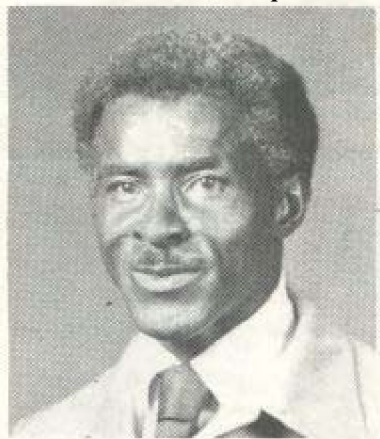




Coachmen of the Past

For the next year, we will be highlighting and honoring the many contributions of African American coachmen to Colonial Williamsburg and the Coach and Livestock program. In this issue, we spotlight the achievements of Harmon Washington Jr. Harmon Washington Jr. as born 10/2/1918. He was employed by the Foundation as Coachman –Interpreter beginning on 6/19/1967 and retiring in 1981. He died 1/24/2002 and is buried in the Angel View Baptist Church Cemetery in Lanexa.

CW News 1977 June 29 p.3



HARMON WASHINGTON, JR.
Coachman Interpreter
Craft Shops
10 Years, June 19

CW News 1981 March p.4

Harmon Washington Jr.

Harmon Washington Jr., coachman in the division of Historic Area programs and operations, retired from Colonial Williamsburg on March 1 after 13 years of service.

Harmon joined the foundation in 1967 as a coachman-interpreter. Since that time he has driven carriages throughout the Historic Area, transporting visitors in the style associated with the eighteenth century. He participated in the Colonial Fair Days and various seminars, and in December 1980 he performed a driving demonstration for the Raleigh Tavern Society.

Harmon has served on the board at Angel View Baptist Church for 22 years. During retirement, he plans to do some gardening and carpentry work at his home.

CW News 1980 June p.5

Randolph Coach journeys to Stratford Plantation

For the first time in many years, a Colonial Williamsburg coach traveled on unfamiliar roads far from the Historic Area.

The handsome green and yellow Randolph Coach joined a variety of other vehicles for a special coaching day sponsored by Stratford Hall Plantation, Robert E. Lee's home on the banks of the Potomac, in Stratford, Va.

Transporting the coach from Williamsburg to Stratford was no easy job. The coach had to be loaded on to a large truck, and the pair of black mares, Joan and Babe, that pulled the coach, followed in a borrowed horse trailer.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Shone represented Colonial Williamsburg at the event. Accompanying them in costume were Joe Jones as coachman and Harmon Washington as footman. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Brown also attended.

The Randolph Coach was quite a hit and was the only example of its type at the exhibition. It is a replica of a town coach of English design dating about 1790.

Other coaches present included a road coach which was a public vehicle that ran a regular schedule on a definite route, a three-quarter park drag, a wagonette, a Concord

type stagecoach, and open carriage called the Victoria, and American trap, a shooting break which was a large version of a four-wheeled dog cart, a Gooch wagon used for horse shows, and a roof-seat break which was a larger sporting vehicle.

The day began with a demonstration by the U.S. Marine Corps Color Guard and the Quantico Marine Band followed by a trumpet call from the chimney, a parade of the coaches and an inspection by the public.

Later the Randolph Coach participated in several competitive events with the other coaches.

CW News 2002 March 19 p.4

In memory...

Harmon Washington, retiree, died Jan. 23. He began his career at the foundation in 1967 as a coachman interpreter in building maintenance. He transferred his coachman duties to both construction and maintenance

and museum operations before he retired in 1981. From 1981-1983 he worked as a casual employee in coach and livestock as an interpretive coachman. Washington is survived by his wife and granddaughter.

Sheep Shearing

In March, one of our employees, Thomas Stover attended Sheep Shearing School in Maryland. He spent the weekend learning to shear sheep. Although we shear many of our sheep with hand shears, knowing how to shear with electric ones teaches the proper way to hold the sheep and to get a quality fleece off the animal. This year with the pandemic, all the sheep were shorn with electric shears. Thomas is doing quite well and will get to shear the pregnant ewes in February. The ewes get machine shorn about a month before they are due to lamb. Cutting the fleece off gives the lamb a better chance to grab a teat for milk, it gives us a clean fleece, and the ewe loses weight at the end of her pregnancy, making her feel much better. Sheep only need a very short amount of wool to keep them warm. Our sheep have long wool because people have selected them for length for many years. We have recently shorn a few ewes that had beautiful fleeces. The amount of rain we have had recently made the fleeces very clean. Unfortunately, when we feed hay to the sheep, they tend to get it in their neck wool dirty to the point where the wool must be thrown away. This late fall shear is a chance to get some pretty fleeces and see if the short fleeces will have less hay in them come spring. It is an experiment to try to improve our wool quality.



Randolph Carriage



Coach Body



Sociable Body

The Randolph Coach was originally purchased around 1930 for \$500.00. It is believed to have been made in the 19th century using a 1770s carriage as a model. It was originally named the Goode Coach but was renamed on its arrival to Colonial Williamsburg. Since the Foundation has owned the carriage it has been refurbished twice. Once in the 1940s, to make it suitable for giving rides, and once again in the 2000s. The Randolph is the only carriage that has two different body types. The sociable body is the one most commonly used. This body is an open design much like our Blue Carriage. We also have an enclosed body for the Randolph. This Coach body is a modern reproduction of the 1940s body. The original 1940s body still remains in our carriage house today.

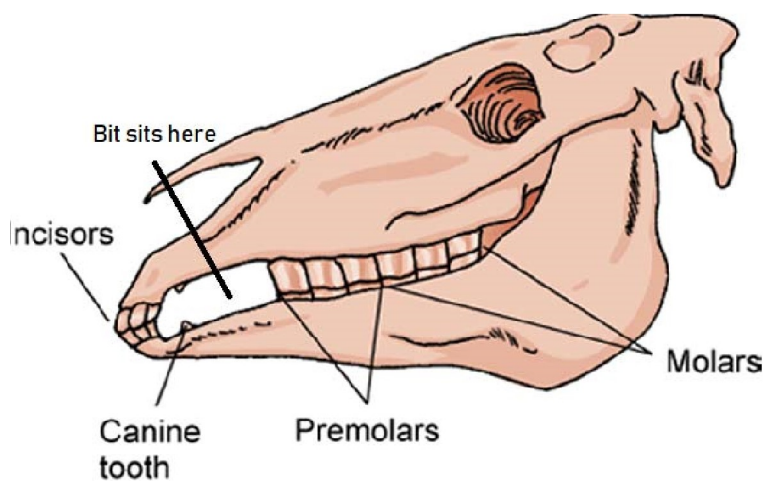
Tools of the Trade

This month we are highlighting some of the tools we use in carriage driving and riding. One of the most important pieces of equipment when driving or riding is the bit. The bit made of a bar shaped mouthpiece and a cheek piece that is attached to the bridle. The bit fits in the horse's mouth and rests on their gums in between their front incisors and back molars.

There are various types of bits that are used for carriage driving. One of the most widely used is the Liverpool bit. This bit can be paired with numerous difference mouthpieces (metal, rubber, jointed, or straight). Much like you and I enjoy different shoe insoles, each horse has their own preference in mouthpieces. This type of cheek-piece has various slots for the reins to slide in as well. The closer the reins are to the mouthpiece the less pressure the horse feels in his mouth.

The chain attached to the bit is called a curb chain. This sits under the horse's chin. The curb chain is not made to be tight under the chin when the horse is at rest. Instead, it is made to get tighter when the cheekpiece has drawn back about 45 degrees. This occurs when the driver asks the horses to stop or slow down. It gives the driver extra leverage and more control over their horses.

Types of Liverpool Bits



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