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The Newsworthy Somerset Case: Repercussions in Virginia

by Emma L. Powers

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Augusta County, Virginia, June 16, 1774

Run away . . . from [Gabriel Jones] a Negro man named BACCHUS. . . . He formerly belonged to Doctor George Pitt, of Williamsburg, and I imagine is gone there under Pretence of my sending him upon Business . . . he is a cunning, artful, sensible Fellow, and very capable of forging a Tale to impose on the Unwary. . . . [He] has been used to waiting from his Infancy. . . . He will probably endeavour to pass for a Freeman . . . and attempt to get on Board some Vessel bound for Great Britain, from the Knowledge he has of the late Determination of Somerset's Case.¹

What was "Somerset's Case," and why did this slave owner think it the runaway's motive? How did Bacchus learn of this case if it were the reason for his running away? Addressing just these two questions takes us through a labyrinth of legal technicalities, English and American newspaper accounts (some accurate, some otherwise), as well as several manuscript collections. In following how the Somerset case was reported and discussed in the late eighteenth century and afterward, we see legends created, professional reputations made and lost, property safeguarded and later destroyed, dreams fulfilled or crushed, and people putting their lives and liberties on the line. In the nineteenth century, abolitionists misunderstood the Somerset case—perhaps they intentionally misrepresented it for propaganda purposes. Twentieth-century historians mythologized the decision as well.

More than two years before Bacchus left Augusta County, Lord Mansfield at the Court of King's Bench in London handed down a unanimous decision in favor of James Somerset, a slave brought to England from the colonies. At this

point I need to backtrack a bit and outline the basics of this matter, especially the cast of characters. First of all, who was Somerset? How did the suit of an enslaved African American come before the high court in London?

James Somerset had been born in Africa and brought to Virginia by a slaver in 1749 at which time Charles Steuart, a Scots merchant living in Norfolk, purchased him. Steuart afterward moved to Boston as a high official in the customs service. In 1769, Steuart went to England on business, taking Somerset with him as his personal servant. These facts at least are not disputed; they are clearly stated in affidavits filed with the court.²

Letters to and from Steuart indicate that Somerset served well and was trusted. He moved about freely, often alone, through London streets and the English countryside making deliveries and relaying messages. Steuart's family and friends knew him well. For example, Steuart re-

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ceived a letter dated August 4, 1771, that said, "This will be delivered you by Somerset who sett off[f] this evening and I suppose will be with you tomorrow night. I have given him a Guinea which he says will be sufficient [money] to carry him down." Less than a week later the same man wrote with some concern for the African, "You dont mention Somerset, but I take it for granted he got safe down."³

No documents inform us of Somerset's state of mind. We can only speculate about how he felt about his enslavement and being taken to a second foreign country. We do know that on October 1, 1771, he ran away, was recaptured and delivered to Captain John Knowles of the ship *Ann and Mary* on the Thames, and was held on-board in irons. The ship was bound for Jamaica where the captain was to sell Somerset on Steuart's behalf.⁴

Interested parties, acting as Somerset's godparents, intervened for their kidnapped godson. On the strength of the their affidavits, a writ of habeas corpus was granted on November 28, 1772. A working definition of *habeas corpus* seems in order at this point. It was and still is the legal document directed by a judge to a person who is detaining another, commanding him to bring the body of the person in his custody at a specified time to a specified place for a specified purpose. The writ's sole function is to release an individual from unlawful imprisonment; through this use it has come to be regarded as the great writ of liberty. Habeas corpus tests only whether a prisoner has been accorded due process, not whether or not he is guilty.⁵

We have no way of knowing whether Somerset had actually converted to Christianity and if those people named as his godparents really knew him. It seems to have been a convention, a legal formula invented years before in other slave suits heard before English courts. Earlier attacks against slavery in England had proceeded on the assumption that no Christian could be held as a slave, thus the appearance of Somerset's godparents here.⁶ This, like several other suits in England's high court, had been designed and stage-managed, very much from behind the scene, by Granville Sharp, a philanthropist, scholar, founder of the English Society for the Abolition of Slavery, and, much later, recipient of an honorary LL.D. from the College of William and Mary in 1791.

Sharp's own summary of the case reads as follows:

June 22d.—This day, James Somerset came to tell me that judgment was to-day given in his favour.

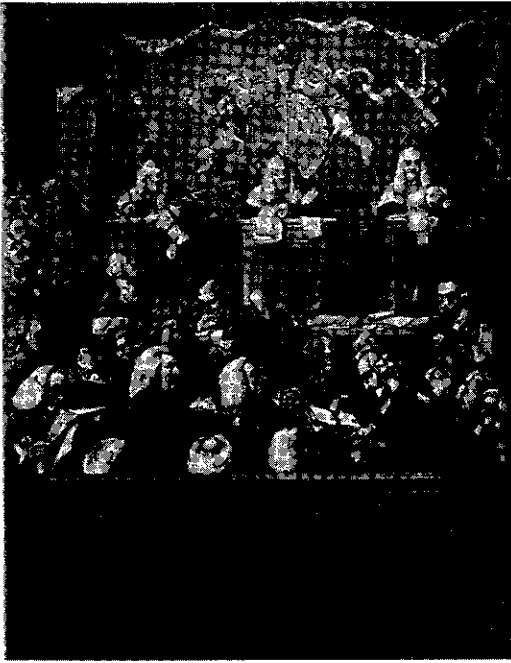
Somerset was the last Negro whom G. S. [Granville Sharp] brought before Lord Mansfield by writ of Habeas Corpus; when his Lordship declared, as the opinion of all the Judges present, that the power claimed by the master "never was in use here, nor acknowledged by the law; and, therefore, the man, James Somerset, must be discharged." Thus ended G. Sharp's long contest with Lord Mansfield, on the 22d of June, 1772.⁷

Surprisingly, Steuart's private papers do not deal with Somerset's flight and the impending legal crisis at any length.⁸ Early in 1772, there are a few brief references to the predicament. For example, in March, a correspondent supposed Steuart had kept away from the resort town of Bath, England, because of "that black Man of consequence Somerset Esq."⁹

By April 1772, word of Somerset's case had reached Virginia—long before Bacchus fled Augusta County in 1774. The first to learn of it seems to have been James Parker, Steuart's close friend and former business associate in Norfolk. On Steuart's behalf, perhaps even at his request, Parker bent the ear of Governor Dunmore about Somerset. When Parker first broached the subject, during a morning walk in the Palace gardens, Lord Dunmore thought he might be able to call the case back to Virginia. When he found that beyond even his authority, the governor, who was a Scot like Steuart and Parker, offered instead to "write a private Letter to E[arl of] G[rafton] in George III's ministry (but if he did pen such a missive, it does not survive). The case was much debated in Virginia—both in the press and face to face; for example, "the affair of yr. Damed Villain Somerseat came on the Carpet" during dinner at the Palace for members of the Council and other distinguished visitors.¹⁰

Quite a few of Steuart's letters survive in various repositories, but for the critical period—between October 1, 1771, when Somerset ran away, until the end of the case in late June 1772—only one letter in his hand has been located. On June 15, Steuart wrote a long paragraph about the progress of the suit, explaining that not he but "the West Indian Planters and Merchants" were paying the legal fees.¹¹ Steuart seemed resigned to losing Somerset and concluded, "Upon the whole, every body seems to think it will go in favour of the negro."¹²

And indeed it did. Newsmongers immediately spread word that this decision meant the end of slavery in England and threatened the continuance of the institution in English colonies. An eloquent phrase from Somerset's



"A Peep into the Court of King's Bench, Westminster" (CWF 1973-26). Printed for and sold by Carington Bowles, circa 1770, this black-and-white mezzotint depicts the interior of the Court in the last years prior to the Revolution.

counsel was attributed instead to the judge, Lord Mansfield. Supposedly Mansfield's verdict freed all slaves with the words "the air of England is too pure to be breathed by a slave."¹³

The fact that Lord Mansfield was expected to be sympathetic to this slave matter for personal reasons lent credence to the erroneous report that the words were his. He was the great uncle and guardian of a mixed race child, Elizabeth Lindsay (also known as Dido Eliza Belle), the daughter of Mansfield's nephew, a Navy captain, and a black woman. Mansfield raised her, and she received generous bequests from both her father and her great uncle.¹⁴

There were—and are—several versions of the sentiment, all of which misrepresent the meaning of the verdict. Eventually, William Cowper perfected the language; he wrote, poetically, but inaccurately:

*Slaves cannot breathe in England, if their
lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are
free[.]
They touch our country, and their shack-
les fall.¹⁵*

According to eyewitnesses, the Lord Chief Justice had said only that slaves, while in England, could not be forced to leave.¹⁶ Legal historians have studied this case carefully, and the

most respected specialist in these matters summarizes the court's decision this way:

Read strictly and technically, the holding of Somerset was limited to two points: a master could not seize a slave in England and detain him preparatory to sending him out of the realm to be sold; and habeas corpus was available to the slave to forestall such seizure, deportation, and sale.¹⁷

Somerset's access to habeas corpus was very important in and of itself. This meant that a vital right had been extended to a black man, said to be a slave, in opposition to his supposed owner. That habeas corpus was available to a black to test the legitimacy of an alleged owner's claim to him or her certainly represented a threat to slavery in England.¹⁸

Newspapers in London, other English towns, and in the American colonies had been following Somerset's case very closely for months. When the final verdict came down on that Monday, June 22, 1772, the mythologizing began at once, although some members of the press gave terse but accurate accounts. *The Middlesex Journal*, for example, reported that Lord Mansfield had decreed, "That every slave brought into this country ought to be free, and no master had a right to sell them here." The words were actually uttered by one of the counselors for Somerset's defense, and similar phrases echo through several centuries of English law and back into ancient literature.¹⁹

Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette* gave a brief but accurate report taken verbatim from the June 1772 *Universal Magazine*, "Yesterday the Court of King's Bench gave Judgment in the Case of Somerset the Negro, finding that Mr. Stuart, his Master, had no Power to compel him on Board a Ship, or to send him back to the Plantations, but that the Owner might bring an Action of Trover²⁰ against any One who shall take the Black into his Service." Soon the case took on a life of its own.

By 1770, some fourteen to fifteen thousand slaves lived in England, as well as an unknown number of free blacks. Most had been brought to the Mother Country from the West Indies or the mainland colonies as personal servants.²¹ Black Londoners interpreted the decision in the Somerset case in their own way and began to celebrate. The "great number" of blacks who had gathered to hear the final decision at King's Bench "went away greatly pleased" with their victory.²²

One source reported that after hearing the pronouncement near two Hundred Blacks, with their Ladies, had an Enter-

tainment at a publick House in Westminster, to celebrate the Triumph which their Brother Somerset had obtained over Mr. Stuart [sic], his Master. Lord Mansfield's Health was echoed round the Room, and the Evening was concluded with a Ball.²³

Some slaves in England who heard about the court's decision left their masters, believing the verdict ended slavery there in one fell swoop. In July, scarcely three weeks after the ruling at King's Bench, one of Charles Steuart's business associates in England wrote

I am disappointed by Mr. Dublin, who has run away. He told the Servants that he had recd. a letter from his Unkle Sommer-set acquainting him that Lord Mansfield had given them their freedoms & he was determind to leave me . . . which He did without ever speaking to me. . . . [He] carried off[f] all his own Cloths which I dont know whether he had any right so to do. I believe I shall not give my Self any trouble to look after the ungreatful [sic] Villain, But his leaving me just at this time, rather proves inconvenient. If you can advise me how to act you will Oblidge.²⁴

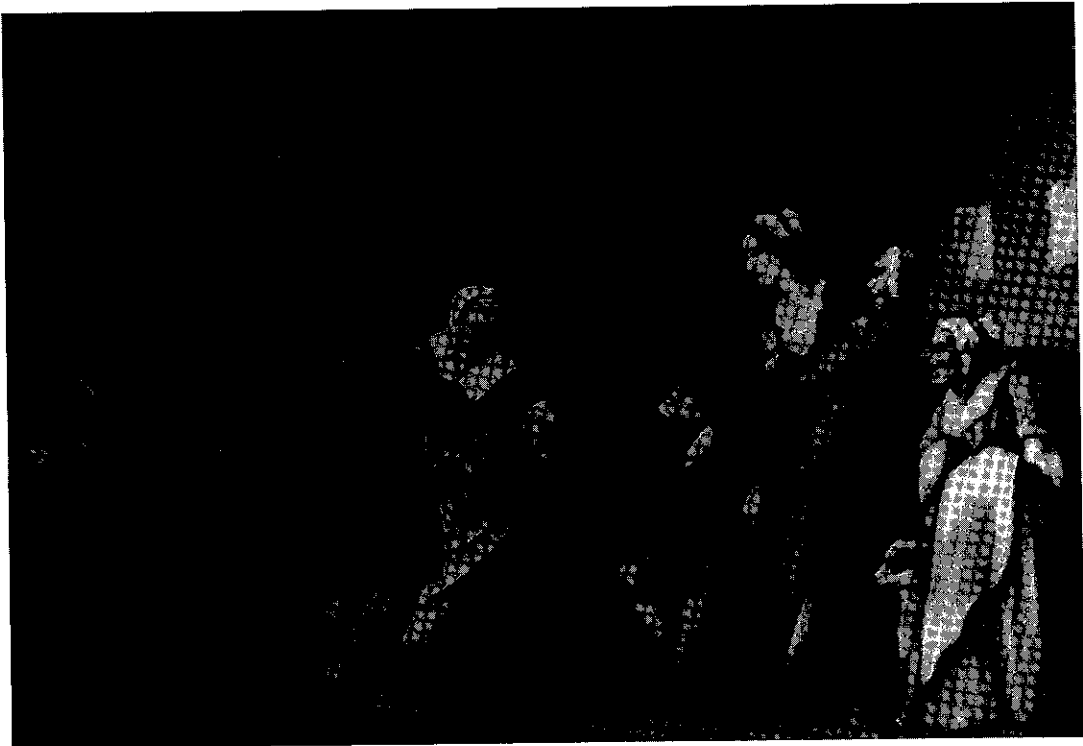
There are several intriguing comments in this brief letter. First and foremost, in less than a

month, the Somerset decision had come to mean freedom in the minds of many, including Anglo-Africans, and the news was getting around. That Dublin was actually Somerset's nephew is unlikely, though as a slave of business associates Steuart and John Riddell, they certainly knew or knew of one another. If only Somerset's letter to Dublin had survived! Their understanding of their present plight, recent changes in their status, and their future plans would all be of great interest.

Also, it would be fascinating to know more about the relationship between Dublin and his coworkers, who were probably mostly or entirely white British domestics. No sources describing those connections are available to us. Indeed, concerning Somerset's life after Lord Mansfield discharged him from court, we know only that he went in person to relay the news to Granville Sharp, his benefactor and legal mastermind.

The only additional piece of information we have about Somerset's life is that he refused to return to Steuart's service. He probably remained in England, but this is mere supposition. One historian reluctantly concluded that James Somerset had "lapsed into obscurity" after his famous court appearance.²⁵

Dublin's situation in 1772 resembles that of the Virginia runaway slave Bacchus. What hap-



"High Life Below Stairs" (CWF 1954-710). This somewhat stylized view of an English kitchen was also printed for Carington Bowles and is dated July 17, 1770. It shows a black liveryed servant socializing with other household staff in a space that may also function as a servants' hall.

pened to them after their escapes? Nothing more is known about Dublin. And we unfortunately know little more about Bacchus. The advertisement tells us he had once lived in Williamsburg and had belonged to Dr. George Pitt, who had immigrated to Virginia in 1742 from Worcester, England. Besides practicing medicine, Pitt was also keeper of the Magazine, where the colony's arms and ammunition were stored. Sometime before the Revolution Pitt returned to England for political reasons—that is, he was a Loyalist. We know even this much about him because of his son's Loyalist claim.²⁶

We can never know exactly what Bacchus learned about the pros and cons of England (and the purity of its air) from Dr. Pitt, but he was in a position to learn quite a lot. Like James Somerset and probably Dublin as well, Bacchus was a body servant and waiting man. Personal servants, by their very job descriptions, were well placed to know their masters' political views, to overhear conversations and plans, and to acquire valuable inside information of all sorts. This is an important trait Bacchus and Somerset had in common.

At the beginning of this article I omitted parts of the runaway ad for clarity and brevity. Let me put them back in now for the complete story. "He [Bacchus] will probably endeavour to pass for a Freeman by the Name of John Christian, and attempt to get on Board some Vessel bound for Great Britain." This strongly implies that Bacchus had run away previously and had already prepared a persona to slip into.

Much of the advertisement details the clothing Bacchus carried away from Augusta County. The items of very fancy apparel included, among other items, "a fine Cloth Pompadour Waistcoat . . . five or six white Shirts, two of them pretty fine, neat Shoes, Silver Buckles, [and] a fine Hat cut and cocked in the Macaroni Figure." We can only speculate whether these were to be the wardrobe of the free man John Christian or if they were carried away for the resale value.

What happened to Bacchus alias John Christian? We don't know any more about his last days than about James Somerset's. Perhaps Bacchus made it to England in 1774. If not and if he dodged reward-seeking captors in Virginia, maybe he took advantage of the next year's opportunity—Dunmore's Proclamation. In 1775, the same Virginia governor who had offered to assist Charles Stuart in holding onto Somerset invited slaves to join the royal cause if they were capable of bearing arms and owned by American rebels. In response to the Proclamation, about 800 slaves made it to British ships.²⁷

After the war and as a result of the *Somerset* case, slaves living near Boston, Massachusetts,



William Murray Mansfield, first earl of Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice (CWF G1993-123). Based on the Sir Joshua Reynolds portrait of Lord Mansfield (1705–93), the printed portrait is the work of engraver F. Bartolozzi and is dated August 24, 1786.

resorted to courts more frequently to seek their freedom. They also requested "back wages" for all their years of labor.²⁸ American abolitionists in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thoroughly exploited the misunderstood *Somerset* case, citing it as the death knell for slavery in England. In the process, they nearly deified Lord Mansfield as well. It was decades, however, before England outlawed the slave trade (1807) and twenty-six years beyond that (1833) until the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire.²⁹

From the beginning, myths grew up around this legal case. As usual, the myths proved more vivid and longer lasting than the truth of the limited application of the verdict. News of supposed emancipation spread from wishful-thinking Anglo-Africans and English abolitionists to ill-informed printing offices in English provincial towns, as well as up and down America's eastern seaboard. At least one poet and several generations of New England abolitionists found inspiration in the misquoted words of the verdict in the *Somerset* case. Word traveled from the owner in London to his confidant in Norfolk, Virginia. Before long, the royal governor was involved, and Somerset's predicament became dinner table conversation at the Palace in Williamsburg. Domestic servants had access to the news nearly as soon as their masters. Enslaved people

both in England and the Virginia backcountry heard and believed what they heard; they believed so strongly that they acted on the information and risked their lives by daring to escape. Somerset misconstrued was a giant fiction. Its repercussions in Virginia and elsewhere were greater than its legal reality.

¹ *Virginia Gazette*, ed. Purdie and Dixon, 30 June 1774. I am grateful to Michael Nicholls for this reference and, therefore, for inspiring my search into the records on both James Somerset and Bacchus, alias John Christian. An earlier advertisement in the same editors' paper also mentions that Virginia slaves thought England meant freedom: "I have some Reason to believe they will endeavour to get out of the Colony, particularly to Britain, where they imagine they will be free (a Notion now too prevalent among the Negroes, greatly to the Vexation and Prejudice of their Masters)." *Ibid.*, 30 September 1773.

² F. O. Shyllon, *Black Slaves in Britain* (London: Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, 1974), 77–78; William M. Wiecek, *The Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism in America, 1769–1848* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), 28–29; and Charles Stewart Papers, Personal and Official Correspondence, owned by the National Library of Scotland (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation microfilm M-68.3). I am grateful to David Thomas König for recommending Wiecek's monograph. Stewart's name is variously spelled in primary sources. I have adopted the only spelling he, his family, friends, and close business associates used.

³ Michael Murray to Stewart, 4 and 10 August 1771, Stewart Papers, ff. 16, 24–25.

⁴ Shyllon, *Black Slaves*, 77–78; Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 28–29.

⁵ *Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., 2001, via www.bartleby.com.

⁶ Shyllon, *Black Slaves*, 124.

⁷ Prince Hoare, *Memoirs of Granville Sharp, Esq.*, 2nd ed. (London, 1828), 137. Zoffany painted Sharp and his family aboard their pleasure barge on the Thames in the 1770s. Much later, in 1791, the College of William and Mary awarded Sharp an honorary LL.D. degree. *Dictionary of National Biography*, 51 (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1897) and personal communication with College Archivist Margaret Cooke, July 22, 2002.

⁸ As I read the surviving letters, I found myself wondering if Stewart's letters pertaining to the Somerset case had been separated from the rest of his papers for study or possible publication at some point—either by Stewart's lawyers in preparing to go to court or by some later family members or scholars.

⁹ John Riddell to Stewart, March 1772, Stewart Papers, f. 133.

¹⁰ Parker to Stewart, 25 May 1772, Stewart Papers, ff. 159–160.

¹¹ Those who were deeply invested in West Indian land and the many slaves who worked the sugar cane crop and sugar mills were very rich and thoroughly committed to the system of slavery in the islands. They used their immense resources to sway opinion in England. An act tolerating slavery in England was proposed repeatedly, but not passed by Parliament. The Virginia House of Burgesses petitioned the Crown to end the importation of slaves into the colony in the spring of 1772. *Journal of the House of Burgesses*, April 1, 1772, 12: 283–284

¹² Stewart to James Murray, 15 June 1772, James Murray Robbins Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 43 (1910): 451.

¹³ Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 21. Even the venerable *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1897), 51: 402, in its entry about Granville Sharp mistook the decision in the Somerset case, a mistake left uncorrected in subsequent volumes of additions and corrections.

¹⁴ Elizabeth Lindasay, aka Dido Eliza Bell, appears with Lady Elizabeth Finch Hatton in a painting by Johann Zoffany still in the possession of the earls of Mansfield.

¹⁵ William Cowper, "The Task," Book II, line 40, cited in Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 34. Cowper's poem, written in 1783, was published in 1785, well after the Somerset case.

¹⁶ Shyllon, *Black Slaves*, ix. *Somerset v. Stewart* [sic], Lofft 1, 98 Eng. Rep. 499 (K. B. 1772), reprinted in 20 *Howell's State Trials* 2, cited in Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 30, n. 26.

¹⁷ Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁹ *Middlesex Journal*, 23 June 1772, cited in Shyllon, *Black Slaves*, ix. Shyllon also cites Felix Farley's *Bristol Journal* for 27 June 1772 as another accurate report. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, No. 2277, 12 August 1772; *Virginia Gazette*, ed. Purdie and Dixon, 27 August 1772, which is a direct quote from the *Universal Magazine* for June 1772, 33. The above issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* quotes Alleyne as saying, "that the laws of England would not endure it [slavery], nor suffer the free air of this realm to be contaminated with the breath of a slave." Shyllon also cites accurate reporting by *The London Evening Post*, 24 June 1772; *The London Chronicle*, *The Daily Advertiser*, *The Gazetteer*, *The General Evening Post*, *The Morning Chronicle*, all of 23 June 1772, as well as *The Gentleman's Magazine* 42 (1772): 293–294, and *The Annual Register* 15 (1772): 110.

²⁰ *Trover* is a common-law action to recover damages for property illegally withheld or wrongfully converted to use by another. *American Heritage Dictionary* via bartleby.com.

²¹ Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 25.

²² *Universal Magazine*, June 1772, 330, and *Virginia Gazette*, ed. Purdie and Dixon, 27 August 1772.

²³ *Virginia Gazette*, ed. Purdie and Dixon, 3 September 1772. If the Williamsburg printers copied this notice from an English publication, the original has not yet been identified.

²⁴ John Riddell to Stewart, 10 July 1772, Stewart Papers, f. 192.

²⁵ Gretchen Gerzina, *Black London: Life before Emancipation* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 131.

²⁶ Loyalist Claim of Richard Floyd Pitt, son of Dr. George Pitt, PRO/AO 13/32.

²⁷ Michael L. Nicholls, "Straddling Hell's Boundaries: Profiles of Free People of Color in Early Virginia," Utah State University Faculty Honor Lecture in the Humanities, Fall 1991, 11–12, copy in John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

²⁸ Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 119, cited in Wiecek, *Sources of Antislavery Constitutionalism*, 56.

²⁹ Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), 34–35.

"Smile for the Camera!" (Obscura, That Is)

by Marcia Wager Finger

Marcia is an interpreter in the Department of Youth and Group Services and portrays Mrs. Annabelle Powell. Before coming to Colonial Williamsburg, she was a director and trustee of the Roger Morris-Jumel Mansion Museum in New York City.

When you least expect it, anachronisms intrude into our attempts to accurately interpret eighteenth-century history at Colonial Williamsburg. Character interpreters are the most vulnerable to "anach attacks."¹ As they invite visitors to step back in time, inevitably the question arises, "May I take your picture?" As if to defend the interpreter, another visitor replies, "They didn't have cameras back then."

We often forget that eighteenth-century Virginians were men of "enlightenment." Though not familiar with photography, as we think of it, they gave us much of the terminology we use today. In 1777, Landon Carter wrote of Captain Dennis who drew a picture of Carter's grandson. "This Capt. offered to *take his Picture* and really effected it on blue Paper with Chalk and Charcoal in a very natural and masterly manner."² So the term to *take a picture* was known in the eighteenth century and is, therefore, correct to use.

What about the *camera*?³ In 1771, Councilor Robert Carter purchased a camera obscura⁴ from the estate of the late Governor Francis Fauquier so we know that there was at least one in Williamsburg.⁵ Fauquier, George Wythe, and Thomas Jefferson often met for scientific endeavors. Perhaps it was a remembrance of those times at Wythe's house that prompted Jefferson to purchase a Scioptric ball⁶ in London in 1787 and a camera obscura for his daughter Maria in 1794, so that she could "take a few lessons in drawing from nature."⁷

In 1669, Robert Boyle (whose estates endowed the Brafferton School at the College of William and Mary) wrote a tract in which he described his construction of a portable box camera and the method of greasing paper to make it transparent enough to receive the image.⁸

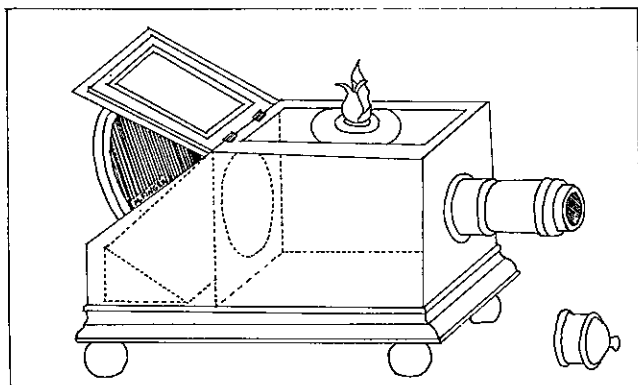
One last link—we know that Wedgwood china was in some Williamsburg homes. It was Thomas Wedgwood (son of Josiah) who experimented with silver nitrate to permanently fix the camera's images on glass. In 1837, Daguerre would take credit for groundwork laid in the eighteenth century.⁹ So when the "anach" attacks, seize the interpretive moment, and just "smile for the camera!"

¹ "Anach attack" is a discipline practiced by Colonial Williamsburg character interpreters to insure accuracy of presentation.

² Carter later adds, "At last I proposed to this Capt. to do me the favour to take my figure in the same manner." Jack P. Greene, ed., *The Diary of Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778*, vol. 2 (Richmond, Va., 1987), 1082.

³ According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1933), the word *camera* is Latin for vault or arched chamber. In optics it is short for *camera obscura* (Latin, meaning literally, a dark chamber), "An instrument consisting of a darkened chamber or box, into which light is admitted through a double convex lens, forming an image of external objects on a surface of paper, glass, etc., placed at the focus of the lens."

⁴ In Helmut Gernsheim's, *The History of Photography from the Earliest use of the Camera Obscura in the Eleventh Century up to 1914* (London, 1955), the development of the camera is traced from its first mention in an eleventh-century Arabian manuscript describing a dark room with a hole in the ceiling used to view an eclipse. Gernsheim includes a reference from Leonardo Da Vinci's *Manuscript D* deciphered by Venturi in 1797. In it Da Vinci observed that if a thin, white paper was held up to the sunlight coming through the hole in such a room, objects outside of the room were visible from the back of the paper. The transference of this concept to a portable box with lenses and mirrors to assist in the drawing of images reflected on paper placed on the camera glass were further explored. In 1657, Kaspar Schott was the first to describe one so small it could be carried under the arm. Johann Zahn illustrated a reflex box camera



Reflex camera obscura. Drawing by Marcia W. Finger, based on illustration in Johann Zahn, *Oculus artificialis teledioptricus sive telescopium* (1685-86)

obscura in 1685 similar to what we know today as the camera (see illustration). It was a camera such as this that Williamsburg residents would have recognized at the sale of Governor Francis Fauquier's estate.

³ York County Wills & Inventories 22, 1771-83, 88-103.

⁶ Gernsheim, *History of Photography*. A Scioptic ball is designed to turn a room into a camera whereby you may view the scene outside projected on the wall. Kaspar Schott called it an "ox eye" after the earlier use of real ox eyes inserted in window shutters to achieve the same effect. It was first called a Scioptic ball by Johann Zahn in *Oculus artificialis teledioptricus sive telescopium* (1685). Gernsheim refers to it as "a wooden ball with a hole bored through its axis and a lens fitted at each end [which] is fixed into an opening in the window shutters." (This makes you wonder if that hole

in George Wythe's shutter might have been used for such a scientific pursuit.)

⁷ Susan R. Stein, *The Worlds of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello* (Charlottesville, Va., 1993), 359, 426.

⁸ Robert Boyle, *Of the Systematical and Cosmical Qualities of Things* (Oxford, 1669). One might assume that some of the recipients of the money for the Indian school might have been acquainted with Boyle's works.

⁹ Gernsheim, *History of Photography*, 29-35, 50. In 1773, Josiah Wedgwood purchased a camera obscura to more accurately and quickly sketch England's stately homes. These pictures were used to prepare the decoration of the china ordered by Catherine the Great. It was Wedgwood's son, Thomas, with his friend Humphrey Davy, who pursued a method of fixing images produced by the camera obscura by means of light and silver nitrates.



"Warfare without Glory": Women and Food in the Eighteenth Century

Nancy is an interpreter in the Historic Foodways Program.

Every eighteenth-century woman in one sense expected to make a living through food, because cooking skills were part of being a notable housewife. Even for the wealthy, providing food was one of the elements in a marriage. Beyond marriage, women were earning their living by producing and selling food, by running taverns and boarding houses and feeding lodgers, and by writing cookbooks.

Women were not taught to cook in a formal sense. Formal schooling, at least for the wealthy, consisted of reading, writing, arithmetic, needlework, French, drawing, painting, dancing, singing, and playing the guitar and the harpsichord. By the nineteenth century, grammar, composition, and natural philosophy were added.¹

Cooking was learned at home and was not listed as a domestic occupation in apprenticeship papers, probably because people considered it part of the "trade" of housewifery. Few women worked as professional cooks. Mary Singleton, who was recently portrayed at the Tenant House,

cooked for her landlord and his family in return for a reduction (35 percent) on the rent. Rosanna Wilson was hired as a cook for Lord Botetourt after the death of Mr. Sparrow.

Of eight advertisements for cooks in the *Virginia Gazette*, seven were for cooks to be hired or purchased which implies that they were slaves and one was for a man to cook for a school. Interestingly, one advertisement, printed November 22, 1770, offered a public house for sale including a "fine French cook" as part of the inventory. Was this possibly an indentured servant with professional training?

Women were involved in food production primarily in the areas of dairying, raising poultry, and growing produce—work that could be done close to the house while watching the children and performing other domestic duties. Such activities generally required little capital investment or formal training. Mary Cummings of Petersburg wrote, "I hope to make a great deal of money by the produce of our garden, for we cannot use one quarter of the vegetables and fruit which we raise. . . . I generally receive from three shillings to four-and-six a day. . . . When Mrs. Bell lived here she once told me she made forty dollars by her asparagus alone."² In one eight-day period a Virginia woman sold 1,668 eggs produced by her hens.³

Selling food was also suitable to small-scale production and for those without capital to in-

vest in a shop. Women could easily sell goods in the market square; laws regarding selling at market in 1773 prohibited Indians, mulattoes, and Negroes, bound or free, from selling dressed meats and baked items. This left produce, dairy products, and live animals that could be sold. (White women apparently could sell anything.) Women were also buying goods at market as described in the diaries of Mary Ambler and Peter Kaln. Mrs. Cornelius Harnett, a well-to-do woman from North Carolina, prepared "minced pies, cheesecakes, tarts and little biscuits" that were sent to town twice daily to be sold.⁴

Outside the market, women were selling food door-to-door and from shops. Nancy Matthews of Petersburg had regular rounds that she followed when selling her cakes. Her route was so well known that clothing was stolen from her house while she was away. Thomas Jefferson mentioned buying cakes (what we would today call cookies) from a woman on the street.

Food could also be used for payment. Local merchants accepted "country produce," which they might in turn sell to their customers. Shops offered a wide selection of imported and locally produced food items, as reflected in *Virginia Gazette* advertisements: almonds, anchovies, barberries, barley, beets, biscuits, butter, cabbage, capers, catsup, chocolate, cress, figs, fish, flour, groats, herring, jams, "junk" (salted beef), lard, lemons, licorice, mackerel, mutton, olive oil, oranges, oysters, parsley, plums, rice, shad, spinach, and vinegar.

Shops devoted more specifically to food included Mary Stagg's confectionary shop in Williamsburg, where hartshorn and calves' foot jellies were sold on Tuesdays and Fridays in addition to fruit jellies, confections, and sweetmeats.⁵ Stagg began her career in Williamsburg as an actress at the Levingston Theater. After her husband's death, she opened a shop, sponsored assemblies, and possibly taught dancing. She was successful enough to buy a slave who was listed in an advertisement on September 22, 1738, as having run away from his new owner.⁶

Women in Charleston, South Carolina, and in Philadelphia ran bakeries and pastry shops, advertising delicacies made in the best manner. They also sold more substantial meat pies although these were available only from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M. and from 8 to 10 P.M.⁷ These types of foods



Detail, "Plenty or L'Abondance" (CWF 1980-232). Equipped with a bar grate, hobs for keeping food and liquids hot and a jack and spit for roasting meats, this well-appointed kitchen would have been found in only the most prosperous of colonial households.

were generally made to order, although items such as preserves would keep and could be made up on speculation. These foods could also be prepared at home without the expense of acquiring a commercial oven; again, suitable for someone without capital to invest.

Another way for women to earn a living was by running a tavern, lodging, or boardinghouse. This line of work was a natural extension of housekeeping, and lodging and boarding could be done on a small scale, similar to some of today's bed-and-breakfasts. The lodger often got the children's room, and the children slept on the floor in another room. Again, no investment of capital was required. Large boardinghouses did advertise and smaller businesses could be expanded.

Meals along with beverages still accounted for a significant portion of the owner's income.

Anne Pattison's 1744-49 account book for her Williamsburg tavern reveals that the most frequently purchased items at her tavern were meals. Pattison bought a wide variety of foodstuffs and other types of merchandise, some for her tavern and some for resale, and seemed to have acted as a broker for other people on several occasions. She purchased items for daily use and also for special dinners and parties that were held at her tavern.⁸ Another tavern keeper, Mary Anne Morris of Petersburg, advertised in the 1820s that she could cater dinners and provide ice cream at very short notice.⁹

A woman also could make money through food by writing a cookbook. No sales figures are available, so the monetary success of each cookbook is impossible to determine, but publishers presumably would not invest in books with little potential for profit. Of 172 cookbooks printed between 1500 and 1800, 84 were authored by men, 38 by women, and 50 by "Anonymous." Only a third of those written by women were printed prior to 1747, when Hannah Glasse wrote *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*.¹⁰ Writing and publishing a cookbook might require a greater investment of time and capital with a slower return of income than raising poultry or running a tavern, but could be the only options for additional income that were available to an urban woman.

Earning a living through food seemed to have been a source of enjoyment for the wealthy (Mrs.

Cummings and her garden) and an additional source of income for the poor. Despite the considerable skill and effort involved in providing food for one's family, food preparation was not considered a true career for a woman as other trades were. However, an eighteenth-century cook would often face "the danger of the flames, the deleterious vapours and pestilential exhalations of the charcoal, [and] she must live . . . as a soldier on the field of battle, surrounded by bullets, and bombs, and Congreve's rockets, with the only difference being that for the cook every day is a fighting day, her warfare is almost always without glory, and most praiseworthy achievements pass not only without reward, but frequently without thanks."¹¹

¹ Suzanne Dee Lebsock, "Women and Economics in Virginia: Petersburg, Virginia, 1784-1820" (M.A. thesis, University of Virginia, 1977), 217-218.

² *Ibid.*, 205.

³ Cynthia A. Kierner, *Beyond the Household: Women's Place in the Early South, 1700-1835* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 172.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵ Julia Cherry Spruill, *Women's Life and Work in the Southern Colonies* (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1938), 278.

⁶ *Virginia Gazette*.

⁷ Elisabeth Anthony Dexter, *Career Women of America, 1776-1840* (Framcestown, N. H.; Marshall Jones, 1950), 146.

⁸ Heather R. Wainwright, "Inns and Outs: Anne Pattison's Tavern Account Book, 1744-1749" (M.A. thesis, Armstrong Atlantic State University, 1998), 105-106, 137-141.

⁹ Lebsock, "Women and Economics in Virginia," 227.

¹⁰ Arnold Whitaker Oxford, *English Cookery Books to the Year 1850* (London: Holland Press, 1977).

¹¹ Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett, *At Home: The American Family, 1750-1870* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989), 99.

T H E
A R T
O F
C O O K E R Y,
M a d e P L A I N a n d E A S Y ;

Which far exceeds any THING of the Kind ever yet Published.

C O N T A I N I N G,

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>I. Of Roasting, Baking, &c.
II. Of Pickling.
III. How the Chops, and you will find how
Exquisite a French Cook's Sauce is.
IV. To make a Number of pretty little Dishes fit
for a Supper, or Side Dish, and how to
Dishes for a great Table, and the rest you have
in the Chops for Lent.
V. To dress Fish.
VI. Of Eggs and Breads.
VII. Of Pickings.
VIII. Of Fats.
IX. For a Full Dinner, a Number of good Dishes
which you may make up for a Table at any
other Time.
X. Directions for the Suck.
XI. For Cornish of Sheep.
XII. Of Hog's-Roadings, &c.</p> | <p>XIII. To Pick and Make Ham, &c.
XIV. Of Pickings.
XV. Of Making Cakes, &c.
XVI. Of Concocting, Conses, Jellies, Wine
Sippets, &c.
XVII. Of Making Wine, Brewings, French Bread,
Muffins, &c.
XVIII. Jam, Curries, and Preserves, &c.
XIX. To Make Andersons, Venison, Ketchup,
Vinegar, and to keep Artichokes, French-
Beans, &c.
XX. OF DRESSING
XXI. How to Stew, and the Secrets of the
Year for Stew's Meat, Poultry, Fish, Hens,
Kitchens, &c. and Fats.
XXII. A curious Chart for the Use of a Mad Dog.
By Dr. Mead.</p> |
|---|--|

B Y A L A D Y.



L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR; and sold at Mrs. Gibbons's, a China-Shop, the
Corner of Fleet-Street, MDCCLXXVII.

[Price 2s. 6d. 2s. and 3s. bound]

When it was first published, Hannah Glasse's cookery book made the latest in up-to-date receipts and cooking techniques available to a wide audience. The book went through seventeen editions between 1747 and 1803.

The Bird Organ

by Phyllis L. Dadd

Phyllis is an interpreter with the Department of Youth and Group Services. She worked as a volunteer with conservator John Watson in compiling information for a black book for the Historic Area on musical instruments in Colonial Williamsburg's collections.

To
John Norton, Esqr. [London]
Williamsburg 12th June 1773

Sir
Inclosed is a letter from Lord Dunmore with the Invoice of Several things for his Lordship and his familys use. . . .

I am Sir
Your Most Obedient
Humble Servant
James Minzies
Invoice of Sundries for the
Earl of Dunmore

. . . a very Small organ for teaching Birds.¹

So goes Lord Dunmore's order that his agent acquire a small barrel organ used to teach wild birds to sing the favorite songs of the day. Today if you visit the Governor's Palace, you can see a serinette or bird organ in the governor's dining room. It is the small walnut box with a hand crank that sits on the table next to the birdcage in the right front corner of the room. Many visitors pass it by without notice. It's an untold story of a belief that wild birds could be taught to sing popular music.

Why would Colonial Williamsburg acquire one small box? Perhaps it is because that small box represents the often hidden personal side of the historical figures that occupied the Palace. It helps round out our knowledge of what they were really like, what they enjoyed, and how they might have spent their spare time. These are the things that make the person behind the historic deeds or events come alive.

The name *serinette* comes from *serin*, the French word for finch, a type of wild bird that was commonly taught to sing in eighteenth-century Europe. The word *serinette* came to be applied to all bird organs, regardless of the kind of bird being taught to sing. To train wild birds to sing individually or in groups, a variety of instruments was used. Common instruments of the day were adapted to play in the right pitch and octave for a bird to mimic. Small English flutes, called flageolettes,² and the serinette, a small version of the eighteenth-century barrel organ, were popular. People interested in training birds were warned to use the same instrument consis-



Bird organ or serinette (CWF 1988-19). Although it dates roughly to 1810-40, Colonial Williamsburg's bird organ corresponds to Jean-Benjamin (-François) de La Borde's 1780 description. The label on the inside of the lid lists the tunes or "airs" that the organ plays.

tently as even a different flute had a slightly different sound and would confuse the bird.

During the eighteenth century, people were entranced with the exotic colors of the New World's wild birds and ability of many of the new species to mimic sounds. People of this period also believed that man could and should improve upon nature. Teaching a wild bird to sing a man-made tune was one way to do this. Evidence of this interest and passion comes down to us in several forms. Two books, both titled *The Bird Fancier's Delight*, published in England in 1714 and 1717, gave instructions on teaching birds to sing. Artists, including Hogarth and Chardin, painted pictures of women and children playing the bird organ for caged wild birds. The eighteenth-century fascination with birds in general was spoofed in Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*, where the bird catcher Papageno was dressed in feathers.³

Author Dale Taylor says of the two rival editions of *The Bird Fancier's Delight* that,

The first book contained instructions for teaching songs to birds, and was reprinted until 1830. The second came out in two rival editions. . . . The later one contained about forty songs tailored to each type of bird, including selections from the "Beggars Opera" and the "Dancing Master," newly composed melodies, and flourishes for the linnnet, bullfinch, canary and woodlark.⁴

Lord Dunmore and members of his large family led fashion in Virginia partially by engaging in the latest interests of London society. James Minzies's letter to London merchant John Norton indicates that perhaps the governor or a member of his family had an interest in the fashion of teaching wild birds to sing popular tunes of the day. Norton's letter dated June 1773 coincided with the arrival in London of Lord Dunmore's secretary Captain Edward Foy who was sent to escort Lady Dunmore and some of her children to Virginia. His Lordship might have ordered the bird organ simply to display that particular London fashion when entertaining at the Palace.

A person attempting to teach a bird to sing would have to spend a significant amount of time each day playing the serinette to the bird in the hope it could master the tune. Sitting near the caged bird, the trainer turned the handle of the serinette, which worked the mechanism inside and allowed the organ to play a popular tune. A typical instrument as described by La Borde in 1780 contained two-miniature bellows, a wind chest, thirteen pipes, and a barrel pegged for twelve tunes rotated by a hand crank.⁵

Dunmore's predecessor also seemed to be a bird fancier. The inventory of the Governor's Palace taken at the time of Lord Botetourt's death in 1770 lists a large collection of birdcages.⁶ The collection, observation, and exchange of wild birds between men of the gentry, aristocracy, and others during this period are well documented. *The London Tradesman* originally published in 1747 as a guide to parents interested in apprenticing their children, said of the birdcage maker's trade,

*though the Wages given is not inferior to other Handicrafts, as the Journeymen earn from Twelve to Eighteen Shillings a Week. The Trade is not much over-stocked, and the Bird-Fanciers in and about London are so numerous a Tribe, that there is a pretty good Demand for their Goods.*⁷

It is probably safe to assume that other Virginians during this period were also interested in observing and training wild birds.

The serinette also illustrates the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's search for the right instrument to accurately portray life here in the eighteenth century. Efforts were under way to refurbish the Palace in accordance with the surviving eighteenth-century documents that described what was actually in the building. Curators had Botetourt's inventory, Dunmore's list of memorials requesting that King George III reimburse him for those items left behind in the Palace when he and his family left Williamsburg

in 1775, and Minzies's letter to John Norton. Based on Minzies's letter, curators at Colonial Williamsburg wanted to acquire a serinette for the Palace. It would take the Foundation almost thirty-five years to find one.

When the curators started searching for a serinette, they first had to determine exactly what they were looking for. Then they had to explain what they wanted to others. The correspondence between curators and Claude Partridge, the London agent used in the 1950s, illustrates the problem. In January 1954, Arthur Rhea, musical consultant to Colonial Williamsburg, wrote to Frank Partridge and Sons, Ltd., regarding the search for a bird organ.

*I have never seen a bird organ except in picture books, but it was a popular ladies' instrument in the eighteenth century. It was a small music box which played by turning a crank and its purpose is reputedly to have been for teaching pet birds to sing.*⁸

Partridge apparently did not find this enough of a description to locate such an instrument and wrote for more information. John Graham II, curator of collections, wrote back in February 1954 suggesting,

*There is a photograph of a bird organ in a portrait I believe in the National Gallery (London). . . . I have seen it in one of the photographs of a painting in one of the collections in London, but unfortunately, I cannot put my hands on this illustration. If I come across it I will write you a letter.*⁹

Apparently, Graham was unable to find that particular illustration, but on March 4, 1954, he sent Partridge "a photograph of a bird organ which is illustrated in one of the portraits of the Frick Art collection in New York City."¹⁰

Despite this information, Partridge never found a serinette. The search for the instrument continued sporadically throughout the next thirty-four years. In 1988, Wurlitzer-Bruck contacted Colonial Williamsburg. They had located an antique bird organ. Assistant curator Martha Katz-Hyman oversaw the acquisition and placement of the early-nineteenth-century serinette now on display in the Governor's Palace dining room. The instrument is a simple, rectangular walnut box with a C-shaped iron/steel crank with a boxwood knob attached. It was made in Mirecourt, France, between 1810 and 1840 and plays eight popular French tunes.¹¹ Inside, the box has only ten pipes and one set of bellows, otherwise meeting La Borde's 1780 description. Colonial Williamsburg's serinette, though built forty to eighty years later, almost exactly follows the plates laid out by Dom François Bedos de

Celles in the second volume of his *L'art du facteur d'orgues* written between 1766 and 1778.¹²

If you thought, as I did, that the training of wild birds, other than parakeets, parrots, and mynahs, to sing popular songs is an antiquated notion that doesn't work, let me tell you of my experience in Paris, France, in 1979. I walked out of the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame on the Ile de Saint Louis and happened upon a bird market. Here were hundreds of beautiful and exotic birds for sale, caged in everything from small bamboo boxes to gilded palaces. As I walked around fascinated, I heard scraps of one of the Beatles tunes. A small yellow-green finch in a wire cage was merrily whistling it. According to the purveyor, today as in the eighteenth century, one only needs an instrument of the right pitch, and the time, patience, and persistence to teach a wild bird to sing a song written by a human being.¹³

¹ Frances Norton Mason, *John Norton & Sons: Merchants of London and Virginia* (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1937), 328–330. In 1772, James Minzies was appointed by Lord Dunmore as “Clerk to the Governor's Office.”

² The English style of flute is played while held in the vertical position. The tin whistle is a common form of the flageolet.

³ Dale Taylor, “A Bird Fancier's Delight,” *Early American Life* 4 (1989): 48; William Hogarth (1697–1764), *The Graham Children*, oil, 1742; and Jean-Baptiste Simion Chardin (1699–1779), *The Bird Organ*, oil on canvas, 20 1/8” x 16 7/8”, 1751, The Frick Collection, New York.

⁴ Taylor, “Bird Fancier's Delight,” 48.

⁵ Jean-Benjamin (-François) de La Borde (September 5, 1734–July 22, 1794), *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1780); and Sybil Marcuse, *A Survey of Musical Instruments* (New York: Harper & Row, [1975]), 647.

⁶ Graham Hood, *Inventories of Four Eighteenth-Century Houses in the Historic Area of Williamsburg* (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1974), 5–19. The original inventory from 1770 is in the Botetourt Manuscripts, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

⁷ R. Campbell, Esq., *The London Tradesman. Being a Compendious View of All the Trades, Professions, Arts, both liberal and Mechanic, now practiced in the Cities of London and Westminster* (London, 1747; repr. Newton Abbot, Eng.: David & Charles Limited, 1969), 245.

⁸ Arthur Rhea to Claude Partridge, January 19, 1954, Curator's Object File # 1954-385, CWF, Williamsburg, Virginia. This is a response to Partridge's letter of January 12, 1954.

⁹ John Graham II to Claude Partridge, January 9, 1954, Curator's Object File # 1954-385, CWF, Williamsburg, Virginia.

¹⁰ John Graham II to Claude Partridge, March 4, 1954, Curator's Object File # 1954-375, CWF, Williamsburg, Virginia. The picture referred to was probably the Chardin cited earlier, which is part of the Frick Collection.

¹¹ Curator's Object File # 1988-19, Curator Work Sheet, CWF, Williamsburg, Virginia. Tunes listed for the serinette are 1. [Lamour] filial; 2. La porcheron; 3. Menuet; 4. Valsse; 5. La Mout ferme; 6. Le Soleil; 7. Chasse d'avignon; 8. La Silvandre.

¹² Charles Ferguson, *The Organ Builder by François Bedos de Celles*, O.S.B., (Raleigh, N. C.: The Sunberry Press, 1977), vol. 2, plates XCIII: all; XCIV: all; CIV: interior fig. 1. This book was created for and was a part of Diderot's *Encyclopédie*. An original copy of this two-volume set is owned by the Colby College Library, Waterville, Maine.

¹³ Several reports and studies of birds in the wild imitating cell phone rings surfaced in 2001. These reports include Michael Swaine, “All About JAVA: The Call of the Lyre Bird,” www.webreview.com, June 2001, concerning the lyrebird of Australia. Teledotcom reported birds chirping popular cell phone rings such as “Fur Elise” and “Dixie.” In June 2002, the Danish Ornithological Association reported that wild birds would often imitate the ring of cellular phones. For more information on this, go to www.google.com and search “cell phones” birds imitate.

Autumn 1774 Calendar

Compiled by Anne Willis. Anne is an instructor in the Department of Interpretive Training.

This calendar was developed to enable interpreters to accurately describe the political, natural, and economic conditions Virginians experienced in the autumn of 1774. Interpreters, using this information, can accurately convey the reality of that autumn, when the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia made independence from Britain almost inevitable and the creation of the Continental Association began to shape the economy and lives of Virginians.

Political Calendar: Autumn 1774

September 5 to October 26, 1774:

- First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia. The Virginia Delegation includes Peyton Randolph (elected president), Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton.
- Congress adopts a Continental Association. Based on Virginia's Plan prohibiting importation of British goods after December 1, 1774, and ending exportation of commodities to Great Britain after September 10, 1775, the Association establishes a system of committees to look for and publicize non-compliance of any who violate the agreement.
- Congress approves the Suffolk, Massachusetts, Resolves. The Resolves declare Parliament's Coercive Acts to be illegal and urge the people of Massachusetts to refuse to pay taxes and otherwise ignore royal officials' orders. This action clearly defies Parliament.
- Congress adopts a Declaration of Rights. This document declares that colonial rights were founded on the law of nature, the British constitution, and the colonial charters and asserts that the colonies will not give up the right to legislate and tax for themselves (with the exception of external commerce). The declaration makes clear that the colonies will not accept "Acts of Parliament" that violate their rights.

October 1774: Liberty Pole erected in Williamsburg.

October 10, 1774: General Court cancelled for fall 1774.

October 10, 1774: Col. Andrew Lewis of Augusta County defeats the Shawnee Indians under Chief Cornstalk in the Battle of Point Pleasant at the mouth of the Great Kanawha River (in present West Virginia).

Total Population of Virginia in 1770

	450,608	Persons
White Population:	263,003	[58%]
Black Population:	187,605	[42%]
Rural Population:	441,596	[98%]
Urban Population:	9,012	[2%]

Counties in Virginia in 1770: 58

Counties in Virginia in 1775: 61

October 19, 1774: Chief Cornstalk accedes to the treaty of Camp Charlotte (in present Ohio). The treaty, negotiated by Lord Dunmore, recognizes Virginia's claims in the upper Ohio River Valley and brings an end to Dunmore's War.

November 1774: Burgesses arrive in Williamsburg, but because of Dunmore's absence, they do not convene.

November 7, 1774: Yorktown has its own "tea party" when a group of irate citizens board the ship Virginia and throw two half chests of tea into the York River. The tea was shipped by John Norton and Sons of London to John Prentis and Company in Williamsburg.

November 9, 1774: Nearly five hundred merchants gather in Williamsburg and sign the Continental Association, which they present to Peyton Randolph and other congressional delegates at the Capitol.

November 25, 1774: James City County elects its Committee of Safety.

November 30, 1774: John Dixon is elected mayor of Williamsburg.

Health

Dr. Sequeyra's account notes, "in the Fall some *remitting* and *intermittent* Fevers."

[Oxford English Dictionary definition of *remitting fevers*—"a type of fever, the symptoms of which undergo at intervals a marked abatement or diminution" (without disappearing entirely as in the *intermittent* type)]. Malaria would have produced a remittent fever.

The Weather

Hurricane Season

NW winds make entering Chesapeake Bay difficult

September 1774

19th The morning fine & cool, & produces in our school at last a fine fire! . . . Evening after school with Mrs Carter, & the girls I took a walk thro the pumpkin & potatoe vines. The air is clear, cold & healthful. We drank our coffee at the great house very sociably, round a fine fire, the house and air feels like winter again. (Philip Vickers Fithian)

October 1774

9th Foggy and yet dry. I saw so much in my yesterday ride out that without rain soon a great deal of wheat sown will be destroyed even of that which is come up, more then of what is not come up. (Landon Carter)

11th Neither dew, nor rain; the very grass plats seems quite burnt up. . . . Rode out this day. It is inconceivable how detrimental the dry weather has been to almost everything. (Landon Carter)

20th Quite dry as usual but no frost as there was the 18 and 19, which as yet have hurt nothing. . . . As to rain, it is agreed on all hands there never was a drier time, even the mills hardly go round but a very few hours in any day. (Landon Carter)

November 1774

18th Hard wind all day from the northwest and very cold. Weather clear. (Washington)

21st Snowing and raining all day and the greatest part of the night. Wind at No. Et. & fresh. (Washington)

30th It continued raining on & off till noon then a close & wet snow till night. (Washington)

Housekeeping/Gardening/Food Preservation

Mosquito netting and gauze covers from the summer removed. Chimney boards removed and fireplaces became active for wood and/or coal burning. Carpets and window curtains re-installed for more warmth. Additional blankets and bed rugs added to bed coverings.

Second sowing of cool-weather crops, like greens and peas. Apples gathered and stored in cellars, sliced and dried, or made into cider or jelly.

Depending on the humidity of the particular year, air-drying of beans, etc., may go on into the fall. Some years the garden will continue producing food for the table well into December. Supply of firewood brought to town and stacked for use in the winter.

Agriculture

Tobacco: Worm, sucker, top, cut, and hang

Strike and strip at night

Tie in hand at night

Pack and prize

Hoe hills for next year and sow seed

Corn: Gather tops and blades for fodder and cart to town

Gather and husk corn

Clear new fields and plow fields for next year

Wheat: Tread, thresh, and clean wheat

Sow and harrow in winter wheat

Cart wheat and straw to town

Plow and sow other grains

Vegetables: Gather peas and beans

Dig potatoes, carrots, and turnips

Pull pumpkins

Orchard: Make cider and peach brandy and cart to town

Gather apples and grapes

Plant grapes and sow apple seed

Livestock: Fatten hogs and beeves

Build shelter for cattle

Sell mutton, hogs, and steers

Butcher hogs (December)

Other: Overseers hired for next year (September)

Cut firewood and cart to town

Ditch fields, grub, and fence

Notable Events for Virginians

Fall of 1774: Lady Dunmore is expecting her ninth child (born December 3)

September 29, 1774: Michaelmas

October 18, 1774: Students return to the College

October 25, 1774: St. Crispin's Day

October 25, 1774: Accession Day of King George to the Throne (October 25, 1760). It is unknown if this traditional celebration was held in 1774.

November 1, 1774: All Saints Day

November 5, 1774: Guy Fawkes Day

November 30, 1774: St. Andrew's Day
Election Day for the Mayor of Williamsburg

Commerce

The majority of items exported were tobacco, grains (corn and wheat), and lumber (staves and shingles) in Virginia's transatlantic, Caribbean, Mediterranean and Wine Islands trade, and the colonial coastal trade. The transatlantic trade generally employed ships and brigs carrying more than 150 tons while those for the coastal and Caribbean trade were schooners usually carrying less than 100 tons.

September to October: Convoy of imported goods arrives from Britain and returns to Britain with tobacco

October: Wheat exported to the West Indies
 October to June: Prime market for cargos exported to Southern Europe
 Ships entering the Lower Chesapeake—September: 20; October: 30; November: 40;
 Ships Cleared from the Lower Chesapeake—September: 20; October: 40; November: 28

Seasonality in Building

Making and burning of bricks through November, sometimes in rural areas bricks are burned after crops are in. Good working months through October.



Q & A

Question: What kinds of sports or outdoor activities were popular with Virginians?

Answer: Virginians of both sexes and all ages and classes were at home in the saddle. Their horses were "their pleasure and their pride." Horse racing developed from informal, often impromptu tests of speed and endurance. In addition to horse racing, occasional boat races on rivers provided similar activities for social gatherings.

Fish and game were welcome additions to colonial tables, but after the first years of settlement, fishing and hunting were done more for sport than necessity.

Cockfighting and wrestling were standard recreation in the backcountry among the lower classes. For gentlemen, boxing was a polite accomplishment like dancing and fencing. The art of fencing could be learned in Virginia, where a number of competent teachers were available. The dueling contests of Virginia fairs were cudgeling matches patterned after the traditional village sport in England.

Bowling was enjoyed in England by men and women of all classes. Ordinary people used public alleys and greens maintained by towns and taverns, and the well-to-do had private bowling greens on their estates. Two European forms of

the sport came to the colonies. The Dutch brought ninepins to New York, and the English brought bowles to Jamestown, where they played in the streets. The quoit resembled a discus but with a hole in the middle. Its homespun variant is pitching horseshoes.

Before he laid out a bowling green at Westover, William Byrd often played cricket with energetic friends. A modern cricketer would not recognize the informal sport those Virginians played. The British national game as it is played today did not begin to develop until the Hamledon rules were drawn up in 1774.

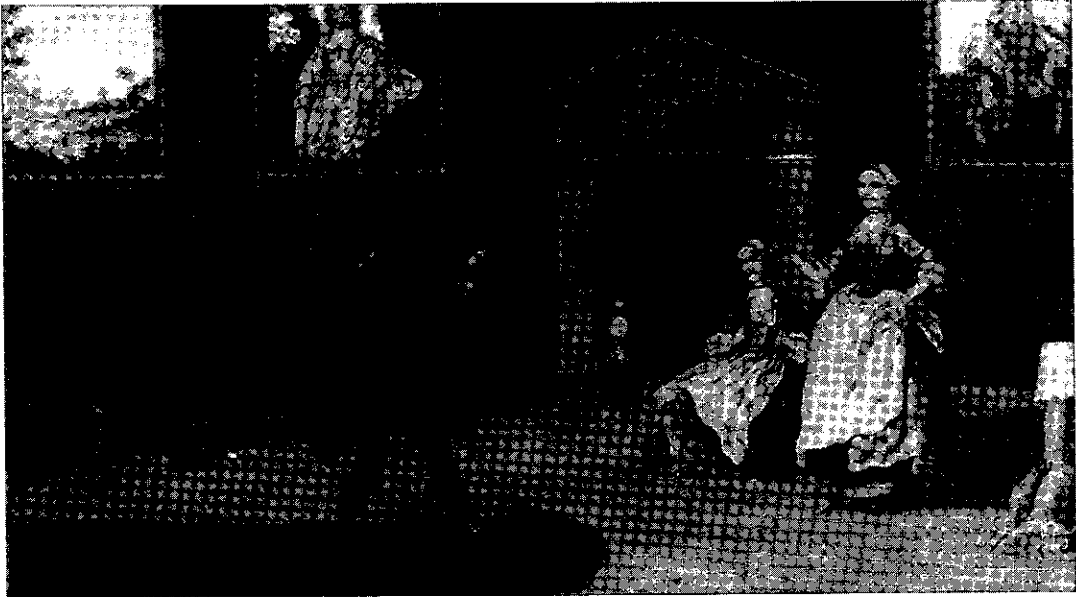
Another ball game colonial Virginians played was fives, or hand tennis, what we call handball today. The origin of the name and of the game is uncertain.

Early badminton, called shuttlecock, was a fashionable pastime in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, but in colonial America only children seem to have played it.

Ice skating and swimming were popular in the appropriate seasons. (Adapted from Jane Carson, *Colonial Virginians at Home*.)

Question: Was Kentucky officially part of Virginia in 1776?

Answer: Yes, it was. Kentucky had a relatively short "colonial" history. The Kentucky country was largely unexplored Virginia territory in the late 1760s. Virginia land speculator Dr. Thomas Walker traveled just beyond the Cumberland Gap in 1750, and a few hardy "long hunters" trapped and hunted in the region thereafter. By 1770, several treaties pertaining to the Indians had allayed the fears of would-be settlers. Former long hunter Daniel Boone was among the first men to lead parties of settlers across the mountains and into central "bluegrass" Kentucky. The first permanent white European settlements at Booneborough and Harrodsburg were being established in 1774/75.



"The Diversion of Battledore and Shuttlecock from an Original Design in Vauxhall Gardens" (CWF 1962-232, 1). Taken from a painting by Francis Hayman and dating to around 1750, this line engraving shows a young man and woman playing shuttlecock (or shittlecock) in a handsome interior.

Kentucky was administered at first as part of Botetourt County, Virginia. In 1772, it became part of newly created Fincastle County. Some people even hoped to make Kentucky into a fourteenth colony, independent of Virginia. However, with the outbreak of the Revolution, many Kentuckians feared that they could not defend themselves against the British and their Indian allies. Thus, in 1776, Colonel George Rogers Clark, a prominent settler and leader, paid a visit to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry at his home in Hanover County, in order to plead for Virginia's protection of Kentucky. That same year, the Virginia House of Burgesses officially created Kentucky County.

Kentucky County remained part of Virginia until Kentucky entered the Union as the fifteenth state (after Vermont) in 1792.

Question: *When was the Bible first printed in British America?*

Answer: No English Bible was printed in the colonies before the Revolution. The Crown restricted the printing of Bibles to the authorized publishing centers of London, Cambridge, and Oxford. Though technically not the first printed Bible in America, the first English-language Bible printed here was an edition of the King James Version done by Philadelphia printer/publisher Robert Aitken in 1782.

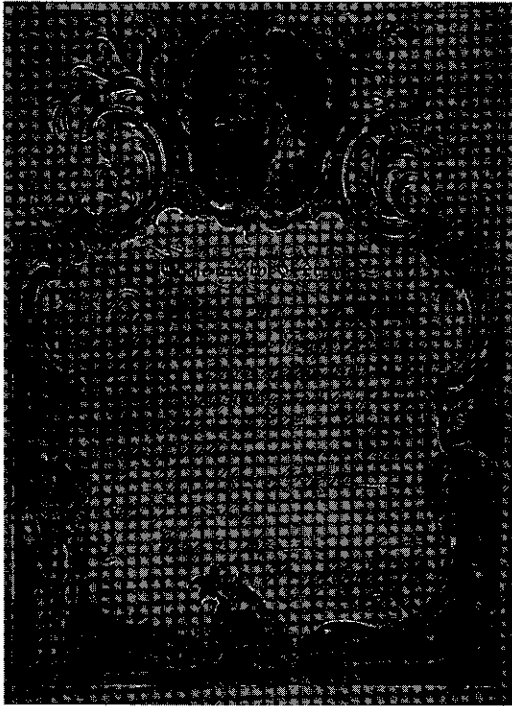
The very first printed Bible in North America was in an American Indian language. British restrictions did not apply to the publication of Bible translations in languages other than En-

glish or to printing portions of the Bible in versions other than the King James. One such example of the latter is the first book published in British North America, the famous *Bay Psalm Book* of 1640, a translation of the Psalms undertaken by Massachusetts Puritan divines Richard Mather, John Eliot, and Thomas Weld. John Eliot later produced the first American Bible, printed in one of the Algonquian languages.

Eliot was interested in the culture and language of the Indians who lived around Roxbury, Massachusetts, and he made a point of studying and learning Natic, as the regional variant of Algonquian was known. He achieved great support for his mission work when he began to preach in this language. His translation and production of the Bible in Natic occurred from 1661 to 1663, in cooperation with a professional printer named Marmaduke, who was sent over from England on a three-year contract. The 1,200-page volume would not have been possible without technical assistance from London.

The first complete Bible in a European language in America was a German edition produced by Christopher Saur of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1743. (Saur's second edition of twenty years later was printed, at least in part, on paper produced in the paper mill of Williamsburg printer William Parks.)

The appearance of Saur's Bible in German resulted in public pressure for a homegrown English edition. A petition laid before the Continental Congress in 1777 for the printing of an American Bible in English came to naught. In



John Minson Galt certificate (CWF G1978-352). Galt was awarded this certificate on May 2, 1767, after attending "a Course of Lectures on the Theory & Practice of Physick." It is one of four certificates Galt received in 1767-68 while studying medicine in London.

the same year, Robert Aitken, a Scots immigrant to Philadelphia, advertised for sale an edition of the New-Testament, which he had printed in 1776. In 1780, Aitken submitted a proposal to Congress for the printing of a complete King James Bible, without the Apocrypha. Aitken went to work, and on September 10, 1782, Congress examined and approved two specimen copies of his Bible.

Aitken inserted his Congressional endorsement into the front of his text and published ten thousand copies set in Brevier type on American-made paper. The work was 1,452 pages in length. [Information from *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* by Alister E. McGrath (Random House, 2001)].

Question: What was the difference between a physician, apothecary, surgeon, chemist, and druggist?

Answer: In Virginia and in areas of England where there was no licensing for medical practitioners, the training and roles were not always clearly outlined. This is not always easy for visitors to grasp, because the regulations and job de-

scriptions for modern practitioners are very clearly specified. The traditional responsibilities are described below.

Physicians usually received formal training at a university. When they completed their study, they were given a degree in medicine and were addressed as doctor. Their role was to diagnose and prescribe treatment for diseases, much as modern internists practice today. Dr. John de Sequerra graduated from the University of Leyden and practiced in Williamsburg from 1745 to 1795.

Apothecaries and surgeons usually served apprenticeships but could go to a university for a degree. In addition to diagnosing and prescribing for patients, apothecaries also compounded medications and sold sundries such as spices, food products, dyes, toothbrushes, soap, and candles. Surgeons treated injuries, fractures, skin and breast cancer, removed stones from the bladder, and performed other operations as needed. Some practitioners, such as William Pasteur and John Galt, practiced as apothecaries and surgeons.

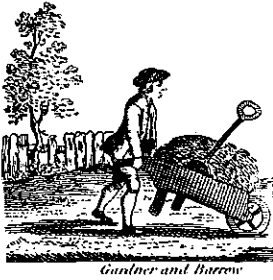
Chemists prepared minerals, metals, and other items for use in medications. Thomas Goodwin practiced this trade in Williamsburg in 1737.

In the colonies, druggists usually imported and sold drugs at wholesale. (The terms *druggist* and *apothecary* were not interchangeable in the colonies.) In 1768, Dr. William Pasteur complained about a local druggist: "tis hardly worth our while to import medicines for sale we are Oblige[d] to sell at a low advance on acct of our confounded druggist here."¹ William Biers, the druggist Pasteur meant, operated his shop from 1765 to 1768.

In London, where licensing laws regulated some aspects of medicine, there were differences. One did not usually practice as an apothecary and a surgeon. Throughout most of the century, London apothecaries were allowed to prescribe but could only charge for drugs. The social standing of medical practitioners was clearly defined. In London, the physician held the most prominent place in medicine, followed by the apothecary and then the chemist, druggist, and surgeon. In the colonies, however, the apothecaries were more on par with physicians; they were often the sole professional medical practitioners in a given community. (Robin Kipps and the Pasteur and Galt Apothecary staff)

Q & A was compiled by Bob Doares, instructor in the Department of Interpretive Training, and member of the Interpreter Planning Board.

¹ Harold B. Gill, Jr., *The Apothecary in Colonial Virginia* (Charlottesville, Va., 1972), 53-53.



The Bothy's Mould

"The best dirt (mould) from the gardener's hut (bothy)."

In a 1694 letter to Virginia planter John Walker, John Evelyn mentioned a gardener sent to Virginia with a design for gardens at the College of William and Mary. He was James Road, an employee of George London who managed the gardens at Hampton Court. Road arrived in Virginia probably in mid-1694 with plans in hand and instructions to lay out the gardens at the college as well as to return to London with a collection of native plants. Unfortunately, neither Road's plans nor a description of the college's original gardens survives. The earliest description dates to 1724, when Hugh Jones wrote about the college campus and grounds. Several other observers in the colonial period left their own impressions of the college gardens. [Adapted from James D. Kornwolf, "So Good a Design," *The Colonial Campus of the College of William and Mary: Its History, Background, and Legacy* (Williamsburg, Virginia, 1989), 33-34.]

Reverend Hugh Jones (1724)

It [the college] is approached by a good walk, and a grand entrance by steps, with good courts and gardens about it . . . and a large pasture enclosed like a park with about 150 acres of land adjoining for occasional uses.

Governor William Gooch (1727)

The College is very large and well built, with gardens and outhouses proportioned.

Reverend William Dawson (1732)

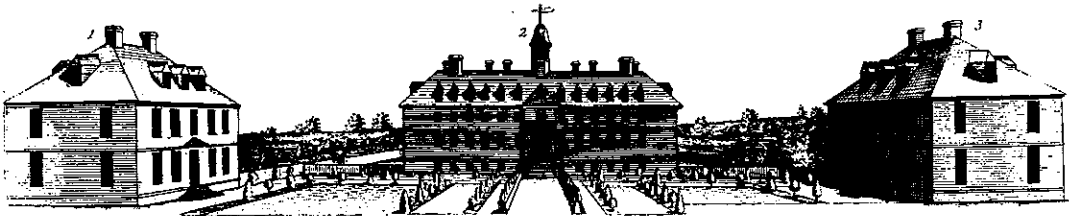
The foundations of a common brick house [for the College President] are to be laid opposite to Brafferton so that the two buildings will appear at a small Distance from the East Front of the College, symmetrically and elegantly framing an existing Garden planted with Ever-Greens kept in a very good Order.

Josiah Quincy (1773)

The college makes a very agreeable appearance, and the large garden before it is of ornament and use.

Ebenezer Hazard (1777)

At this [East] Front of the College is a large Court Yard, ornamented with Gravel Walks, Trees cut into different Forms, & Grass.



Detail from Bodleian Plate.

“Well, in Our Country, . . .”

by Val Forrester

Val is a site interpreter in the Department of Historic Interpretation.

Alice looked round her in great surprise. “Why, I do believe we’ve been under this tree the whole time! Everything’s just as it was!”

“Of course it is,” said the Queen. “What would you have it?”

“Well, in our country,” said Alice, still panting a little, “you’d generally get to somewhere else—if you ran very fast for a long time, as we’ve been doing.”

“A slow sort of country,” said the Queen. “Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!”

Distance and time, time and distance. The broad, paved King’s Highway running through Philadelphia might accommodate the largest carriages in reasonable comfort and at smooth speeds, but in our country—isolated at times up to six weeks from even experienced southbound post riders—flood waters caused seasoned Tidewater travelers to prefer horseback. When the waters of the Pamunkey reached the cushion of a chaise while one was sitting on it, even men like Thomas Jefferson confessed to bouts of “violent hydrophobia.” So, if a visitor to Williamsburg wishes to know about times and distances, then and now, tell them it depends upon the skill of the ferrymen. And then you might also point to a weathervane and mention the autumnal equinox, buffalo, inclination, and grosgrain silk.

Icy rains, slippery glazes on rocks, and gusts of blinding snow hinder any traveler, as do any hazardous road conditions. Imagine a well-traveled road, eroded to expose mazes of roots so that horses blundered stepping through them. And then imagine being pitched from a horse and breaking a leg—the nearest plantation miles away. Rather travel by stage wagon? For a brief time in the 1760s, a stage ran the thirty-two-mile stretch between Hampton and Williamsburg. In the winter, snow and rain often soaked passengers, and in the summer, the dusty, damp interior of the stage wagon could become unbearably. Upon reaching a river, passengers might wait several hours for belongings to cross on the ferry, especially if other stages preceded theirs.

Prefer to cross the Atlantic? By the “advice of those skilled in sea voyages,” Jefferson chose the period between the autumnal equinox (September 23 in the Northern Hemisphere) and winter for his departure, whereas he regarded March and September, “the boisterous equinoctial months,” as “the most disagreeable seasons to be passed at sea.” (Thus, waiting until October to sail would probably have been a good idea.) Travel to England could take a month or more. Nicholas Cresswell left Liverpool in April and arrived in Urbanna, Virginia, in May 1774, after a passage of thirty-eight days. In July 1777, he left Long Island Sound, New York, and thirty-three days later at the end of August, he arrived, exhausted, in Portsmouth, England.

Cresswell had spent almost three years exploring Maryland, Virginia, western Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. In his travels, he and his party often encountered salt licks. Large herds of buffalo existed in the western regions, and since these animals were “fond of” salt or brackish water, they would travel from lick to lick inadvertently creating roads “as large as most Publick roads in a populous Country.”

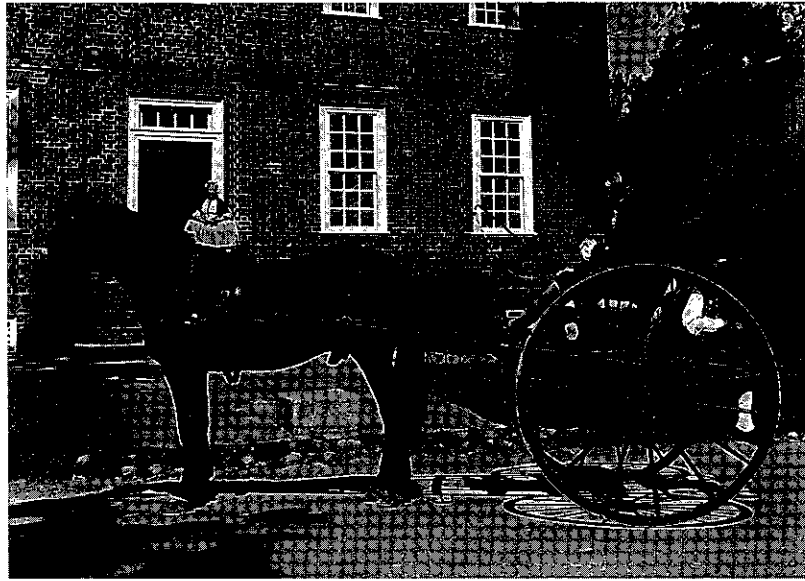
Roads in the colonies often developed from trampled buffalo paths or Indian trails, and by the 1630s, laws were passed requiring counties to establish roads between places of importance, such as courthouses, churches, ferries, mills, and capital cities. Between 1636 and 1774, the Boston Post Road, aka the King’s Highway, was created for the distribution of mail. This route first linked Boston to New York and Philadelphia to Norfolk. South from Alexandria, the King’s Highway was (for a distance) called the Potomac Trail.

Roads were needed for mail delivery and for spreading news, but why did people travel? For the same reasons we do today: to seek employment, to conduct business, to tour the countryside, and to visit family and friends. Whereas the means of travel has changed, the idea of travel has not.

To say that the time it takes us to travel an hour on the highway is equivalent to travel time in a day in the 1700s is a rather high estimation, since a journey of more than fifty miles in a day was considered long. Whether for business or pleasure, traveling thirty to fifty miles a day tended to be average, depending on conditions.

For example, when Jefferson attended the Continental Congress in 1775, he left Williamsburg on June 11 and arrived in Philadelphia on June 20. That was nine to ten days to travel roughly three hundred miles. George Washington spent anywhere from three to seven days traveling from Williamsburg to Mount Vernon.

The chaise, also called a riding chair, was a convenient form of travel because of its maneuverability and the fact that it required only one horse.



Why, at times, so few—or so many—days? On one return trip from Williamsburg, Washington submitted to staying at his host's home "on condition that he should dine, only dine," and ended up staying the night. He had not expected to meet and converse with Martha Custis, whom he would later behold in a stylish wedding gown of grosgrain silk on Twelfth Night 1759.

The trend of a more leisurely pace would continue. When Martha traveled with George, the journey to General Assembly sessions involved visiting friends and relations and taking the "sequestered walks of connubial life" that provided Washington with a "permanent and genuine happiness." Perhaps strolling half as fast as those running twice as fast yields better results, and maybe the end result is best discovered in the unexpected. After all, sometimes the best modes of transportation are the oldest.

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Arts & Mysteries

Would You Really have Been Here?

Women in the Historic Trades Department

by Misti Furr

Misti is a historic trades interpreter at the James Geddy House.

Today we find women working at many of Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Trades sites. In some cases, these women are undertaking the same tasks as women in the eighteenth century. In other cases, however, motivated by our modern concerns for equal opportunity regardless of gender, women perform work that rarely, if ever, was undertaken by women two centuries ago. Both situations can give rise to questions among us and among our guests. They also can provide opportunities for us to better understand the times we are trying to interpret and, in turn, to better educate our guests.

Women have been part of the Department of Historic Trades (in its many different forms and with its many different names) since the early days of the Restoration. Their roles have been many and varied. Lucy Cook and her husband came from Luray, Virginia, to start the basket-making program. Bonnie Brown helped to reopen the Spinning and Weaving Shop after it closed for lack of a qualified weaver. Gayle Clarke became the first woman silversmith. Today, guests can find some thirty women working in Historic Trades. As part of the trades department, these women belong to an elite group of museum historians. As trades historians, they help provide a link between eighteenth-century handcrafts and modern museum education. This idea of preserving historic trades is an integral part of the trades department's mission.

While women in trades face many of the same interpretive challenges as men, they also encounter some unique challenges. There are many physical constraints as well as environmental restrictions caused by dress. It's not easy to be next to a fire in a dress. We see, through print sources, women in the eighteenth century making similar compromises.

Several tradeswomen feel that they cannot interpret many eighteenth-century subjects without first "proving" themselves to guests and/or colleagues. The history of women's roles is by no means definitive; not every historian agrees on what part women played in eighteenth-century industry. While we may be politically correct and socially equal in the workplace of today, there is still a lot of work to be done in

the history books. These barriers are ones guests face when they view women in trades.

Quite often a guest in the Historic Area will question the authenticity of something that they see: "They didn't have nails back then." "Hey, is there air conditioning in this building?" Most interpreters encounter many different variations on this theme. When the interpreter is a woman, what is often called into question is the interpreter herself. "Would you really have been here?" is a question that is part of everyday life for many of the women in the department.

What makes it so hard for guests to accept the presence of women in trades settings? Some guests have only a very general view of history and even less knowledge of something as specific as women's roles in the eighteenth century. Even within the museum environment there is quite a bit of controversy regarding women's history. Some only discuss women in the domestic setting. An essay, by Edith Mayo, states how some guests (and others) view women's history: "Women's exhibits are considered legitimate [only] if they present traditional "women's" topics such as costume, quilting, or decorative arts, or if women are depicted as leading "attendant" lives—that is attached to some other cultural or historical group."¹

Most guests going from one end of the Historic Area to the other have the opportunity to see women completing various tasks. Usually, sewing, weaving, or cooking (all performed by some women within Historic Trades) do not draw comments. In fact, in a rather ironic twist, it is often the men participating in these tasks who are asked to justify their presence. When guests see a woman performing some sort of "nontraditional" work, they become curious. At this point, we, as interpreters, have the opportunity to reward curiosity with education. We have the ability to tell guests that women did work in the eighteenth century. We have the examples of women like Clementina Rind, Ann Geddy, and Margaret Hunter—right here in Williamsburg.

Being asked that question—"Would you have been here?"—provides many of the women in the Historic Area with a unique opportunity to enlighten the guest just by their very pres-

ence. There is still more that we can do as a museum; simply having women working in trades is not enough. We must be careful to let the guest know that there were arenas in which we are not entirely sure women would be found. We must also expand upon research that has already been done. We cannot expect to give each guest a complete history of women's eighteenth-century work roles. We can, however, give them enough information so that they walk away from the Historic Area ready to do their own research. Isn't that what good interpretation is about?

(As part of my research for this column, I presented thirty women in the Historic Trades Department

with a questionnaire. I would like to thank each one for taking time out of her day in order to help with this article. Anyone interested in the topic of women's history may want to contact Betty Myers (at the Wig Shop) or Suzie Dye (at the Geddy Foundry) who coordinates a women's history study group that meets regularly.)

Look for future columns on what trades were practiced by women in the colonial period.

¹ Edith P. Mayo, "New Agles of Vision," in *Gender Perspectives: Essays on Women in Museums*, ed. Jane R. Glaser and Artemis A. Zenetou (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994).

Extracts from the Autobiography of the Reverend James Ireland

James Ireland (1748–1806), a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, and Presbyterian by upbringing, immigrated to Virginia sometime after the French and Indian War. He settled in the Shenandoah Valley around 1766. (See "Of Prison, Poison, and Other Perils: The Life of the Reverend James Ireland," Interpreter, Fall 1998.) There he came under the influence of the Baptist community of believers and was ordained as a minister of that faith in 1769. Imprisoned by local authorities in the fall of that year for preaching without a license, Ireland then traveled in the spring of 1770 to Williamsburg, where he met with Governor Botetourt at the Palace. Botetourt treated him kindly and gave him legal advice on obtaining a proper license from the General Court at the Capitol.

Ireland's first-person account of the struggle for religious freedom in colonial Virginia is preserved in an autobiography, dictated from his deathbed during the last few weeks of his life and published posthumously by J. Foster of Winchester, Virginia, in 1819. There has been no subsequent edition. A copy of the rare original exists in the collection of the Earl Gregg Swem Library at the College of William and Mary. Bob Doares, member of the Historic Area training team and Interpreter Planning Board, also owns one of these 1819 imprints.

In this and following issues of the Interpreter, Bob will share some of his favorite excerpts from The Life of the Rev. James Ireland, Who Was, for Many Years Pastor of the Baptist Church at Buck Marsh, Waterlick and Happy Creek, in Frederick and Shenandoah Counties, Virginia. [Punctuation and spelling have been minimally edited for clarity.]

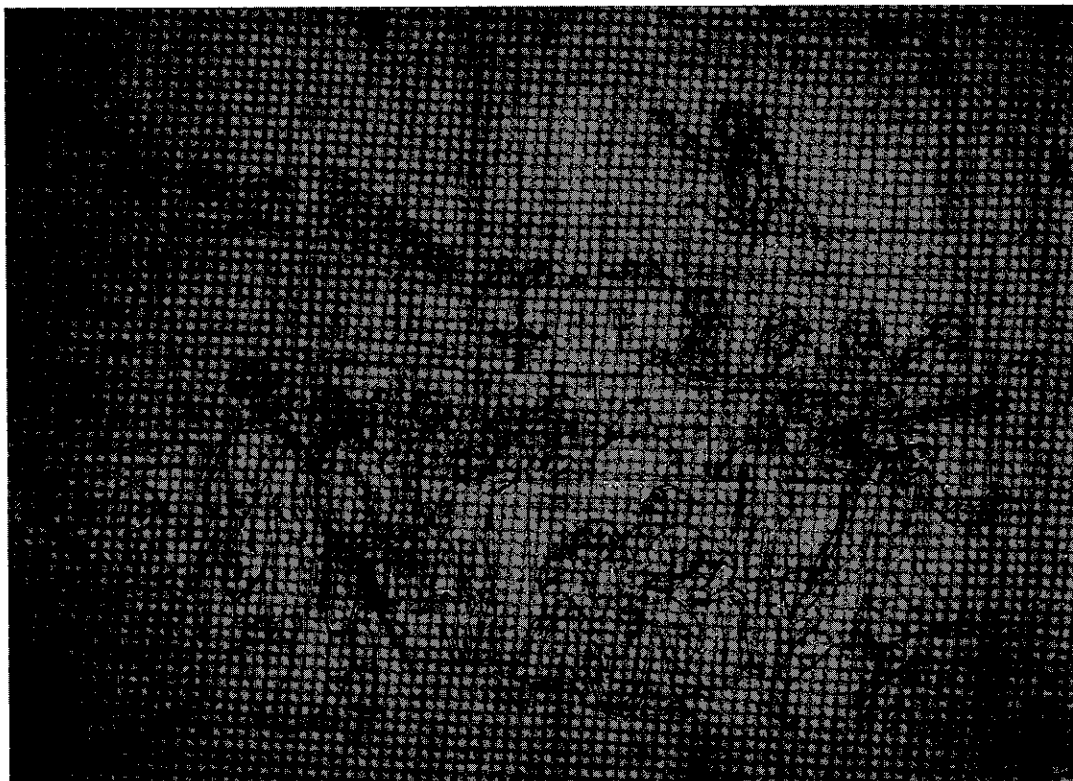
Chapter 1 (Childhood in Edinburgh and the Influence of the Reverend George Whitefield)

It is customary, when the history of a person's life is published, to give an account of the place of his nativity and parentage. The object I have in view, in this particular is only, so far as is necessary, to introduce me as a rational being into the world.

My ancestors in the male line, were a respectable people, and were neither classed with the nobility nor commonality, but occupied the middle space between these appellations, and were ranked with those who according to the custom of the country, were denominated gentry: and on the maternal side I sprang from a people that were called good farmers. My grandfather's name was Thomas Andrews. My grandfather in the male lineage lived in a town eight miles from Edinburgh, called Kings-Horn, being a small sea-port, and had his landed estate lying contiguous thereto; he was bred to the profession of the law, and was considered as an able counselor; and enjoyed other offices that were profitable and advantageous. He had three sons named George, David and James. . . .

My father, the youngest of his sons, on whom he bestowed a very liberal education, was bred to the law; whether the commencement of his studies in that profession were under his own father I cannot ascertain, but have heard him say, he finished his studies in Edinburgh; where, in process of time, he married my mother and fixed his residence in that city. . . .

My father, in his professional character, had a very considerable run of business, by which he supported his family handsomely, and my mother being a woman of taste and fashion they lived up to their income; consequently, my father could not lay up what is called a portion for his children; but his determination was, to endeavour to



"The Black Stool or Presbyterian Penance" (CWF 1993-137). The work of David Allan, this circa 1784 drawing shows the interior of a Scots meetinghouse with the minister fulminating against the downcast sinner across from him. Note the person driving the dogs out the door on the right.

give them a genteel education; and intending to bring me up to his own profession, I was early put to school; in order to acquire what was requisite, that I might at a suitable age, enter on, and go through the graduations of a classical education.

My parents, sustaining the appellation of Presbyterians had a watchful eye over my youthful morals; and although I dare not say they were at that time, acquainted with vital and experimental religion, yet every needful moral precept was inculcated; and their instruction was not lacking for the moral improvement of my mind; and having a tenacious and retentive memory, I was early instructed in the principles of the Gospel according to the Presbyterian plan. . . .

About this time Mr. George Whitefield came to Edinburgh and preached morning and evening every day in the week, for several months successively, at a place called the Orphan Hospital; as several thousands attended him daily, both morning and evening, the collections, which were usually gathered at every sermon, was appropriated to the benefit of the poor orphans. I have every reason to believe the ministry of Mr. Whitefield was instrumental in converting my father to the saving knowledge of Christ; he attended his ministry every day both morning and evening, and on the Lord's day would have his family and servants

attend with him. I might here give a relation of what I called my father's conversion, with the reasons which induced me to believe it was a work of grace in the heart; but as I am not writing the history of his life, but that of my own, I shall add no more on the subject.

Chapter 4: (Near Death at Sea and Emigration to America)

There were four ships that went a whale catching in company together from Leith; all which were considered as subject to the command of a Commodore . . . whose name was Yan Yonson a Hollander, a gentle and humane man; he visited at my fathers, which reconciled my parents the better to this voyage, as I was to sail with him; and indeed I was treated by him with all the humanity of a father, and he entrusted me with the care of all his stores, with which he was bountifully supplied. . . .

We were pretty far advanced in the north seas, on our voyage outward bound, and had been visited with a storm, whether a violent or moderate one, I will not determine; but as a storm in those seas produces a very lofty swell in the waves subsequent to its termination, we were becalmed almost in an instant; and although the wind was favourable, yet there was not a sufficient breeze to

undulate the water, so as to work the ship. . . .

When our ship was in this situation the boatswain addressed himself to several young men in language similar to this; "which of you, my active young lads, will venture up to the top-gallant-mast-head, taking with you the top-gallant-block, in order to reave the rope belonging to the block through the sheave, and fasten the end of it to the ring at the main-top-mast-head?"

I immediately sprung forward, and offered my service to perform it; up I went with apparent alacrity; the higher I got, I found it necessary to be the more cautious, in consequence of the rolling of the ship. When I had ascended to the main-top-mast-head and looked above me to the top-gallant-mast, I found there were very few ratlings fixed to the main-top-gallant-mast-shrouds (which ratlings serve as a ladder for sailors to mount aloft by) so that I had to perform the other distance, by what the sailors call shining it up. When I got to my destined spot and untied the rope . . . the block dropped out of my hand, and miraculously indeed was I preserved from falling—Once I think for a few moments, my legs got untwisted from the shrouds, and my whole weight was suspended by one hand; I, however, executed the task I had voluntarily undertaken to do, and descended down to the quarter-deck. . . . When I got safe on deck and began to view the danger I had been in, I was seized with an immediate panic, and shook all over as if I had been in an ague. Of all the dangers I ever was exposed to, I humbly conceive this was the greatest; and my escape and deliverance from it the most singular. . . .

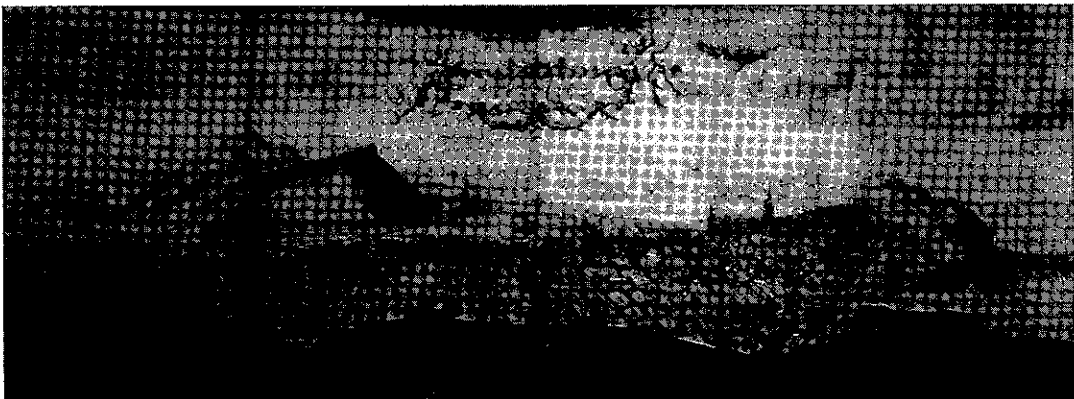
From thence we proceeded on our voyage home, and shortly after I embarked for America. The circumstances which led to my embarkation for this country, and final separation from my parents, friends, and native land, are of themselves, of a nature, at this time probably of not sufficient

magnitude to detail; suffice it to say, they arose from an act of juvenile indiscretion, and the rigor of the penal laws of the government under which I was born and raised. I however, hailed my removal as the most auspicious and fortunate epoch of my life. It pleased my great deliverer to bring good out of evil, and I was destined to exchange a land of tyranny and sanguinary oppression, for a country of liberty, reason, and humanity.

True it is, that on my first arrival in Virginia, and for a few years after, this now happy country too, groaned under the tyranny of a rigorous religious intolerance: but it soon pleased the *great giver of all good*, through the instrumentality of the revolution, to burst asunder the bands of tyranny, and I was permitted, with all others to enjoy that entire freedom of conscience, in the exercise of my ministry, in the gospel of a blessed redeemer, so congenial and balmy to the human mind—From this rigorous intolerance arose many of my severe trials and cruel persecutions in the early part of my gospel labours, which will be detailed in their proper place.

Chapter 4: (Presentiments of Hell, Teaching School, circa 1768, Shenandoah County, Virginia)

Soon after I came to America, I had a singular dream which produced some momentary effects upon me at that time, which were as follows, viz. I dreamt that I was walking in the high street of the city of my nativity, and the Devil appeared to me, and in an instant, laid hold of my person and, as I thought, carried me down bodily to hell. It appeared to me that the entrance therein was by two large leafed gates; and as he opened the gates in order to thrust me in, I felt as if an awful steam of heat issued therefrom; before he could execute his purpose however, I was bound fast under the arm pits by a long silver cord, the end of which reached to



North Prospect of the City of Edinburgh (Private Collection). Published in London in 1708 by Andrew Johnson but based on a late-seventeenth-century view, Edinburgh is seen from the north looking south with Arthur's Seat in the left distance. The Royal Mile runs from Holyrood Palace on the left (or east) to Edinburgh Castle on the right (or west).

heaven, and I was in an instant delivered, and sat down upon the spot, where the grand enemy seized me. . . . How many times the dream was repeated I cannot recollect at present; but when I awoke and reflected upon it, it produced some strange sensations in me. I dare not say it left any impression of my guilty state, but it produced in me a partial reformation, for about a week.

After I had recovered from my last stroke of affliction, a stranger lodged all night at my place of residence, who lived about thirty-six or forty miles from there; who, among other subjects of conversation, informed the family that he was in search of a School-Master, who would meet with ample encouragement in the parts where he lived, provided he was capable to teach, and could come well recommended. Not being there that night myself, they recommended me to him, and upon their recommendation he offered encouragement for me to go to his house; and, as they told me, spoke so highly of himself that they conceived him to be a leading character in those parts. However, when I went up I found it quite the reverse, but at the same time, was informed that the settlement stood much in need of a teacher among them. I applied to one of the most reputable characters in the neighborhood, who soon collected a few of his nearest neighbours, that wished to encourage a school; and after proving me a little and requesting me to write a line or two before them, they appeared well pleased, and every thing was fixed to the satisfaction of both parties, and the school was

to commence on a certain day; at which time I attended, and commenced immediately; and so on obtained an acquaintance with the temper disposition and practice of the settlement which produced a very considerable shock in my mind, by comparing the contrast between the people amongst whom I had lived and those amongst whom, I was now to live. . . .

In my new settlement there was not the least appearance of respect for the Sabbath excepting amongst a few Quakers, who on the first day of the week, would meet at a certain house and pursue their modes according to their way of thinking. It was the only day of general sport, merriment and dissipation in the vicinity where I resided; and no scenes of vanity or wickedness, would they hesitate to pursue, or practice. When I beheld their practice, the first influence it had upon me was, that it disposed me to take my Bible and retire into the woods by myself, where I spent a good part of the day in reading; and to the best of my recollection, I wept and prayed also. . . .

Those partial Lord's day impressions soon "vanished like the morning cloud and the early dew." Not many weeks passed before I could heartily join with them in all their wicked amusements without remorse; and being of an aspiring disposition, it did not suit my taste to be a common accomplice with them in their vices, but also an active head or leader in every practice of wickedness, so that it might be said of me as in Isaiah 5th chap. and 18th verse, "I drew iniquity with the cords of vanity and sin as with a cart rope."

The Name Has Been Changed . . .

In his memoirs dictated near the end of his life, Ireland identified the area where he settled as Shenandoah County. However, there was no Shenandoah County in 1768, nor would there be for another decade. The area was originally known as Frederick County. In 1772, the General Assembly carved Dunmore County out of Frederick County. Legislators named the new county after John Murray, fourth earl of Dunmore and governor of Virginia from 1771 to 1775. Dunmore's actions at the outbreak of the Revolution made him so unpopular with Virginians that the General Assembly changed the county's name to Shanando (now Shenandoah) County, effective February 1, 1778. It was named for the Shenandoah River, which passes though the county. Shenandoah is an Indian word meaning beautiful daughter of the stars. (Adapted from Emily J. Salmon and Edward D. C. Campbell, Jr., The Hornbook of Virginia History)

Chapter 6: Visits to a Neighboring Settlement

Visiting these parts repeatedly, I became tolerably well acquainted with the settlement in general; and these parts were much more to my taste than the settlement in which I at that time resided. A considerable number of the people of both sexes were nearly of my age, their recreations, pleasures and pastimes, were very congenial to my wishes. Balls, dancing and chanting to the sound of the violin, was the most prevailing practice in that settlement. That being my darling idol, and being esteemed by all who ever saw me perform upon the floor, a most complete dancer; which accomplishment so called, together with my other moods of address, soon acquired me the confidence and esteem of those called, now a days, young ladies. The young men through the settlement in general, appeared to be destitute of every virtuous or moral qualification, and heads of tolerably numerous families were equally as wild and dissipated as the youth. When in companies together nothing was heard, comparatively speaking, but obscene language, cursing and swearing, drinking and frolicking, horse racing

and other vices, with the exception of a few characters or families in that settlement.

Being in want of a schoolmaster, it was their general desire to have me the following year down amongst them; with the promise of generous encouragement, I soon consented. My conscience, by this time, appeared to be seared as with a hot

iron; remorse was an utter stranger to my breast when I came down to live amongst them; I possessed certain qualifications by which I could accommodate myself to every company; with the religious I could moralize a little; with the well bred I could be polite; with the merry I could be antique; and with the obscene I could be profane.

BRUTON HEIGHTS UPDATE: New at the Rock



Becoming Americans Story Lines: New Materials in the Rockefeller Library

Freeing Religion

Hudson, Carson O. *These Detestable Slaves of the Devil*. Haverford, Pa.: Infinity, 2001. BF1577.V8H83 2001

Hudson briefly describes the beliefs about witches prevalent in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries before continuing with a discussion of English laws on witches and instances of witches in Virginia, from Joan Wright of Surry County in 1626 to the servant Mary of Richmond County in 1730. This quick and easy reference to the surviving records involving witchcraft concludes with a helpful chronology and a list, arranged by county, of accused witches.

Nelson, John K. *A Blessed Company: Parishes, Parsons, and Parishioners in Anglican Virginia, 1690-1776*. Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. BX 5917. V8 N45 2001

Nelson reconstructs everyday Anglican religious practice and experience in Virginia from the end of the seventeenth century to the start of the American Revolution. Challenging previous characterizations of the colonial Anglican establishment as weak, the author reveals the fundamental role the church played in the political, social, and economic as well as spiritual lives of its parishioners.

Taking Possession

Landsman, Ned C., ed. *Nation and Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600-1800*. Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 2001. E184.S3 N38 2001

This collection of essays discusses the important ways the Scots influenced American society and culture, especially in the eighteenth century. Scottish philosophy, Presbyterianism, commerce (including the slave trade), medicine, and family/social life became part of the fabric of early American life.

Taylor, Alan. *American Colonies*. New York: Viking, 2001. E188 .T395 2001

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author provides a readable narrative beginning with a discussion of America before European colonization. The book proceeds regionally and chronologically to describe the various peoples who came to America and their interactions with the native population.

Enslaving Virginia

Morgan, Kenneth. *Slavery and Servitude in Colonial North America: A Short History*. Washington Square, N. Y.: New York University Press, 2001. E446 .M67 2001

Three quarters of the immigrants who peopled the British American colonies experienced compulsory labor for at least part of their lives. This short book offers an introduction to, and a synthesis of, the research on servitude during the years 1600-1800 and discusses the factors that contributed to the enslavement of African peoples in the New World.

Redefining Family

Bushman, Claudia L. *In Old Virginia: Slavery, Farming, and Society in the Journal of John Walker*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. F232.T54 B87 2002

John Walker (1785-1867) of Chatham Hill and Locust Grove in King and Queen County kept a journal from 1824 through 1867 describing his business and personal dealings. He owned and

supervised slaves; he converted to Methodism; he experimented with farming techniques; he got married and recorded routine household activities and chores, as well as the vicissitudes of illness, cures, and death. Five of his seven children died before the age of fourteen.

Theophano, Janet. *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*. New York: Palgrave, 2002. TX 643.T44 2002

Proceeding topically, the author examines British and American cookbooks written by women from the seventeenth century to the present, in order to discern what they tell us about the compilers' lives, culture, and communities and about women's collective memory and family legacy.

Choosing Revolution

Goldsworthy, Jeffrey Denys. *The Sovereignty of Parliament: History and Philosophy*. Oxford, Eng.: Clarendon Press, 1999. KD 4195.G65 1999

Written for British lawyers, this book defines parliamentary sovereignty and then chronologically follows the debates and conflicts that shaped British government over the centuries. Of special interest are the sections treating "the American crisis" and the writing of the American constitution.

Buying Respectability

Alcock, N. W., and Nancy Cox, eds. *Living and Working in Seventeenth Century England: An Encyclopedia of Drawings and Descriptions from Randle Holme's Original Manuscripts for The Academy of Armory* (1688). London: The British Library, 2000. DA370 .L58 2000 CD-ROM

Randle Holme III came from a long line of Chester antiquaries, genealogists, and heralds. He transformed what started out as a heraldic manual into an encyclopedia of seventeenth-century life and work. It is an invaluable reference for clothing and customs, since many of the details do not exist elsewhere. Holme described and drew all manner of household furnishings, chairs and stools, pots, pails, and frying pans. He was particularly interested in crafts and made drawings of carpenters, coopers, potters, ropemakers, and many other craftsmen at work.

Glanville, Philippa, and Hilary Young, eds. *Elegant Eating: Four Hundred Years of Dining in Style*. London: Victoria and Albert Publications, 2002. GT 2853.E45 2002

The furnishings of the dining room, the setting of the table, the luxuries of hot food and ice cream are all beautifully illustrated in this cultural and historical look at formal dining.

Johnson, Odai. *The Colonial American Stage, 1665–1774: A Documentary Calendar*. Madison, N. J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001. PN 2237.J64 2001

After an informative introduction giving an overview of theater culture, theatrical venues, repertory, and finance, the calendar begins in 1665 with the first documented performance in America of *The Bear and the Cub* in Pungoteague, Virginia. Researchers will find the concluding bibliography and indexes—including a person index, a place and subject index, and a title and author index—helpful as they proceed with their research.

Dohner, Janet. *Encyclopedia of Historic and Endangered Livestock and Poultry Breeds*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001. SF105.275.U6 D65 2001

Attractively printed and appealingly illustrated with color photographs and appropriate period prints this volume is chock full of information on rare breeds. If you look closely, you'll see a few familiar pictures of Colonial Williamsburg animals. A history of each animal type—cattle, sheep, pigs, horses, etc.—is followed by discussions of current issues, such as laws, diseases, and products, before the breeds are treated individually.

American Cabinetmakers Database. *Maine Antique Digest*.

[<http://www.cabinetmakersearch.com/index.html>]

This database, available on the Internet by subscription, indexes more than 36,000 records and is searchable by maker's name, maker's state, and form of cabinetry. Contact the Reference Desk (libref@cwf.org, ext. 8510) for login information.

Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts's Library Archives and Craftsmen Database [<http://www.mesda.org/acresarmemon.html>]

This collection of data on the lives and working habits of southern artisans working prior to 1821 provides records for more than 75,000 artisans in approximately one hundred trades. The records for the artisans vary from simple entries to more complex listings describing the work of the artisan, land transactions, vital statistics, items produced, how the products were sold, and design sources, to name just a few examples. Contact the Reference Desk (libref@cwf.org, ext. 8510) for login information.

Compiled by Juleigh Muirhead Clark, public services librarian.

New Items in the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library's Special Collections Section

Tusser, Thomas. *Tusser Redivivus: Being Part of Mr. Thomas Tusser's Five Hundred Points of Husbandry*. London: J. Morphew, 1710.

This work, "long the handbook of the English country gentleman," describes—both in prose and poetry—gardening tasks to be performed on a monthly basis. Descriptions include what corn and grass are to be sown, what trees planted, and how land is to be improved.

Bickham, George. *Deliciae Britannicae; or, the Curiosities of Kensington, Hampton Court, and Windsor Castle*. London: E. Owen, [ca. 1750].

This volume details architecture, interior decoration, and artwork in a room-by-room tour of royal palaces. Particularly interesting are four engraved plates showing placement of specific pictures hung in Queen Caroline's closet at Kensington.

Ambulator; or, the Stranger's Companion in a Tour Round London. London: J. Bew, 1774.

Thomas Jefferson owned a copy of this popular pocket guidebook. The work describes important buildings, sights, and gardens, as well as cataloging pictures by eminent artists. Included are a room-by-room roster of the many artworks at Chiswick House, together with notices concerning Syon House, Strawberry Hill, Kew Gardens, Hampton Court, and Knoll.

Compiled by George Yetter, associate curator for the architectural drawings and research collection.

New Acquisitions of Materials for Children

Janice McCoy Memorial Collection
Rockefeller Library

Bartlett, Robert Merrill
The Story of Thanksgiving

Blumberg, Rhoda
What's the Deal? Jefferson, Napoleon and the Louisiana Purchase

Butler, Jon
Religion in Colonial America

Diouf, Sylviane A.
Growing Up in Slavery

Haskins, James, and Kathleen Benson
African Beginnings

Haywood, John
World Atlas of the Past: The Age of Discovery, 1492–1815

Isaacs, Sally Senzell
Life in America's First Cities
Life in a Colonial Town
Life on a Southern Plantation

Johnston, Lucile
Celebrations of a Nation: Early American Holidays

Kalman, Bobbie
Colonial Times from A to Z
Life on a Plantation

Lepore, Jill
Encounters in the New World

Maestro, Betsy
Struggle for a Continent: The French and Indian Wars, 1689–1763

Moloney, Norah
The Young Oxford Book of Archaeology

Sewall, Marcia
James Towne: Struggle for Survival

Wood, Marion
The World of Native Americans

BIOGRAPHY

Gaines, Ann Graham
King George III

Gaustad, Edwin S.
Roger Williams

Grote, JoAnn A.
Lafayette

Kaye, Harvey
Thomas Paine

Laughlin, Rosemary
John D. Rockefeller

Stanley, Diane, and Peter Vennema
Good Queen Bess: The Story of Elizabeth I

FICTION

Buckey, Sarah Masters
Enemy in the Fort

Jones, Elizabeth McDavid
Mystery on Skull Island

McDonald, Megan
Shadows in the Glasshouse

McKissack, Patricia C.
Picture of Freedom: The Diary of Clotee, a Slave Girl

PERIODICALS

Cobblestone, November 2001
 "Arts & Crafts of the Middle Atlantic
 Colonies"

Cobblestone, December 2001
 "The Swamp Fox"

TEACHING AIDS

King, David C.
*Revolutionary War Days: Discover the Past
 with Exciting Projects, Games, Activities*

Quasha, Jennifer
*Jamestown: Hands-on Projects about One of
 America's First Communities*

Library of Virginia

*Virginia: The History and Culture of a Common-
 wealth—Elementary Education Materials*



Interpreter's Corner

On the Tip of My Tongue

by Jim Hollins

*Jim is a historical interpreter in the Department of
 Youth and Group Services.*

"Reenactor! Reenactor! That's the word you're looking for," announces one of the guests on my 75th Anniversary Walk. Others concur with a nodding of heads.

"That's it, that's the word," I say in agreement.

What happened to me is a common occurrence among interpreters. The word was on the tip of my tongue, and I couldn't come up with it. It is called "drawing a blank." It is the inability to recall a word that you use frequently. This is quite frustrating. There is no known cure for this disease, and it can strike at any time.

My bouts with coming up empty usually occur when they can do the most damage to my interpretation. If you are like me, you realize that you

are coming up short several moments before you arrive at that point. This gives you a nanosecond or two to develop a strategy to remedy the situation. The best that I have been able to do involves one of the following three choices:

- Skip whatever you were going to say. The resulting gap in your interpretation generally results in some strange looks from your guests.
- Describe whatever it was that you could not remember in other terms. If you are lucky, you can pull this off, and your audience will never know the difference.
- Throw yourself on the mercy of your audience. Tell them that you are coming up short, and that you sure could use their help. Then describe as best you can this thing you cannot recall. Keep in mind that your audience will only help you if the item that you are describing is familiar to them.

So, now you have three choices, and all you have to do is choose the best for the moment. Choice number one is a disaster. Do not consider it. Choice number two can work provided you can come up with an alternate description that will suffice. Choice number three has excellent potential, provided that the word you are unable to recall is something that your audience will know. All things considered, choice number three is the best one.

This brings us back to the beginning and reenactors. On that particular day, I could not recall the word *reenactor*. I was reasonably sure someone in my group would likely know it, so I decided to ask for help. I told the group that I hated to admit it, but I could not remember the word that described people who dressed in period attire and participated in events on weekends involving soldiers' encampments. They quickly provided the answer.

I do not know why, but for some reason I paid special attention to the group's reaction to helping me. They all seemed to be genuinely happy. This reaction was quite different from their response to having answered a question. Some individuals are self-conscious about their knowledge of Virginia history and are reluctant to risk attempting to answer a question. Nobody, however, seemed to be the least bit shy about helping me out. In fact they jumped at the opportunity like a "duck on a June bug."

Just what does an audience get from providing help? The answer is a good feeling and a positive learning experience. Since groups receive a positive experience from providing help, we should make sure other guests can have a similar experience.

The next issue is how to ensure, if needed,

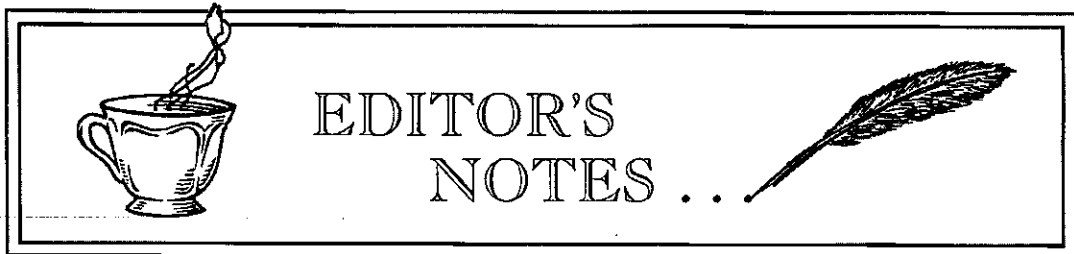
that our guests get an opportunity to realize the benefits of helping our interpreters. Not all guests will be candidates for helping us. Some are eager to participate in the interpretation and do not need to be engaged by rendering assistance. However, there will always be opportunities for unresponsive groups. It should not be difficult for an interpreter to ask for help. I like to divide help into two categories: seeking help, and actively seeking help. Seeking help merely means that you truly cannot recall something. Actively seeking help means that you really have not forgotten something, but you have a current need to engage your reluctant guests in a fashion that makes them feel good about the experience.

As I said earlier, you have to evaluate your audience to justify the need before actively seeking help. If your audience qualifies, then you need to choose a subject about which they will likely have some knowledge. Remember, they can only help

you if they are familiar with the subject you choose. To use this technique successfully, pick your spots and content. A single method will not be appropriate for every guest. You will need to make sure you are not "forgetting" the same thing each time. Vary your approach according to the makeup of your audience; consider age, sex, and focus.

To practice actively seeking help is simple. Start by using your fellow interpreters as your audience. Recently, I could not recall the name of the eighteenth-century naturalist who visited this area. Quickly, I was reminded that his name was Mark Catesby. That same day, I could not remember the cartographer who made the colorful map displayed in the Capitol. I was told his name was John Mitchell.

People are genuinely happy to help you and like to do so. If the opportunity presents itself, engage your audience by actively seeking help. People will be glad to put words in your mouth.



New Staff in the Department of Interpretive Training

We welcome Margot Créviaux-Gevertz, the new director of the Department of Interpretive Training for the Historic Area. Margot has had a very successful twenty-year career with world-class hospitality companies, providing expertise in training and management of the training function for large-scale themed vacation destinations. She comes to us from Groton, Connecticut, where she was corporate director of training for Waterford Hotel Group. As director of training for the Historic Area, Margot is responsible for the overall training for the Historic Area Division, as well as the oversight of recruitment, hiring, development, and performance management of the training staff, and planning the department's future. Margot began her new responsibilities on August 5. Her office is located on the second floor of the William Finnie House.

We also welcome Judy Garman to the Department of Interpretive Training. Judy, a long

time employee of Colonial Williamsburg, is the new administrative specialist for the department. She began her new responsibilities on September 23. Her office is located on the second floor of the Finnie House.

Corrections for Summer 2002 Issue

On page 18 under "Presbyterians in Virginia and America," Peyton Randolph is identified as speaker of the House of Burgesses. At the time he debated Samuel Davies, Randolph was attorney general for the colony and not yet speaker.

In the introduction to the "Bothy's Mould" column by Janet Guthrie it was noted that Janet recently had a story accepted for publication in *Green Prince*. It should have read *Green Prints*.



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