

# Interpreter

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## Christmas Customs

by Emma L. Powers

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Christmas in colonial Virginia—it's a topic that alternately thrills and bores me. As the "designated hitter" in research for the history of this holiday, I either bubble over with enthusiasm and information about Christmas customs in eighteenth-century Virginia, or else I can't find answers to satisfy myself or anyone else. The reason, I've lately come to see, is that for Virginia colonists the holiday was so very different from our twenty-first-century celebration. Eighteenth-century customs don't take long to recount: church, dinner, dancing, a few evergreens, visiting—and more and better of these for those who could afford more.

It's certainly a short list, I tell myself, as I plan meals, go shopping, bake cookies, write three hundred cards, stuff stockings, and dog-ear or re-

cycle the hundreds of catalogs that begin arriving at my house in October. (Cousin Fran is so difficult to buy for!)

Attend church, stick some holly on the windowpanes, fix a great dinner, go to one party, visit or be visited. It sounds so refreshingly easy and simple and quick. But I'd miss a tree with lots of lights and all my favorite ornaments collected over the years. And if there were only one special meal, how could I hope to eat my fill of turkey and goose, both mince pie and fruitcake, shrimp as well as oysters? Materialist that I am, I would surely be disappointed if there were no packages to open on the morning of December 25.

Our present Christmas customs derive from a wide array of inspirations, nearly as various and numerous as the immigrants who settled this vast country. Most of the ways Americans celebrate the midwinter holiday came about in the nineteenth century, but we're extraordinarily attached to our traditions and feel sure that they must be very old and supremely significant. What follows is a capsule history of some of our most loved Christmas customs. Perhaps both residents and guests will enjoy learning the background of one or more of these rites. I offer them in the spirit of the season: with best wishes for continuing health and happiness to all!

Christmas, a children's holiday? No eighteenth-century sources highlight the importance of children at Christmastime—or of Christmas to children in particular. Think of Philip Vickers Fithian's December 18, 1773, diary entry about exciting holiday events: "the *Balls*, the *Fox-hunts*, the fine *entertainments*." None was meant for kids, and the youngsters were cordially not invited to attend. Sally Cary Fairfax was old enough to keep a journal and old enough to attend a ball at Christmas 1771, so she was not one of the "tiny tots with their eyes all aglow." The emphasis on Christmas as a magical time for children came about in the nineteenth century. We must thank the Dutch and Germans in particular for centering Christmas in the home and within the family circle.

### Also in this issue . . .

"Anglican Theology and Devotion in James Blair's Virginia" by E. L. Bond . . .	4
"The Bothy's Mould" by W. Greene . . . . .	20
"Q & A" . . . . .	22
"Extracts from the <i>Autobiography of the Reverend James Ireland</i> ," part 5 . . . . .	24
"Cook's Corner" by L. Arnold . . . . .	26
"New at the Rock" . . . . .	28
"Interpreter's Corner—Gross! Gross!" by J. Hollins . . . . .	32
"The Gloucester Hickory" by W. Greene . . . . .	33
"Editor's Notes" . . . . .	35



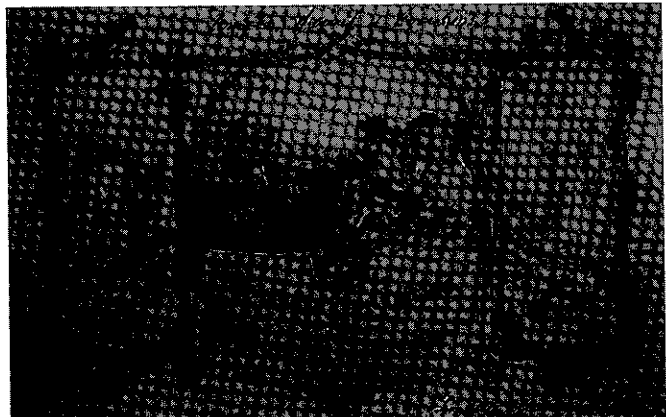
*Christmas in the Country*

**Gift giving.** Williamsburg shopkeepers of the eighteenth century placed ads noting items appropriate as holiday gifts, but New Year's was as likely a time as December 25 for bestowing gifts. Cash tips, little books, and sweets in small quantities were given by masters or parents to dependents, whether slaves, servants, apprentices, or children. It seems to have worked in only one direction: children and others did not give gifts to their superiors. Gift-giving traditions from several European countries also worked in this one-way fashion; for example, St. Nicholas filled children's wooden shoes with fruit and candy in both old and New Amsterdam. (Eventually, of course, "stockings hung by the chimney with care" replaced wooden shoes.) We must attribute the exchange of gifts among equals and from dependents to superiors to good old American influences. Both modern affluence and diligent marketing have made it the norm in the last fifty years or so.

Santa Claus, too, is an American invention, although an amalgam of American, Dutch, and English traditions: partly the lean, ascetic Saint Nicholas, he is also related to the bacchanalian Father Christmas. While

many countries and ethnic groups have a Christmastime gift bringer, the "right jolly old elf" dressed in red and fur and driving his sleigh and reindeer sprang from the pen and imagination of New Yorker Clement Clark Moore. In his 1823 poem "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," Moore created the new look for the Christmas gift-giver. Cartoonist Thomas Nast completed the vision with his 1860s drawings that still define how we see Santa.

**Christmas cards.** Printers have been cashing in on Christmas since the eighteenth century—at least in London and other large cities. Schoolboys (and I do mean only the young males) filled



*Christmas Card, 1843*

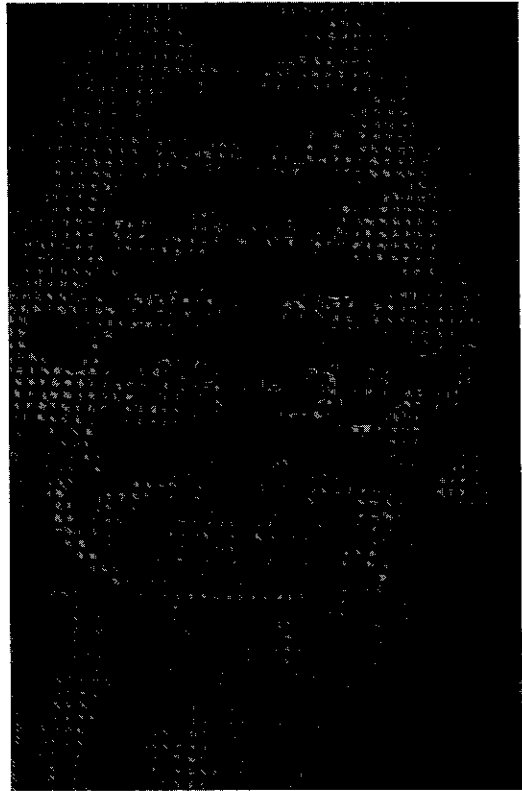
in with their best penmanship pages preprinted with special holiday borders. "Christmas pieces" they were called. But the Christmas card per se was a nineteenth-century English invention. The one pictured here, published by H. C. Horsley in 1843, is generally accepted as the first. Other examples from the 1840s abound, as this quick, efficient means of sending season's greetings proved so useful.

**Garlands and greens.** Decorations for the mid-winter holidays consisted of whatever natural materials looked attractive at the bleakest time of year—evergreens, berries, forced blossoms—and the necessary candles and fires. In ancient times, Romans celebrated their Saturnalia with displays of lights and hardy greenery formed into wreaths and sprays. Christian churches have long been decorated for Christmas. The tradition goes back so far that no one knows for certain when or where it began.

No early Virginia sources tell us how, or even if, colonists decorated their homes for the holidays, so we must rely on eighteenth-century English prints. Of the precious few—only half a dozen—that show interior Christmas decorations, a large cluster of mistletoe is always the major feature for obvious reasons. Otherwise, plain sprigs of holly or bay fill vases and other containers of all sorts or stand flat against windowpanes. (I cannot tell for sure how these last were attached; perhaps the stems were merely stuck between the glass and the wooden muntins.)

**Christmas trees.** If we had to choose the one outstanding symbol of Christmas, of course it must be the gaily decorated evergreen tree with a star at the very top. German in origin, *Tannenbaum* gained acceptance in England and the United States only very slowly. The first written reference to a Christmas tree dates from the seventeenth century when a candle-lighted tree astonished residents of Strasbourg. I have found nothing recorded in the eighteenth century about holiday trees in Europe or North America. By the nineteenth century, a few of the "pretty German toys" (to use Charles Dickens's phrase) appeared in London. But these foreign oddities were not yet accepted there or elsewhere in the British Empire. When a print of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's very domestic circle around a decorated tree at Windsor Castle appeared in the *Illustrated London News* in 1848, the custom truly caught on.

At about the same time, Charles Minnegerode, a German professor at the College of William and Mary, trimmed a small evergreen to delight the children at the St. George Tucker



*Christmas at Windsor Castle, 1848*

House. Martha Vandegrift, aged 95, recalled the grand occasion, and her story appeared in the *Richmond News Leader* on December 25, 1928. Presumably Mrs. Vandegrift remembered the tree and who decorated it more clearly than she did the date. The newspaper gave 1845 as the time, three years after Minnegerode's arrival in Williamsburg. Perhaps the first Christmas tree cheered the Tucker household as early as 1842.

**Christmas foods and beverages.** Everyone wants more and better things to eat and drink for a celebration. Finances nearly always control the possibilities. In eighteenth-century Virginia, of course, the rich had more on the table at Christmas and on any other day, too, but even the gentry faced limits in winter. December was the right time for slaughtering, so they had fresh meat of all sorts as well as some seafood. Preserving fruits and vegetables was problematic for a December holiday. Then as now, beef, goose, ham, and turkey counted as holiday favorites; some households also insisted on fish, oysters, mincemeat pies, and brandied peaches. No one dish epitomized the Christmas feast in colonial Virginia.

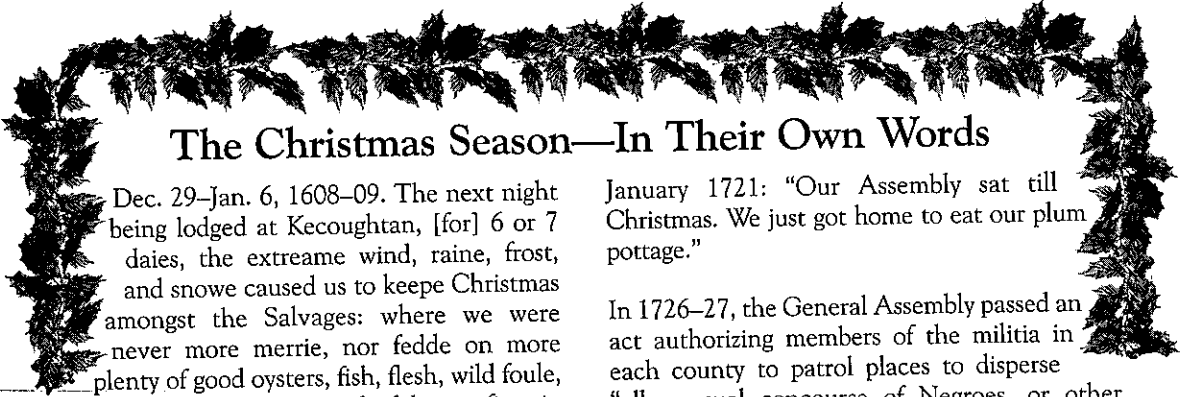
Wines, brandy, rum punches, and other alcoholic beverages went plentifully around the table on December 25 in well-to-do households. Others had less because they could afford less. Slave owners gave out portions of rum and other liquors

to their workers at Christmastime, partly as a holiday treat (one the slaves may have come to expect and even demand) and partly to keep slaves at the home quarter during their few days off work. People with a quantity of alcohol in them were more likely to stay close to home than to run away or travel long distances to visit family.

**Length of the Christmas season.** Eighteenth-century Anglicans prepared to celebrate the Nativity during Advent, a penitential season in the church's calendar. December 25 began a festive season of considerable duration. The twelve days of Christmas lasted until January 6, also called Twelfth Day or Epiphany. Colonial Virginians thought Twelfth Night a good occasion for balls, parties, and weddings. There seems to have been no special notice of New Year's Eve in colonial days. (Maybe that is to be expected

since Times Square was not yet built and Guy Lombardo had not been born.) Most music historians agree that the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" with all its confusing rignarole of lords a-leaping and swans a-swimming was meant to teach children their numbers and has no strong holiday connection.

These days the Christmas season seems to begin right after Halloween and comes to a screeching halt by Christmas dinner (or with the first tears or first worn-out battery). We emphasize the build-up, the preparation, the anticipation. Celebrants in the eighteenth century saw Christmas Day itself as only the first day of festivities. Probably because customs then were fewer and preparations simpler, colonial Virginians looked to the twelve days beyond December 25 as a way to extend and more fully savor the most joyful season of the year.



## The Christmas Season—In Their Own Words

Dec. 29–Jan. 6, 1608–09. The next night being lodged at Kecoughtan, [for] 6 or 7 daies, the extreame wind, raine, frost, and snowe caused us to keepe Christmas amongst the Salvages: where we were never more merrie, nor fedde on more plenty of good oysters, fish, flesh, wild foule, and good bread; nor never had better fires in England then in the dire warme smokie houses of Kecoughtan (*Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*).

December 25, 1709. I rose at 7 o'clock and ate milk for breakfast. I neglected to say my prayers because of my company. . . . About 11 o'clock the rest of the company ate some broiled turkey for their breakfast. Then went to church, notwithstanding it rained a little, where Mr. Anderson preached a good sermon for the occasion. I received the Sacrament with great devoutness. After church the same company went to dine with me and I ate roast beef for dinner. . . . Then we took a walk about the plantation, but a great fog soon drove us into the house again. In the evening we were merry with nonsense and so were my servants. I said my prayers shortly and had good health, good thoughts, and good humor, thanks be to God Almighty (*The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709–1712*).

In 1720, Virginia's General Assembly sat until December 23. Councilor Robert Carter of Corotoman wrote London merchant Micajah Perry on

January 1721: "Our Assembly sat till Christmas. We just got home to eat our plum pottage."

In 1726–27, the General Assembly passed an act authorizing members of the militia in each county to patrol places to disperse "all unusual concourse of Negroes, or other slaves" during the "Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide holidays, wherein they are usually exempted from labour," as "great danger may happen to the inhabitants of this dominion from such unlawful concourse."

December 25, 1740. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather was very cold and cloudy, the wind north and threatened more snow. Nobody went to church except my son because of the cold. I put myself in order. After church came two playfellows for my son, young Stith and Hardyman. I ate roast turkey. After dinner we talked and I danced. I talked with my people and prayed (*Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1739–1741*).

On December 22, 1751, George Washington left Barbadoes where he had gone in the fall with his brother Lawrence. On board the *Industry* sailing to Virginia, he wrote in his diary: "Christmas Day fine and clear and pleasant with moderate sea tho continuance of the Trade [winds]. . . . We dined on a \_\_\_\_\_ Irish goose . . . Beef & ca. and

drank a health to our absent friends" (*The Diaries of George Washington, 1738–1799*).

December 21, 1769. The Inclination of this Assembly could alone have engaged me to have interrupted the Business of this Session; but as I understand that it is generally desired to adjourn over the Christmas Holidays, and not to meet again till the month of May, I do direct both houses to adjourn themselves (Governor Boteourt from *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1766–1769*).

[December] 25 [1771]. Went to Pohick Church with Mrs. Washington and returned to Dinner. 26. Went a hunting in the Neck early. Kill'd a Fox and dined with several others at Mr. Peake (*The Diaries of George Washington*).

December 1771. We wish your health, and good fires; victuals, drink, and good stomachs; innocent diversion, and good company; honest trading, and good success; loving courtship, and good wives; and lastly, a merry CHRISTMAS and a happy NEW YEAR (*The Virginia Almanack for the Year of our Lord 1771*).

London, December 25, 1771. His Royal Highness, the Duke of Cumberland is to keep Christmas at Windsor Lodge, in the old English solid Way, being determined to keep open Table for the Country People, for three Days, covered with Surloins of Roast Beef, Plum Puddings, and minced Pies, the rich and ancient Food of Englishmen (*The Virginia Gazette, Purdie & Dixon, March 19, 1772*).

Philip Vickers Fithian, tutor to the family of Robert Carter of Nomini Hall.

Fryday [December] 24 [1773]. Ben [Carter] rode off this morning before day to Mr Fauntleroy's, for Christmas. . . . Guns are fired this Evening in the Neighbourhood, and the Negroes seem to be inspired with new life. The Day has been serene and mild, but the Evening is hazy. Supp'd on Oysters.

Saturday 25. I was waked this morning by Guns fired all round the House. The morning is stormy. Nelson the Boy who makes my Fire, blacks my shoes, does errands &c. was early in my Room, and drest only in his shirt and Breeches! He made me a vast fire, blacked my Shoes, set my Room in order, and wish'd me a joyful Christmas, for which I gave him half a Bit. . . . Soon after my Cloths and Linen were sent in with a message for a Christmas Box, as they call it; I sent the poor Slave a Bit, & many thanks. . . .

At Breakfast, when Mr Carter entered the Room, he gave us the compliments of the Season. (*Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian*).

"On the Decay of English CUSTOMS and MANNERS"

Sir,

I Am an old Fellow, and confess that I like old Things. Among the chief of these, I hold old Fashions and Customs; and, among all the Refinements of the present Age, I do not think that in these [days] they have refined greatly for the better. This is Christmas Morning [1773]; and when I look around me, I think it promises but a dull Holiday. The Times, Sir, are changed. In such a Day as this, an English Kitchen used to be the Palace of Plenty, Jollity, and good Eating. Every Thing was plain, but plenty. Here stood the large, plump, juicy Buttocks of English Roast Beef, there smiled the frothy Tankards of English Beer; here smokes the solid sweet-tasted Mince Pies, and there the curling Fumes of Plumpudding perfumed the Sky with delicious Fragrance. Humour and Eating went Hand in Hand; the Men caroused, and the Women gave loose to gay but innocent Amusements.

Now mark the Picture of the present Time: Instead of that firm Roast Beef, that fragrant Pudding, our Tables groan with the luxuries of France and India. Here a lean Fricassee rises in the Room of our majestic Ribs, and there a Scoundrel Syllabub occupies the Place of our well-beloved Home-brewed. The solid Meal gives Way to the slight Repast; and, forgetting that good Eating and good Porter are the two great Supporters of Magna Charta and the British Constitution, we open our Hearts and our Mouths to new Fashions in Cookery, which will one Day lead us into Ruin.

Alas! alas! That it should come to this! Our Nobles absolutely subsist upon Macaroni and Negus, and our very Aldermen have almost forgot the use of Barons and Custards. What will this World come to at last!

Let us be no longer surprised that we are no longer what we have been. Let us no longer be astonished that our broad Shoulders, our brawny Arms, our firm round Legs, exist no more; that our Bones are marrowless, and our Nerves without Strength. We live upon Pap, and our Drink is Tea and Capillaire. . . .

AN OLD FELLOW

(*Virginia Gazette, December 30, 1773*)

# Anglican Theology and Devotion in James Blair's Virginia, 1685–1743

## Private Piety in the Public Church

by Edward L. Bond

Edward L. Bond is an assistant professor of history at Alabama A&M University. He would like to thank Charles Royster, Gaines M. Foster, Warren M. Billings, and Kathleen McClain Jenkins for their comments on earlier drafts of this essay. This article appeared in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 104 (Summer 1996): 313–340. It is reprinted with permission.

*When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul.*

*Book of Common Prayer, 166*

WILLIAM FITZHUGH, an attorney and tobacco planter in Stafford County, reflected briefly in January 1686/7 on the difficulties of life in the Virginia colony. Education for children was hard to come by. Financial security rested upon too many contingencies and forced Fitzhugh to devote more time to worldly affairs than he thought proper. With the exception of that found in books, "good & ingenious" society was scarce. "[B]ut that which bears the greatest weight with me," he wrote, ". . . is the want of spirituall help & comforts, of which this fertile Country in every thing else, is barren and unfruitfull."<sup>1</sup>

Complaints similar to Fitzhugh's were common throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As early as 1611 the Reverend Alexander Whitaker had expressed concerns that would linger for more than a hundred years: "Our harvest is froward and great for want" of ministers. Conditions improved slowly. In 1662 a former colonial minister estimated that nearly 80 percent of the colony's parishes lay vacant. No more than ten or twelve ministers served a population approaching 26,000. Three decades later, in 1697, only twenty-two of Virginia's fifty parishes had ministers, and that for a population of approximately 62,800 souls. Not until the 1730s did an adequate supply of clergymen fill Virginia's churches.<sup>2</sup>

Yet had ministers filled every vacant parish in the colony, the church's work still would have suffered, only to a lesser degree. The Church of England's mission in Virginia was hampered not



Tobacco culture required Virginians to adapt their religious calendar. In 1623/4 the House of Burgesses declared that when two holy days fell "together betwixt the ffest of the Annuncyation of the Virgin Mary and Set. Michell the Arkeangell, then only one to be kept." This period between 25 March and 29 September was the prime growing season for tobacco, and the colonists were likely expected to devote most of their energies to planting, tending, and harvesting. Courtesy Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

only by a shortage of clergy but also by the colony's environment. Virginians learned early that their land's promise lay in tobacco. Consequently, they did not settle in towns as did inhabitants of England or its other colonies. Instead, they scattered across the countryside, often settling along one of the rivers that divided the Tidewater and Piedmont regions into a series of peninsulas. This settlement pattern—essentially an accommodation to tobacco culture—hindered the public practice of religion. Parishes in Virginia were very large, and most contained more than one church. Colonial parsons served each on a rotating basis by officiating and preaching first at one church and then at the others in their turn on succeeding Sabbaths.<sup>3</sup>

The various obstacles confronting Virginia's established church doubtless shaped that institution, but they did not fundamentally alter the church's mission or eliminate its influence. The shortage of ministers, the colonists' scattered manner of settling, and the absence of ecclesiastical courts common in England were but "occasions," situations the church simply had to deal with as it went about its work. As one historian has recently noted, "the political, social and cultural context can only provide the occasion for a church and contribute to the shaping of its outward form: it cannot provide a definition

of a church or its *raison d'être*." Viewed in this context, the many complaints about Virginia's church are more properly understood not as criticisms but as expressions of devotion to a way of religion struggling to guide the faithful toward salvation in a "novel environment."<sup>4</sup>



*Miniature of James Blair. A watercolor on ivory, this miniature shows the Reverend Blair in old age, but still in clerical dress with a long, curly wig. The portrait has been in the collection of the Virginia Historical Society since 1909.*

Although hampered by the colony's "occasions," Anglicanism in James Blair's Virginia<sup>5</sup> was primarily a pastoral religion, concerned with the spiritual care and guidance of individuals rather than with theological polemic, intellectual debate, or a "prying into adorable Mysteries" beyond comprehension by the human mind. Like Puritanism, Anglicanism addressed the devotional life, which for members of the Church of England meant a life that began in faith, proceeded through repentance and amendment of life, and culminated with the "sure and certain hope" of a glorious resurrection on the last day. The church's liturgy, ministers' sermons, the sacraments, devotional materials, and events in the natural world all helped create a general orientation pointing the faithful in the direction of God, while leaving the essential work of salvation in the hands of individuals who would work out their own "with fear and trembling."<sup>6</sup>

Virginians often spoke of this process as a pilgrimage or a voyage to Heaven. "Before I was ten years old," William Fitzhugh confessed to his mother, "I look'd upon this life here as but going to an Inn, no permanent being."<sup>7</sup> By the late sev-

enteenth century, the pilgrimage motif was a well-known form of portraying the soul's journey to God. The Anglican notion of the journey, however, possessed its own distinct qualities that emphasized neither the terrors of the wilderness typical of Puritan writers nor the mystical union with God common among Roman Catholic authors. Theirs was a low-key piety, deeply felt and involving the "whole individual" but given to order rather than to passion or ecstasy. Extremes harmed the spiritual life. John Page, for instance, warned his son against the emotional excesses of presumption and despair—those "two destructive rocks, upon either of which, if the ship of the soul dash, it is split in pieces"—as a missing of the religious life's golden mean. One deceived men and women into vain hopes of mercy; the other tormented them with "hellish fears of justice." Together they threatened both halves of the spiritual life. "Presumption," Page warned, "is an enemy to repentance, and despair to faith."<sup>8</sup>

As Page's allusion suggests, Virginians often described their spiritual journeys through the metaphor of a ship at sea returning to its home port, a particularly evocative image for anyone who had survived an Atlantic crossing. James Blair turned the metaphor into an analogy. He compared Christians to a well-disciplined ship's crew attending to its duties, "[s]uch as stopping the Leaks, mending the Sails, . . . preparing the Guns to make a Defence against an Enemy; and especially the keeping of a good Reckoning, and looking out sharp to avoid Shelves, and Rocks, and Quicksands, and all other Dangers both attending the Voyage at Sea, and the Piloting right into Harbour."<sup>9</sup>

When Blair compared the spiritual journey to sailors going about their usual tasks of keeping the ship in order and bringing it to its intended destination, he captured the essence of the Anglican's movement to God. It was part of an individual's daily work, striking only in its ordinariness. People expected sailors to repair leaks, make preparations for enemy assaults, guide the vessel to port, and watch for shallow waters to prevent the ship from running aground. These were tasks common to the lives of seafaring men. For sailors to have neglected these chores would have been extraordinary. And this was perhaps the most distinctive quality of Anglican religion in colonial Virginia. It seemed unexceptional, a matter of performing the routine and habitual duties that naturally accompanied an individual's vocation. Religion was less something individuals believed than something they did, a practice rather than a set of propositions. "Christ's Doctrine is a practical Doctrine," Blair stated. "Whosoever heareth

these Sayings of mine, *and doeth them*.<sup>10</sup> Virginians, then, thought mere belief in religious dogma denoted an insufficient faith. The mark of a good Christian was neither right doctrine nor a command of theological subtleties, but a life adorned with good morals. John Page's words to his son were typical: "A good life is inseparable from a good faith—yea, a good faith is a good life."<sup>11</sup> Ministers occasionally maintained that the Sermon on the Mount with its teachings on behavior contained everything necessary for salvation.<sup>12</sup>

Anglicans in Virginia conceived of religion as a form of duty, and this idea guided the way in which they ordered their relationships with God. Sometimes, as when James Blair preached that "Good Morality is Good Christianity," they simply equated religion with virtue, often in simplistic terms that could be misleading to people who did not share their understanding of religion.<sup>13</sup> When Virginians referred to religion in this way, they meant more than performance of moral duties or some rationalist incarnation of virtue. Duty was a necessary facet of the Anglican believer's journey to Heaven, a response to God undertaken in faith. Had there been no God, there would have been no reason to attempt to control one's passions, to confess one's sins, or to marvel at God's "wise and mercifull Providence." But God did exist. He was merciful and good, and He had sent "Christ into the World to bring us to Heaven." The proper and natural response to God's loving action was obedience, for Virginians believed obedience was "perfective of our Natures."<sup>14</sup> Duty, then, understood as a well-ordered life of prayer and obedience to God's laws, was the high mark of a person's earthly pilgrimage, the restoration of human nature as far as

that was possible on earth.<sup>15</sup> To live such a life, like the sailor who did his duty in Blair's analogy, was natural and what God expected.

Since Adam's fall, however, men and women had been incapable of the obedience God demanded. Virginians realized they were sinners and that more often than not their wicked ways fell short of a holy life. Yet they could comfort themselves with the knowledge that, despite their faults, God was merciful and did not want His creatures to suffer eternal damnation. For this reason He had sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world as a propitiation for the sins of mankind.<sup>16</sup> Christ's death had pacified God's wrath toward humanity and granted "a title to eternal life" to all who accepted the Gospel's terms.<sup>17</sup> God offered the promise of eternal life to the whole world, not just to a select few whom He had predestined for Heaven. John Page, a royalist who had emigrated to the colony during the English Civil War, offered one of the most powerful illustrations of this belief. Christ, the mediator between God and man, was born not in a "private house, but [at] an inn, which is open for all passengers," and in the "commonest place," a stable. Likewise, the Savior's crucifixion had not taken place within the city walls, "but without the gate, to intimate that it was not an Altar of the Temple, but the world."<sup>18</sup>

Although Anglican soteriology affirmed that Christ had died to redeem the whole world, universal redemption did not necessarily mean universal salvation. Salvation demanded human action. The Gospel, Robert Paxton declared, "does not bring Salvatn to all to whom it appears, not because it is insufficient, but because [men and women] do not accept of its offers . . . upon its terms by hearkening to its exhortatns & com-



"Evening" (CWF, 1962-122, 1). Immigration across the Atlantic impressed itself deeply on Virginia's colonists. They often depicted their spiritual journey to God as a voyage to Heaven and saw the hand of God in storms, hurricanes, and the power of the sea.



plying with its commands."<sup>19</sup> Men and women played a role in gaining their salvation; it was neither a free gift to the elect nor a presumptuous solifidianism.<sup>20</sup>

Virginians understood faith as a necessary but insufficient part of a Christian's pilgrimage to Heaven. By faith, men and women acknowledged God's omnipotence and Christ's saving death, but unless they responded to this knowledge with a sincere repentance, their faith meant little. "If you welcome repentance, knocking at your door from God," John Page told his son, "it shall knock at God's door of mercy for you."<sup>21</sup> Every time an Anglican recited morning or evening prayer—at public worship, within the family, or privately in his closet—God again summoned the world to repent. Through the words of the liturgy's invitation to worship taken from the prophet Ezekiel and cited in the epigraph, God called all people to lead lives of repentance, to forsake their transgressions, and to amend their lives. Repentance allowed men and women the opportunity to benefit from Christ's death and to apply the covenant of grace to themselves. Through the sacrifice of His Son "God meets us half way," Robert Paxton declaimed. "He is reconciled to us, It remains only that we be reconciled to him that we hearken to the message from him & be reconciled to God."<sup>22</sup>

When Anglicans spoke of religion as a duty, they used language as best they could to explain the temporal manifestations of a life transformed through repentance. Thus, a good life was a good faith, for faith was only good if it showed itself in works. Unlike conversion, which Nonconformists often described in evocative terms, there was a poverty to the language of repentance.<sup>23</sup> Tears could express this disposition of the soul, "for Tears," preached Deuel Pead, "have an audible and significant Voice . . . God hears their secret, and special Voice, and in our weeping reads our Humility and Repentance."<sup>24</sup> But like moral behavior, tears, too, were externals, and such "outward testimonies" were poor reflections of a broken and contrite heart. How otherwise to explain repentance than by pointing to its outward results? Without evidence of a good life—what people then called amendment of life—repentance remained incomplete.<sup>25</sup>

By placing such emphasis on repentance and human action, Virginians heightened the role of human endeavor in the economy of salvation. Yet to suggest, as some historians have, that Virginians practiced moralism placing unwarranted confidence in external duties rather than in faith and God's grace is inaccurate.<sup>26</sup> Anglican theology muddled the traditional sequence of justification and sanctification; it suggested on its

surface that good works could merit salvation. Virginians, however, were not Pelagians; they did not believe that men and women could take the initial steps toward salvation unassisted by divine grace. Reformed Protestantism had traditionally taught that God justified men as sinners without prior merit or effort on the part of individuals. By faith, the sinner "appropriated" God's promise of forgiveness demonstrated in Christ's atoning death. Sanctification, or "growth in grace through a life of obedience and good works" culminating in glory hereafter, had its basis in justification. Although related, sanctification followed justification, and the two were distinct events.<sup>27</sup>

The soteriology espoused in Blair's Virginia conflated this chronology. God had justified sinners through the resurrection of Christ and had thereby invited all mankind to partake of the covenant of grace.<sup>28</sup> It remained, however, for men and women to take hold of the "title to eternal life" exhibited to them by responding with their own faith and repentance.<sup>29</sup> Without repentance, there could be no justification. This sequence could suggest that sanctification occurred simultaneously with or preceded justification, thus making human action the means whereby God accepted persons as righteous. But to Virginians, God was always the original actor.<sup>30</sup> In technical language that Virginians rarely used, but readily implied, God's prevenient or "preventing grace" called mankind to repent; His operative or "assisting grace," requested in prayer, made men and women capable of repentance and the good works that provided evidence of a life transformed by grace.<sup>31</sup> John Page best captured the paradox at the heart of Anglican theology in colonial Virginia. "You shall be saved for your faith, not for your works," he told his son; "but for such a faith as is without works you shall never be saved. Works are disjoined from the act of justifying, not from the person justified."<sup>32</sup>

In short, Virginians embraced the doctrine of the conditional covenant. God had satisfied His side of the covenant by offering mankind justification through the death of His Son. By faith and repentance, demonstrated through a holy life of conformity to God's laws, men and women met their part of the covenant's obligations. Through the gift of grace, freely given to those who asked this of Him in prayer, God cooperated with man in the drama of salvation. Just as a good crop required both seasonable weather and the farmer's diligence, "there must," James Blair argued, "be a due Concurrency of these two, the Grace of God, and our own Endeavours, to produce a due Obedience" to the Gospel's precepts.<sup>33</sup> Charles E. Ham-

brick-Stowe, in attempting to illustrate the differences between Puritan and Roman Catholic spirituality, suggested that whereas Puritans thought in terms of their having been elected by God, Roman Catholics believed that they had elected God.<sup>34</sup> Anglicans in Virginia found a middle path; they cooperated with God in order to ensure their prior election by Him. Robert Paxton could therefore preach: "Every one who perishes for want of mercy is his own murderer & lost because he refused his own mercy."<sup>35</sup>

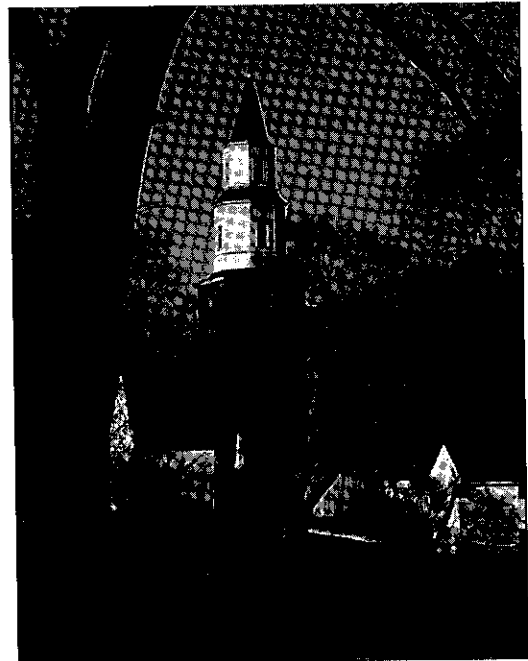
Virginians thus focused their attention on the pastoral task of preventing the faithful from committing spiritual suicide by failing to repent and amend. Ministers preached of this duty, devotional literature recommended it, parents introduced their children to this truth by teaching them the church catechism, and condemned criminals urged the crowds gathered to witness their executions to "repent now, and continue repenting so long as you have an hour to live." In 1678 one young indentured servant who had been sentenced to death for murdering his master and mistress admonished onlookers in Charles City County to make their "Election sure" by forsaking their wicked paths. "Leave off sinning," he warned, "else God will leave you off."<sup>36</sup> God also took part in the pastoral work of calling Virginians to repent by periodically sending epidemics and plagues of insects upon the colony to remind the settlers that they were sinners who needed to amend their lives. Similarly, because Anglican ecclesiology defined the church broadly to include all members of the polity, a minister's task was neither to call the elect out of the world into a pure church nor to prepare individuals for their conversion by God but to encourage all Christians to accept God's offer of salvation by living a life of repentance.

Repentance was central to the spiritual pilgrimage of Anglicans, as important a part of their journey to God as conversion was to Nonconformists—a necessary element of the spiritual life without which all other religious exercises were of little value. Virginians occasionally equated repentance and conversion, thereby suggesting that repentance marked the onset of an active spiritual life in which the individual consciously began moving toward Heaven. James Blair likened it to the "Pangs and Throws of the new Birth," and Robert Paxton called repentance the "change of life."<sup>37</sup> The intention to repent indicated a person's acceptance of God's offer of salvation, a decision to become a Christian by choice rather than by the accident of birth in a Christian nation.<sup>38</sup>

Yet Virginians did not view repentance as a mechanical round of sin, sorrow, and brief

amendment repeated day after day—a process they equated with Roman Catholicism.<sup>39</sup> Neither did they believe repentance should be left until the death bed. Delaying so long left no opportunity for the necessary amendment of life, and a sick-bed repentance often proceeded from the wrong motives, fear of judgment rather than love of God.<sup>40</sup> Nor was the repentance God demanded accomplished at one time; it was instead a process that continued throughout a lifetime, "an habitual Temper of the Mind and Course of Life."<sup>41</sup>

Repentance represented the essential reorientation of an individual's life. Despite the necessity of an amended life as evidence and the emphasis ministers placed on outward behavior, the process of repentance more accurately described an internal change within the believer's heart or mind (Virginians did not present a consistent anthropology), which then resulted in a life that increasingly conformed to God's laws. "[T]he inner Man of the Heart, is the chief Thing that God aims to govern," preached Blair, for "like the main spring in a clock, the heart animates and directs all a person's thoughts and motions. As this main Spring of the Heart goes, the Man thinks, contrives, speaks and acts."<sup>42</sup> Virginians often used the pilgrimage motif to express this shift in direction. Blair suggested that the disposition of the heart determined the port toward which a person sailed.<sup>43</sup>

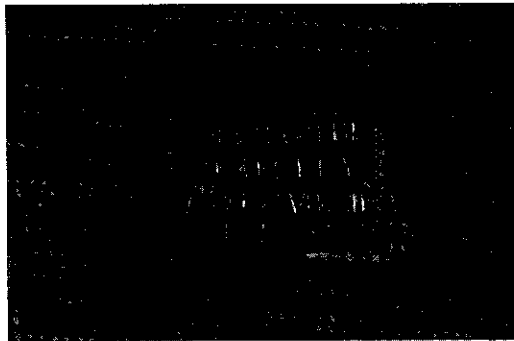


"If we set [God's] Glory before our Eyes, as the ultimate Aim and Design of all our Actions, we shall be delivered from all base sinister Designs and Intentions," preached Commissary James Blair to his congregation at Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg. The original portion of the structure dates to about 1715.

The heart's love also dictated the object that impressed itself upon the eyes. "Heavenly Treasures are fitted for our Heaven-born Souls," Blair told his Bruton Parish congregation, thereby noting man's natural end. "The more good we do with an Eye to Heaven, the more heavenly minded shall we prove, and the more directly shall we steer our Course to Heaven."<sup>44</sup> What individuals saw or placed before their eyes was important to colonial Virginians, because they believed that sight conveyed knowledge more immediately than the elusive medium of sound. George Keith spoke for many in the colony when he observed that without frequent repetition, spoken words were "as soon forgot as heard, for most part."<sup>45</sup> To set God before one's eyes was indicative both of a well-ordered heart and of one's embarkation on the path leading to Heaven. Felony indictments often illustrated this point in a negative way by citing the generally accepted explanation for the defendants' crimes: the malefactors were described as "not having the feare of God before thine eyes but being moved by the instigation of the devill." Lacking the proper orientation, men and women strayed from the precepts contained in the Gospels. They threatened their own salvation and disrupted the polity through acts such as theft, murder, and suicide.<sup>46</sup> Robert Paxton urged his parishioners to follow a different course: "This therfor is an essential part of our religion, to set God always befor our eyes as the great-pattern of our lives & actns." So oriented, obedience to God's laws provided evidence of a person's faith.<sup>47</sup>

An active, sincere, and regular devotional life was the key to what Virginians called "evangelical obedience." Prayer and spiritual discipline could turn nominal Christians—those who were "Christian" by virtue of their Englishness—into professing Christians, or people who had made a conscious decision to make their lives a pilgrimage to God. George Keith employed nautical imagery to explain the importance of the devotional life. He compared the Bible to a compass and Christ's life to a map that could guide the faithful on their voyages. Prayer entreated God to send the winds of divine influence to fill the sails of human affections.<sup>48</sup> The devotional life shaped the moral life and thus served as the link among faith and repentance and salvation.<sup>49</sup>

In public as well as in private, the Book of Common Prayer was the single greatest influence shaping Virginians' devotional lives. Next to the Bible, it was the most common volume in the colonists' libraries.<sup>50</sup> Its liturgy repeated weekly at public worship and read each day privately by many individuals provided a constant source of



*The Book of Common Prayer, the second most numerous title in colonial libraries, guided the devotional lives of Virginians. In 1760 Ichabod Camp wrote: "[A]ltho' God by his grace and Holy Spirit, assists us to a virtuous and holy life, yet he does not compel us; on the other hand, if we are wicked, we are so, not for want of sufficient help to be otherwise, but because of our wilful neglect of the assistance which is afforded us . . . . [W]hether we will co-operate with him, or resist him, depends wholly upon our own choice." Williamsburg midwife Catharine Blaikley personalized her prayerbook.*



structure for the spiritual life. The Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer were repeated at each office, and in the appointed lessons the Bible was read through every year. The liturgy in fact echoed the Bible; many of its prayers were crafted from the words of Holy Scripture. Day after day, week after week, it gave voice to the same themes in the same words that called the faithful to repentance at every service and offered them the means of grace.<sup>51</sup> By repeating the same words at each service and by using the same forms, the set liturgies of the Book of Common Prayer were intended to work a gradual transformation in the lives of individuals.<sup>52</sup> Thus, to describe Anglican worship (as some recent historians have) as "predictable and boring" misses the point because in effect it defines the Anglican approach to religion from an evangelical perspective.<sup>53</sup> Unlike evangelicals and Non-conformists, Anglicans placed little emphasis on conversion, and their style of worship reflected

this difference. Both as a devotional work and as a service book, the Book of Common Prayer aimed less at conversion than at helping the presumably converted maintain and deepen their faith. It served as the liturgy for a people who were Christians because they were members of the English commonwealth.<sup>54</sup> William Beveridge, a late seventeenth-century minister and sometime bishop of St. Asaph, explained in his discourse *A Sermon concerning the Excellency and Usefulness of the Common Prayer* that prayer book worship was designed to form as well as to order the lives of English Christians. This process, however, occurred slowly, a gradual action instead of a sudden and dramatic change like that experienced by the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. Because the set prayers worked this transformation through sound rather than through the more immediate agency of sight, necessity demanded the frequent repetition of the same words and phrases.<sup>55</sup> Beveridge, in fact, based his argument on the elusive epistemology of the spoken word:

*In order to our being Edified, so as to be made better and holier, whensoever we meet together upon a Religious account, it is necessary that the same good and holy Things be always inculcated and pressed upon us after one and the same manner. For we cannot but all find by our own Experience, how difficult it is to fasten any thing that is truly good, either upon our selves or others, and that it is rarely, if ever, effected without frequent Repetitions of it. Whatsoever good things we hear only once, or now and then, though perhaps upon the hearing of them, they may swim for a while in our Brains, yet they seldom sink down into our Hearts, so as to move and sway the Affections, as it is necessary they should do, in order to our being Edified by them. Whereas by a Set Form of Publick Devotions rightly composed, as we are continually put in mind of all things necessary for us to know and do, so that it is always done by the same Words and Expressions, which by their constant use will imprint themselves so firmly in our Minds, that . . . they will still occur upon all occasions; which cannot but be very much for our Christian Edification.<sup>56</sup>*

Hence, divine worship following the rites of the prayer book was intended to grasp an individual's affections and thereby sway that person toward living a holy life. Not that this reorientation occurred simply by hearing or reading the offices each day or each week. Individuals had to partic-

ipate willingly in the service. By opening their minds to the words they heard, they allowed the liturgy to bring their affections into the right frame and temper.<sup>57</sup> Repeatedly using the same set, brief forms encouraged this process and allowed the faithful to "recollect" their prayers, or, in Beveridge's words, to "look over our Prayers again, either in a Book, or in our Minds, where they are imprinted."<sup>58</sup> Over time, spoken prayers thus gained the epistemological immediacy of sight.

Unlike the colony's laws, which threatened transgressors with physical torments and economic sanctions, the set liturgy of the prayer book aimed at the affections. It attempted to transform people from within rather than to restrain them from without. Over time, active participation in the prayer life of the established church might lead people to practice self-discipline for the sake of salvation. Self-discipline provided evidence of the internal reorientation of the heart that had occurred as a result of repentance. Without prayer, the best of duties was but "dull Morality" and worthless in the eyes of God.<sup>59</sup> John Page highlighted the importance of acting from the proper motives when he warned his son to beware of a dry performance of duty separate from faith: "External actions adorn our professions, where grace and goodness seasons them; but where the juice and vigor of religion is not settled in the soul, a man is but like a goodly heart-shaken oak, whose beauty will turn into rottenness, and his end will be the fire."<sup>60</sup>

Devotional life played an important part in shaping a holy life, and Virginians did not restrict their spiritual regimen to the public liturgy and the sacred space of the parish church. They never viewed public worship as an end in itself and did not believe God could be approached only in the church building or through the set forms of the Book of Common Prayer. Nor did they believe public worship was necessarily the most important part of the spiritual journey. Unlike English divines, who treated private devotions as a form of preparation for the church's public worship, ministers in Virginia reversed this sequence. They placed greater emphasis on private devotions than on public and communal prayer. James Maury told his congregation that "Solitude is prerequisite to prayer" and recommended that persons interested in serious spiritual discipline follow Christ's example and retire from the presence of others when they attended to their prayers. Such devotions, he suggested, were "generally more serious and contemplative" because individuals were less likely to be disturbed in private than at public worship.<sup>61</sup>

The emphasis Virginia's ministers placed on private prayer likely reflected the necessity im-



For colonial Virginians, public worship at churches such as Bruton Parish in Williamsburg was not necessarily the most important aspect of their spiritual journey to God. John Page warned his son not to "narrow up" God's service in "hearing." "Preaching," he admonished, "is to beget your praying, to instruct you to praise and worship God" in private devotions. Courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

posed on Anglicans by the colony's "occasions." If the public worship of the church was to be the focal-point for the piety of the faithful, the church had to provide regular opportunities for the devotion it encouraged. But relatively few ministers served Virginia's church, the Lord's Supper was usually celebrated just three or four times each year, and divine service was held only on Sundays, a practice ministers new to the colony sometimes complained about.<sup>62</sup> Clergy tried to accommodate themselves to these circumstances as best they could and so often acted more like missionaries than settled ministers. Given their sporadic contact with the laity, necessitated by the colony's large parishes, ministers encouraged the faithful to make use of the means of grace in private. Most sermons preached in colonial Virginia, in fact, were how-to discourses on repentance urging the duty of private prayer and explaining its necessity. Preaching thus served the faithful as a calm exhortation to action, to keep God before their eyes, and to deepen their spiritual lives away from the church building. Ministers also distributed religious volumes to their parishioners, thus making devotional manuals substitutes for clergymen who could not adequately serve their parishes.<sup>63</sup>

Not surprisingly, Anglicans in Virginia practiced much of their piety at home. Reading the Bible or other religious books, self-examination, and secret prayer all directed the faithful toward God. These exercises were designed to help Virginians forge spiritual resolutions and then to act upon them, to order their lives in keeping with the divine pattern. Bible reading was widely encouraged. John Page urged his son to read the Scriptures frequently and offered him the counsel of St. Ambrose: "Eat, and eat daily of this heavenly manna." The Scriptures provided "exact maps of the heavenly Canaan, drawn by the pen of the Holy Ghost."<sup>64</sup> In the stories of Christ's earthly pilgrimage the Bible offered a model of the Christian life. Virginians viewed Christ as the divine teacher of virtue who had perfectly combined faith and works, thereby restoring human nature and demonstrating what men and women could become. They learned their duties through His model and then tried to apply His teachings to their lives. "Examples are far before Precepts," James Blair preached of Christ's life contained in the Gospels. "[T]he perfect Pattern of all Virtue . . . gives a very great Light into our Duty."<sup>65</sup> John Tillotson (1630–1694) became archbishop of Canterbury in May 1691. Colonial ministers frequently bor-

rowed from his published sermons when composing their own. After the infamous reconciliation with his wife on the billiard table in July 1710, William Byrd II recorded that she “read a sermon in Dr. Tillotson to me.”

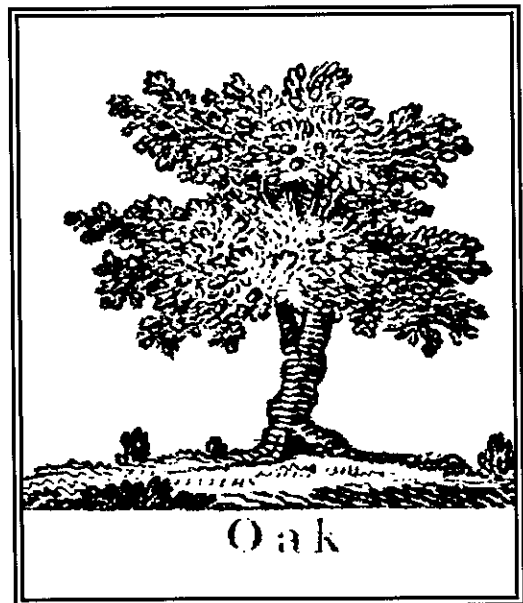
In addition to the Bible, Virginians turned to a variety of other religious works to guide their devotions. Philip Ludwell, Sr., kept a “poor little old [prayer] book” worn from use in his closet to help order his private spiritual exercises. Another colonist believed that for family or private devotions one “cannot make a better choice than of the church prayers.”<sup>66</sup> A number of English devotional writings also helped Virginians direct their journeys to Heaven. *The Practice of Piety*, by Puritan bishop Lewis Bayly; *The Whole Duty of Man*, likely written by Richard Allestree, a royalist minister; the Book of Common Prayer; *A Weeks Preparation Towards a Worthy Receiving of the Lords Supper*; and the *Church Catechism*, by the Whiggish English minister John Lewis, were all widely available in the colony. Lewis’s book proved so popular that in 1738 William Parks, who printed the *Virginia Gazette*, published an edition out of his Williamsburg press and advertised it as “being very proper for a New Year’s Gift to Children.”<sup>67</sup> Although written by a range of authors representing nearly the entire theological spectrum, the religious volumes owned by colonial Virginians shared a common desire to encourage what one historian has called “the consecrated life of the laity.” These works advocated what came to be called “holy living,” and like the Bible, they urged Virginians to imitate Christ. The colonists were likely as practical in their purchase of books as in their theology. Books were bought in order to be used.<sup>68</sup> And apparently they were. In 1702 a group of Quakers in Chuckatuck complained that the Anglican practice of distributing devotional manuals hurt their own efforts to attract converts.<sup>69</sup>

Family prayers, too, formed part of the Anglican spiritual regimen. Virginia’s ministers recommended this exercise, as did the English clergy, especially for those people who were unable to attend public worship regularly.<sup>70</sup> John Page urged his son to take up the practice of family devotions, not only as a means of grace but also as an example to his children. Because Virginians believed that praying for a person conferred grace on that individual, habitual family prayer was also a way for husbands and wives mutually to support each other in their spiritual lives.<sup>71</sup>

Besides offering public prayers within the family, Anglicans were expected to engage in the more serious work of private prayer, a duty “to be often performed, by none, seldomer than morn-

ing and evening.”<sup>72</sup> William Byrd II followed this practice throughout his life, even on those days when he attended public worship at the local parish church.<sup>73</sup> Like family prayer and public worship, private prayer included praise, petition, confession, and thanksgiving. In their daily prayers Virginians thanked God for His temporal blessings or begged Him to be merciful to the colony, at the same time acknowledging His omnipotence. “I comit you and yors to the divine tuition,” and “the planter (if [God say Amen] designs) a great crop” were typical sentiments.<sup>74</sup>

The more intense work of private devotion transcended both texts and forms. The colony’s ministers advised Virginians to set aside words and to approach God in meditation or “mental Prayer,” for prayer was the “Language of the Heart to God.”<sup>75</sup> By meditating on God’s goodness, His providences, or His mercy in sending Jesus Christ to redeem mankind, men and women focused their eyes on the deity and thus oriented themselves for the journey to Heaven.<sup>76</sup> These exercises brought the faithful “Face to Face” with God. So, too, did their daily observations of the natural world. Nature fascinated Virginians. It created within them a feeling of wonder that both frightened them and attracted them to the Creator. A great storm, the beauty of a flower, or the power of the sea that separated them from England all inspired this emotion, what one European philosopher called “a sudden surprise of the soul.” Governor John Page remembered of the botanist John



James Blair noted: “There are many wonderful things might be learned from the Works of Creation . . . for they bear the Marks and consequently the Proofs of God’s Wisdom.”

Clayton: "I have heard him say, whilst examining a flower, that he could not look into one, without seeing the display of infinite power and contrivance, and thus he thought it impossible for a BOTANIST to be an ATHEIST." The "most Dreadfull Hurry Cane" that struck Virginia in 1667 inspired a similar response. Councillor Thomas Ludwell believed "all the Ellements were at Strife," contending to see "wch of them should doe most towards the reduction of the creation into a Second Chaos, it was wonderfull to consider the contrary effects of that Storme."<sup>77</sup> Other colonists embraced illnesses, bad weather, and plagues of insects as calls to repentance. Understood properly, the entire world pointed toward God.

Despite the emphasis Anglicans in Virginia placed on human effort in the economy of salvation, the focus of their devotion remained on God. Over and over He called them to repent, and His was the pattern they endeavored to imitate. They did not find humility in meticulous self-examination or in bemoaning the human condition, but in acknowledging God's goodness and striving to grow in grace and Christian perfection. Rather than meditating on their sins, Virginians tended to focus their attentions on God. Although they practiced self-examination, no extant sermon delivered by an Anglican minister in the colony suggested that the faithful keep journals of their religious pilgrimages or record their sins in detail. Virginians did not keep a diary of their spiritual lives in a book, but in their lives.

The devotional life shaped the moral life and provided the link between faith and repentance, between piety and living a holy life. Commissary Blair therefore recommended that Virginians heed the Pauline injunction to pray without ceasing.<sup>78</sup> He suggested the use of mental prayer and brief ejaculatory prayers—either with the heart or with the lips—throughout the day, as a means of spiritual maintenance and the "keeping out of Evil-Thoughts."<sup>79</sup> Ejaculatory prayer was similar to the Hindu "om" and among Christians was a popular form of mystical prayer involving the frequent repetition of brief phrases. St. Augustine's "O, Beauty of all things Beautiful," St. Francis's "My God, My God," and the Jesus Prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me," are all examples from the Christian tradition. Blair believed this form of prayer should become as common in the spiritual life "as Breathing is in the Natural."<sup>80</sup> He also urged the faithful to pray the Psalms as an antidote to temptation. Blair found Psalm 136 particularly useful, its refrain of "for his mercy endureth forever" a model of brief ejaculatory

prayer.<sup>81</sup> By keeping mindful of God through habitual devotion, individuals drew down measures of grace to help them combat temptations and kept their eyes focused on God as they continued on the course to Heaven.

Like other Christian theologies, Anglicanism in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Virginia tried to assist the faithful along the path to Heaven. Although Anglican piety addressed the whole person by cultivating what James Blair called "the practice of the divine presence," Virginians demonstrated their piety most vividly through external behaviors. Such actions did not indicate the widespread acceptance of rationalism, moralism, or the ascendancy of works over faith. Doing one's duty was a statement of faith and the product of a sincere devotional life. Unlike many Nonconformists, Anglicans did not seek in their earthly pilgrimages a mystical union with Christ, the "Bridegroom of the soul." Rather, they thought of Christ as a teacher of virtue, and with the assistance of God's grace they endeavored to imitate the divine pattern. William Byrd II could therefore define blasphemy as living a life of "Disorder." By so living, "instead of blessing his name, we are blaspheming it, & blotting out his Image in our Souls."<sup>82</sup>

Virginians viewed the spiritual life as a process in which the faithful, through God's assistance, tried to replace their sinful habits with the habits of Christian virtue. They were fond of citing the parable of the talents to indicate that sincere Christians were expected to grow in grace and come ever closer to Christian perfection throughout a lifetime. It was a process of becoming by doing. The habitual repetition of devotional behaviors strengthened an individual's relationship with God and led to the growth in grace necessary to continue the work of repentance and amendment. One could discern the state of a person's soul by observing his actions. A life marked less and less by sin was one oriented toward God, while a life that continually reflected "a long train of sins" was evidence that the work of repentance had not yet begun.<sup>83</sup>

The performance of devotional duties not only helped an individual grow in grace but also helped to establish a religious identity. This assumption of an identity had always been true of those who took on the disciplines of family and secret prayer, but by the end of the century it was becoming true of regular church attendance as well. In 1699 the House of Burgesses reduced the legal requirement for church attendance to once every two months.<sup>84</sup> The decision to attend public worship regularly and to engage in private spiritual exercises, then, had largely become a

matter of personal choice. A form of voluntarism was emerging within the structure of the institutional church, and it was being encouraged by colonial leaders. God had offered redemption to all men and women. To respond to His call, either by worshipping regularly at the parish church or by making use of the means of grace in private, was to begin the process of becoming a Christian by choice rather than by birth.

The colony's "occasions" had forced Virginians to adapt their devotional practices, not to abandon them. For those who wished to make use of them, the means of grace still existed. Virginia's ministers realized their church's problems, and pragmatic clergymen actively encouraged forms of prayer that potentially threatened the centrality of the institutional church. Despite the church's difficulties, the faithful were able to practice their piety and to continue their pilgrimage to Heaven. And although William Fitzhugh worried about the lack of "spirituall help & comfort" in Virginia, he also knew that a person could further her spiritual pilgrimage in the colony, even if the spiritual helps were not as readily available as some colonists may have wished. He wrote his mother in 1698 to thank her for the gift of her "choice Bible." Urging her to face a present illness with Christian patience and to see God's hand in it, he reported that his sister, who also lived in Virginia, had "died a true penitent of the Church of Engld."<sup>85</sup>

Not only did the Anglicanism of James Blair's Virginia allow the faithful to continue their pilgrimages to Heaven, but it also created a mentality that helped to shape the colony's future. Although the private practice of piety that the colony's established church encouraged made it possible for Anglicans to adapt their devotional lives to a "novel environment," this emphasis carried with it a potential challenge to Virginia's institutional church. The origins of the Great Awakening in Virginia made that challenge a reality. "The first signs of the coming disturbance," in the words of Rhys Isaac, started "about 1743 when numbers of ordinary people . . . began reading religious tracts and absenting themselves from church."<sup>86</sup> Given the colony's "occasions" and the devotional life they had engendered, the Great Awakening's beginnings in the colony might be understood as the logical consequence of Virginia's approach to Anglican piety. Reading religious books beyond the sacred space of the parish church was hardly novel to Virginians. Ministers had encouraged the practice. That groups would eventually break away from the church in this manner reflected less a disruption than an evolution of the colony's traditional approach to religion.

In addition to emphasizing a private piety that was potentially dangerous to the established church, the Anglican mentality in Virginia may have led people to view events within a certain intellectual context as well. The religious notions preached from Virginia's pulpits encouraged the colonists to find patterns in events. Virginians, for instance, did not speak of individual sins in a teleological way, as a missing of the mark, but they viewed a series of actions in this way. Actions implied patterns, and "a long train of sins" was evidence of an unrepentant life, of a life that was moving toward an end other than Heaven. Moreover, the pattern such a life demonstrated was the result of human choice. More than two decades would pass after James Blair's death in 1743 before Virginians discerned in events a design against their liberty.<sup>87</sup> Although Anglicanism in Blair's Virginia did not speak the language of power and conspiracy, it did provide the colonists with a teleological method of interpreting events. Human actions were the result of human choice, they were evidence of the heart's intent, and they tended to point logically toward a particular end. At the very least, Virginia's Anglican church offered the colonists an intellectual structure sympathetic to the logic of English opposition thought. It offered Virginians practices and structures that opened an unintended future.

<sup>1</sup> William Fitzhugh to Nicholas Hayward, 30 Jan. 1686/7, in Richard Beale Davis, ed., *William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World, 1676-1701* . . . Virginia Historical Society Documents, 3 (Chapel Hill, 1963), p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Whitaker to William Crashaw, 9 Aug. 1611, in Alexander Brown, ed., *The Genesis of the United States* . . . (2 vols.; Boston and New York, 1896), 1:499; [Roger] G[reene], *Virginia's Cure: or an Advisive Narrative Concerning Virginia* . . . (London, 1662), in Peter Force, ed., *Tracts and Other Papers, Relating Principally to the Origin, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonies in North America* . . . (4 vols., 1836-46; Gloucester, Mass., 1963), 3: no. 15, pp. 4-5; Samuel Clyde McCulloch, "James Blair's Plan of 1699 to Reform the Clergy of Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly* (hereafter cited as WMQ), 3d ser., 4 (1947): 73, 76; Joan Rezner Gundersen, "The Anglican Ministry in Virginia, 1723-1776: A Study of Social Class" (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1972), pp. 32-34, 231. Population estimates come from Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975), p. 404; and Joan R. Gundersen, "The Search For Good Men: Recruiting Ministers In Colonial Virginia," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 48 (1979): 453-64.

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, p. 374; Warren M. Billings, John E. Selby, and Thad W. Tate, *Colonial Virginia: A History, A History of the American Colonies in Thirteen Volumes* (White Plains, N.Y., 1986), pp. 65, 134-36; John C. Rainbolt, "The Absence of Towns in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* (hereafter cited as JSH) 35 (1969): 343, 347; T. H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, 1985), p. 41; George MacLaren Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church and the Political*



*Conditions Under Which It Grew* . . . (2 vols.; Richmond, 1947–52), 1:372–73. Discounting the five largest parishes, the average size of a Virginia parish in 1724 was approximately 270 square miles. For the activities of colonial ministers, see Arthur Pierce Middleton, "The Colonial Virginia Parson," *WMQ*, 3d ser., 26 (1969): 425–40. Virginia's accommodation to tobacco culture began to affect religion as early as 1623/4, when the General Assembly modified traditional English notions of religious time by decreasing the number of fast and feast days in the Church of England's liturgical calendar that the colonists would be expected to observe. For the influence of Virginia's weather on church attendance, see Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling, eds., *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709–1712* (Richmond, 1941), pp. 63 (24 July 1709), 68 (7 Aug. 1709), 290 (21 Jan. 1711), 330 (15 Apr. 1711); William Stevens Perry, ed., *Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church* (5 vols., 1870–78; New York, 1969), 1:11; and Patricia U. Bonomi and Peter R. Eisenstadt, "Church Adherence in the Eighteenth-Century British American Colonies," *WMQ*, 3d ser., 39 (1982): 254–55.

<sup>4</sup> Many Anglicans in colonial Virginia testified to the importance of religion in their wills by mentioning forgiveness of sins, a sure and certain hope of the resurrection, or an explicit request for Christian burial. Others left donations of money, books, or property to their parish churches. See York County Deeds, Orders, and Wills, books 1–10, Library of Virginia, Richmond (microfilm and transcripts at Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Library, Williamsburg, Va. [hereafter cited as ViWC]). More than 70 percent of the wills recorded in these volumes contained additional religious sentiments beyond the traditional beginning, "In the Name of God, Amen." Among those people noting a parish affiliation, this number increased to 85 percent. See also Warren M. Billings, review of *Holy Things and Profane*, by Dell Upton, in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 95 (1987): 379–81. The notion of "occasions" is in Paul Avis, "What is 'Anglicanism?'" in Stephen Sykes and John Booty, eds., *The Study of Anglicanism* (Philadelphia and London, 1988), p. 406.

<sup>5</sup> I have used the term "James Blair's Virginia" because the majority of extant sermons written by colonial Anglicans in Virginia—those of Blair (by far the largest single collection), Robert Paxton, John Clayton, Deuel Pead, Peter Fontaine, and George Keith—are from the period covered by Blair's years in the colony, 1685 to 1743. The Anglican theology discussed here did not come abruptly to an end in the mid-1740s, and I would contend that similar views continued through the entire colonial period. Yet, although the few sermons of James Maury and other colonial ministers indicate the continuation of these religious views, there are limited primary sources on which to base such a hypothesis both before 1685 and after 1743. To the extent that an Anglican theology can be recovered for colonial Virginia, that theology comes from the years of Virginia's first commissary. If the quotations tend to come from a small number of colonial Virginia's many ministers, it is because so few of the colony's clergymen left sermons or other writings.

<sup>6</sup> James Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon on the Mount . . . Explained, and the Practice of it Recommended in divers Sermons and Discourses* (5 vols.; London, 1722), 5:374; The Burial Office, in *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England* (London, 1678); George Keith, *The Power of the Gospel in the Conversion of Sinners* (Annapolis, 1703), p. 12; John Page, *A Deed of Gift to My Dear Son, Captain Matt. Page, One of His Majesty's Justices for New Kent County, in Virginia*, ed., William Meade (1687; Philadelphia, 1856), p. v. On the pas-

toral nature of Anglicanism, see also Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:173; George Keith, *The Doctrine of the Holy Apostles and Prophets the Foundation of the Church of Christ* . . . (Boston, 1702), p. 3; and Deuel Pead, *Jesus is God: or, The Deity of Jesus Christ Vindicated Being an Abstract of some Sermons . . . Preach'd in the Parish Church of St. James Clerkenwell* (London, 1694), p. 43. Pead had served Christ Church Parish in Middlesex County, Virginia, from 1683 through 1691 before returning to England.

<sup>7</sup> William Fitzhugh to Mary King Fitzhugh, 30 June 1698, in Davis, ed., *William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World*, p. 358. See also Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, p. 219; Edmund Watts, will, 26 Feb. 1675, York County Deeds, Orders, and Wills, book 5, f. 165; *The Vain Prodigal Life, and Tragical Penitent Death of Thomas Hellier Born at Whitchurch near Lyme in Dorset-shire: Who for Murdering his Master, Mistress, and a Maid, was Executed according to Law at Westover in Charles City* . . . (London, 1680), p. 40; and Donna Joanne Walter, "Imagery in the Sermons of James Blair" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1967), esp. pp. 39–44.

<sup>8</sup> Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill, 1982), pp. 54–55; John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689* (New Haven, 1991), pp. 373–74; Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 1:104; Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 94–95 (quotations).

<sup>9</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:138 (quotation); Keith, *Power of the Gospel*, p. 17; Deuel Pead, "A Sermon Preached at James City in Virginia, the 23d of April 1686, Before the Loyal Society of Citizens born in and about London and inhabiting in Virginia," ed. Richard Beale Davis, in *WMQ*, 3d ser., 17 (1960): 376–77.

<sup>10</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 5:374. See also *ibid.*, 2:199, 204; and Robert Paxton, sermon no. 4, "Of the Tares in the Church," Robert Paxton Manuscript Sermon Book, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. There is no pagination in Paxton's sermon book, but each sermon is precisely eight pages long. I have cited the appropriate page for each individual sermon.

<sup>11</sup> Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 160 (quotation), 168, 210. John Tillotson, the English divine from whose published sermons colonial ministers borrowed most frequently when composing their own, also mocked the idea that "the Gospel is all promises, and our part is only to believe and embrace them" (John Tillotson, *The Works of Dr. John Tillotson, Late Archbishop of Canterbury* [10 vols.; London, 1820], 1:496). See also Keith, *Power of the Gospel*, p. 12; and Gundersen, "Anglican Ministry in Virginia," pp. 180–81.

<sup>12</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 5:364; Robert Paxton, sermon no. 3, "Of Anger," p. 1, Robert Paxton Manuscript Sermon Book; Tillotson, *Works*, 1:447; William Giberne, *The Duty of Living Peaceably with all Men* (Williamsburg, 1759), p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:253 (quotation); Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 183–95; William Byrd II, "Religion," c. 1725, p. 1, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond (hereafter cited as ViHi); William Byrd II, commonplace book, 1722–32, p. 51, ViHi.

<sup>14</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:148, 5:203; Thomas Pender, *The Divinity of the Scriptures From Reason and External Circumstances* . . . (New York, 1728), p. 17.

<sup>15</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:186, 3:36, 5:157.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:189.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Paxton, sermon no. 2, "Of the Resurrectn of Christ," p. 6, Robert Paxton Manuscript Sermon Book (quotation); Robert Paxton, sermon no. 1, "Of the Son of God," p. 6, *ibid.*; Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 126–29, 236–37.

<sup>18</sup> Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 141–42, 130. See

also Paxton, sermon no. 1, "Of the Son of God"; Robert Paxton, sermon no. 11, "Of Salvation," esp. p. 7, Robert Paxton Manuscript Sermon Book; Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:87, 5:301; Ichabod Camp, *Men have Freedom of Will and Power, and their Conduct, whether good or evil, is of Choice* (New Haven, 1760), p. 4; and Morgan Godwyn, *Trade Preferred Before Religion, and Christ Made to Give Place to Mammon* . . . (London, 1685), preface, p. 11, text, p. 33.

<sup>19</sup> Paxton, sermon no. 11, "Of Salvation," p. 3 (quotation); Thomas Warrington, *The Love of God, Benevolence, and Self-Love, considered together. A Sermon Preached at Norfolk, Before a Society of Free and Accepted Masons, December 27th, 1752* (Williamsburg, 1753), p. 7; Camp, *Men have Freedom of Will*, esp. pp. 13–14. George Keith noted: "We are workers together with God, we must not be merely passive . . . as so many Stricks and Stones . . . but following after him as he gently leads and draws us" (Keith, *Power of the Gospel*, p. 12).

<sup>20</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 5:300–302. For the differences between Anglicans and Puritans on mankind's role in the process of salvation, see Hambrick-Stowe, *Practice of Piety*, p. 60.

<sup>21</sup> Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, p. 51 (quotation); Robert Paxton, sermon no. 8, "Of Repentance," p. 8, Robert Paxton Manuscript Sermon Book; Pead, *Jesus is God*, p. 101.

<sup>22</sup> Paxton, sermon no. 11, "Of Salvation," p. 6 (quotation); Paxton, sermon no. 2, "Of the Resurrectn of Christ," p. 8; Peter Fontaine, "A Fast Day Sermon Preached May 10, 1727" (typescript), ViWC; Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, p. v.

<sup>23</sup> "Laying hold of Christ," "getting into Christ," and "rolling themselves upon Christ" were common phrases used by Nonconformists to describe their relationship with the Savior. See Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 320.

<sup>24</sup> Deuel Pead, *A Practical Discourse Upon the Death of Our Late Gracious Queen* (London, 1695), p. 15 (quotation); Wright and Tining, eds., *Secret Diary of William Byrd*, p. 175 (7 May 1710).

<sup>25</sup> Paxton, sermon no. 8, "Of Repentance," p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> See C. Fitzsimons Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (Wilton, Conn., 1966); Gundersen, "Anglican Ministry in Virginia," pp. 180–81, 188; and Jan Lewis, *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson's Virginia* (Cambridge, London, and New York, 1983), pp. 45–47, 212–14. For a good rebuttal of the moralist position, see Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 298.

<sup>27</sup> Spurr, *Restoration Church*, pp. 298–99; *Sermons, or Homilies: Appointed to be Read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth, of Famous Memory* (New York, 1815), p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Paxton, sermon no. 2, "Of the Resurrectn of Christ," p. 6; Paxton, sermon no. 11, "Of Salvation," p. 2; Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:7; Keith, *Power of the Gospel*, pp. 2–6.

<sup>29</sup> Paxton, sermon no. 2, "Of the Resurrectn of Christ," p. 6 (quotation); Keith, *Power of the Gospel*, p. 7; Fontaine, "A Fast Day Sermon"; John Frederick Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism in North America* (Detroit, 1984), p. 184.

<sup>30</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:148.

<sup>31</sup> Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 300; Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, p. 25; Paxton, sermon no. 8, "Of Repentance," p. 7; Paxton, sermon no. 2, "Of the Resurrectn of Christ," p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, p. 237.

<sup>33</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 5:315–16.

<sup>34</sup> Hambrick-Stowe, *Practice of Piety*, p. 45.

<sup>35</sup> Paxton, sermon no. 8, "Of Repentance," p. 8.

<sup>36</sup> *Vain Prodigal Life*, pp. 39–40.

<sup>37</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 1:104–5; Paxton, sermon no. 8, "Of Repentance," p. 7; Tillotson, *Works*, 1:79.

<sup>38</sup> Deciding to define oneself as a Christian through choice rather than through the possession of an English surname is a major theme in James Blair's sermons. See, for instance, Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 1:62, 2:14, 22, 31, 255, 3:186, 280, 5:321.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:167, 4:15.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:167, 4:31, 5:357–58; Paxton, sermon no. 8, "Of Repentance," p. 5; Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 293. "It is a most desperate madness for Men to defer it till" they approach death, warned *The Whole Duty of Man*, a devotional volume popular among Virginians ([Richard Allestree], *The Whole Duty of Man* [1658; London, 1714], pp. 121–22).

<sup>41</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 1:96.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:332 (quotations); Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 40–55; Pead, *Jesus is God*, p. 35.

<sup>43</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:332.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 4:225, 230. See also *ibid.*, 3:344.

<sup>45</sup> George Keith, *The Notes of the True Church With the Application of them to the Church of England, And the Great Sin of Separation from Her* . . . (New York, 1704), p. 8. On the fleeting nature of the spoken word, see also William Dawson to Dr. Bearcroft, 12 July 1744, Dawson Papers, vol. 1, f. 22, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (microfilm, ViWC); Pead, "A Sermon Preached at James City," p. 378; Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 3:5; *Sermons, or Homilies*, p. 39; and Edward L. Bond, "Religion in Seventeenth-Century Anglican Virginia: Myth, Persuasion, and the Creation of an American Identity" (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 1995), chap. 5.

<sup>46</sup> Warren M. Billings, "Pleading, Procedure, and Practice: The Meaning of Due Process of Law in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *JSH* 47 (1981): 580. See also York County Deeds, Orders, and Wills, books 1–10; Francis, baron Howard of Effingham, to Philadelphia Pelham Howard, [1 May 1684], in Warren M. Billings, ed., *The Papers of Francis Howard, Baron Howard of Effingham, 1643–1695* (Richmond, 1989), p. 90.

<sup>47</sup> Robert Paxton, sermon no. 6, "of imitating God," p. 3, Robert Paxton Manuscript Sermon Book (quotation); Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:47.

<sup>48</sup> Keith, *Power of the Gospel*, p. 17.

<sup>49</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 3:346; Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 334.

<sup>50</sup> Richard Beale Davis, *Intellectual Life in the Colonial South, 1585–1763* (3 vols.; Knoxville, 1978), 2:580.

<sup>51</sup> Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 334.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia*, Architectural History Foundation Books, 10 (New York, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1986), p. 9 (quotation); Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790* (Chapel Hill, 1982), pp. 63–64. For a corrective to this view, see the insightful comments in Joan R. Gundersen, review of *Holy Things and Profane*, by Dell Upton, in *WMQ*, 3d ser., 46 (1989): 380. The well-known complaint about Virginians altering parts of the liturgy, usually by shortening it, is not a significant deviation from practices in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and does not suggest that the colonists were less Anglican than their coreligionists in the mother country. Even in the most "conformable" of English parishes similar deviations occurred. See Spurr, *Restoration Church*, pp. 187–88.

<sup>54</sup> Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 109. See also "Draft Representation of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts to King George 1," 3 June 1715, Fulham Palace Papers, vol. 36, ff. 42–43, Lambeth Palace Library, Virginia Colonial Records Project (hereafter cited as VCRP), Survey Report 578, ViWC.

<sup>55</sup> William Beveridge, *A Sermon concerning the Excellency*

and Usefulness of the Common Prayer . . . (1682; London, 1779); Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England* (5 vols.; Princeton, 1961–75), 2:196; Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:9.

<sup>56</sup> Beveridge, *Excellency and Usefulness of the Common Prayer*, pp. 7–8 (also quoted in Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, p. 64; and Davies, *Worship and Theology*, 3:26–27).

<sup>57</sup> Beveridge, *Excellency and Usefulness of the Common Prayer*, pp. 17, 21–23, 39.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11. Some Anglican apologists argued that brief collects or “arrow-like prayers” required less time than the long prayers of the Puritans and therefore ran less risk of losing the hearers’ attention. James Blair believed short prayers addressed the infirmities of human nature more directly than longer ones. See Davies, *Worship and Theology*, 2:212; and Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:9.

<sup>59</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 3:362.

<sup>60</sup> Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 246–47 (quotation); John Clayton, *Christ Crucified; the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God* (London, 1706), p. 3.

<sup>61</sup> John Spurr, “The Church, the Societies and the Moral Revolution of 1688,” in John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor, eds., *The Church of England c. 1689–c. 1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (New York, 1993), p. 138; Jeremy Gregory, “The Eighteenth-Century Reformation: The Pastoral Task of Anglican Clergy After 1689,” *ibid.*, p. 73; James Maury, “2d sermon on Mat. vi.6,” pp. 2–5, James Maury Manuscript Sermons, ViWC (quotation); Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:9.

<sup>62</sup> John Lang to Bishop Edmund Gibson, 7 Feb. 1725 / 6, vol. 12, Fulham Palace Papers, ff. 97–98, Lambeth Palace Library, VCRP, SR 8038. See also Francis Nicholson to Lucy Burwell, [1701], Francis Nicholson Papers, ViWC.

<sup>63</sup> John Page warned his son that sermons and public prayers did not exhaust his religious duty. “The word preached brings in knowledge, and knowledge rectifies devotion. So that preaching is to beget your praying, to instruct you to praise and worship God” (Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 168–69).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12–14 (quotation); James Maury to James Maury, Jr., 17 Feb. 1762, Fontaine-Maury Papers, ViWC.

<sup>65</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:64 (quotation), 166; Pead, *Jesus is God*, pp. 81–82. For an example of biblical precepts in action, see Robert Carter to Micajah and Richard Perry, 22 July 1720, in Louis B. Wright, ed., *Letters of Robert Carter, 1720–1727: The Commercial Interests of a Virginia Gentleman* (San Marino, 1940), pp. 34–35. Wrote Carter: “My son, I find, is upon the stool of repentance . . . He begs of me to forget his past extravagances and desires I may not insist upon a particular account from him, and that he will give me no more occasion of future complaints. Upon these terms I am willing to shut up with him. Thus you see I am no stranger to the story of the Gospel.” For Christ as an exemplar of unjust suffering for Christians to imitate, see Sir William Berkeley to [the king's commissioners for Virginia], 23 Apr. 1677, CO 1/40, f. 62, Public Record Office (hereafter cited as PRO), VCRP, SR 661.

<sup>66</sup> Philip Ludwell to Philip Ludwell II, 20 Dec. 1707, Lee Family Papers, 1638–1867, ViHi; Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, p. 216.

<sup>67</sup> *Virginia Gazette*, 15–22 Dec. 1738.

<sup>68</sup> Davis, *Intellectual Life*, 2:493, 580; Louis B. Wright, “Pious Reading in Colonial Virginia,” *JSH* 6 (1940): 385; Spurr, *Restoration Church*, p. 371. For specific ownership and recommendations, see York County Deeds, Orders, and Wills, books 1–10; James Maury to Mary Grymes, 16 Jan. 1768, Sol Fienstone Collection of the American Revolution, sec. 924, letter 33, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (microfilm, ViWC).

<sup>69</sup> *Epistles Received*, vol. 1, f. 383, Library of the Society of Friends, VCRP, SR 845. See also *Epistles Sent*, vol. 2, f. 16, Library of the Society of Friends, VCRP, SR 899.

<sup>70</sup> Gregory, “Eighteenth-Century Reformation,” p. 74.

<sup>71</sup> Page, *Deed of Gift to My Dear Son*, pp. 189, 192–93.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217. See also Francis, baron Howard of Effingham, to Philadelphia Pelham Howard, 21–22 Mar. 1684, in Billings, ed., *Howard of Effingham Papers*, p. 73; and [Allestree], *Whole Duty of Man*, p. 110.

<sup>73</sup> Wright and Tinling, eds., *Secret Diary of William Byrd*.

<sup>74</sup> John Catlett to Thomas Catlett, 1 Apr. 1664, misc. manuscripts, ViWC (first quotation); William Byrd I to (Perry & Lane?), 29 Mar. 1685, in Marion Tinling, ed., *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684–1776*, Virginia Historical Society Documents, 12, 13 (2 vols.; Charlottesville, 1977), 1:30 (second quotation); Philip Ludwell to Philip Ludwell II, 9 Feb. 1705/6, Lee Family Papers; Francis Nicholson to Lucy Burwell, 7 Jan. 1702/3, Francis Nicholson Papers.

<sup>75</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:9–10, 132, 3:359, 5:170.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:203, 206, 5:170–71.

<sup>77</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago, 1991), pp. 20–23, 78–80; Edmund Berkeley and Dorothy Smith Berkeley, *John Clayton: Pioneer of American Botany* (Chapel Hill, 1963), p. 28; Thomas Ludwell to John, Lord Berkeley of Stratton, 7 Nov. 1667, CO 1/21, ff. 282–283, PRO. See also Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 1:206, 4:50–51, 96, 100, 324–25; Pead, *Jesus is God*, p. 10; William Byrd II to Francis Otway, [c. Aug. 1737], in Tinling, ed., *Correspondence of the Three William Byrds*, 2:453; *Virginia Gazette*, 25 Jan.–1 Feb. 1739/40, p. 4; and Tho[mas] Glover, *An Account of Virginia, its Scituation, Temperature, Productions, Inhabitants and their manner of planting and ordering Tobacco . . .* (London, 1676), p. 20. Glover's manuscript edition suggests that the great hurricane of 1667 “was a divine punishment laid on the Virginians because they had broken their promises not to plant tobacco” (Classified Papers, 1660–1740, VII [1], Royal Society of London [photocopy, ViWC]).

<sup>78</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 4:112, 5:166. The biblical reference is I Thess. 5:17.

<sup>79</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:343–44, 4:10, 5:170–71.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:344, 5:170–71; Hambrick-Stowe, *Practice of Piety*, p. 184; F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (2d ed.; New York, 1974), p. 738. Compare Blair's views with those in James Walsh, ed., *The Cloud of Unknowing* (New York, 1981). Blair, and many Virginians, may well have continued the traditional practices of English contemplative prayer. This emphasis, rather than a lack of religious fervor, may help account for the small amount of material historians have uncovered about the practice of religion in colonial Virginia.

<sup>81</sup> Blair, *Our Saviour's Divine Sermon*, 2:342, 3:239.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*; William Byrd II, commonplace book, p. 16.

<sup>83</sup> Tillotson, *Works*, 2:31. The parable of the talents is in Matthew 25:14–30 and Luke 19:12–27.

<sup>84</sup> William Waller Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia . . .* (13 vols.; Richmond, 1809–23), 3:170–71.

<sup>85</sup> William Fitzhugh to Mary King Fitzhugh, 30 June 1698, in Davis, ed., *William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World*, p. 358.

<sup>86</sup> Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, p. 148.

<sup>87</sup> Blair's sermons on government could easily have been cribbed from the writings of his friend, John Locke. Blair's sermons, in fact, may be one of the first means by which Locke's ideas were communicated to the colonial public.



## The Bothy's Mould

Presenting the latest dirt (mould) from the gardener's hut (bothy).

### A Curious Cucumber

by Wesley Greene

Wesley, longtime garden historian in the Landscape Department, is the new author of this column. You can often find him in costume interpreting in the Colonial Garden across from Bruton Parish Church.

The modern cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*) is probably a descendent of the wild *Cucumis harnwickii*, a native of the foothills of the Himalayas. The culinary cucumber was known in India by at least 2000 B.C.E. All of the ancient Roman writers on agriculture mentioned the cucumber. Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 B.C.E.) gave the Latin name *Curvimir* to the cucumber, referring to the curvature of the fruit. The Greek name for cucumber was *sikys*, meaning the plant had no aphrodisiac qualities, hence the Greek proverb: "Let a woman weaving a cloak eat a cucumber; because female weavers, if we believe Aristotle, are unchaste, and eager for love making." Pliny (23–79 C.E.) recorded the often-repeated story of the cucumber being "a delicacy for which the emperor Tiberius had a remarkable partiality; in fact there was never a day on which he was not supplied with it."

The cucumber was probably first introduced to England during the reign of King Edward III (1327–77). A list of seeds prepared by Roger, the gardener to the archbishop of Canterbury, included "concomber & gourde" (1326–27). The plant was apparently lost during the wars of York and Lancaster but was reintroduced during the reign of King Henry VIII sometime after 1515. By the end of the seventeenth century, the cucumber was a well-known fruit in English gardens although there persisted some question about its healthfulness. It was said that the archaic name *cowcumber* arose because the fruit was thought fit only for cows. This seems somewhat curious given the fondness of the Roman emperor Tiberius for the cucumber, but suspicions about the fruit lingered right up to the eighteenth century. The celebrated English di-

arist Samuel Pepys wrote on August 22, 1663, "Mr. Newburne is dead of eating cowcubbers, of which, the other day, I heard another, I think Sir Nicholas Crisp's son."

John Evelyn, a founding member of the Royal Society in England, wrote in *Acetaria* (1699), "The Cucumber it self, now so universally eaten, being accounted little better than Poyson, even within our Memory." Despite Evelyn's optimism, Landon Carter recorded in his diary on July 24, 1766, his concern for his daughter Judy who was sick: "She does bear ungovernable the whole summer through, eating extravagantly and late at night of cucumbers and all sorts of bilious trash."

The cucumber arrived in the New World with the first explorers. Christopher Columbus is credited with introducing it to Haiti in 1494. Just fifteen years later, Hernando de Soto recorded seeing cucumbers in Florida. In 1535, Jacques Cartier observed "very great cucumbers" near present-day Montreal. Cucumbers were planted at Jamestown in the first years of that settlement. In *A True Declaration of the estate of the Colonie in Virginia* (Published by advise and direction of the Councell of Virginia, 1610), John Smith noted, "What should I speake of cucumbers, muske melons, pompions, potatoes, parsneps, carrets, turnups, which our gardens yeilded with little art and labour."

It was, however, a very different cucumber that created a sensation in eighteenth-century Williamsburg. On August 28, 1737, John Custis wrote to Peter Collinson, a London merchant and avid collector of North American plants:

*The seeds of the long cucumber you sent me; I planted but none came up; I gave my son 3 seeds which all came up; notwithstanding the excessive drouth he had one more than 3 feet long; to the astonishment of many; several people rid many miles to see it. . . . there are more people begd some of the seed; then 10 cucumbers can afford.*

A memo in *Hortus Collinsonianus* read, "I sent seeds of a Turkey cucumber to Mr. Custis in Virginia, in the year 1737; it produced a fruit three feet long and fourteen inches round; grew in one night three inches in length, and people came twenty miles round to visit it." This extraordinary fruit is also described in the August 12–19, 1737, edition of the *Virginia Gazette*:

*There grew, this summer, in the Garden of Mr. Daniel Parke Custis, in New-Kent County, a Cucumber, of the Turkey or Morocco Kind, which measured a Yard in Length, and near 14 Inches round the thickest Part of it. . . . They are ribb'd*

almost like a Musk-melon, colour'd like a Water-melon; and taste much like the common Cucumber. Several curious Persons have been to view them, the like having never been seen in these Parts before.

The story of the Virginia cucumber was picked up by a Boston newspaper that, in turn, gave an account (perhaps tongue-in-cheek) of a gigantic Massachusetts watermelon. Mr. Parks, publisher of the *Virginia Gazette*, countered with an article in the following year (August 25–September 1, 1738) to assure the Bostonians that the Virginia cucumber was real. He began the article with the quote from the Boston paper:

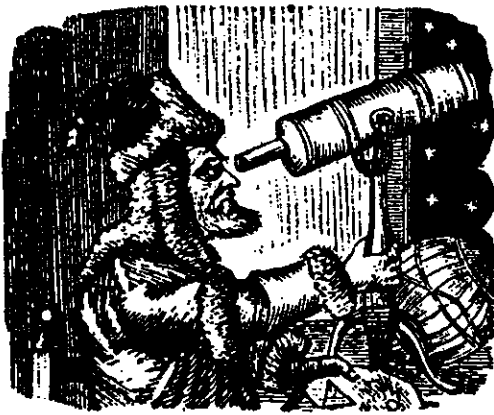
*Last Week was cut out of a Garden belonging to Capt. Wells of Cambridge . . . a Water Melon, that was in circumference, both Ways, a Yard and an Eighth Part of a Yard, which weighed 36 Pounds and 10 ounces. . . . This Rarity we send to Virginia, in Return for their Cucumber. If the Author of this Paragraph was ingenious and candid in his Account, we receive his Present very kindly: But if he intended wittidly to impose upon us an overgrown imaginary Water-melon, for a real Cucumber, supposing our Account to be false . . . we must beg leave to assure him, that the Description we gave of that Cucumber was true; and that from the Seed of it, and others of the same Kind, abundance of them have been propagated in several Gentlemens Gardens this Year, particularly in That of Mr. Thomas Nelson, Merchant, in York Town, who has one in his Garden, which measur'd (this Day) 40 inches in Length; and has several others 3 Feet long: He had some this Year which exceeded any of these in Size; but being ripe and wither'd are now considerably shrunk. There are Two Species of them, one Green, the other White; the Green ones are largest, but both of 'em eat well. As we have undeniable Proofs of the Truth of this Account, we venture to send it to the Northward, for Improvement, or Admiration.*

Mr. Parks

Mammoth cucumbers generated not only national news but international news, as was evident in a December 15, 1768, edition of the *Virginia Gazette*: "Liverpool, Sept 9 There is now growing in the garden of Peter Holme, Esq; at Green Bank, near this town, a cucumber produced from a seed brought from Turkey, which measures 25 inches and a half in length, and 28 inches in circumference, and weighs upwards of 30 pounds."

In fact, this wonderful fruit was probably not a cucumber at all. The 1759 edition of *The Gardeners Dictionary*—the most authoritative gardening work of the eighteenth century, by Philip Miller, superintendent of the Chelsea Physic Garden—lists the Turkey cucumber as *Cucumis flexuosus*. This was a true melon then—not a cucumber—that today often goes by the name of Armenian melon or serpent melon. When ripe, it has a hollow center with an abundance of seeds just as the familiar muskmelon does. It is a very long, pale-green melon, with striking ribs and a sweet green flesh that tastes very much like a sweet cucumber. You can see this melon/cucumber growing in the summer months at our Colonial Garden or purchase seeds if you would like to grow one yourself. This curious cucumber continues to amaze guests to Williamsburg today just as it did over 250 years ago.





## Q & A

(Character interpreters forwarded the first six questions about religious life in eighteenth-century Virginia.)

**Question:** What is the best way to refer to the established church in Virginia?

**Answer:** The name of the church in the eighteenth century was the Church of England, and it is a Protestant (i.e., non-Catholic) faith. In Britain, it is still the Church of England and Queen Elizabeth II is its titular head. In America today, it is the Episcopal Church. Both the modern Church of England and the Episcopal Church in America preserve a form of worship very close to that of the eighteenth century. Although historians have come to call the Church of England the Anglican church, that term doesn't seem to be in common use in the eighteenth century and is best not used in the Historic Area. Character interpreter Jack Flintom points out that the diary of Methodist itinerant minister Joseph Pilmore refers to members of the Church of England as Episcopalians. Church of England is far more correct for the period than Anglican. Episcopal Church is also acceptable and may be helpful for further clarification. As for character interpreters, most residents of Williamsburg whom they portray would have simply referred to "the Church" and didn't need to even say "Bruton Parish" to refer to the local church.

**Question:** Were most Virginia parish churches frame or brick structures?

**Answer:** By the time period we interpret, they were of brick. Rhys Isaac writes in *Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, "The churches were generally plain structures. In the early eighteenth century they were oblong in form. . . . Formerly churches had been constructed of wood, but by 1720 . . . they were built of brick."

**Question:** How many parishes were there in Virginia?

**Answer:** At least eight official lists of the Virginia parishes and their clergy between 1680 and 1774 have survived. According to a 1774 document, Virginia had ninety-five parishes, ninety incumbent ministers, and five vacancies. (See George McLaren Brydon, D.D., *Virginia's Mother Church* ([Richmond, Va., 1947], 241.)

**Question:** Do only Presbyterians use the term meetinghouse?

**Answer:** No. A meetinghouse is the place of worship of any dissenting Christian denomination, whether Presbyterian, Baptist, Quaker, or whatever. The term *church* refers only to the local Church of England parish church.

**Question:** Was there segregated seating at Bruton Parish?

**Answer:** As for gender, there seems to be no gender segregation in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, though vestry minutes indicate that men sat separately from women and children when the present church building was new at the beginning of the eighteenth century. We're not sure when the practice ceased, but by mid-century there are a few references to family galleries and seating in the church.

In terms of racial segregation, no one knows exactly where the slaves sat in Bruton Parish, though there seems to have been a number of arrangements in Virginia churches, some more segregated than others. Some churches had slave galleries, others had benches for slaves at the rear or in the aisles, and in certain cases slaves may have sat with the family of their masters in private family pews or private galleries. Usually relegated to the fringes of the congregation, slaves often listened at church doors or from adjacent areas such as bell towers.

**Question:** Who ran the vestry meetings?

**Answer:** It is very clear from surviving records that the parish minister normally presided as a thirteenth party over his twelve-man vestry.

**Question:** Would anyone in the eighteenth century have actually wanted to attend a hurricane?

**Answer:** Well, the answer is certainly no, if we are thinking of the meteorological usage of *hurricane*—the Isabel type of storm that visited not so long ago. And, of course, in the eighteenth century, Virginians were all too familiar with such storms—an October 1749 hurricane washed up eight hundred acres of sand that formed Willoughby Spit in Norfolk, and a Sep-

tember 1775 storm destroyed milldams, crops, ships, and houses in the vicinity of Williamsburg.

However, the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives one of the meanings of the word *hurricane* as "a large and crowded assembly of fashionable people at a private house, of a kind common in the eighteenth century." The OED lists the following: "1746 R. Whatley, *Christian*, p. vii, 'A confused meeting of Company of both sexes on Sundays is called a Hurricane.'" And, "1746-47, Mrs. Delaney in *Life and Corr.*, p. 447, 'Tomorrow I go to St. James . . . and finish at the Duchess of Queensberry's, who is to have a hurricane.'" I can imagine many Virginians quite eager to attend that sort of hurricane. NOTE: I hasten to add that to date there is no recorded use of this form of the word in eighteenth-century Virginia. But if you happened to be visiting the Mother Country. . . .

(Phil Shultz, training specialist, Department of Interpretive Training)

**Question:** Is it correct in our interpretive period of 1774 to use the word *typhus* in referring to the disease?

**Answer:** In using the word *typhus* in a medical sense, the answer is a modified yes. Dr. William Cullen used the word *typhus* when he published his nosology (disease classification) in 1769. A translation from the Latin of this nosology appears in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1771, vol. 3, p. 59. Dr. Cullen puts typhus in the class *Pyrexia* (feverous disorders), order *Febres* (fevers). Even though the word *typhus* is already in use by 1774, it would be more commonly called slow or nervous fever.

(Sharon Cotner, *Pasteur & Galt Apothecary*)

**Question:** Are venetian blinds authentic to the eighteenth century? Was the term *venetian blind* used in the eighteenth century?

**Answer:** In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, housekeeping included taking great care to protect expensive furnishings from the damaging effects of sunlight, dirt, smoke, soot, insects, and wear. In their daily and never-ending battle against the elements, Virginians em-

ployed venetian blinds to help control light and insects. The movable slats filtered light and deterred the entry of insects, thereby providing protection from fading and flyspecks, while allowing air circulation and controlled light.

The origins of the venetian blind date back to antiquity, to early forms used in ancient Egypt and Pompeii. Similar blinds were used in medieval Italy and thirteenth-century Spain. Helen Comstock, an English decorative arts historian, suggests their origin is eastern, because in Italy they were known as *persiana* and in France, *jalousie a la persienne*. They may have been introduced to Europe from the Venetian trade with the East, thus the name *venetian blind*.

The slats in ancient venetian blinds were stationary. In 1757, a Parisian craftsman named Lebeuf advertised the perfection of the venetian blind with the addition of tapes and cords to adjust the slats to various angles, and to raise and lower them to any desired height. By the fourth quarter of the eighteenth century, venetian blinds were in common use by the wealthy throughout America. Employed in shop windows, offices, homes, churches, public buildings, and even on carriages, venetian blinds were ordered from England as well as purchased locally. In January 1770, Williamsburg craftsman Joshua Kendall described their usefulness when he advertised that he made

*The best and newest invented Venetian SUN BLINDS for windows, that move to any position so as to give different lights, that screen from the scorching rays of the sun . . . give a cool refreshing air in hot weather, and are the greatest preservatives of furniture of any thing of the kind ever invented.*

The term *venetian blind* appears in the 1770 inventory of Governor Botetourt. The 1779 papers of Thomas Jefferson—List of Packages sent from the Palace (To Richmond)—mentions *Vene<sup>n</sup> Blinds*.

(Kimberly Smith Ivey, associate curator, textiles; Phil Shultz, training specialist)

## Extracts from the *Autobiography of the* *Reverend James Ireland* Fifth Installment

*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. There he came under the influence of the Baptist community of believers and was ordained as a minister of that faith in 1769. Ireland's first-person account of the struggle for religious freedom in colonial Virginia is preserved in an autobiography published posthumously by J. Foster of Winchester, Virginia, in 1819. There has been no subsequent edition. Bob Doares, training specialist in the Department of Interpretive Training and Interpreter Planning Board member, owned one of these rare 1819 imprints.*

*Beginning with the fall 2002 issue of the Interpreter, Bob has shared 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.] The story continues here.*

### **Book III, Chapter 10 continued, Trial in Culpeper, 1770**

I returned homeward, and with a number of friends attended on the day of trial at the court house. They had found a sham jury against me, determined still to continue me in prison. I was indicted for alleged crimes, which if proven, would have subjected me to criminal punishment. The King's attorney opened up the indictment, and then presumed to ask me, "*Guilty or not guilty.*" I answered *not guilty*; and declared that if five hundred witnesses were not sufficient, I could produce a thousand, to destroy the validity of what I was charged with. Finding them deaf to every thing I could offer in my own defence, I then produced my license, signed by the first authority, to have a meeting house built in that county, for myself to preach there without molestation. Never was a people so chagrined as the bench of magistrates were; however, still they were determined to send me back to jail, and I had to give a friend the charge of my riding horse and furniture. One of my friends at that instant tapping me on the shoulder, asked me if I had any objections to employing an Attorney? I answered no, provided he would make good what he undertook. I immediately turned round to lawyer Bullett, (since Judge Bullett) asked him if he

would undertake my cause and ensure success? He answered in the affirmative. Five pounds (equal to \$16.66) being his fee, I agreed to give it.

After a good deal of altercation between my Attorney and the Court, he told them plainly, "that they had prosecuted me upon laws that had no existence these seventy years, that they subjected themselves to a prosecution on account of their conduct towards me, as those conventicle acts were repealed at the accession of William the third to the throne of England, and had never an existence since."

By this time the confusion of the bench was conspicuous to all that were in the house; the judge of the quorum picked up his hat and went out of doors, another followed his example, until the whole of the magistrates evacuated the bench; and there did I stand like the woman accused of adultery, before Christ, who told them, that "They who were without sin, should cast the first stone; when they all went out, being convicted, one by one."

Thus ended this great sham trial, to the mortification of the bench and their abettors; whilst on the other hand, the pious followers of the dear Redeemer were overjoyed at their disappointment, and the prospect of having a meeting house for themselves. Till the meeting house was erected, an arbour was set up, under the shelter of which, other travelling ministers attended and preached to the people in my absence; and this was the first means of the gospel being spread in that county, the happy and astonishing spread thereof, is now conspicuous to all in the county who are religiously disposed.

Now I enjoyed my liberty to exercise my talents through the state (then colony) for the good of souls.

### **Book III, Chapter 11, Three Divisions of Virginia**

From what has been said, you cannot help taking notice of the awful darkness which overspread Virginia at that time; although in speaking of it more particularly I shall divide it into three districts of country, and touch upon the general character of the inhabitants of each, so far as I was then, and shortly afterwards, acquainted with them.

The first, from the blue ridge of mountains down towards the bay, they were considered as the politest part of the people, prior to any



spread of the Gospel therein. Religion was a subject that did not concern their minds, unless it was in their opposition against those who felt the earliest impressions of it; they resigned and gave up their spiritual concerns to the guidance and direction of their spiritual guides: like *priest* like *people*, they appeared all to be in the ditch, put their trust in men, and made flesh their arm. Scarcely a persecution took place, in that quarter, but had a Priest at the head of it, and received the hearty concurrence of their parishioners. In early stages of my ministry, I made a visit almost down to the Bay; in that course of preaching, I traveled considerable distance, and met with exceeding few that had any desire for the conversion of their souls. . . .

Being two hundred miles from my residence, I longed to be back among those called my own people; that being the *second* division, which lays between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghany mountains. The people inhabiting these valleys were better informed, arising from the following considerations: they were a divided people as to religious persuasions, consisting of Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Quakers, Menonists, Tunkers and Churchmen, with a variety of others. As persecution was not a reigning principle among them, and they lived in a common state of sociability, it gave them an opportunity of being acquainted with each other's principles and practices, by which their *ideas* became more enlarged, and their *judgments* more generally informed than those of the first division.

With regard to the third division, who lived beyond the Alleghany mountains, in our western settlements, it would be hard for one to give a proper description of them, until time and opportunity of action, would enable such to form a correct opinion. But as kind providence had allotted, under the Blue Ridge, through all the courses and windings of this valley, (between the Ridge and Alleghany) and from the other side of the Alleghany down upon the Ohio, to be the sphere of my ministerial labours, and public services put in my power, were it necessary, I could give a full detail respecting them. When I went among them, I found them to be an uncultivated people; the farther I went back the more rude and illiterate they were: I often thought they constituted a compound of the barbarian and the Indian; although I found among them, a number of respectable and well behaved people; but my present remarks I have given in the gross. . . .

When first liberated from prison, my heart glowed with a zeal for the glory of God, the honour of my dear Redeemer, the prosperity of religious societies, and gathering in of souls to the

Lord Jesus. In a dependence on *him*, I immediately set to work. The doctrines I began first to preach, were our awful apostacy by the fall; the necessity of repentance unto life, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We being by nature, *dead in trespasses and in sins*, our helpless incapacity to extricate ourselves therefrom I stated and urged. When in the exercise of this duty, I would be at it day and night: preaching three times a day very often, as well as once at night, without any regard to the inclemency of weather, or distance of place, so I could reach it. In a dependence on God, I surmounted every difficulty that lay in the way, without ever sparing my human frame, not withstanding numbers of my friends would tell me, I would destroy the earthen vessel before my services could be completed. This had no influence upon me; the salvation of precious souls possessed the leading faculties of my soul, and strongly influenced my heart.

After being engaged, as above, for about one year, I possessed a desire to alter my condition of life. It would be almost like an experience, to give the circumstances attending the same; but I shall only say that the girl, on whom I placed my affections, was the daughter of a Mr. Francis Burgess of Fauquier county. She felt exceedingly near to me, being awakened under my ministry, and, as Paul saith, my child in the Gospel. She also experienced her deliverance from under the guilt and burden of sin, under my public speaking. When joined together in matrimony, a most happy companion she proved to me. As her piety and general character is well known in many of the Churches, I shall only add, that in every respect she appeared to be a preacher's wife to me. We lived together in a comfortable state for about eighteen years, she bore me eight children, and then was removed by death to a state of bliss where I hope to meet her. . . .

And now, as many of my religious friends are fond of poetical composition, and know that I possess a measure of talent that way, I will entertain them with one in this place. The origin of which belongs to Mr. Thomas Buck, jr. Being at his house one evening, in our younger days, and both being fond of spiritual songs, he mentioned one he would sing; it was called the minister's hymn. After hearing it sung, I observed, I thought it greatly deficient. That the minister's duty, work, and reward was but barely touched on in it; but if he would learn me the tune, I would compose him one that would better comport with that title, which was accordingly done, and the hymn is as follows.

1. Ye heralds whose mission from God is to preach,  
Appointed by Jesus the nations to teach

The way of salvation, through faith in his blood,  
To bring back poor sinners again unto God.

2. Your office is glorious, your work it is great,  
The kingdom of satan through God you must shake;

His strong holds demolish, his subjects subdue,  
And bring them at Jesus's feet for to bow.

[Editor's note: The poem continues for a total of sixteen verses!]



## COOK'S CORNER

by Laura Arnold

Laura is a member of the Interpreter Planning Board.

Although some claim that the first official Thanksgiving took place at Berkeley Plantation in 1619, most Americans recognize the predecessor of the modern holiday to have occurred at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1621. At both sites, legend portrays colonists gathered together to thank God for their survival of the unknown hazards of life in the New World, as well as to thank Native Americans whose wary cooperation made that survival possible.

Of the 144 passengers and crew that settled James Fort (Jamestown) in the spring of 1607, only 40 survived the first summer. Political rivalries, lack of practical skills, poor decisions, illness, near starvation, and polluted water almost doomed the expedition. Finding sources of food and clean water were crucial to the continued existence of the settlement, because without them the men could not physically or mentally cope with other major problems.

In February 1608, when the James Fort settlers were "almost entirely dependent on Indians for food," Christopher Newport and John Smith met with Powhatan, the Indian leader.<sup>1</sup> Powhatan was a shrewd negotiator and probably believed he got the best of the bargain when he exchanged bushels of corn for beads and swords. Indians must have watched in amazement the Englishmen's clumsy attempts to build a permanent settlement on the marshy, mosquito-infested land they chose for James Fort. Nevertheless, in spite of unresolved differences and later bloody conflicts, Indians shared their expertise in fishing, hunting, and agricultural practices with those who came to usurp their land.

Stories abound about Native Americans all along the Atlantic seaboard teaching the

colonists to plant corn. Corn was not a familiar grain to those transplanted Englishmen who were used to the wheat, oats, and barley favored in Great Britain. Thomas Hariot, who accompanied Sir Walter Raleigh to Roanoke Island in 1585, wrote about his experiences in *A Briefe & True Report of the New Found Land in Virginia* (published in 1588 when what would later become North Carolina was considered part of Virginia). Hariot's record is the best early description of the versatility of corn.

*Pagatowr, a kinde of graine so called by the inhabitants, the same in the West Indies is called Mayze: English men call it Guinney wheate or Turkie wheate. . . . The graine is about the bignesse of our ordinary English peaze . . . but of divers colours: some white, some red, some yellow, and some blew. All of them yeelde a very white and sweete flower: being used according to his kinde it maketh a very good bread. Wee made of the same in the countrey some mault, whereof was brued as good ale as was to be desired. So likewise by the help of hops therof may bee made as good Beere. . . . Of these graines besides bread, the inhabitants make victual eyther by parching them; or seething them whole until they be broken; or boyling the floure with water into a pappe.<sup>2</sup>*

Hariot also wrote about other crops planted by the Indians such as beans, peas, pumpkins, squash, melons, and sunflowers.

Even more revealing than the list of crops is Hariot's description of the Native American methods of agriculture. "By experimenting the latter [the Indians] had learned that corn grew best if four seeds were planted close together in a circle, in small hillocks a yard or more apart, with

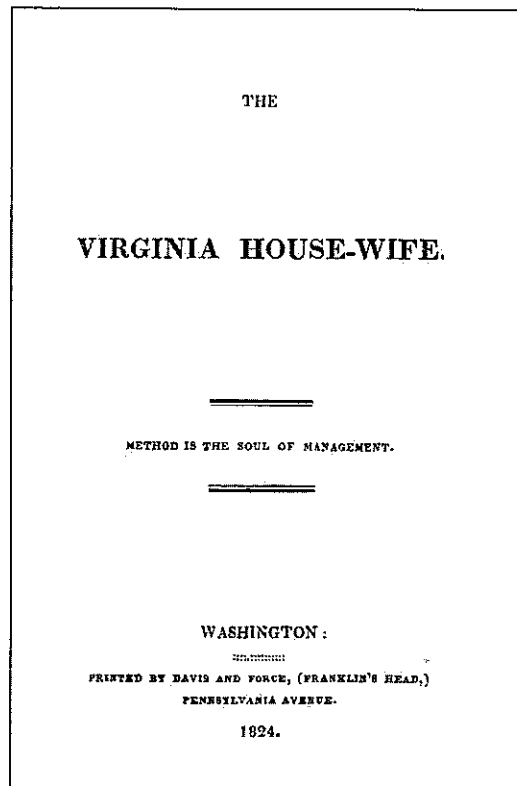
the hillocks running in rows about the same distance apart. They timed their planting of corn so that they had three crops of it each year, and they used the cleared ground around the hillocks to grow other vegetables simultaneously."<sup>3</sup> Cornstalks became supporting poles for beans and peas, while squash, melons, and pumpkins were grown in the land around the hillocks.

In addition to helping the settlers cultivate their crops, American Indians introduced them to the fruits and berries, small and large game animals, birds "by the millions," and fish and seafood that were to be found in abundance outside the confines of the settlement boundaries.<sup>4</sup> Two of the wild roots eaten by the Indians are of special interest to us today. One is the sweet potato, incorrectly referred to as the yam, and the other is the tuckahoe root that flourished in the swamps around Jamestown. Sweet potatoes are now identified as an essential part of southern cuisine (especially at Thanksgiving feasts), while the tuckahoe root has disappeared from southern cooking. "Tuckahoe" however lives on as the name of the plantation near Richmond associated with Thomas Jefferson and the Randolph family.

Sir John Randolph used the "Uppowoc" or tobacco described by Hariot to become one of the wealthiest men in Virginia.<sup>5</sup> Not all of his descendants were as fortunate. Mary Randolph, whose cookbook, *The Virginia House-wife*, is a favorite source of recipes documenting eighteenth-century foodways, grew up at Tuckahoe Plantation. She married her cousin David Meade Randolph and led a life of privilege until family and political scandals deprived them of the gentry lifestyle to which they were accustomed. Mary Randolph then used her skills as an experienced hostess and cook to operate a successful boardinghouse in Richmond. Her reputation guaranteed the success of her cookbook when it was published in 1824, four years before her death.

More than two hundred years elapsed between the arrival of those ill-prepared men at "James Towne" and the publication of Mary Randolph's cookbook. By that time the native foods so unfamiliar to the early settlers were a common part of the American diet. Curiously, corn is not one of the vegetables for which she provides cooking instructions. Perhaps by the time she compiled her cookbook, combining corn and lima beans into succotash was considered a dish that every cook knew how to prepare.

She did include recipes using cornmeal and hominy ("Batter Cakes," "Corn Meal Bread," and "Polenta"), and her recipes for sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and squash are embellished with



*Frontispiece of Mary Randolph's cookery book. Mary Randolph's 1824 publication did not give her name, but the book's frontispiece exhorted its readers to remember that "Method is the soul of management."*

rich ingredients not available to either the Native Americans or the struggling settlers.

We need to remind ourselves as we sample the following recipes how tasteless (to our palates) the native dishes must have been when prepared without the benefit of salt, butter, cream, molasses, sugar, spices, and eggs. We also need to remind ourselves that American cooking as we know it with all of its richness and variety began with the "basics," and those basics were the contribution of Native Americans to the culinary melting pot.

### Squash or Cimlin

Gather young squashes, peel, and cut them in two; take out the seeds, and boil them till tender; put them into a colander, drain off the water, and rub them with a wooden spoon through the colander; then put them into a stew-pan, with a cup full of cream, a small piece of butter, some pepper and salt, stew them, stirring very frequently until dry. This is the most delicate way of preparing squashes.

### Baked Indian Meal Pudding

Boil one quart of milk, mix in it two gills and a half of corn meal very smoothly, seven eggs well

beaten, a gill of molasses, and a good piece of butter; bake it two hours.

### Pumpkin Pudding

Stew a fine sweet pumpkin till soft and dry, rub it through a sieve, mix with the pulp six eggs quite light, a quarter of a pound of butter, half a pint of new milk, some pounded ginger and nutmeg, a wine glass of brandy, and sugar to your taste. Should it be too liquid, stew it a little drier; put a paste [pastry] round the edges, and in the bottom of a shallow dish or plate, pour in the mixture, cut some thin bits of paste, twist them

and lay them across the top and bake it nicely.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ivor Noël Hume, *The Virginia Adventure: Roanoke to James Town: An Archaeological and Historical Odyssey* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 171, 192.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 13–14.

<sup>3</sup> *The American Heritage Cookbook* (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., 1964), 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Hariot, 16.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Randolph, *The Virginia House-wife* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1984), 131, 153–154.

## BRUTON HEIGHTS UPDATE: New at the Rock



by Juleigh Muirhead Clark

*Juleigh, public services librarian at the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, gives us an update on their new catalog system.*

This fall brought a new online catalog to the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library. PATRIOT, our library catalog since 1988, has been replaced by LION, first the catalog of the William and Mary Libraries and now the catalog of the Williamsburg Research Libraries Partnership. You can now search the holdings of all the libraries simultaneously or limit your search to Rockefeller Library holdings. Access the catalog directly, <http://lion.wm.edu/uhtbin/lion>, or from the Rockefeller Library website, <http://www.history.org/History/jdrlweb/index.cfm>.

All Rockefeller Library books, videos, and music CDs are now on LION and can be searched by keyword, author, title, or subject. Books circulate for four weeks, while videos and music CDs circulate for one week. Please call the Library Public Services Department (ext. 8510 or 8512) to place holds on books that are checked out to another borrower. Books checked out on LION can be renewed online for two additional four-week loan periods, or a total of eight additional weeks. You may renew them by accessing "YOUR RECORDS" online at <http://lion.wm.edu/uhtbin/cgisirsi/0/0/1/3/X>.

Library staff are updating borrower records and adding additional information. For instance, after email addresses are added to LION, the li-

brary can send you automatic messages via email. As part of this cooperative venture, all Rockefeller Library holdings are receiving new barcodes. The Library closed for a week in August to perform the bulk of this project. All the Library's cataloged collections are in the LION database, but the circulation information will not be correct until new barcodes have been applied to all materials that were checked out on PATRIOT. Please help us complete the closing of the PATRIOT catalog by returning all books that were checked out before September 1, 2003. We will be glad to re-barcode them and check them out to you on the new catalog.

One of the new features of the system allows you to use your Colonial Williamsburg staff ID when you borrow library materials. To take full advantage of this feature, please present your staff ID at the Rockefeller Library Circulation Desk.

The members of Williamsburg Research Libraries Partnership include Swem Library (main academic library), Marshall-Wythe Law Library, and campus branch libraries in various buildings around the William and Mary campus. To learn more about the libraries of the College of William and Mary, read descriptions of their collections and services on the Internet, <http://swem.wm.edu/Guide/generalinfo.htm>. Swem Library will issue borrowing cards to Colonial Williamsburg staff with current Colonial Williamsburg IDs. These cards can be used at Swem and its branches. The Marshall-Wythe Law Library will issue a separate borrowing card.

## Becoming Americans Story Lines: New Titles in the Rockefeller Library

### Taking Possession

Hinderaker, Eric, and Peter C. Mancall. *At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

The authors provide a history of the backcountry from the end of the sixteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century. By "backcountry" they mean an ever growing and shifting territory generally beyond the effective control of British authority. The complex interactions among various interests were characterized by alternating periods of familiarity and suspicion, trade and exploitation, cooperation and warfare.

Perdue, Theda. *"Mixed Blood" Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South*. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2003.

In a small volume based on a lecture series, Perdue examines the assimilation of non-Indians who married Native women and the incorporation of their descendants into tribal life. The focus is on southern tribes in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Whites tried to use the "mixed blood" concept to racialize Native societies but were met with the resistance of Native cultural traditions.

### Enslaving Virginia

Schwarz, Philip J., ed. *Slavery at the Home of George Washington*. Mount Vernon, Va.: Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, 2001.

This collection of essays addresses such topics as Washington's plans for his plantation, how they affected his slaves, and how the slaves responded; the personal lives of Mount Vernon slaves with emphasis on their free time; what archaeological evidence reveals about slave conditions; and what public records reveal about the slaves freed by Washington's will. The subtext is Washington's changing attitudes toward, and relationships with, his human property.

Schwarz-Bart, Simone. *In Praise of Black Women 2: Heroines of the Slavery Era*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.

Phillis Wheatley, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth are the North American women included in a volume that also covers South America and the Caribbean. The biographical narratives are supplemented with folklore, per-

sonal writings, and historical notes; but the noteworthy features of the book are the lavish illustrations from contemporary sources.

### Redefining Family

Hamilton, Phillip. *The Making and Unmaking of a Revolutionary Family: The Tuckers of Virginia, 1752-1830*. Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Press, 2003.

Social changes resulting from the American Revolution and its aftermath are examined through the archive of two generations of the St. George Tucker family. Paradoxically, the victory over the British led to the decline of Virginia's leading planter families. The enlightened principles of the Revolution were abandoned for the social conservatism of the antebellum period.

Saxton, Martha. *Being Good: Women's Moral Values in Early America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2003.

This is a detailed study of how gender, race, class, age, and religion shaped women's moral values and emotional behavior in seventeenth-century Massachusetts, eighteenth-century Virginia, and nineteenth-century St. Louis. In Virginia, contrasting assumptions and expectations for white and slave women led to elevation and isolation on the one hand and exploitation on the other. The author concludes that the practice of assigning different moral values according to gender and race hampered the development of a "mature and realistic moral code" and adversely affected public policies.

### Choosing Revolution

Dershowitz, Alan. *America Declares Independence*. Hoboken, N. J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

A controversial author writes about the Declaration of Independence. He deals with natural law, establishment of religion, contradictions regarding equality and slavery, the evolving nature of words and concepts, and the founders' intentions. Jefferson is a central focus.

Hoeveler, J. David. *Creating the American Mind: Intellect and Politics in the Colonial Colleges*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002.

The nine colonial colleges are examined to determine "how they expressed, advanced, and challenged" American intellectual culture. A particular emphasis is the collegiate experience of prominent revolutionaries. The chapter on William and Mary is subtitled "Beleaguered Anglicanism."

## Buying Respectability

Lehmann, Gilly. *The British Housewife: Cookery Books, Cooking and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Totnes, Eng.: Prospect Books, 2003.

This study focuses on the cookery books—who wrote them, who read and used them, the changing culinary styles they reveal, and how their prescriptions were followed in practice by the different levels of society. From diaries and memoirs the author learned much about meal-times, menus, manners, and tastes.

Mann, Bruce H. *Republic of Debtors: Bankruptcy in the Age of American Independence*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.

The relationship between debtors and creditors in the late eighteenth century is revealed through the personal stories of those caught up in the pervasive dilemma. The transformation of society's view of indebtedness from a great moral failure to a simple economic one culminated in the short-lived Bankruptcy Act of 1800.

## Freeing Religion

Dershowitz, Alan. *America Declares Independence*. Hoboken, N. J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2003. (See **Choosing Revolution**)

Hoeverler, J. David. *Creating the American Mind: Intellect and Politics in the Colonial Colleges*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002. (see **Choosing Revolution**)

Saxton, Martha. *Being Good: Women's Moral Values in Early America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2003. (See **Redefining Family**)

*Submitted by Del Moore, reference librarian,  
John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library.*

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

Burgh, J[ames]. *Political Disquisitions; or, An Inquiry into Public Errors, Defects, and Abuses*. Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1775.

This work, especially prepared by its English author for use in America, gathers opinions both from ancient and modern sources concerning political science and ethics. Already popular in England, it was meant to draw the attention of government and the people to a consideration of the necessity and means of reforming political problems and "restoring the constitution and

saving the state." The volume bears the signature of Henry Banks of Richmond, a land speculator, who purchased large tracts of land in western Virginia following the Revolution when Indian immigration westward was already under way.

Halfpenny, William. *Twenty New Designs of Chinese Lattice and Other Works*. London: R. Sayer and S. Brindley, 1750.

Among the rarest of Halfpenny books, this suite of six plates illustrates twenty designs in the Chinese manner. Included are dimensioned architectural plans and elevations for palings, or fences, and gates. Popular in the eighteenth century, examples of this style influenced balustrades and stair railings in colonial America.

*Holy Bible*. London: C. and R. Ware, 1767.

This book originally contained both Old and New Testaments, together with the Apocrypha. Most of the Old Testament is now lacking. Significantly, this bible contains several pages of family records concerning the Whitlocks of Hanover County, Virginia, from 1760 to 1842. Also recorded are the names and birth dates of numerous slave children and their mothers.

*Holy Bible*. Philadelphia: Mathew Carey, 1809.

This edition contains both Old and New Testaments, together with the Apocrypha. Also included are an index and tables of scriptural weights, measures, and coins. The work is embellished with ten maps. It is thought to be of New Jersey origin and contains the family record of Thomas (1760–1813) and Letitia (1763–1841) Smith.

Ireland, James. *Life of the Rev. James Ireland*. Winchester, Va.: J. Foster, 1819.

This autobiography was dictated by Ireland on his deathbed in 1806. It recounts the history of religious dissent in Virginia—particularly in the Shenandoah Valley. Included is a description of his 1770 visit to Williamsburg and audience with Governor Botetourt. The book is the principal source upon which Foundation staff have based their character interpretation of this Baptist minister in the Historic Area.

Mercer, John. *Exact Abridgment of all the Public Acts of Assembly, of Virginia*. Williamsburg, Va.: William Parks, 1737. This work is bound together with Mercer's *Continuation of the Abridgment*, Williamsburg, Va.: William Parks, 1739.

The acts are gathered, largely alphabetically, under their proper titles, together with their year of promulgation. There is also a table, or index,

to help identify laws included in acts covering multiple subjects. The author mentions that the work is meant to be used in conjunction with George Webb's *Virginia Justice*.

Shaw, Henry. *Examples of Ornamental Metal Work*. London: William Pickering, 1836.

This author, known for his illustrated books on the Middle Ages, includes examples of door locks, key escutcheons, door handles, weather vanes, chandeliers, hinges, door knockers, gates, railings, lampposts, and other forms of decorative ironwork. There are fifty plates, two of which are colored. Styles represented include Elizabethan, Gothic, and classical forms.

Shinn, George Wolfe. *King's Handbook of Notable Episcopal Churches in the United States*. Boston: Moses King, 1889.

This useful book breaks the subject up into four categories: colonial, early nineteenth century, parish churches and buildings, and cathedrals and procathedrals. It contains one hundred illustrations, is indexed, and includes considerable information concerning architects.

Weems, Mason Locke. *Life of George Washington*. Philadelphia: Mathew Carey, 1810.

This curious figure in American literary annals, known as "Parson" Weems, was an Episcopal cleric, writer, and bookseller. His biographies, which have been termed "essays in hero wor-

ship," include accounts of Francis Marion, Benjamin Franklin, and William Penn. Intended to inculcate patriotic devotion and high moral standards in American youth, the Washington title went through eighty-six editions between 1800 and 1927 and is the source for the anecdote of the cherry tree. A very successful book in its time, the work is a fictionalized biography that is easily read, yet full of drama and excitement.

Letter: Lt. John Riggs, New York, to William Blathwayt, [London], May 9, 1701.

Riggs, for whom Blathwayt had evidently obtained a military commission some years before, writes to say that since the death of Gov. Richard Coote, earl of Bellomont, the Colonial Council has refused to provide officers with back pay and asks for assistance.

Letter: William Blathwayt, London, to Col. Morgan, [West Indies], May 21, 1702.

Blathwayt writes concerning military affairs in the West Indies during the War of the Spanish Succession. He was at the time a member of Parliament and Secretary of War. His letter mentions that the Duke of Ormonde will command the British expedition on the Iberian peninsula.

*Submitted by George Yetter, associate curator for the architectural drawings and research collections, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library.*



## Interpreter's Corner

### Gross! Gross!

by Jim Hollins

*Jim is a historical interpreter in the Department of Educational Program Support.*

The words "Gross!" "Gross!" echoed down Duke of Gloucester Street as my school group prepared for lunch at Shields Tavern. Before sending them in, I had announced that I needed to provide them with directions for ordering their food. I explained that I had dropped by Shields before their arrival and picked up a menu. To make things easier, I volunteered to review it with them.

I retrieved the menu from my shirt pocket, unfolded it, and eagerly announced their choices. As I named the items, I noticed that their facial expressions changed from anticipation to horror. Their only outward reaction was to mouth the word *gross*. This was just the reaction that I had hoped to create. For you see, I was not actually reading from a Shields Tavern menu but rather from one that I had created and refer to as the "Top Ten Gross Eighteenth-Century Foods." After admitting that I had been "putting them on," I explained that my list includes foods that were enjoyed during the eighteenth century. They were taken from cookbooks owned by Williamsburg residents. I also mentioned to the group that, although we consider some eighteenth-century foods rather unappetizing, it is all in how you look at it. Two hundred and fifty years from now, people may well find our foods revolting. In fact, they might even say, "Two hundred and fifty years ago, in the year 2003, they ate something called a hamburger. They actually ate cow meat—gross!"

This is just one example of interpreting eighteenth-century foods. Colonial foodways don't need to be interpreted only in the colonial kitchens or dining rooms. Wherever you interpret food, it is extremely important to set the stage rather than just read from a list. This requires some preparation before presenting an interpretation of food.

Our guests have a basic curiosity about the foods consumed in the eighteenth century. They typically like to hear about—at least to our way of thinking—the most outlandish foods, the more unappetizing the better. This makes food an excellent means of engaging an audience and holding their attention.

Foodways interpretation works well with school or adult groups. It can also be used to engage individual guests. With individuals, interpreting often involves a more off-the-cuff approach than a planned interpretation. One day, while I was "clicking" at the printer, a lady stopped and asked what I would recommend at Shields. Without a moment of hesitation, I informed her that the "ragoo" of pigs' ears was excellent. She seemed puzzled for an instant but quickly understood what I was doing. She returned an hour later and said that the pigs' ears were fantastic!

I am sure by now you are wondering what makes up my "Top Ten Gross Eighteenth-Century Foods." Well, here they are:

10. Pickled Ox Palates
9. Cod's Head
8. Eel Pie
7. Blood Pudding
6. Tripe
5. Calf's Head
4. Pickled Tongues
3. Roasted Udder
2. Calf's Foot Jelly
1. Ragoos of Pigs' Ears

A humorous approach to food often provides a welcome change of pace for our guests. This type of food interpretation is short but memorable and can be presented just about anywhere in the Historic Area.

I don't know about you, but I'll have the pickled ox palates.

*Items 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are from Hannah Glasse's The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy. Items 1, 2, 4, and 10 and the spelling of ragoos are from E. Smith's The Compleate Housewife: or Accomplish'd Gentlewoman's Companion.*



## The Gloucester Hickory

by Wesley Greene

*Wesley is a garden historian in the Landscape Department and the new author of "The Bothy's Mould."*

Of the thousands of trees that came down during Hurricane Isabel this past September, one of the oldest and most venerable was the Gloucester hickory that stood on the riverside lawn at Toddsbury Estate in northern Gloucester County. I was invited to visit Toddsbury several years ago to see this tree, which, according to family legend, was known to Thomas Jefferson. Toddsbury, located on the North River in Gloucester County, is part of the seven-hundred-acre estate patented by Robert Todd in 1664. According to the present owners, the original part of the house was probably built by Thomas's son Capt. Thomas Todd in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Over the next century the original structure was enlarged, and, by 1794, the entire estate was inherited by the captain's grandson Philip Tabb.

The hickory was, indeed, a very old and very large specimen, but the question the present owners were interested in was: What kind of hickory was it? The nuts were huge. In some ways the tree resembled a mockernut hickory, but it wasn't one. I am pretty familiar with the local mockernuts, bitternuts, and pignut hickories. I have seen the occasional water and shagbark hickory. This tree wasn't any of them, so I went looking for help.

I returned to Toddsbury several months later with Donna Ware, a plant taxonomist from the College of William and Mary, and Bill Apperson from the Virginia Department of Forestry. Donna determined that it was a shellbark hickory, *Carya laciniosa*. This, in itself, was exciting because the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora* lists the shellbark hickory as occurring only in Fairfax County, Virginia. So it was very unusual to find this tree in our area.

But what about the Jefferson connection? Turning to Thomas Jefferson's *Garden Book*, I found several references to the "Gloucester Hickory." The first mention was in 1787 while Jefferson was in Paris. He wrote Richard Cary in Virginia requesting seeds from a wide variety of native American plants, including the Gloucester hickory. After returning home, Jefferson first planted a Gloucester hickory at Monticello in 1807.

In January 1809, Bernard McMahon, a well-known and respected nurseryman in Philadel-

phia, wrote to Jefferson: "Mr. [François] Michaux informed me that there is a very large fruited kind of Hickory growing in Gloucester County, Va. which he takes to be a non described species." That same month Jefferson replied:

*The Gloucester hickory nut, after which you enquire, has I think, formerly spread extensively over this continent from East to West, between the latitudes of 36 & 38 but only in the richest bottom lands on the river sides. Those lands being now almost entirely cleared, I know of no remains of these nuts but a very few trees specially preserved in Gloucester, and some on the Roanoke. In Kentucky there are still a great many & West of the Missisipi it is, I believe, their only nut of the Juglans family. . . . I have not Gronovius's (or rather Clayton's) Flora Virginica to turn to, but he certainly must have described it, as he lived in Gloucester, & I know that it grew in his neighborhood.*

Jefferson was referring to John Clayton, the clerk of court for Gloucester County from 1720 until his death in 1773, who lived just a few miles from Toddsbury. Clayton was perhaps the best, and probably the least known, of eighteenth-century American botanists. He began sending herbarium specimens to Mark Catesby in London during the 1730s. Catesby passed them on to Dr. John Fredrick Gronovius in Lieden, Holland, who, beginning in 1739, published information about them as *The Flora Virginica*. Clayton sent hickory specimens to Gronovius three times.

At the British Museum of Natural History, where Clayton's herbarium sheets are now kept, sheets for two of those samples identify them as mockernut hickories. The sheet for the third has never been found, although Gronovius referenced a Linnaean species number for it from the *Species Planatarum* (1753). This identified the tree as *Juglans alba*, since renamed *Carya tomentosa* or the mockernut hickory. There was much confusion as to the identity of the Gloucester hickory when Clayton was collecting specimens, so without the herbarium sheet it is impossible to know whether or not Clayton knew or collected this tree.

Later in January 1809, Philip Tabb of Toddsbury wrote to Jefferson:

*I am sorry it is not in my power to send you as many of the large hickory nuts of this country as you wished to plant, very few of the best trees are now left & they produced less than usual the last year & were soon consumed five only were left by accident which I now forward. I have not*

been altogether inattentive to those nuts since apart of the lands producing them have been in my possession—I have planted some of the largest and best which are growing vigorously & I have little doubt but the trees raised properly from the nut will be more productive than those which grow in the woods, for on clearing the lands & exposing them suddenly after the tree has matured they become sickly & unproductive.

Jefferson sent four of the nuts he received from Gloucester to McMahon in Philadelphia. He also intended to obtain nuts from the Roanoke site, which he promised to send on to McMahon to compare with nuts McMahon had from Kentucky. In February 1809, McMahon thanked Jefferson for the nuts and said that they did not appear to be the same as the ones he received from Kentucky and were different than any he had seen before. He asked, "Does this species belong to the walnut division, or is it a true Hickory?"

In April 1811, Jefferson planted more Gloucester hickories at Monticello and sent more nuts to McMahon. Finally, there is a February 1812 letter from McMahon to Jefferson: "I would thank you to inform me whether you take the Gloucester Nut to be a distinct species, as announced by Mich. f. (*Juglans laciniosa*) or whether, if only a variety, it is nearer allied to the *Juglans tomentosa* Mich. or to the *J. squamosa* Mich. fi. the *J. alba* of his father." It appears now that François Michaux was correct in considering this a distinct species.

Nearly two hundred years later, Ware, Apperson, and I stood around the Gloucester tree and speculated with Breck Montague, the present owner of Toddsbury. Could this be one of the trees Philip Tabb spoke of planting in 1809, which were "growing vigorously"? The tree had been reduced to a single limb growing from a massive, hollow trunk. It was the biggest trunk on a hickory any of us had ever seen. Perhaps it was the last living legacy of Philip Tabb.

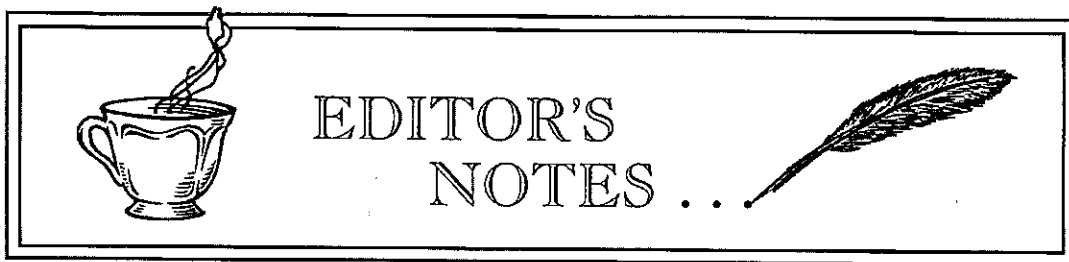
I contacted Peter Hatch from Monticello about the Gloucester hickory. It turns out that this was not the first time this tree had been "discovered." In 1984, a Mr. Lindley from Toddsbury showed up at Monticello with his car's back seat full of sprouted Gloucester hickories in plastic cups. Peter was never sure what kind of hickory it was, but he planted quite a few of them at Monticello and believes three of them are still alive. He also observed that they did not do well on dry sites. This, in fact, may have been the fate of the shellbark hickory in Gloucester County.

When Philip Tabb observed in the early nineteenth century that the tree seemed to decline after being cleared around, he was probably referring to the clearing of forests for cropland. Along with clearing, it was a common practice in the low country of Gloucester County to ditch the land for drainage. The shellbark hickory, as Jefferson observed, was normally found in floodplains and rich bottomlands. Apparently, as this habitat was altered over the centuries, we lost most of the shellbark hickories, with the possible exception of the odd tree here and there.

Over the past couple of years, I have met several people who claim to know about other examples of the Gloucester hickory. I went to see one tree at an abandoned house site in the Gloucester Courthouse area that turned out to be another shellbark hickory. Apparently a few of these trees still stand in that region.

The original tree at Toddsbury had produced only a handful of nuts over the past several years. However, this year, in a sort of eerie premonition, it produced a bumper crop of hickory nuts. Mr. Montague has offered me some of them, which I will try to germinate over the winter. Perhaps, we can preserve this historic tree through its progeny.





With this issue, the Colonial Williamsburg *Interpreter* has gone to a three-issue-per-year schedule (instead of four). Publication will include a combined Fall/Winter issue and separate Spring and Summer issues.

The Colonial Williamsburg *Interpreter* is published three times a year by the Historic Area Division.

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