.	6
1 Pine Table	0.	2.	6
26 Candle Moulds and Frame	2.	0.	0
5 Stone Jars and 7 Juggs	1.	10.	0

1 Pair Steelyards			0.	7. 6
4 Saddles			2.	10. 0
1 Pair Cards and spinning Wheels			0.	10. 0
2 Chests			0.	15. 0
1 Pair saddle Bags			0.	5. 0
Parcel Carpenters Tools			1.	10. 0
1 Bay Horse			10.	0. 0
1 Do.			5.	0. 0
1 Do.			3.	0. 0
2 Cows 1 Yearling and 1 Calf			10.	0. 0
Cart Harness for 2 horses			0.	15. 0
			£77.	5. 0
147 lb. Bacon	@ 6D.		3.	13. 6
			£80.	18. 6

Wm. Pierce
Johnathan Prosser
Cutht. Hubbard

Returned into York County Court the 17th day of June 1771 and Ordered to be recorded
Examed.

Teste
Tho. Everard Cl. Cur.

Simon Williams's Inventory and Appraisement, 1769

Simon Williams's inventory and appraisement, July 17, 1769, is that of a single man living in urban lodgings. Williams owned only £17 worth of goods, mainly clothing and personal effects. The document comes from York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83), 35.

Inventory and appraisement of the Estate of Simon Williams Deceased taken pursuant to an order of York Court bearing date the 17th day of July 1769 Vizt.

1 Pair Shoes and 1 Knee Buckle & 1 Stock Do. 1 pr. Sleeve Buttons	2.	0.	0
1 Silver Watch	5.	0.	0
1 Pair Spectacles ink pot 1 Snuff Box	0.	1.	6
3 Wiggs	1.	0.	0
1 Hatt 15/. . . 1 pair Boots 1. Pair Shoes 5/	1.	0.	0
4 pair woollen stockings 4/. . . 3 pair Do. Thread 4/	0.	8.	0
7 Shirts 40/. . . 6 Stocks 2/6	2.	2.	6
5 Night Caps 3/. . . 1 Pair Mufatees 2 Hankerchiefs 2/6	0.	5.	6
3 Coates 6 Waistcoats Cloth 3 Pair Breeches 1 flannel waistcoat 2 pair Gambadoes	4.	2.	6
1 Pair Saddle Bags 12/6 . . . 1 Sadle 5/	0.	17.	6
1 Butter pot	0.	1.	6
1 Glass salt seller	0.	1.	0
	£17.	0.	0

Exam

Joseph Valentine
William Pearson
Fips Jackson

Returned into York County Court the 17th day of June 1771 and Ordered to be recorded.
Exam

Teste
Thos: Everard Cl: Cur:

Thomas Hornsby's Inventory and Appraisement, 1773

Thomas Hornsby's inventory and appraisement were taken in 1773. This valuable estate, totaling £6,414.16.5, gives a room-by-room breakdown of the contents of this wealthy merchant's house in town, as well as appraisals of the slaves and livestock at several outlying farms. The document is from York County, Wills and Inventories 22 (1771–83), 107–112.

Inventory and appraisement in Current Money of the Slaves and Personal Estate of Mr. Thomas Hornsby deced

August 4th 1773

At House in Town.				
Goods on Hand in Sterling		1801.	2.	9 ½
25 per Cent on Ditto		450.	5.	8 ½
	[Subtotal]	2251.	8.	6
Goods imported since deducting Shipping Charges		1296.	15.	4
25 preCent on Do		317.	8.	10
Slaves				
Stephen		30.	—.	—
James		80.	—.	—
Joe		60.	—.	—
Anthony (lame)		5.	—.	—
Old Molly		1.	—.	—
Sally		35.	—.	—
Judith and her 5 Children, Nancy, Rachel, James, Delphia and William		200.	—.	—
Little Judith and two Children Peter and Phillis		80.	—.	—
Hannah and her Child Daniel		50.	—.	—
Tom given by Will to WH		50.	—.	—
Horses				
1 Bay Horse		25.	—.	—
1 Ditto Ditto		30.	—.	—
4 Cart Horses		28.	—.	—
Carts &c.				
Cart and Gear		15.	—.	—
1 Tumbler and Gear		6.	—.	—
1 Chair and Harness		6.	—.	—
1 Double Do. and Harness		15.	—.	—
Cows				
1 Cow and Calf		5.	—.	—
1 Cow		5.	—.	—
1 Ditto		1.	—.	—
3 Shoats		1.	2.	6
Plate				
Tea pot Coffe pot and milk Pot		25.	—.	—
1 Tankard		18.	—.	—
1 Punch ladle		.	15.	—
1 Watch		3.	—.	—
1 Tankard, 2 pint Cans, 2 Candlesticks Snuffers and Stand				
4 Salts 1 Soup Spoon 1 Marrow Do. 18 Table Spoons				
21 Tea Ditto 1 pr Sugar Tongs wt. 158 1/2 oz. @ 7/		55.	9.	6
1 Ca[se?] of Desert Knives			7.	6
In the Chamber				
1 Desk and Book Case		5.	—.	—
1 Cupboard		.	15.	—
1 Round Table		.	15.	—
1 Do 10/ 1 Do 15/ 1 large Do 50/		3.	15.	—
12 Walnut Chairs		3.	—.	—
1 Smoking Chair		2.	—.	—
4 pr Sheets £6 1 Single Ditto 15/		6.	15.	—
8 Napkins		.	10.	—
6 Pillow Cases		.	12.	—
a parcel Books		5.	—.	—
1 Tea Chest		.	8.	—

6 China Bowls	.	15.	—
11 Plates 15 Do	1.	6.	—
13 Qeen [*sic*] China Plates	.	4.	—
a parcel old Tea China &c	1.	10.	—
1 Set Curtains Teaster and Rodds	3.	10.	—
1 Corner Cupboard	.	1.	3
1 Glass	5.	—	
4 Pictures	2.	6	
1 pr. End irons		15.	—
1 Chair 1/3 1 Cooler 10/	11.	3	
In the Hall			
1 Clock	8.	—.	—
1 Chest Drawers	3.	—.	—
2 Dressing Tables	1.	—.	—
1 Bed Bedstead Counterpin Blanket Sheets &c.	8.	—.	—
1 Matrass	2.	10.	—
1 Chimney Glass		15.	—
1 Dressing Ditto	1.	—.	—
1 Desk £4.—.— & Tea Chest 35/	5.	15.	—
1 Corner Cupboard and Tea Tray	.	7.	6
1 Easy Chair 50/. 2 old Ditto 10/	3.	—.	—
1 Hair Trunk	.	15.	—
1 Brush 2/6 1 Map of Virginia 10/	.	12.	6
14 Pictures 20/	1.	—.	—
1 Mahogany Stand with Brass Frame	1.	—.	—
2 old Cases Sugar Box, Chocolate Pot &c. &c.	.	15.	—
In the Passage			
1 Table	10.	—	
1 Screen	1.	—.	—
2 Chairs	.	5.	—
2 Fire Buckets	.	2.	6
Up Staris [*sic*. upstairs]			
3 Beds Boulsters and Pillows	15.	—.	—
1 Bed Stead	.	7.	6
1 Couch, Curtains, Bed and Pillows	1.	10.	—
1 pr. Blankets	1.	5.	—
4 pr. Ditto (B.H.)	2.	10.	—
1 pr. Ditto 15/ 3 pr. Do. 40/	3.	05.	—
1 Rugg Wt. 1 Green Do. 20/	1.	10.	—
2 Quilts	2.	—.	—
1 Sett old Curtains	10.	—	
1 Sett old Gauzes Ditto	5.	—	
3 Counterpins	1.	—.	—
1 Carpet 20/ 1 Do 25/	1.	5.	—
4 pr. Sheets 60/ 4 pr. Ditto 50/	5.	10.	—
2 pr. Couch Sheets	.	15.	—
4 Counterpanes	3.	10.	—
6 Table Cloths 40/. 3 ditto 18/	2.	18.	—
2 large Table Cloths	1.	15.	—
2 Ditto	.	15.	—
10 Towells and a Napkin	.	10	
1 Pillow Case		2.	—
1 Copper Oven	1.	—.	—
2 Couch Counterpanes	5.	—	
1 Bag Feathers		15.	—
6 Guns (Rifles)	8.	—.	—
1 Duch [*sic*] Oven	12.	6	
1 Plate Warmer	.	5.	—
2 pr. Shovels Tongs and Poker		12.	6
1 pr End irons fender &c. &c.		10.	0
a parcel Wooden Ware &c.		12.	6
1 Womans Saddle	1.	5.	—
1 Warming Pan, Bellows &c.	.	10.	—
In the Kitchen			
1 Jack	2.	—.	—
1 Pot Rack 7/6 4 pr sad Irons 10/	.	17.	6
1 Fish Kettle 7/6 1 Copper Kettle 30/	1.	17.	6
1 large Copper Kettle	6.	—.	—
1 brass old Do. 7/6 1 old Dutch Oven 12/6	1.	—.	—

1 Skillet 2/6 2 Ditto 25/	1.	7.	6
2 Tea Kettles		16.	—
1 Chafin Dish		7.	6
6 Pots and Hooks		1.	10
Parcel Candle moulds		7.	6
1 Tin Coffee Pot		3.	—
2 Pewter Chamber Pots		10.	—
3 Close Stool Pans		12.	6
1 Bed pan	.	6.	—
1 Water Dish and 8 Plates	2.	—.	—
2 dozen Plates	1.	15.	—
2 3/4 dozen Ditto	1.	5.	—
16 Dishes	2.	—.	—
12 Basons 25/. 3 ditto 6/	1.	11.	—
Mortar and Pestle		5.	—
4 Tin Sauce Pans		3.	—
4 Dish Covers 2/6 2 Brass Chafing Dishes 6/		8.	6
1 Grid Iron 5/. 1 Cullender 2/		7.	—
8 Brass Candlesticks		14.	—
1 Homany Pestle		2.	6
1 Safe 30/. 3 Tables 10/ 1 Water Pot 5/	2.	5.	—
a Parcel Tubs and Pails	.	15.	—
1 Spit and End irons 15/ 2 frying Pans 5/	1.	—.	—
Garden Tools	.	10.	—
In the Cellar			
1 Pipe of Wine £25.—.— 1 hhd Rum £16	41.	—.	—
5 Boxes Candles	11.	—.	—
old Cooler and Dish with 50 lb. Pewter	1.	—.	—
In the Brick House			
1 Desk and Book Case	15.	—.	—
12 Walnut Chairs	8.	—.	—
1 Table 15/. 1 Corner Cupboard 12/6	1.	7.	6
1 Bed Teaster and Curtains with Sheets and Counterpanes	4.	—.	—
1 Table 7/6 1 Chair 1/3		8.	9
1 Bed Stead 5/. 1 Looking Glass 25/	1.	10.	—
In the Red House			
2 Beds, Matrasses Beadsteads &c.	12.	—.	—
1 Couch Matrass and furniture &c.	2.	—.	—
1 Screen 15/ 1 Cupboard 15/	1.	10.	—
6 Chairs 50/. 2 Elbow Ditto 25/	3.	15.	—
1 Table	.	15.	—
1 pr. End Irons 2 Shovels	.	7.	6
1 Trunk	.	7.	6
4 ½ pr. Sheets @ 14	3.	3.	—
1 Sheet 10/. 11 Pillow Cases 20/	1.	10.	—
3 Counterpanes	3.	—.	—
2 Table Cloths 25/. 6 Napkins 7/6	1.	12.	6
1 Carpet 30/. 1 do. 30/. 2 pr. End irons 30/	4.	10.	—
1 Sett Curtains 30/. 2 Bed Quilts 20/	2.	10.	—
2 Grates	2.	—.	—
3 Groce Bottles @ 35/	5.	5.	—
Parcel Buttons	1.	18.	—
Sundry Articles Cutlary Ware	3.	—.	—
6 Trunks 15/. 1 do. 4/	.	19.	—
Several Remnants Shalloon and Durants	.	5.	—
1 Parcel Ribbons 60/	3.	—.	—
Parcel Shoes and Clogs	1.	—.	—
Parcel Carpenters Tools	3.	—.	—
Parcel old Lumber	1.	—.	—
At Cherry Hall Plantation York County Augst. 5th 1772			
Slaves			
Tom	80.	—.	—
Anthony	70.	—.	—
Pompey	55.	—.	—
Sarah and her Children Charles Margaret & Jenny	130.	—.	—
Sarah and Child Harry	80.	—.	—
Betty and Child Patt	70.	—.	—
Doll	70.	—.	—

1 Horse		2.	10.	—
2 Mares		18.	—.	—
23 old Cattle @ 35/		40.	5.	—
4 Yearlings @ 20/		4.	—.	—
5 Calves @15/		3.	15.	—
23 Hoggs @10/		11.	10.	—
12 Piggs 2/6		1.	10.	—
1 Gun		1.	5.	—
Plantation Utencils		7.	—.	—
At Porters James City County				
Slaves				
York		30.	—.	—
Toney		35.	—.	—
Nanny and Children Isham & Fanny		85.	—.	—
4 Hoggs	12/6	2.	10.	—
5 Pigs	1/3		6.	3
3 Shoats	4/		12.	—
12 old Cattle	45/	27.	—.	—
2 Yearlings	20/	2.	—.	—
4 Calves	15/	3.	—.	—
Plantation Utencils		2.	—.	—
At Powhatan Plantation Ja. City				
Slaves				
Pompey		30.	—.	—
Jack		75.	—.	—
Harry		75.	—.	—
Pompey		50.	—.	—
Sally and Children Nancy & Johnny		60.	—.	—
Poll and Child Betty		70.	—.	—
Amey		40.	—.	—
old Nanny		20.	—.	—
Hoggs				
19 old Hogs	12/6	11.	17.	6
10 Shoats	4/	2.	—.	—
19 old Cattle	40/	38.	—.	—
3 Yearlings	20/	3.	—.	—
2 Horses		13.	—.	—
1 Ox Cart and Gear		6.	—.	—
1 Bed and furniture		2.	10.	—
Plantation Utencils		4.	—.	—
At Creek Plantation Ja. City				
Slaves				
Harry		30.	—.	—
Tim		45.	—.	—
Jenny		25.	—.	—
15 old Cattle	40/	30.	—.	—
4 Yearlings	20/	4.	—.	—
5 Calves	15/	3.	15.	—
10 Sheep	11/	5.	10.	—
5 Sheep @7/		1.	15.	0
12 Hoggs	11/6	6.	18.	0
4 Shoats	4/	.	16.	—
5 Pigs	1/3		6.	3
Plantation Utencils		2.	—.	—
		£6413.	16.	5

In obedience to the order annexed We the Subscribers have appraised the Slaves and Personal Estate of Mr. Thomas Hornsby Deceased in the Counties of York and James City amounting as per Inventory to Six Thousand four Hundred thirteen Pounds Sixteen Shillings and five Pence Current Money. Given under our Hands this 17th day of August 1772.

Alex. Craig
William Goodson
Ro. Prentis

August 17th, 1772.

Cash in the House at Testators Death	£5160.	11.	1

Sundry outstanding Debts to be accounted for at a future Day
Joseph Hornsby
William Hornsby Executors

Returned into York County Court the 17th day of August 1772 and ordered to be Recorded

Teste
Thos: Everard Cl: Cur:

George Wells's Inventory and Appraisement, 1754

Here is the inventory and appraisement of the estate of George Wells, a Williamsburg shoemaker. This 1754 document lists a tradesman's goods room-by-room and clearly indicates that his shoemaking operation was carried on in his residence. Notice the names and arrangement of the rooms in his house, as well as the numerous fashionable—non-essential—household items listed here. This document comes from York County, Wills and Inventories 20 (1745–59), 321–323.

AN INVENTORY of the Estate of George Wells decd.

Above Stairs.			
1 Feather Bed & Bolsters 1 Rug 1 Blanket Bedstead Cord & Hide	£3.	.	
1 Feather Bed Bolster & Pillow 1 Rug 1 Blanket Bedstead & Cord	3.	.	
1 Pair of end Irons 5/. 1 Round basket 1/7 ½ d	0.	6.	7 ½
2 Rugs 1 old Blanket Oznabs. Bed & Bolster & Bedstead	2.	.	
1 Bed with red Rug old Blanket & Bedstead	2.	.	
1 large red Painted Chest	0.	10.	
Below Stairs in the left hand Room.			
1 Eight day Clock	7.	.	
1 Feather Bed 1 Bolster 2 Pillows 1 Quilt 2 Blankets, Yellow Curtains & Rods Bedstead Cord & Hide	6.	.	
6 Leather Chairs 24/. 1 Arm'd Leather Chair 6/	1.	10.	
6 high back Wooden bottom Chairs 3/9. 2 Rush bottom Do. 1/10 ½	0.	5.	7 ½
1 Couch 5/. 1 Desk 50/. 1 Cake Bees Wax 1/.	2.	16.	
1 Gauging Rod 4/. 5 Razors 2 Straps & 1 Hone 3/	0.	7.	
4 Cribage Boards 2/6. Some Powder & horn & Shot 5/	0.	7.	6
1 Silver Watch	8.	12.	
6 Silver Table Spoons 1 Milk Pot 1 Punch Ladle 9 Tea Spoons 2 Strainers & 2 Tongs at 6/. per oz.	8.	11.	9
A Parcel of old Buckles & Buttons at 5/. per oz.			
1 old Silver Watch (belonging to Dickinson)	[not valued]		
A Parcel of Pictures & Prints 20/. 1 large Looking Glass £3	4.	.	
2 small Looking Glasses 1/3 1 small round Table 2/6	0.	3.	9
1 Large Oval Cedar Table 15/. 1 Oak Oval Do. 15/	1.	10.	
1 Chest of Drawers 30/. 1 small Table & Toilet 10/	2.	.	
12 China Plates 1 China Dish & Earthen Dish	1.	10.	
1 Tea Chest and 2 old Backgammon Tables	0.	10.	
1 Pair Dogs with brass Heads 15/. 1 Cotton Counterpane 26/	2.	1.	
1 Striped & Chex'd Counterpane 5/. 1 White Holland Sheet 5/	0.	10.	
3 Diaper Napkins & 2 Pillow Cases 6/. 2 pr. Coarse Sheets 32/	1.	18.	
1 Butchers Steel 5/. 1 Gun 5/. 2 pr. old Sheets 7/6	0.	17.	6
The second Left hand Room.			
1 Rushia Drab Bed Bedstead Bolster Rug & Blanket	3.	.	
1 Chest 10/ 1 pair Saddle Bags Boots & Spurrs 10/	1.	.	
1 Mans Saddle 15/. 2 Horse Collars & 1 Cart Saddle 10/	1.	5.	
1 old Safe 3/. 1 New Safe 15/.	0.	18.	
In the Right hand Room.			
A Parcel of Pictures 10/. A Corner Cupboard 10/	1.	.	
2 China Bowls 6 China Cups and Saucers and a Parcel of Glass Ware	1.	10.	
A Table with old Knives and forks 2 pr. Scales 1 pair Wool Cards 3 half pint Mugs 1 Lamp 1 Tea Pot, Pepper Box Mustard Pot —and a Clothiers Brush	0.	15.	
2 Pair Stilyards 1 Candle Box & a pr. Sad: Irons	0.	15.	
1 Bell Metal Pot 1 Iron Pot 1 pair Tongs 2 pr. Pothooks 1 Grid Iron 2 old Iron Candlesticks and a Hominy Pestle	0.	8.	
1 pr. Iron Dogs 8/. 2 Shoemakers Benches & Tools 20/.	1.	8.	
A Parcel of Trumpery in a Closet 12/6. 3 Wiggs 10/.	1.	2.	6
1 Cutlass & 1 Dagger 7/6 1 pr. Pistols 12/. 1 Mans Hatt 12/6	1.	12.	
1 Cloth Coat Lined with Blue 30/. 3 pair Breeches 20/	2.	10.	
1 white Duffell Coat 15/. 1 blue Coat & Silk Waistcoat & Breeches 40/	2.	15.	
1 Grey Coat & Scarlet Waistcoat & fustian Breeches	1.	10.	
1 Black Waistcoat Strip'd Banyan & flannel Waistcoat	1.	.	
A Chest 6/. a case with 3 Bottle 2/6. 1 Table 3/.	0.	11.	6

In the Shop.			
6 Sides Soal Leather 35/. 9 Calf Skins 45/. 6 pr. Negro Shoes 15/	4.	15.	
2 Pair Pumps 1 pr. Shoes 1 pair Slippers 2 pr. Childrens Shoes	0.	18.	
110 Lasts 15/. 3 Cheeses 18/. 9 lb Soap 4/6	1.	17.	6
2 pair Shoe & 1 pr. Boots Stretchers 3/. 2 Casks 2/6. 1 Stew pan 4/	0.	9.	6
1 Saw 1 Adz 1 Hammer 3 files & Sundrys	0.	2.	6
1 Shoe makers Window 1/3d. 1 Table 2/6	0.	3.	9
In the Celler			
1 Groce Bottles 26/. 1 Cask Cyder 10/. A Parcel of Empty Casks 8/.	2.	4.	
1 Jarr of Soap 1 Cask of Do.	1.	6.	
In the Meal House			
1 Cask Flour No. 23 qty 214 lb Nett at 14/	1.	10.	
1 Table 5/. 1 Tray & Tin Sheets with Ginger Bread Prints 7/	0.	12.	
A Naple Biscuit Pan &c.	0.	7.	
40 Bushels of Wheat at 4/	8.	.	
8 Barrells & 1 Bushell of Corn @ 8/	3.	5.	7
1 Searce & 1 Tray 4/. 1 Quilting frame 3/.	0.	7.	
1 Spinning Wheel & Riddle 6/. 1 Steel Coffee Mill 2/6	0.	8.	6
1 old Saddle &c.	0.	4.	
In the Garden and Yard			
1 Horse called Sorrell 1 Do. Called Prince	6.	.	
4 Benches & 1 Wheel Barrow	0.	15.	
In the Smoke House			
2 Hoes 2 Spades & 1 Pewter Bason 7/6. 1 Cow 30/	1.	17.	6
In the Kitchen			
8 Pails 8/. 1 Cullender Tin Coffee Pot Tin Kettle 1 Iron Ladle			
1 Frying Pan 1 Tea Kettle 8/	0.	16.	
1 Warming Pan 5/. 18 Pewter Plates & 10 Dishes 40/	2.	5.	
1 Pewter Soap Kettle 5/. 1 Pewter Tankard 1 Butter dish 1 Porringer 2/6	0.	7.	6
Pewter Measures 6/. 1 brass Morter & Pestle 5 Candlesticks 1 Stand 8/6	0.	14.	6
2 Copper Chocolate Pots 1 Coffee Pot 10/. 1 Driping Pan 5 Spoons 1/	0.	11.	
3 Iron Pots 1 Iron Skillet 32/. 1 Brass Kettle 1 Skillet 15/	2.	7.	
1 Iron Toaster 1 Flesh fork 1 Chafing Dish 2 pr. Pot hooks & Grid Iron	0.	6.	
1 Box Iron & Heators 1 Spit 1 Salt Box Pot Racks	0.	6.	3
4 Calf Skins and two Baggs	0.	6.	3
8 Gold Rings	3.	10.	11
Benjamin Grant a Servant Man	10.	.	
Betty Willey a Servant Woman	2.	10.	
1 Cart and Wheels	1.	.	
	£144.	18.	

Peter Scott
John Greenhow
John Page.

Returned into York County Court the 20th day of May 1754 and Ordered to be recorded.

Examd.

Teste
Thos. Everard Cl: Cur:

Colonel White Eyes's Inventory, 1778

The inventory (unappraised) of White Eyes, Pittsburgh, November 9, 1778. This interesting document lists the personal estate of a member of the Delaware Nation. His possessions include clothing, spectacles, and a silver medal with George III's likeness. The list, from a contemporary transcript, was printed in Louise P. Kellogg, ed., *Frontier Advance on the Upper Ohio, 1778–1779* (Madison, Wis.: The Society, 1916), 168.

Pittsburgh 9 Novr. 1778

Inventory of Sundry Moveables the Property of the Late Col. white Eyes of the Delewar [*sic*] Nation Deceased now in the Possession of Thomas Nicholas [Nicholson] of Pittsburgh Viz.

1 Breech Clout fully trim'd
1 Bundle of blue & Red Ferreting. Qty. 31 ½ Red Do.
22 ½ blu Do.
1 Paint Bag with some paint in it
1 Silver Medal Effigee of Geo. the 3d. of Great Britain
1 large be[l]t Wampum 11 Rows
1 Quill Back'd Comb 1 pr. Scissars 3 yards Gartering
1 Printed Linen Jacket, 1 Bundle Sundry Papers
1 Pr. Saddle Bags
1 Green Coat fac'd with Red with an Apatch
1 Old Do. Do. Cotawy [Cuttaway] 1 Crib & Bridle
1 Pr. Old Buck Skin Leggons. 1 plain Scarlet Jacket new
1 Do. Old, 1 Pr. Scarlet Breeches. 1 Pr. of Buck Skin do.
1 Scarlet Silk Jacket Trim'd with Gold Lace
1 small Red Pocket Book with some papers & needles
1 Fur Cap 1 pair plated Buckles 3 pr. Shoes viz. 1 new & 2 Old
1 Old blue Breech Clout 1 Pr. of white Legons bound
1 Knife Case, & belt 1 Match Coat
1 New Saddle & Saddle Cloth 1 Beaver Hat 1 Rifle, Pouch & Horn
1 Broach & Ear Ring 1 pipe Tomahawk 1 P Knee buckles & 1 P Spectacles

Indian Trade Goods, 1756: Accounts from the Ohio Company Papers

These accounts from the Ohio Company Papers list Indian trade goods and the furs and skins owing in exchange for manufactured items. These are two separate documents (the Native Americans named in the second part did not trade with Campbell, whose accounts are given first). These accounts appear in Kenneth P. Bailey's *The Ohio Company Papers, 1753–1817, Being Primarily Papers of the "Suffering Traders" of Pennsylvania* (Arcata, Calif., 1947), 134–135, 137–138.

[April 24, 1756] The following is an Account of Goods which Joseph Campbel [who kept store in Pittsburgh] who was employ'd by Teaffe & Calender trusted to the Indians as he declared before his Death & for which they the said Teaffe & Callender never recd. any Satisfaction Neither can the Books of said Campbel because he being killd by an Indian & the Books not to be found——

To 2C [200] Strouds @ 2 Bucks & a Doe P Stroud . . 50 Bucks	18.	15.	0
To 10 Match Coats . . . . . 25 Bucks	9.	7.	6
To 12 Quarts of powder . . . . . 12 Bucks	4.	10.	0
To Lead . . . . . .10 Bucks	3.	15.	0
To [illeg.] Gross of Garter . . . . . .12 Bucks	4.	10.	0
To Ribboning. . . . . 7 Bucks	2.	12.	6
To Wampum . . . . . .20 Bucks	7.	10.	0
To Knives. . . . . 11 Bucks	4.	2.	6
To a Rifle Gun. . . . . 20 Bucks	7.	10.	0
To 7 Kettles. . . . . 35 Bucks	13.	2.	6
To 6 lb Wt: of paint . . . . . .36 Bucks	14.	0.	0
To 15 Blankets. . . . . 37 Bucks & a Doe	14.	11.	3

Account of the losses of James Dunning
May 11, 1756
Sundry Debts due by the Indians belonging to the said Town [Twigtwee Town] trusted out by myself —

The Blind Capt. . . . . 60 Bucks @ 7/6 P[er] B[uck]	£22.	10.	0
The Raccoon . . . . . 20 Bucks	7.	10.	0
The Black Dog. . . . . 10 Ditto	3.	15.	0
The Sewer . . . . . .7 Ditto & 1 Doe	2.	16.	3
The Pianguisha . . . . . .7 Ditto & 1 Doe	2.	16.	3
The Stone . . . . . .15 Ditto	5.	2.	6
The Old King . . . . . 5 Ditto & 1 Doe	2.	1.	3
The Old Kings Son. . . . . 3 Ditto	1.	2.	6
The Ottawa Man . . . . . 5 Ditto	1.	17.	6
Quittape. . . . . 9 Ditto	3.	7.	6
	[£]52.	18.	9

An advertisement for John Greenhow's Store from *The Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 12, 1771, p. 3, col. 2.

Greenhow's Store Advertisement, 1771

To be SOLD at John Greenhow's *Store, near the Church, in* WILLIAMSBURG *for ready Money, on reasonable Terms,*

BROADCLOTHS, Stuffs, Shags, Flannels, Negro Cotton, Rolls, Osnabrugs, *Irish* Linens, Sheeting, Linen, Cambricks, Lawns, Muslin, *India* Damasks, white Calicoes, Humhums, *India* Dimity, printed Linens, Cottons and Calicoes, Cloaks and Cardinals, genuine Drugs and Medicines, Wholesale or Retail, at an unusual low Price, particularly the best picked Bark, Crucibles, Silversmiths casting Sand, Anvils, small and large Shears, and most Sorts of Tools for that Business, Watchmakers Tools, and a Variety of Materials for the Trade, Sets of Blacksmiths Tools, complete or separate, Surveyors Instruments, and Books for their Instruction, a large Assortment of Carpenters and Cabinet Makers Tools and Materials, Tools and Materials for almost every Business, various Sorts of Instruments for drawing Teeth, Pocket Cases of Surgeons Instruments, genteel Dressing Boxes for Travellers, Pinking Irons, Sheet Iron, Iron Pots from one Quart to twenty five Gallons, Iron Dogs and Backs, Iron and Copper Tea Kettles, Mortars, Skillets, Salamanders, Bread Hoes, a great Variety of Mill Saws, Pit and Crosscut Saws, Saws of all Sorts, with both Steel and Iron Plates, very neat Fowling Pieces with false Breeches, Bridle Locks, Water Pans, Rasps and Files of almost all Sorts and Sizes, Steel of all Sorts, Spinet Keys and Wire, wove Brass Wire for Wheat Fans and Riddles, Ditto for *Indian* Meal and Flower, Closestool, Bed, and Warming Pans, polishing Powders of most Sorts, Borax, crude Sal Ammoniac and Argol, Logwood, Redwood, Fustick, Madder, Galls, Alum, Copperas, Indigo, Old Spirits, best and common Arrack, *Madeira, Lisbon*, red Port, Claret, *Canary*, and *Renish* Wines, mixed Sweetmeats, preserved Ginger, Orange Chips, candied Angelica, Barley Sugar, white and brown Sugar Candy, Anchovies, Olives, Capers, Vinegar, best and common Olive Oil, Groats, Split Peas, Rice, Sago, Salop, all Sorts of Spices, Currants, single and best double Bed Blankets, early Garden Peas, and various Sorts of fresh Garden Seeds, Canary, Rape, Lucern, Timothy, Sainfoin, Clover, Flax, and *French* Furze Seeds, Ounce Threads of most Prices, Cambrick Thread, cotton, coloured, and Marking Threads, Chalk, Whiting, Garden Spades and Rakes, Ditching Spades, Iron Fenders, Cinder and Dust Shovels, Trevets, Pothooks, flat and Box Irons and Stands, Scythes and Scythe Stones of all Sorts, a Variety of Toys, Jack Chains, Well Chains, Chain Traces and Back Bands, large and small Fryingpans and Drippingpans, Half Gallon Case Bottles, Bottle Corks, Sheet Cork for Seines, Tar, Rosin, Salt, Coffee, Chocolate, **Bohea, Green, Congo, and best Hyson Teas, imported before the Association,** [emphasis added] Candlesticks, a great Variety of Money Scales and Weights, Brass Scales and Weights from one Pound to fifty six, Bed Screws and Bunts, Staymakers Knives, Whalebone, Tabby, Ticking, and every other Material for the Trade, Working Canvas, and Worsteds, of all Shades, Tailors Shears and Needles of all Sorts, Hand Reading Glasses and Spectacles, Concave and Convex Ditto, green Preservers and Visuals, Watchmakers Magnifyers, most Sizes of Anchors and Tongues for Silver Buckles, Locks of almost all Sorts, both curious and common, particularly large Iron Case Locks for Doors, and large Padlocks for Prisons, most Sorts of Nails, Hinges, and Materials for Building, Window Glass, Linseed and Train Oil, Paints of most Sorts, Hunting Horns, Dog Collars large and small House Bells, Key and Curtain Rings, Stone Buttons set in Silver, Stone Hair Pins, Tortoiseshell and Horn Poll Combs, Horn, Ivory, and Box Combs, Crystals for Sleeve Buttons, Earrings and Lockets, Foil of various Colours for Jewellers, Hour Glasses, large and small rich China Bowls, China, Glass, Tin, and Delf Ware of most Sorts, Cart and Chair Wheel Boxes of most Sizes, Block Tin, Tin Sheets, Spelter, Pewter Ware, Glass Mortars, Bedticks, Pewter Measures, Ivory Memorandum Books add [*sic*] Pencils, Silk Purses, coarse and fine Hats, Brushes and Pencils of most Sorts, Lamps, Vermin and Beaver Traps, Fiddles and *Roman* Strings, *German* Flutes and Fifes, Shoe Lasts, Wooden Heels, Machine, Shoe and polishing Blacking, Spinel, Breeches Ball, Buckskin Breeches, Looking Glasses of most Size[s,] Flax Hackles, Wool, Cotton, and Stock Cards, Hoes, Axes, Adzes, Trowels, Currying Knives, *Ward's* Ether for the Headach, Ringworm Earth, Glue, *Mezzotinto* Prints, *Pyrront* Water, Sifter and Search Bottoms, Coffee Mills, curled Hair, Barbers Pipes, Silk, Thread, and Riband, Candle Moulds, Cock Gaffs, neat Horse and Womens Scissors, Necklaces, Beads and Bugles, most fashionable Sorts of Trimmings for Hat Makers, white, Worsted, and Cotton Stockings of all Sorts, a Variety of Stationary and Books, such as Family Bibles, Dictionaries, Dispensatories, *Tislot* [?] and *Fothergill* on Health, *Bracken's* Farriery, &c. and many Hundreds of other Articles.

Margaret Hunter Millinery Advertisement, 1771

Millinery advertisement, *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), June 20, 1771. Some of the items mentioned here may surprise those who think milliners sold only ladies' fashions.

MARGARET HUNTER, MILLINER, WILLIAMSBURG, HEREBY informs her Friends, and Customers that she is removed to the Corner Store in Doctor Carter's Brick House, where she carries on the Millinery Business in all its Branches; also makes Ladies Hats, Bonnets, Cloaks, and Cardinals, and mounts Fans in the neatest Manner.

* She has for sale a great variety of Millinery, TOYS, Stresburg, Rappes, Weston's and Scotch SNUFF, &c.&c.&c. Orders from the Country will be faithfully and punctually executed, on the most reasonable Terms.

Bernard Moore's "Scheme of a Lottery," 1768

Bernard Moore's scheme for a lottery, from *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 1, 1768, lists prizes including land, cattle, and skilled slaves.

SCHEME *of a* LOTTERY, *for disposing of certain* LAND, SLAVES, *and* STOCKS, *belonging to the subscriber.*

Prizes.		Value.	CONTENTS *of* PRIZES.
1 of		£5000	To consist of a forge and geared gristmill, both well fixed, and situate on a plentiful and constant stream, with 1800 acres of good land, in King and Queen county, near Todd's Bridge, which cost 6000.
1 of		1375	To consist of 550 acres of very good land, lying in King William County, on Pamunkey river, called Gooch's, part of 1686 acres purchased of William Claiborne, deceased; the line to extend from said river to the back line across toward Mattapony.
1 of		1925	To consist of 550 acres of very good land adjoining and below the said tract, lying on Pamunkey river, whereon is a good dwelling-house, 70 feet long and 20 feet wide, with three rooms below and three above, also all other good and convenient outhouses, 1000 fine peach trees thereon, with many apple trees and other sorts of fruit, a fine high and pleasant situation, and the plantation in exceeding good order for cropping; the line to extend from said river to the back line towards Mattapony.
1 of		1750	To consist of 586 acres, below the aforesaid two tracts, whereon is a fine peach orchard, and many fine apple trees; the plantation is in exceeding good order for cropping, and very fine for corn and tobacco, and abounds with a great quantity of white oak, which will afford, it is thought, 1000£ worth of plank and staves.
65 of	£50	3250	To consist of 6500 acres of good land, in Caroline county; to be laid off in lots of 100 acres each.
4 of	75	300	To consist of 812 acres of good land, in Spotsylvania county, in the fork between Northanna and the north fork, with a large quantity of low grounds and meadow land; to be laid off in lots of 203 acres each.
1 of		280	A Negro man named Billy, about 22 years old, an exceeding trusty good forgeman, as well at the finery as under the hammer, and understands putting up his fire; also his wife named Lucy, a young wench, who works exceeding well both in the house and field.
1 of		200	A Negro man named Joe, about 27 years old, a very trusty good forgeman, as well at the finery as under the hammer, and understands putting up his fire.
1 of		200	A Negro man named Mingo, about 24 years old, a very trusty good finer and hammerman, and understands putting up his fire.
1 of		180	A Negro man named Ralph, about 22 years old, an exceeding good finer.
1 of		220	A Negro man named Isaac, about 20 years old, an exceeding good hammerman and finer.
1 of		250	A Negro man named Sam, about 26 years old, a fine chaffery man; also his wife Daphne, a very good hand at the hoe, or in the house.
1 of		200	A Negro man named Abraham, about 26 years old, an exceeding good forge carpenter, cooper, and clapboard carpenter.
1 of		150	A Negro man named Bob, about 27 years old, a very fine master collier.
1 of		90	A Negro man named Dublin, about 30 years old, a very good collier.
1 of		90	A Negro man named London, about 25 years old, a very good collier.
1 of		90	A Negro man named Cambridge, about 24 years old, a good collier.
1 of		90	A Negro man named Harry, a very good collier.
1 of		100	A Negro man named Toby, a very fine master collier.
1 of		120	A Negro man named Peter, about 18 years old, an exceeding trusty good waggoner.
1 of		190	A Negro man named Dick, about 24 years old, a very fine blacksmith; also his smith's tools.
1 of		80	A Negro man named Sampson, about 32 years old, the skipper of the flat.
1 of		70	A Negro man named Dundee, about 38 years old, a good planter.
1 of		85	A Negro man named Caroline Joe, about 35 years old, a very fine planter.
1 of		110	A Negro woman named Rachel, about 32 years old, and her children Daniel and Thompson, both very fine.
1 of		70	A Negro woman named Hannah, about 16 years old.

1 of		75	A Negro man named Jack, a good planter.
1 of		75	A Negro man named Ben, about 25 years old, a good house servant, and a good carter, &c.
1 of		120	A Negro man named Robin, a good sawer, and Bella his wife.
1 of		70	A Negro girl named Sukey, about 12 years old, and another named Betty, about 7 years old, children of Robin and Bella.
1 of		75	A Negro man named York, a good sawer.
1 of		80	A Negro woman named Kate, and a young child called Judy.
1 of		60	A Negro girl (Aggy) and boy (Nat) children of Kate.
1 of		75	A Negro named Pompey, a young fellow.
1 of		110	A fine breeding woman named Pat, lame of one side, with child, and her three children, Let, Milley, and Charlotte.
1 of		60	A fine boy named Phill, son of Patty, about 14 years old.
1 of		50	A Negro man named Tom, an outlandish fellow.
1 of		280	A Negro man named Caesar, about 30 years old, a very good blacksmith; and his wife, named Nanny, with two children, Tab and Jane.
1 of		110	A Negro man named Edom, about 23 years old, a blacksmith, who has served four years to the trade.
1 of		160	A Negro man named Moses, about 23 years old, a very good planter; and his wife Phebe, a fine young wench, with her child Nell.
1 of		50	A Negro woman named Dorah, wife of carpenter Jemmy.
1 of		35	A Negro named Venus, daughter of Tab.
1 of		25	A Negro named Judy, wife of Sambo.
1 of		20	A Negro named Lucy, outlandish.
1 of		25	A Negro man named Toby, a good miller.
1 of		100	A team of exceeding fine horses, consisting of four, and their gear; also a good waggon.
1 of		80	a team of four horses, and their geer, with two coal waggons.
10 of	20	200	To consist of 100 head of cattle, to be laid off in 10 lots.

124 Prizes	£18,400
1716 Blanks	

1840 TICKETS, at 10£ each, is £18,400.

Managers are JOHN RANDOLPH, JOHN BAYLOR, GEORGE WASHINGTON, FIELDING LEWIS, ARCHIBALD CARY, CARTER BRAXTON, BENJAMIN HARRISON, RALPH WORMELEY, RICHARD HENRY LEE, THOMAS WALKER, THOMAS TABB, EDMUND PENDLETON, PETER LYONS, PATRICK COUTTS, NEIL JAMIESON, ALEXANDER DONALD, DAVID JAMESON, and JOHN MADISON, Gentlemen.

The above LOTTERY will be drawn on Thursday the 15th of this instant (December) in Williamsburg.

N.B. Not any of the cattle mentioned in this lottery are to be under the age of two years, nor none to exceed four or five years old.

BERNARD MOORE.

T. H. Breen, "Narrative of Commercial Life: Consumption, Ideology, and Community on the Eve of the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 50 (July 1993): 486–501.

[Note: This is an excerpt of a much longer article. Footnotes here are not sequential because of editing, but they follow the numbering in the printed article.]

. . .

The most striking aspect of the Revolutionary boycotts is their utter novelty. No previous popular rebellion had organized itself so centrally around the consumer. That the Americans did so is an additional indication of their modernity. Yet historians have not viewed the boycott movement as problematic: it just happened; it was a reflexive response to taxation without representation.[42] And so it must have seemed to most colonial Americans. While they defended their constitutional goals, fiercely affirming their rights, they seldom bothered to consider the rationale of nonimportation. Shared consumer assumptions and experiences flowed smoothly into the taken-for-granted of resistance. As a Philadelphia broadside declared, "the Stopping the Importation of Goods is the only probable Means of preserving to us and our Posterity . . . Liberty and Security."[43]

The first boycotts of 1765–1766 contested the Stamp Act. Similar protests occurred in 1768–1770 and 1774–1776. Over time, the nonimportation movement grew larger, more successful, and more democratic. Groups of local merchants usually planned and executed the initial efforts, but the driving force behind the various committees and associations gradually passed to the people. Throughout the colonies, extralegal bodies seized control of the boycott movement; as they did so, their members increasingly spoke in the name of a newly constituted American public.

While the boycott was rapidly becoming the distinctive signature of American political protest, colonists began to resituate themselves in an evolving commercial discourse. Their focus shifted away from reciprocity, away from a mutually beneficial exchange with Great Britain, to outright claims of American preeminence. "I think it may justly be said," boldly declared a Philadelphia writer, "that THE FOUNDATION OF THE POWER AND GLORY OF GREAT BRITAIN ARE LAID IN AMERICA."[44]

Although this booster may not have believed that the American tail really wagged the British dog, he and others made a strong case for Britain's economic dependence on American consumers. Thacher, for example, likened commerce within the British empire to "a grand chain" and concluded that Parliament could not remove the American links "without greatly endangering the whole."[45] In 1769, the South Carolina Gazette suggested that consumption of imported goods was really a source of political empowerment. Americans, the editor argued, "know themselves to be the best customers Great-Britain has, for her wares." They did not have to pay the oppressive taxes. Britain's rulers should learn that "every American has an indisputable right to lay his money out [on goods] as sparingly as he pleases." If Americans supported the boycott, then no one could predict what might happen. British merchants might suffer large losses; British workers might find themselves out of work. . . .

If riots in the Midlands of England failed to win parliamentary concessions, Americans had another card to play: they could go into manufacturing themselves. This had not been a topic of broad colonial interest before the passage of the Stamp Act, but once it became part of a general commercial conversation, it opened up new creative possibilities. Insistence that Americans were capable of satisfying their own consumer demand—something that they would not achieve for many decades—made it easier for people to imagine genuine economic independence. In any case, there is not much evidence that Revolutionary Americans wanted to roll back the commercial progress of the eighteenth century. If a recalcitrant Parliament forced their hand, explained a letter in the Boston Chronicle, "the people of America, must from necessity, if not from motives of interest, set up manufactures of their own: which must gradually diminish, and in consequence put an end to that mutual beneficial commerce, that has hitherto subsisted between us."[47]

Such plausible, though exaggerated, economic claims fed the boycott movement. . . . Local associations organized to promote non-importation and manufacturing represented initial, often tentative steps toward a radical reconstitution of civil society.[48] For in point of fact, Americans of the time were experimenting with new forms of community, founded not on traditional religious affiliations but on shared commercial interests. Only those who insist that preindustrial capitalism inevitably sparked destructive individualism will be surprised by popular attempts to construct interpretive communities around a temporary withdrawal from an Atlantic marketplace.

The truth of the matter is that a liberal market ideology proved capable of sustaining interpretive communities—indeed, of mobilizing ordinary men and women into associa-

tions unequivocally dedicated to the common good. As a "Tradesman" writing for the Pennsylvania Chronicle in 1770 well understood, civil society in America could develop from sources other than republicanism. He explained that "as we form a considerable, independent, and respectable Body of the People, we certainly have an equal Right to enter into Agreements and Resolutions with others for the public Good, in a sober, orderly Manner, becoming Freemen and loyal Subjects . . . [L]et us determine, for the Good of the Whole, to strengthen the Hands of the Patriotic Majority, by agreeing not to purchase British Goods."[49]

. . .

The nonimportation movement—in effect, a communal experiment in applied ideology—exposed a radical egalitarian strand within the commercial discourse. To appreciate this development one must remember that the consumer market of the mid-eighteenth century was open to almost any white person able to pay the price. Generous credit, paper currency, and newspaper advertisements encouraged broad participation.[51] Usually, free producers were also consumers. And on the eve of Revolution, the success of the colonial boycotts depended on all these consumers temporarily deciding to become nonconsumers. The argument for the liberating possibilities of agency in the new Anglo-American marketplace is not intended to mitigate the exploitative and oppressive effects of eighteenth-century capitalism. The development of an Atlantic economy meant that African-America slaves and indentured servants—indeed, unfree people of all sorts—worked very hard, often under extremely harsh conditions. New forms of self-fashioning were built on the suffering of laborers in England and America who made mass consumption possible.

Since in the politicization of private economic choice every free voice counted, it is not surprising that the promoters of the boycott movement tried to legitimate their activities through appeals to the popular will. They presumed to speak for the majority, however defined. Exclusiveness ran counter to the spirit of this powerful mobilizing discourse. . . . The so-called subscription lists also testify to the egalitarian thrust of eighteenth-century commercial thought. These instruments extended the boycott movement to large numbers of people who normally would not have had a voice in public affairs. The lists presented individual consumers with a formal declaration of purpose, followed by an oath or pledge. The goal of subscription was in part indoctrination. The forms reviewed a growing catalog of grievances and announced that in the short term only nonimportation could preserve liberty and property. More significant, the ritual of signing gave birth to new collectivities. The ordinary consumer who accepted the logic of the argument and signed the paper thereby volunteered to support a community protest.

Surviving subscriptions resonate with religious as well as contractual language. . . .

The subscription campaign caught the public interest. Numbers provide an index of political success. In 1767, the Boston Evening-Post reported that "the Subscription Rolls are daily filling up at the Town Clerk's Office." Charlestown, Dedham, and Providence had launched efforts of their own, and there, too, the forms were "filling up fast."[55] The publisher of the South-Carolina Gazette established a central register where the separate subscriptions could be tabulated, and he urged "Gentlemen in the country possessed of these Forms . . . to transmit the names subscribed thereto, as frequently as possible."[56] The Maryland Gazette informed its readers that 840 people had already signed the local lists; many more were expected.[57]

One person's signature seems to have been as desirable as another's. In 1767, Boston town officials specifically urged "Persons of all Ranks" to come forward, and in Annapolis, Maryland, people circulating "our Association-Paper" predicted that colonists of "every Degree" would sign it. The South-Carolina Gazette even reported that in New York, "The Sense of the People was taken by Subscription, and near 800 Names got, about 300 of the People without a single Shilling Property."[59]

Even more significant, the subscription movement actively involved women. It was as consumers participating in new interpretive communities that American women first gained a political voice. Although men may have pushed women to the margins of formal protest, so that they had to organize their own subscriptions, women made the most of this opportunity. In 1770, for example, a group of Boston women drew up an agreement "against drinking foreign TEA." One hundred twenty-six "young Ladies" announced: "We the Daughters of those Patriots who have and now do appear for the public Interest . . . do with Pleasure engage with them in denying ourselves the drinking of Foreign Tea, in hopes to frustrate a Plan that tends to deprive the whole community of their all that is valuable in Life."[60] Another Boston subscription gained the signatures of 300 "Mistresses of their respective families." The next week, 110 more names appeared.[61] In 1774, the women of Charleston, South Carolina, formed an association and, according to the local newspaper, "are subscribing to it very fast."[62]

These innovative efforts to bring people into the boycott remind us that consumer-based actions were inherently more open than were the traditional political ones accessible only to while males with property. Peter Oliver, the Boston loyalist who later penned a caustic history of the Revolution, immediately spotted the radical thrust of the market protest. Recounting what he had witnessed during the late 1760s, Oliver claimed that agitators had circulated

"A Subscription Paper . . . Enumerating a great Variety of Articles not to be imported from England, which they supposed would muster the Manufacturers in England into a national Mob to support their Interests. Among the various prohibited Articles, were Silks, Velvets, Clocks, Watches, Coaches & Chariots; & it was highly diverting, to see the names & marks, to the Subscription, of Porters & Washing Women."[63] Oliver ridiculed such activities. How could persons outside politics ever hope to have their opinions on important issues taken seriously? But the poor laborers of Boston—women as well as men—knew what they were doing. Their "names & marks" testify to their membership in a new volitional community that people of Oliver's status could never comprehend.

Subscription should be seen, therefore, as an instrument through which the colonists explored the limits of democratic participation. Appearing on the margins of mainstream political discourse, the popular lists raised the issue of political exclusivity.[64] Did the men and women who signed the papers, for example, necessarily represent the people? If they did not, then for whom did they speak?

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The key element of the developing argument was the rejection of exclusiveness. . . . the common good was a public responsibility. There was no celebration here—as one finds in the republican literature of that time—of the man of wealth and leisure, the independent property holder who rises above grubby commercial interests and contemplates with marvelous objectivity the general welfare. Legal standing did not define citizenship. . . .

Americans of different backgrounds and regions regularly insisted that without "virtue" their cause had no chance whatsoever. Virtue was the social glue that kept the newly formed liberal communities from fragmenting. Colonists who signed the subscriptions, supported the boycotts of British goods, and marched the streets carrying banners proclaiming "Liberty and Non-Importation" assumed that their protests mobilized virtuous people. . . .

. . .

Despite charges of political oppression, Americans never really confronted absolutist authority—any rate, nothing on the order of the ancien régime in France and Germany. British colonial government was notoriously weak. In this social and political setting American authors defined what was essentially a commercial public sphere. In newspapers and pamphlets, popular writers assumed separate, though entirely complementary voices. They spoke for as well as to a reasoning and virtuous public. The bourgeois audience invented by the commercial press was especially skilled at spotting fraudulent patriots. As a South Carolinian explained in 1770, "the non-Importers had long been endeavouring to discover who were true, and who Traitors to the Cause of American liberty, which nothing could so effectually discover as the present Measure: But, since the Sons of Liberty have got all their Names, and every Man who before wore a Mask, now appears with an uncovered Face, they begin to be not a little uneasy."[83]

When vicious consumers were caught with British manufactured goods, it was bourgeois virtue that held them accountable, often demanding full confession and restitution. . . .

. . . [L]ocal conversations . . . encouraged virtuous consumers to imagine even larger collectivities. The process was slow, halting, punctuated by self-doubt and mutual recrimination, but during the run-up to Independence, Americans living in scattered communities managed to reach out convincingly to distant strangers, to persons not directly known but assumed to share in the development of a new consumer marketplace. The initial boycott experiments of the 1760s persuaded the colonists of the need for broader, more effective alliances. They learned about each other through the weekly newspapers that were themselves both a product and a voice of expanding commerce.[85]

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The collapse of non-importation in 1770 left Americans in a sour mood. As they assessed the failure to wean themselves from British goods, they momentarily doubted their moral ability to create a truly virtuous state. Their self-deprecatory statements during this period seem to echo the anticommercial rhetoric of republican discourse, persuading some modern historians, at least, that preindustrial capitalism and the public good were in fact incompatible. What, inquired one newspaper essay, can the colonists learn from recent defection from the boycott?

"That self-interest is irresistible.

"That liberty and public good can stand no chance among men when self-interest is its rival.

"That self-interest recommends the most underhanded schemes to every man's good conscience."[92]

"Cato" of New York agreed. "The late Conduct of the Merchants of New-York, Philadelphia, &c.," he explained, "sufficiently proves, that no Dependence is to be had upon any Combination or Agreement that can be entered into for the public Good, however well calculated to answer that End — if it interferes with the private immediate Interest of Individuals."[93]

Such statements—and they were common—should not be interpreted as evidence that Americans rejected either pre-industrial capitalism or the consumer marketplace. The renunciation of excess in the market made sense only in a society that took consumption for granted. The

challenge for Revolutionary Americans was to negotiate between extreme self-indulgence and primitive simplicity. It involved mediation, not repudiation. . . .

In any case, the cries of the pessimists were unfounded. They misread the commercial changes sweeping American society and therefore underestimated the capacity of men and women to translate individual market behavior into mass political protest. The delegates to the First Continental Congress did not make that mistake. They appreciated the centrality of consumption in mobilizing persons of different regions and social backgrounds. On October 20, 1774, Congress authorized the Association, a broad network of local elected committees entrusted with the total enforcement of non-importation. These bodies became in effect, "committees of public safety." At the moment of decision about ultimate political loyalties, the colonists' friends and neighbors were busy monitoring commercial behavior and enforcing bourgeois virtue in the name of the common good.[95] "We need only fight our Own selves," announced "A Carolinian" in 1774, "suppress for a while our Luxury and Corruption, and wield the Arms of Self Denial in our own Houses, to obtain the Victory . . . And the Man who would not refuse himself a fine Coat, to save his Country, deserves to be hanged."[96]

We have traced a complex flow of ideas into actions, of shared assumptions about a commercial empire into forms of political resistance. This was most certainly not the only route from experience and ideology to revolution. Other, more celebrated political discourses helped Americans make sense out of rapidly changing social and economic conditions within the British empire. In this particular exploration, however, we have reconstituted a frame of reference that defined itself around participation in a newly established consumer marketplace. This focus powerfully illuminates how the great shaping forces of history—commercial capitalism, for example—impinged on the lives of ordinary men and women, compelling them to reimagine themselves within a larger polity. For consuming Americans, the mental process had unintended results: the creation of political instruments open to persons of "all ranks," the development of a concept of virtue that included any man or woman capable of economic self-restraint, and the formation of new interpretive communities based on shared, secular interests.

42 Arthur Meier Schlesinger, *The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763–1776,* Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, LXXVII, NO. 182 (New York, 1918); Andrews, "The Boston Merchants and the Non-Importation Movement," *Transactions of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts,* XIX (1916–1917), 182–101; Edmund S. Morgan, "The Puritan Ethic and the American Revolution," *WMQ,* 3d. Ser., XXIV (1967), 3–43; J. E. Crowley, *This Sheba, Self: The Conceptualization of Economic Life in Eighteenth-Century America* (Baltimore, 1974), 125–146; Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), 321–378.

43 The Following Address Was Read At A Meeting of the Merchants . . . , 25th of April, 1768 (Philadelphia, 1768).

44 [Dickinson] *Late Regulations,* p. 31.

45 [Thacher], *Sentiments of a British American,* 15.

47 *Boston Chronicle,* Feb. 13, 1769.

48 See Judith N. Shklar, *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991).

49 *Pennsylvania Chronicle, and Universal Advertiser,* May 14, 1770.

51 Breen, "An Empire of Goods," 467–499.

55 *South-Carolina Gazette,* Dec. 6, 1773.

56 *South-Carolina Gazette,* June 29, 1769.

57 *Maryland Gazette,* May 11, 1769. See Robert A. Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World* (New York, 1976), 49–52.

59 *South-Carolina Gazette* [Supplement], Aug. 20, 1770.

60 *Boston Gazette,* Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26, 26 [Supplement], 1770.

61 *Ibid.,* Feb. 12, 1770.

62 *South-Carolina Gazette,* Sept. 19, 1774. For a misogynist critique of these organizing efforts see *Boston Evening-Post,* Feb. 7, 1774. See also Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1980), 37–41; Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "'Daughters of Liberty': Religious Women in Revolutionary New England," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Women in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville, Va., 1989), 211–243; Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1988); and Breen, "Liberalism and Luxury: Eighteenth-Century Women in a Revolutionary Political Discourse," Society of the Cincinnati Annual Lecture, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, April 20, 1992.

63 *Peter Oliver's Origin and Progress of the American Revolution: A Tory View,* ed. Douglass Adair and John A. Schutz (Stanford, Calif., 1976), 61.

64 On the "contagion of liberty" see Bernard Bailyn, *Ideological Origins,* 230–319.

83 *South-Carolina Gazette,* [supplement], Aug. 20, 1770.

85 See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983), 80–148.

92 *Connecticut Courant,* Jan. 8, 1771.

93 *New-York Journal,* Sept. 27, 1770; *New-London Gazette,* Oct. 5, 1770.

95 Breen, "'Baubles of Britain'," 97–104; Jerrilyn Greene Marston, *King and Congress: The Transfer of Political Legitimacy, 1774–1776* (Princeton, N.J., 1987); David Ammerman, *In the Common Cause: The American Response to the Coercive Acts of 1774* (Charlottesville, Va., 1974).

96 *South-Carolina Gazette,* June 27, 1774.

Lorena S. Walsh, "Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency: Living Standards and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1643–1777," *Journal of Economic History* 43 (1983): 109–117.

By the mid-eighteenth century, tidewater Chesapeake households at all levels of wealth were both able and willing to buy a wide range of non-essential consumer goods either previously unavailable or long considered unimportant. The use of amenities and often luxuries as props for increasingly elaborated and differentiated life styles was not a result of country folk imitating city consumption patterns, however. Urban life styles did produce new spending habits, but the vast majority of the population who lived in rural areas managed to improve their consumption levels without altering traditional patterns of resource allocation.

Throughout the tidewater Chesapeake across the seventeenth and into the first quarter of the eighteenth century, colonists adopted a style of living that required a minimum of domestic or architectural props for its support. Until the 1730s, settlers below the level of the economic elite put a high priority on basic household equipment—a good bed, a few cooking pots, something to eat food off of, a chest or two for storing goods, and a gun for hunting. When an area was first settled, even these were in short supply. But when farms were well established, chairs, tables, bedsteads, sheets, chamber pots, and interior lighting were among the ordinary—to us—amenities without which many poorer folk managed to function very well. Such items were more common among middling landowning families, but were still far from universally standard equipment. Living largely in crudely constructed, one- or two-room dwellings where chambers functioned alternately or simultaneously as bedroom, sitting room, workspace, kitchen, and dining hall, ordinary families found that a few pieces of easily movable, multi-purpose furniture and a small store of communal vessels best served their needs.

The elite made other choices, but these too were largely amplifications of basic needs with an overlay of modest amenities that contributed more to comfort than to ostentatious display. Houses were more adequate, but so "meane and Little" by English standards that newcomers found them unreliable guides to the owners' true social position. Rather than building lavishly, the early planter elite built very modestly, and then established social distance from servants and slaves by relegating their workers (and some workspaces, like kitchens) to flimsy outbuildings. Within the dwelling of the white family living and work spaces remained intermixed. The parlor might indeed boast a cupboard and a curtained bed, but it likely also housed bales of trade goods, tools, horse gear, and stored foodstuffs.

Economic prosperity meant that all family members sat on individual chairs instead of stools, beds, chests, or communal benches; ate from a table; made use of candles after dark; had more pewter dining and drinking vessels; more and better beds with linens, bedsteads, and hangings; a greater variety of cooking equipment; and now and then a picture or looking glass. However, once one got beyond the beds, chairs, tables, sheets, and the like, there was no agreed-upon assemblage of goods that supported a truly distinctive upper-class life style, nor even any consensus that more than mere sufficiency was necessary.

Beginning about 1715 the tidewater elite began to acquire a greater array of material goods that facilitated a style of living that more clearly set them off from the ordinary folk. Specialized furniture like japanned chests of drawers and escritoires, teaware, elaborate looking glasses, individual cutlery, ceramic punch bowls, clocks and watches, and sets of imported cane chairs were among the most prominent. The artifacts are easy enough to trace, but almost undocumented is the blending of appointment, ritual, and manner that was part of the process. Families not only bought more personal possessions and increasingly individualized personal possessions; they had also to learn to use them to best effect and to school the children in the use of objects and ceremonies to communicate the "liberality of sentiment and genuine hospitality" that became hallmarks of the Chesapeake gentry.[1]

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the range of domestic props that gentlefolk found desirable exploded. Matched china place settings; mahogany chairs, tables, buffets, and bookcases; specialized beverage glasses and serving dishes; an impressive array of kitchen gadgetry; garniture; candelabra; prints; tea and coffee services—to name a few—began to fill up larger, more formal dwellings that now boasted separate drawing and dining rooms. Social spaces became divorced from work places, storerooms, and sleeping quarters, and each area was furnished with increasingly specialized equipment appropriate to the activities, formal or informal, there pursued. Meanwhile coaches and carriages appeared in quantity for the first time and allowed travel in undisputed style.

Initially only the rich participated in this increasingly lavish expansion of consumption. By the 1730s, however, middling families got into the act and by the 1750s, even the poorer sorts were finding a wide variety of non-essentials increasingly desirable. At the lowest levels of wealth this meant acquiring more of the ordinary amenities families had so long foregone—tables, chairs, bedsteads, individual knives and forks, bed and table linens, and now—inexpensive ceramic tableware. It also meant acquiring a taste for that

soon-to-be symbolic luxury—tea. Middling families moved beyond commonplace decencies, substituting a piece or two of case furniture for plain, utilitarian chests and trunks; filling fine tables with full ceramic place settings; preparing more varied and elaborate meals with a burgeoning variety of cookware; drinking tea in full ritual fashion; and decorating the house with pictures, mirrors, vases, and flowerpots. Neat, orderly domestic furnishings that afforded comfort with here and there an appropriate touch of elegance—and of course manners to match—were becoming one of the chief means of conveying a family's status and respectability.

Planters' letterbooks and diaries, travelers' accounts, and studies of urban residents provide picturesque but not necessarily typical information about living standards in the colonial Chesapeake. The main ingredient of this study is approximately 4,000 probate inventories from three areas—York County, Virginia, and Anne Arundel and Somerset counties, Maryland, from the 1640s through 1777. The first two were leading tobacco-growing counties and the sites of the capitals of the two colonies. The last was more marginally integrated into the tobacco economy, was more isolated from major trade routes, and had no important towns. Together, the three counties cover a broad range of local experience and permit comparison of rural and urban consumer behavior. The contents of the inventories were studied by several methods—tabulation of values for major components of non-capital wealth, notation of the presence or absence of selected consumer goods, a count of the quantities of basic kinds of furnishings, and scoring based on the appearance of twelve selected amenities.[2]

This new and widespread willingness to buy inessentials as well as necessities and both in ever-increasing quantities—so evident from the inventories—has traditionally been associated with the spread of urban consumption habits and expenditure patterns into the countryside. A comparison of the inventories of decedents living in the capitals of Williamsburg and Annapolis with those of country residents dwelling both around and far away from these towns demonstrates, however, that this was not the case in the eighteenth-century Chesapeake.

By mid-century, the two towns had grown from small, unimpressive administrative centers that catered to periodic bursts of activity during public times into lively urban entities. Prominent officeholders and a growing colonial bureaucracy took up residence in town and began to indulge in a level of conspicuous consumption almost never matched in the countryside. They stocked newly built, elegant townhouses with the latest in fashionable imports with an abandon that some thought verged on decadence. In addition, the local artisans and laborers who served the towns' affluent families purchased amenities and minor luxuries on a scale far exceeding that of country residents at similar levels of wealth. In town, keeping up with whatever group of Joneses it was relevant to keep up with meant spending ever greater proportions of total movable wealth on consumer goods.

In contrast, country dwellers, the vast majority of Chesapeake residents, changed their consumption habits without altering long-established spending patterns. In all the rural areas studied, mean investment in non-capital goods failed to rise after 1730, just at the time that the consumption habits of the general population began to change. Chesapeake planters then were all the more readily drawn into what one eighteenth-century observer called "the rising tide of extravagance" precisely because they could do so without departing from traditional investment patterns.[3]

The stability of rural consumption expenditures is increasingly apparent when non-capital wealth is further broken down into the proportions allocated to basic household functions such as sleeping, cooking, dining, seating, storage, and the like. Middling planters maintained relatively stable spending patterns on domestic equipment from the early eighteenth century, and by mid-century poorer families were allocating their resources much as middling groups did.[4] Changes in non-capital spending were most evident among the rural elite; their tastes for expensive timepieces, decorative objects, fine china, and coaches did bring about some shifts in spending priorities. For the majority of the population, however, nothing replaced the good feather bed as the most desirable of all domestic equipment. Improvements in the sleeping arrangements of the master and mistress and later of other family members continued to absorb about a third of non-capital wealth. Utensils for cooking food and eating it remained second in importance. Rural families came to fulfill basic needs, to fill them more comfortably, and still to acquire some non-essentials without greatly changing spending patterns inherited from a time when artifacts mattered much less.

Given the late development and small populations of Chesapeake towns, it is not surprising that their influence on the countryside was limited. An examination of spending and marketing practices in the towns suggested other reasons why country residents did not simply imitate their urban neighbors. First, town dwellers spent proportionately more of their non-capital resources on particularly social equipment—elaborate dining ware, gaming tables, toilet articles, lighting devices, tea services, and a multitude of highly specialized chairs and tables. Whatever their level of wealth, town folk owned, on the average, twice as many chairs and at least three times as many tables and candlesticks as did country cousins of similar means. The greater opportunities for social intercourse that town life afforded encouraged a proliferation of supporting props that even the much-vaunted country gentry hospitality simply did not

require. Other new spending patterns can also be related to peculiarities of town life. There, less had to be invested in heavy food-processing equipment because butchering, dairying, and milling were done by outlying farmers, while the tendency of most town folk to regulate their activities by clock time made little sense to farmers whose work routines could not easily be divorced from natural rhythms.

Second, the impact of towns as retail centers for consumer goods was limited. Urban shopkeepers did not acquire a large country clientele and apparently catered mostly to town residents and to nearby artisans. Town merchants and some craftsmen demanded payment in cash, a condition that resident officials, bureaucrats, and laborers whose wages were paid in coin could easily meet, but one that discouraged large-scale purchases by visiting planters who were accustomed to buying imports on credit.[5]

How then did rural families improve their standards of consumption if they relied neither on urban merchants nor on urban spending practices? First, improvements in marketing, transportation, and technology in Britain were making some kinds of consumer goods like ceramics and cutlery cheaper and more plentiful throughout the empire. Second, terms of trade continued to favor the region's staple after mid-century, so imported manufactures became proportionally less expensive. Third, native-born Americans usually inherited some basic consumer durables, and once they predominated over immigrants in the adult population around the turn of the eighteenth century, some families may have been able to purchase amenities earlier in the life cycle than would immigrants. An early age at marriage and consequently larger numbers of young children to support appears, however, to have wiped out most of this initial advantage until at least mid-century. Fourth, expansion of credit with the appearance of Scottish factors may have enabled small planters to purchase more non-essentials. Fifth, home industries increasingly provided replacements for basic imports, especially cloth. Such activities were almost non-existent in most of the Chesapeake before the 1680s, and thereafter were for a long time common only among the rich. By the 1750s, however, at least half the inventoried households in prime tobacco-growing counties were equipped to spin wool, cotton, or flax, and in more marginal areas over half of the recorded households were weaving cloth and almost all were making yarn. Manufacture of candles, soap, shoes, standard furniture, and brandy was less universal, but also on the rise. It seems far from accidental that these activities were most common in the areas that grew little or mostly low-grade tobacco. Those who benefited least from more favorable terms of trade managed to increase purchases of fashionable imports by buying fewer basic manufactures.

Finally, country residents had access to imperial marketing networks that had no dependence on colonial towns. Until the 1730s, stores stocking goods year-round were rare in the Chesapeake countryside. By the 1740s a growing network of country stores, largely Scots-operated, made basic sorts of imports readily available to ordinary planters even in relatively remote areas. The non-resident factors who operated the stores were willing to extend generous credit to their small-planter patrons in order to secure the year's tobacco crop. Choices among consumer goods might be limited by the amount of credit they could command, but were at least unhampered by some local magnate's conception of what they should be buying with their money.

Larger planters who sold their tobacco on consignment in effect did most of their shopping in England. Local purchases in country stores were often limited to staples like coarse cloth for slaves' clothing, nails, tools, and salt—items they ran short of before new supplies came in from abroad. Frequently planters shipped their lower-grade tobacco to west- and north-country factors and obtained from them Irish linen, Lancaster cotton, Staffordshire pottery, west-country cheeses, and other goods that could be acquired to advantage in these ports. The better grades of tobacco went to London agents whose employees rummaged the stores of the metropolis for their colonial customers. Discriminating planters could specify the shopkeeper from whom the wares were to be purchased, and factors' wives and daughters sometimes stepped in to fill the particular orders of the planter's spouse. While some disgruntled customers complained that they ended up with shopworn or outdated goods, it was the timeliness of the imports that struck English observers. In 1771 William Eddis wrote from Annapolis, "The quick importation of fashions from the mother country is really astonishing. I am almost inclined to believe that a new fashion is adopted earlier by the polished and affluent American than by many opulent persons in the great metropolis . . .," and even in distant rural areas he encountered "elegance as well as comfort . . . in very many of the habitations."[6]

By the eve of the American Revolution white Chesapeake colonists had dramatically changed their styles of living. Items of comfort and convenience were no longer luxuries, but rather were becoming essential to life in middling households and were deemed increasingly desirable among the poor. Meanwhile the elite were making use of the wide variety of new luxury products to define their status through the display of "superior elegance." The intensely competitive consumer culture of the towns attracted few adherents in the countryside. Nonetheless, rural dwellers were ready to participate in their own way in an increasingly sophisticated material culture where artifacts took on a critical role in defining family routines and relationships with the community at large.

Table 1

PERCENTAGES OF NON-CAPITAL MOVABLE WEALTH INVESTED IN VARIOUS CONSUMPTION CATEGORIES, SOMERSET COUNTY, MARYLAND, AND YORK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, 1643-1777

Consumption Category	1643–1654	1655–1664	1665–1677	1678–1687	1688–1699	1700–1709	1710–1722	1723–1732	1733–1744	1745–1754	1755–1767	1768–1777
Somerset County, Maryland, Total Movable Wealth £0-49 N=353												
Beds and Bedding	——	——	29.9%	38.2%	26.8%	31.6%	24.7%	——	37.6%	35.9%	——	32.0%
All Other Furniture	——	——	4.2	9.3	8.6	9.6	8.7	——	6.6	6.2	——	7.4
Cooking	——	——	30.8	23.8	20.2	20.5	15.2	——	13.2	12.6	——	9.5
Dining	——	——	13.1	7.2	6.2	5.6	5.5	——	8.6	11.1	——	10.8
Timekeeping	——	——	0	0	0	[a]	0	——	[a]	[a]	——	.4
York County, Virginia, Rural Residents, Total Movable Wealth £0-49 N=247												
Beds and Bedding	13.5	31.7	28.3	34.5	35.5	37.0	41.8	45.2	38.1	36.0	31.3[b]	40.1[b]
All Other Furniture	7.2	5.5	9.3	8.8	11.6	9.3	9.5	12.2	9.2	8.2	16.4	12.6
Cooking	36.5	15.3	15.1	16.4	15.7	13.0	11.3	12.9	10.7	14.9	13.3	15.5
Dining	6.2	7.2	8.2	8.5	12.7	9.7	11.6	14.4	10.2	10.4	9.0	8.8
Timekeeping	0	2.8	0	0	[a]	0	.2	[a]	0	.4	[a]	2.2
York County, Virginia, Urban Residents, Total Movable Wealth £0-49 N=22												
Beds and Bedding	——	——	——	——	——	46.8	33.7	33.5	29.0	34.7	26.2[b]	20.4[b]
All Other Furniture	——	——	——	——	——	29.8	6.5	4.4	14.7	11.9	17.1	14.1
Cooking	——	——	——	——	——	4.8	10.6	12.5	11.0	14.1	4.3	8.8
Dining	——	——	——	——	——	18.0	6.9	8.5	8.9	5.8	8.0	9.9
Timekeeping	——	——	——	——	——	0	.2	0	2.3	4.9	4.3	5.0
Somerset County, Maryland, Total Movable Wealth £50-225 N=377												
Beds and Bedding	——	——	42.5	40.6	32.2	32.5	36.1	——	37.8	34.7	——	36.7
All Other Furniture	——	——	5.7	10.3	10.4	8.0	8.7	——	8.0	11.1	——	12.5
Cooking	——	——	16.4	13.6	14.8	16.3	12.2	——	11.0	10.3	——	8.9
Dining	——	——	6.7	6.9	8.3	8.2	7.6	——	8.6	10.0	——	9.7
Timekeeping	——	——	0	0	0	0	0	——	[a]	.2	——	.4
York County, Virginia, Rural Residents, Total Movable Wealth £50-225 N=296												
Beds and Bedding	25.6	36.2	23.5	29.1	38.1	34.5	37.6	36.2	38.0	32.6	38.7[b]	33.7[b]
All Other Furniture	9.4	7.5	7.0	6.9	10.6	8.1	9.7	8.7	10.1	13.7	9.3	21.9
Cooking	14.3	19.4	11.0	12.4	11.5	12.9	12.1	12.7	12.4	9.9	8.8	11.6
Dining	4.8	5.5	7.1	7.2	10.3	7.0	9.3	9.7	9.7	9.8	9.6	7.6
Timekeeping	0	1.1	.8	0	.1	.2	[a]	0	.2	2.0	.9	0
York County, Virginia, Urban Residents, Total Movable Wealth £50-225 N=49												
Beds and Bedding	——	——	——	——	——	30.0	44.0	20.7	29.3	24.7	29.3[b]	30.0[b]
All Other Furniture	——	——	——	——	——	7.3	15.3	14.8	19.5	20.6	21.0	33.4
Cooking	——	——	——	——	——	13.9	11.5	5.8	9.4	9.8	19.5	8.4
Dining	——	——	——	——	——	13.8	13.1	4.2	10.9	14.4	15.5	9.5
Timekeeping	——	——	——	——	——	0	[a]	4.3	1.6	5.4	.8	1.3
Somerset County, Maryland, Total Movable Wealth £226+ N=203												
Beds and Bedding	——	——	25.7	24.7	38.4	23.9	41.7	——	25.8	28.6	——	26.2
All Other Furniture	——	——	18.6	3.9	4.0	6.5	11.5	——	11.7	12.8	——	12.4
Cooking	——	——	15.2	9.0	6.3	9.4	8.6	——	8.5	7.8	——	6.6
Dining	——	——	7.0	6.3	2.6	9.9	11.8	——	11.7	11.9	——	11.0
Timekeeping	——	——	0	0	[a]	.7	2.1	——	.9	.6	——	.9
York County, Virginia, Rural Residents, Total Movable Wealth £226+ N=240												
Beds and Bedding	——	27.1	24.9	22.1	14.8	20.0	24.4	24.8	32.1	27.9	23.8[b]	28.7[b]
All Other Furniture	——	8.1	7.7	6.3	7.8	8.0	11.0	12.5	12.1	12.6	11.8	15.7
Cooking	——	9.2	6.3	6.4	8.7	7.5	9.9	9.4	8.9	9.7	8.6	8.0
Dining	——	5.3	8.8	9.7	9.8	6.1	6.7	6.5	9.8	11.5	11.0	11.5
Timekeeping	——	0	.6	0	.1	.2	.7	.8	.9	1.8	1.9	1.6
York County, Virginia, Urban Residents, Total Movable Wealth £226+ N=34												
Beds and Bedding	——	——	——	——	——	23.3	28.3	24.7	24.0	22.0	17.5[b]	18.9[b]
All Other Furniture	——	——	——	——	——	5.3	13.4	9.1	18.4	19.4	23.5	19.7
Cooking	——	——	——	——	——	4.6	7.6	8.7	7.1	7.9	5.0	7.3
Dining	——	——	——	——	——	9.0	7.0	8.1	15.5	17.7	15.3	14.9
Timekeeping	——	——	——	——	——	1.3	1.0	4.0	2.5	2.9	2.4	5.6

[a] Less than .1 percent
[b] Minimum percentages, as many inventories for these years are partially mutilated

1 William Eddis, *Letters from America,* ed. Aubrey C. Land (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p. 57.

2 The inventories have been converted into constant currency using a consumer price index developed by the St. Mary's City Commission. Biases resulting from changes in reporting rates or in the age structure of the decedent population did not appear large enough to warrant adjustments for the purposes of this study.

3 Jack Michel reports like patterns among Philadelphia and rural Pennsylvania consumers. "In a Manner and Fashion Suitable to Their Degree: A Preliminary Investigation of the Material Culture of Early Rural Pennsylvania," *Working Papers from the Regional Economic History Research Center* 5, no. 1 (1981).

4 Cutting points were established as follows: £50 was close to the median value of all estates until about 1730. At about £225 the quantity and variety of consumer products increased perceptibly across the whole period.

5 Edward C. Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763–1805* (Baltimore, 1965), chap. 1.

6 Eddis, *Letters,* pp. 1, 57–58.

Sources for table: for Somerset County, Testamentary Proceedings, Inventories and Accounts, Somerset County Judicial Records, Inventories, and Accounts, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland; for York County, York County Deeds, Orders, and Wills, photocopies at Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia.

1775 City Directory

Occupation of Household Heads

PROFESSIONALS

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Brown	John	Clerk, Secretary's Office	Anne, née Geddy	
Baker	John	Dentist	None Known	
Carter	James I	Doctor	Hester	Common Council
Carter	William I	Doctor	Mary, née Wray, married 2 Dec. 1775	
DeSequeyra	John	Doctor	None Known	
Finnie	William	Doctor	1st Elizabeth, née Buckner; 2nd Elizabeth Chamberlain, by 30 Aug. 1776	
Galt	John Minson	Doctor	Judith, née Craig	Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
McClurg	James	Doctor	Unmarried	
Middleton	Alexander	Doctor	Unmarried	
Pasteur	William	Doctor	Elizabeth	JP—York Co.; Alderman; Mayor, Dec. 1775–Nov. 1776; Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Pitt *(left Williamsburg Aug. 1775)*	George	Doctor	Widower (Sarah d. 6 Nov. 1772) until April 1775	Keeper, Public Magazine
Powell	Thomas	Doctor	Elizabeth	
DeSabbe	Joseph	Doctor/Fencing Master	None Known	
Blair	John	Lawyer	Unmarried	Alderman; Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Everard	Thomas	Lawyer	Diana, née Robinson	Clerk, York Co. Court; Bruton Parish Vestry; Alderman; Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Hubbard	James	Lawyer	Frances. née Morton	Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Innes	James	Lawyer	Unmarried	Captain, Williamsburg Independent Co., 1775
Nicholas	Robert Carter	Lawyer	Anne, née Cary	JP—James City Co.; Bruton Parish Vestry; Alderman; Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Prentis	Joseph I	Lawyer	Unmarried	Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Randolph *(out of Williamsburg June–Nov. 1775)*	Edmund	Lawyer	Unmarried	
Randolph *(left Williamsburg Sept. 1775)*	John II	Lawyer	Ariana, née Jennings	JP—James City Co.; Alderman
Randolph *(d. Oct. 1775)*	Peyton	Lawyer	Elizabeth, née Harrison	JP—York Co.; Bruton Parish Vestry; City Recorder; Committee of Safety, 1774/75
Tazewell	John	Lawyer	Sarah, née Bolling	Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Waller	Benjamin	Lawyer	Martha	Bruton Parish Vestry; Committee of Safety, 1774/75
Waller	Benjamin Carter	Lawyer	Unmarried	Lieutenant, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Wythe	George	Lawyer	1st Anne, d. 1748; 2nd Elizabeth, née Taliaferro	Bruton Parish Vestry; Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Bracken	John I	Minister, Bruton Parish	Unmarried	
Camm	John	Minister, W&M	Elizabeth, née Hansford	
Dixon	John II	Minister, W&M	Widower, Lucy d. October 1769	
Jones	Emmanuel	Minister, Brafferton	Mary, née Macon	
Madison *(left Williamsburg May 1775)*	James	Minister, W&M; (ordained 20 Sept. 1775)	Unmarried	
Bland	William I	Minister, James City Parish	Married a Mrs. Willis of Warwick Co., June 1773	

Gwatkin *(left Williamsburg June 1775)*	Thomas	Minister, W&M	Unmarried	
Henley *(left Williamsburg May 1775)*	Samuel	Minister, W&M	Unmarried	
Rose	William	Teacher	Mary	
Yates	William II	Teacher, Usher, W&M	Unmarried	
Wallace	Samuel	Teacher, Whaley Free School	Probably married	
Burton	Robert	Teacher, Writing Master	None Known	
Davenport	Matthew	Teacher, Writing Master	Frances	Deputy Co. Clerk, York; Clerk, Williamsburg HustingsCourt; Cerk, Committee of Safety

ARTISANS

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Pierce *(in Williamsburg after Aug. 1775)*	William II	Artist	Unmarried	
Highland	Robert	Auctioneer	1st Mary, née Timson [?]; 2nd by 1778, Frances	
Moyer	Peter	Baker	Rebecca	
Scovemont	Nicholas	Baker	None Known	
Lockley	John	Bartender	None Known	
Lafong	George I	Barber	Margaret	
Lenox	Walter	Barber	Elizabeth	
Nichols	James	Barber	Elizabeth, née Wyatt	
Anderson	James	Blacksmith	Hannah, née Tyler	Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Bond	Robert	Blacksmith	Anne	
Draper	John	Blacksmith	None Known	
Martin	John	Blacksmith	Unmarried	
Cummings	Edward	Bookbinder	None Known	
Harwood	Humphrey	Bricklayer	Sarah	Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Phillips	William	Bricklayer	Elizabeth	
Spurr	Samuel II	Bricklayer	Anne, widow of Nathaniel Hay	
Jaram *(in Williamsburg after June 1775)*	Francis	Builder	None Known	
Saunders	John III	Builder	Married a daughter of Matthew Pierce	
Booker	Richard	Cabinetmaker	Mary	
Bucktrout	Benjamin	Cabinetmaker	Mary	
Crump	John	Cabinetmaker	None Known	
Dickinson	Edmund	Cabinetmaker	Unmarried	
Scott *(d. Dec. 1775)*	Peter	Cabinetmaker	None Known	Common Council
Allen	John	Carpenter	Frances [?]	
Atherton	James	Carpenter	Lucy	
Brown	John	Carpenter	Anne	
Gwyn	John	Carpenter	None Known	
Hatton	Matthew W.	Carpenter	Mary, née Wager	
Kendall	Joshua	Carpenter	None Known	
Lamb	John	Carpenter	Frances	
Middleton	David	Carpenter	None Known	
Moody	Philip IV	Carpenter	Judith	
Powell	Benjamin	Carpenter	Annabell	Common Council; Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Taylor	James	Carpenter	Elizabeth	
Deane	Elkanah	Coachmaker	Elizabeth	
Deane	Jones Allan	Chair Maker	None Known	
Holiday	William	Chair Maker	None Known	
Puryer	Obadiah	Chair Maker	None Known	
Shiphard	John	Chair Maker	None Known	
Taliaferro	Charles	Chair Maker	None Known	
Howard	John	Coach Painter	None Known	
Waterford	Adam	Cooper	Unknown	
Hallam	Sarah	Dancing Mistress	Unmarried	
Waddell	William	Engraver	None Known	
Wall	Thomas	Entertainer	Married, wife's first name not known	
Wiley	Alexander	Hairdresser	None Known	
Sheppard	John I	Harnessmaker	Elizabeth	
Connelly	John I	Hatter	Mourning	
Jones	Nanny	Laundress	Widow of Matt. Ashby; separated from George Jones?	

Brodie	Margaret	Milliner	Unmarried	
Carlos	Elizabeth	Milliner	Unmarried	
Charlton	Jane [Hunter]	Milliner	Edward Charlton	
Hunter	Margaret	Milliner	Unmarried	
Rathell	Catherine	Milliner	None Known	
Dixon	John	Printer	Rosanna Royle, née Hunter	JP—York Co.; Mayor, Dec. 1774–Nov. 1775; Committee of Safety, 1774/75; Colonel, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Hunter	William	Printer	Unmarried	
Pinkney	John	Printer	None Known	
Purdie	Alexander	Printer	1st Mary, d. by 1772; 2nd Peachy, née Davenport	Public Printer
Roberts	Edward	Saddle/Harnessmaker	None Known	
Craig	Alexander	Saddler	Mary, née Maupin	Common Council; Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Gilbert	Robert	Shoemaker	Sarah	
Rollinson	John	Shoemaker	Elizabeth	
Sclater	John	Shoemaker	None Known	
Skinner	Thomas	Shoemaker	Elizabeth, née Ryan	
Craig	James I	Silversmith	Anne, née Stevenson	
Galt	James	Silversmith	Mary, née English	
Geddy	James II	Silversmith	Elizabeth, née Waddell	Common Council; Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Pasteur	Blovet	Silversmith	Mary	
Rowsay	John	Silversmith	None Known	City Sergeant
Rowsay	William	Silversmith	Frances, née Tabb	
Singleton	Anthony	Silversmith	None Known	
Allen	Adam	Stocking Maker	None Known	
Craig	Thomas I	Tailor	Anne, née Pasteur	
Davenport	Ambrose	Tailor	Mary	
Didup	Archibald	Tailor	None Known	
Durfey	Severinus	Tailor	Mary	
Nicholson	Robert	Tailor	Mary	Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Nicholson	William	Tailor	Unmarried	
Prosser	Jonathan	Tailor	Mary	
Pearson	William	Tanner	1st Elizabeth, d. by 1762; 2nd Mary Magdalene	
Kidd	Joseph	Upholsterer, etc.	None Known	Ensign, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Coke	Robey	Wheelwright	Betsey, née Skinner	
Cosby	William	Wheelwright	None Known	
Lindsay	John	Wheelwright	None Known	
Charlton	Edward	Wigmaker	Jane, née Hunter	Committee of Safety, 1775/76

COMMERCIAL

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Baxter	Daniel	Merchant	Single or Widower	
Bickerton	William Francis	Merchant	Unmarried	
Bruce	Jacob	Merchant	Rachel	
Carter	John II	Merchant	Jane, née Mitchell	Common Council; Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76
Cocke	James I	Merchant	Elizabeth	Alderman; Committee of Safety, 1774/75
Dawson	William	Merchant	None Known	
Dixon	Beverly	Merchant	Unmarried	
Dixon	Haldenby	Merchant	None Known	JP—James City Co.[?]; Common Council
Ferguson	John	Merchant	Elizabeth	Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Goodson	William	Merchant	Mary	Committee of Safety, 1775/76
Greenhow	John	Merchant	1st Judith 2nd Elizabeth, née Tyler	

Holt	John	Merchant	None Known	
Holt	William	Merchant	Mary, née Edloe[?]	JP—James City Co.
Hornsby	William	Merchant	None Known	
Hornsby	Joseph	Merchant	Mildred, née Walker	JP—York Co.; Committee of Safety, 1775/76; Major, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Hubbard	James	Merchant	None Known	
Jackson	George	Merchant	Anne, née Pate	
Jackson	Robert	Merchant	Elizabeth	
Lewis	John	Merchant	Elizabeth Armistead, née Allan	
Lewis	William James	Merchant	None Known	
Maitland	William	Merchant	Unmarried	
Miller *(left Williamsburg June 1775)*	Robert	Merchant	Unmarried or widower	
Norton	John Hatley	Merchant	Sarah, née Nicholas	JP—York Co.; Captain, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Pierce	William	Merchant	None Known	
Pitt	William	Merchant	Eleanor	
Prentis	Daniel	Merchant	Elizabeth, née Godwin	
Prentis *(d. Nov. 1775)*	John	Merchant	Elizabeth, née Pierce	
Prentis	Robert	Merchant	None Known	
Reid	George	Merchant	Eve	Ensign, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Russell	William	Merchant	Elizabeth, née Farrow	Lieutenant, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Turner *(d. June 1775)*	John	Merchant	None Known	
Turner	William	Merchant	None Known	
Cary	Bernard	Merchant/Linen Draper	Unmarried	

SERVICE: Taverns

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Anderson	Robert	Ordinary Keeper	Anne	Captain, Virginia Minute Co., Sept. 1775
Campbell	Christiana	Ordinary Keeper	Widow (Ebenezer d. by Aug. 1752)	
Carter	John Hathaway	Ordinary Keeper	Anne	
Crawley	Joseph	Ordinary Keeper	Frances	
Formicola	Serafino	Ordinary Keeper	Matilda	
Moody	Matthew I	Ordinary Keeper	1st Anne (d. by 1767); 2nd Jane	
Page	William	Ordinary Keeper	Elizabeth	
Southall	James Barrett	Ordinary Keeper	Frances	Committee of Safety, 1774/75, 1775/76; Captain, Williamsburg Militia, Sept. 1775
Vobe	Jane	Ordinary Keeper	Widow (? Thomas, d. by 1750)	
Charlton	Richard	Ordinary Keeper/Wigmaker	Sarah, née Satterwhite	
Hubbard	Cuthbert	Ordinary Keeper/Wigmaker	None Known	

SERVICE: Other

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Orr	Katherine	Boardinghouse Keeper	Widow (Hugh, d. 6 Jan. 1764)	
Ferguson (Farquharson)	John	Gardener	A Mrs. Farquharson, d. Sept. 1787	
Wilson	James	Gardener	None Known	
Digges	Maria	Housekeeper, W&M	Unmarried	
Hay	Grissell	Lodginghouse Keeper	Widow (Peter, d. 26 Nov. 1766)	
Jordan	James	Lodginghouse Keeper	None Known	
Cumbo	Edith	Maid [?]	Unknown	
Pelham	Peter I	Musician	Anne	Keeper, Public Gaol
Cooley	Mary	Nurse	Widow	
Gillett	—— (Female)	Nurse	Unknown	
Corbin, Jr. *(left Williamsburg Aug. 1775)*	Richard	Secretary to Receiver General	Unmarried	
Minzies *(left Williamsburg June 1775)*	James	Secretary	Unmarried	
Smith	Mary	Servant/Housekeeper, W&M	Unknown	

MISCELLANEOUS

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Blair	Anne	Gentlewoman	Unmarried	
Dawson	Elizabeth	Gentlewoman	Widow (1st William Bassett, d. by 1744; 2nd William Dawson, d. 20 July 1752)	
Dawson *(d. by March 23, 1775)*	Priscilla	Gentlewoman	Widow (Thomas, d. by Nov. 1760)	
Laughton	Henry	Bookkeeper	Unmarried	
Nicholas	George	Gentleman	Unmarried	Captain, 2nd. Co.,2nd Virginia, Sept. 1775
Selden	Miles	Gentleman	Elizabeth, née Armistead	
Randolph	Betty	Gentlewoman	Widow (Peyton d. Oct. 1775)	
Russell	William	James City Co. Jailer, 1771	None Known	
Miller	John Fred	Keeper, Public Magazine	None Known	
Dunmore	John Murray	Governor	Charlotte	

UNKNOWN

Last Name	First Name	Occupation	Marital Status/Spouse	Offices Held
Balsam	Elizabeth	Unknown	Widow, d. by Feb. 1775	
Cooper	Joseph	Unknown	Widower (? Lydia)	
Deane	Elizabeth	Unknown	Widow (Elkanah d. Oct. 1775)	
Digges	Elizabeth	Unknown	Unmarried	
Digges	Susannah	Unknown	Unmarried	
Dixon	Charlotta	Unknown	Widow (Nicholas, d. by Feb, 1770)	
Hardcastle	Joshua	Unknown	None Known	
Hay	Elizabeth	Unknown	Widow (Anthony, d. by Dec. 1770)	
Johnson	John	Unknown	None Known	
McCarty	Michael	Unknown	None Known	
Morse	Henry	Unknown	None Known	
Powell	Lucy	Unknown	Widow (1st Benjamin Moss, d. by Sept. 1737; 2nd Seymore Powell, d. by July 1765)	
Prentis	Elizabeth	Unknown	Widow (John, d. Nov. 1775)	
Ratliff	Gideon	Unknown	None Known	
Robinson	Editha	Unknown	Widow (Thomas, d. by Aug. 1765)	
Singleton	Mary	Unknown	Widow (Richard Hunt, d. by Mar. 1774)	
Stith	Mary	Unknown	Unmarried	
Tuell	Mary	Unknown	Widow (Matthew, d. by Dec. 1774)	
Wallace	Betty	Unknown	Unmarried, has children	
Waters	Sarah	Unknown	Widow (William, d. 30 May 1767)	
Whitaker	Rachel	Unknown	Widow (Simon, d. by Nov. 1766)	
Wray	James II	Unknown	Widower (Frances, d. 11 Aug. 1774)	

Prices and Wages In 1750

by Harold B. Gill, September 29, 1977

To understand the meaning of prices and wages, they must be considered in the context of the cost of living at any particular time. While it is possible to estimate the cost of housing and board, I have discovered no satisfactory way of adequately determining how surplus money was used—on clothing, for savings, as investments, etc. It is impossible to give anything more than a suggestion of how money might have been spent. We can arrive at the approximate income of a journeyman craftsman and the approximate cost of his lodging and board, but the amount spent on clothing is difficult to estimate.

The data collected for this study are primarily confined to the years between 1745 and 1755 with some information gathered from earlier and later years for comparison. Interestingly, there seems to have been little change in the retail cost of most commodities, and salaries were fairly stable until the Revolution and its attendant inflation.

The salaries used here reflect the cash payments to employees, who were single men in most cases, and do not include possible perquisites such as allowances for clothing, board, lodging, etc. There is some evidence that journeymen received allowances for clothing as well as room and board. Clerks in stores, for instance, usually received £25 per year plus board, lodging, and washing. One clerk wrote in 1756 that £25 per year afforded him "a sufficiency to live on." Store managers received about £100 per year plus some benefits. It is not always possible to determine the total cash value of such as allowances so that the wages cited here are the minimum cash income figures of the employees.

The wages of journeymen [tradesmen] in Virginia ranged from £27 to £35 per year with an average of about £30. For most [trades] the figures are about the same or slightly higher than salaries paid journeymen in London during the period. The notable exceptions are Virginia tailors who received about twice as much as those in London. However, it is not clear whether or not London wages included any perquisites, but it is certain that cost of board was much cheaper in Virginia than in London.

[Tradesmen] could demand high wages in Virginia because of the scarcity of skilled workers. Governor Gooch complained that "Artificers we have Charge thrice as much for the Labour as a good Workman would in England." Another observer commented that Virginia was one of the best countries he ever saw for all sorts of tradesmen since carpenters and blacksmiths earned 7 shillings 6 pence a day (about £100 a year), and he expressed surprise that more England [tradesmen] did not migrate to Virginia. There is little evidence, but what there is indicates a master [tradesman] cleared between £100 a year. In order to encourage trained workers to come to Virginia, indentured servants were often offered from £6 to £10 Sterling per year in addition to maintenance. The servant's wages were slightly less than the money remaining in the independent journeyman's hands, about £12, after he paid room and board. House rent averaged about £8 per year and board about £10. We are assuming that the journeyman was single and renting a house. He could rent a room for as little as £2 per year. For comparison, plantation overseers cleared from £24 to £65 annually depending on the success of the crop with no investment of his own money, so it is easy to see why many craftsmen abandoned their trades and turned to agriculture. One observer wrote "a poor Man, if diligent, may in a short time (less than seven years) become able to purchase & set upon, perhaps a square mile of Ground."

How the journeyman [tradesman] spent his surplus money is anybody's guess. A round trip to England cost about £20, and so with a little saving, he could go on a tour. A fine gun cost from £3 to £8, an ordinary musket £1, and a rifle about £4. Lord Fairfax paid £3 for a squirrel gun made especially for him, and George Washington imported a "handsome fowling piece" at a cost of over £8. Wigs cost anywhere from £1.12..6 to £3, with the majority going for £2..3..0.

The following list of . . . retail prices may give some idea of relative costs. These are all imported goods:

Men's shoes	0..8..0
Men's "Best" pumps	0.11..0
Women's calamanco shoes	0..6..6
Salt	0..2..6/bushel
Rum	0..1..3/quart
Sugar, brown	0..0..7 ½ /lb.
single refined	0..1..3/lb.
double refined	0..1..6/lb.
Tea, green	0.10..6/lb.
Bohea	0..7..6/lb.
Paper, writing	0..1..6/quire [24 sheets]

A Few Virginia Prices, 1760s and 1770s[1]

First insertion of a lost and found ad in the Virginia Gazette	*0. 3. 0*
Subsequent insertions of same ad.	*0. 2. 0*
Annual subscription to the Gazette.	*0. 12. 6*
Box seat at the Williamsburg theater.	*0. 7. 6*
12 packs of playing cards.	*0. 15. 0*
2-volume set of Machiavelli's writings.	*2. 10. 6*
Hannah Glasse's Art of Cookery.	*0. 12. 6*
Concert ticket.	*0. 5. 0*
Postage for single-sheet letter, Williamsburg to Annapolis.	*0. 0. 8*

1 Excerpted from a memorandum by Thad W. Tate, April 5, 1960, Research Query File, Rockefeller Library, Williamsburg, Va.

Lingo of Virginia's Colonial Economy

by Peter V. Bergstrom

The cryptic terminology of colonial merchants is as confusing to many interpreters as it is to our visitors. Much of the mystery can be cleared up, however, by starting with a simple outline of the Virginia economy—how the planters sold their crops and purchased the manufactured goods they desired from Europe—and by reference to a basic glossary of eighteenth-century economic terms.

Virginians who made their living by raising tobacco could either sell their produce to English merchants via a system of trade known as consignment marketing, or they could deal locally with a colonial merchant [in which case, the term was] direct purchase marketing. In the first case, the planter "consigned" his goods to an English merchant, who acted as his agent in arranging for the sale of the planter's tobacco in England, and the purchase and shipment back to Virginia of the goods the planter ordered. The scene in *The Story of a Patriot* in which John Fry and his family are unpacking goods from England offered an example of this system. In consignment marketing there was no middleman, and the planter gained the greatest share of the profits, but he also bore the greatest share of the risk. He held title to his crop until it was actually sold in England, which meant that if the ship taking his tobacco to England sank or was captured in war or by pirates, it was the planter who suffered the loss. Likewise, if the price of tobacco fell suddenly in Europe, as it often did in years of large harvests, it was the planter who suffered.

In the second case, that of direct purchase marketing, the planter sold his crop outright to a merchant in Virginia. The price he received would probably be lower than if he consigned it to England, but it would now be the merchant's worry to see the tobacco safely to England and to find a purchaser for it. A second advantage of direct purchase marketing was that while the planters' choice of manufactured goods was limited to what the merchant had in stock, he could actually see the goods and judge their quality before he made his choice. Moreover, by the 1750s, many merchants were present in Virginia [, making] competition among them brisk and the choice of goods very great.

Whichever system the planter used to sell his crops and acquire his goods, [other] additional elements were involved. English Sterling coins could not legally be exported to the colonies, so coined money was continually in short supply in Virginia. The colonial surmounted this problem in a number of ways. First, they made extensive use of foreign coins—primarily Spanish and Portuguese coins gained by trading to the West Indies—whose values they periodically fixed by law. (See the Glossary [following] for values of some of these coins.) Second, after the establishment of the tobacco inspection system in 1730, they discovered that they could use tobacco notes as a kind of currency—although this never proved to be fully satisfactory since the value of the notes depended on the price current of tobacco and could vary between the time a person acquired the notes and chose to sell them to someone else. Third, after 1755, the government of Virginia periodically issued paper currency that was similar to modern paper money. Since this paper currency was not backed by any metallic reserve, however, but only by the colony's promise to redeem it from the collection of future taxes, paper currency was constantly subject to devaluation and/or inflation. The fourth and most common expedient the Virginians used instead of circulating money was some form of credit.

In general, two kinds of credit were available to Virginians. For short-term credit, planters went to their local merchants and were given book credit for the purchase of tools, cloth, etc. This was secured by the planter's promise to pay back the merchant at harvest time from the proceeds of his next crop. Typically, this meant that the planter would negotiate a price for his entire crop with the merchant (a direct purchase sale) while the plants were still growing in the fields. The merchant would then cancel the book debt and the remainder of the proceed would be returned to the planter either in cash or as a future credit on the merchant's book. The shrewd planter would demand more cash and less credit, since he could then spend the cash where and as he chose. By contrast, the shrewd merchant would try to give more credit and less cash. Often, the merchant might even offer a higher price for the planter's tobacco if the planter were willing to take his earnings as a credit rather than in cash. Merchants also employed the practice of selling their goods in the colonies at an advance over their prime cost in England or Scotland. The size of this mark-up was supposed to represent the merchant's expenses for freight, insurance, overhead, and the like (as well as the current exchange between Virginia currency and Sterling). The advance also included his profit margin. . . . Considering that at least one Scottish merchant wrote home suggesting that an advance of 75 percent was common, and 100 percent not at all unusual, the merchant's profits must have been substantial. Lest this should make the merchants appear entirely heartless and grasping, however, it should be pointed out that they were giving the planters a minimum of one year's credit without interest, and that they had no absolute guarantee that the planter would continue to sell his crops exclusively to them until the planter's debt was cleared. Bad debts might account for as much as 10 percent of the merchant's gross sales in any given year.

The second source of credit was through a commercial house in Britain. Any planter who used the consignment system to market his tobacco automatically employed British credit as well, for it was his agent who initially paid the freighting costs, the English duties on the tobacco, and the costs associated with marketing the crop in England. While all of these charges were ultimately deducted from the planter's profit, the English merchant had carried the planter's costs for a minimum of a year for a 3 percent commission on the gross sale price of the tobacco. The major user of British credit, however, was the colonial merchant, for without British support, he would have been unable to purchase goods in Britain for resale in America, as well as to extend his own credit to the planters while waiting to purchase their tobacco for resale in Britain.

British credits were transferred to the colonies and back by means of bills of exchange. These were negotiable instruments—rather like modern checks—by which a person with a Sterling credit in Britain could transfer all or part of his credit to another person. The drawer of the bill, like the writer of a check, wrote an order to his creditor (usually a British mercantile firm that was acting as a bank) to pay the payee the amount stated in the bill. The payee could then take the bill to Britain, present it to the drawee (the mercantile firm) and collect his due. More commonly, however, the payee would endorse the bill over to another party—that is, sign it and give it to someone to whom he owed money [like a modern-day third-party check]. That person in turn could present it to the payee or endorse it once again. When the bill finally reached the hands of the payee, he would, if he indeed had on deposit the amount specified by the drawer, pay the debt. If there were no funds or credits on deposit with the payee, the last holder of the bill (like the person with a bad check), was momentarily left in the lurch. When the payee in such cases protested the bill of exchange, it had to be taken back to the last endorser to be made good. He, in turn, had to complain to whomever he had received it from, and so on, until it was returned to the original drawer. The legal complications could become quite involved, and two rules of thumb developed: (1) Don't accept a bill from someone whose credit you don't trust and (2) the obverse, never endorse anyone else's bills, notes or bonds.

Since not every Virginian—planter or merchant—had Sterling credit readily available to him in Britain, a system developed in which those who did have such credits available to them could sell them to those in Virginia who needed them. Naturally, the sellers of bills sought to gain a profit from their service. Several factors surrounded this money market, [influencing] the final cost of the Sterling bills to their Virginia purchasers.

First, there was the rate of exchange between Virginia current money and Sterling money. From the 1630s, the Virginia Assembly had tried (with little success) to attract foreign coinage into the colony by artificially inflating its value above the official English exchange rate between Sterling coins and foreign coins. Until 1727, foreign coins made of silver were worth about 15 percent more in Virginia than . . . in England. After 1727, foreign coinage of both silver and gold was valued at 25 percent above the English rate. Because foreign coins were the basic monetary unit in circulation in Virginia, all current money whether it was in coin, or after 1755 in paper currency, was related to Sterling money by this exchange rate. When the rate held at £125 Virginia current equal to £100 Sterling, the exchange was said to be at par.

In the course of daily events, however, a second factor impinged upon the Virginia money market [decreeing] that the exchange rate rarely be at par, for those who had Sterling credits to sell believed that they deserved a profit over and above the official exchange rate. Moreover, they perceived that some purchasers could give them better values in Virginia current money or in goods for their bills of exchange than others might. Hence, when the supply of Sterling credits was greater than the demand for them in Virginia, the exchange rate might fall below par—though this happened only rarely. More likely, the demand for Sterling credit would be greater than the seller's ability to provide bills, and the rate would rise above par.

Glossary

Terms common in the market place

Consignment marketing. A method of selling one's crops in which the planter dealt directly with his agent or merchant in England. The merchant advanced the money to cover the cost of the freight, the duties, and the actual sale of the crop in England, and then deducted these [expenses] plus a commission of 2 1/2 or 3 percent from the gross amount of money generated by the sale. The merchant, therefore, took his commission not only on the sale price of the crop, but also on all the money he advanced to cover the planter's expenses. Since the planter kept title to his crop until it was finally sold in England, the loss that might be incurred from damage at sea or a drop in the market price was his and not the merchant's.

Direct purchase marketing. A method of selling one's crops in which the planter sold his produce directly to a merchant in Virginia. The price he received for his crops would be less [than in the case of consignment marketing], but he would then bear none of the risks . . . [, expenses or difficulties] involved in getting his crops sold in England. The planter also had the advantage of having his money immediately, rather than having to wait one or perhaps two years to complete a sale as he might have to do with consignment marketing.

Book credit or book debt. The amount of credit or debt that the planter maintained upon the account books of his local merchant in Virginia. In a society . . . chronically short of circulating coinage, the ability to command book credit, and even to transfer it from one customer to another was essential to the smooth functioning of everyday business.

Prime cost. The cost of goods to a Virginia merchant when he purchased them in England from his English supplier. In a sense this was similar to a wholesale price, except that many smaller Virginia merchants were forced to purchase their goods retail from other merchants in England, rather than actually securing them wholesale from the manufacturers.

Advance. The mark-up on the first cost that the Virginia merchant applied to his goods before reselling them in the colony. This ranged from 50 to 100 percent or more of the prime cost. Also, it was not uncommon for a merchant to apply a different rate of advance upon the sales of his various customers, depending upon their credit status.

Price current. The day-to-day price for which a commodity could be bought or sold in the colony. This price usually represented the consensus view of the merchants as to what it was worth at any given time. In Philadelphia and Boston these prices were published on a weekly basis in the newspapers. Virginia's merchants never reached that level of sophistication during the colonial period. But . . . [from about 1750 to 1775], many Virginia merchants, especially those in the Northern Neck region—accepted Philadelphia price currents as Virginia price currents as well.

Money Terms

Specie. Any type of coined metallic money. The most common types in Virginia were Spanish silver reales (dollars), Spanish gold Pistoles, Portuguese gold Moeadas (Moidors), and Portuguese gold Deobras (Joes and Half-Joes). Few English Sterling coins actually circulated in Virginia.

Coin values. English coins, in whose denominations Virginians calculated their accounts (even though they rarely had English coins), were of the following values:

4 farthings = 1 penny (plural is "pence," abbreviated "d")
12 pence = 1 shilling (abbreviated "s")
20 shillings = 1 pound (symbolized "£")
21 shillings = 1 guinea

Exchange. The rate at which a given amount of one coinage was said to be equal to a certain amount of another coinage. In Virginia as in England, the rate of exchange was based on the weight in troy ounces of the silver or gold content of the foreign coins. Hence, to determine the value of foreign coins that were often defaced or worn, Virginians had to weigh them and multiply the number of ounces of gold or silver by the exchange rate. To encourage the retention of foreign coins within the colony, the Virginia Assembly increased the official English exchange rate by 25 percent.

Virginia Current Money. The money or units of measure in which Virginians kept their accounts. This was figured and stated in terms of pounds, shillings, and pence, but since actual exchange occurred in foreign coins or bills of exchange, Virginia current values had to be converted to Sterling values by an exchange rate. Although this rate was officially set at 25 percent so that £125 Virginia Current Money equaled £100 Sterling money, the unofficial rate charged by those with Sterling bills of exchange to sell could force the actual day-to-day rate well above par.

Par. The point at which the official rate of exchange equaled the actual rate charged by the sellers of Sterling bills. From 1727 until the Revolution, par was £125 Virginia Current to £100 Sterling.

Bills of exchange. The financial instrument by which Sterling credits were actually moved back and forth from England to Virginia. In practice, though not in legal technicality, a bill of exchange functioned like a

modern check. In practice, it involved three parties.

Drawer. The person with a Sterling credit in Britain, who writes the order assigning all or part of his credit to the payer (the person writing the check).

Drawee. The person or firm in Britain holding the Sterling credit on its books and to whom the bill is addressed (the bank).

Payee. The person who will receive the credit in England (the person to whom the check was written).

Protest. The refusal of the drawee to pay the bill of exchange, presumably on the grounds of insufficient funds or credits on deposit to cover the face value of the bill.

Paper currency. Beginning in 1755 (as a war measure), Virginia issued a series of paper bills or notes that were to pass as legal tender for most, but not all, private and public debts. At first, merchants accepted paper for Sterling debts at the going rate of exchange, but soon discovered that they thereby lost money when the exchange continued to rise faster than they could use their notes to buy bills of exchange to send to Britain. In 1764 Parliament responded to the growing mercantile pressure with a law forbidding the colonies from making paper money legal tender for private Sterling debts and protected the merchants from having to accept such paper unless they willingly chose to do so. In spite of these strictures, a limited amount of paper money continued to be used in Virginia for both public and private transactions until the Revolution.

Tobacco notes. After the passage of tobacco inspection legislation in 1730, all good tobacco was to be lodged in public warehouses while it awaited shipment to England. The warehouse receipts, or notes, were allowed to pass as an impromptu currency in the sense that they could be transferred from one person to another, until their final holder redeemed them at the warehouse for the amount of tobacco specified on the face of the note. They were not successful as a currency, though, because they had no intrinsic or fixed value; rather, they represented whatever that amount of tobacco might be worth at the price current on any given day. Hence, to accept a tobacco note was in a sense of bit of speculation, as one hoped the value of tobacco would rise rather than fall between the time of acceptance and redemption or transfer of the note.

Inflation or devaluation. The two parallel economic processes by which the absolute value of a given amount of money loses purchasing power over a given period of time. Money is devalued either by official decree or unofficial practice when the same amount buys less. Prices are inflated when sellers insist upon charging more for the same item.

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Note: Does not include names mentioned only in the 1775 City Directory, pp. S-10–14.

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