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The Impact of the Death of Governor Francis Fauquier on His Slaves and Their Families

by Julie Richter

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When Francis Fauquier, the governor of Virginia, wrote his will on March 26, 1767, he noted that his slaves were "a part of my Estate in its nature disagreeable to me, but which my situation made necessary for me." Fauquier continued to say that the disposal of his bond laborers "has constantly given me uneasiness whenever the thought has occurred to me." He felt a moral obligation to provide for his enslaved men, women, and children at his death "by using my utmost Endeavours that they experience as little Misery during their Lives as their very unhappy and pitiable condition will allow." Fauquier decided to allow his slaves to choose their next masters within six months of his death. He also wanted mothers and their children to be kept together. The governor instructed his executors to read and explain his will to all members of his household—his wife, children, servants, and slaves.

Fauquier's legacy to his enslaved men and women was an attempt to secure their family and friendship ties. In the first section of this article I will assess the governor's bequest to his bond laborers. I will look at the options that Fauquier had when he wrote his will, the kind of choice that he gave bond laborers, and the implications of this bequest. In the second part of this essay I use a variety of sources—the York County Court records, the Bruton Parish Birth Register, the *Virginia Gazette*, private papers, account books, and personal property tax lists–to analyze the factors that might have influenced a slave to choose his or her new master, to assess the reasons a master might have agreed to purchase a slave from Fauquier's estate, and to follow the histories of these individuals in Williamsburg and in other areas of Virginia. The biographies of Fauquier's bond laborers reveal that these men and women used their legacy to try to preserve the family and neighborhood connections that they had created as members of "the Governor's Family."

When Francis Fauquier wrote his will on March 26, 1767, he expressed his dislike of the institution of slavery. However, he decided not to free his enslaved men, women, and children in spite of his feelings. Fauquier could have petitioned the Council to emancipate any or all of his slaves for meritorious service. There was a precedent for this action: when he left Virginia in 1749 Governor William Gooch decided to manumit a slave named Captain Jack. Fauquier also decided against choosing a new master for each of his enslaved men, women, and children or asking his executors to sell these individuals after his death.

Dispersal of Slaves Belonging to the Estate of Francis Fauquier

SLAVE NAME	NEW MASTER	VALUE	PRICE
Bristol	Thomas Everard (Palace Green)	55	41
Doll	Richard Johnson	40	30
Hannah	Lord Botetourt (Palace)	60	60
Old John	Thomas Everard (Palace Green)	40	30
Young John	George Gilmer	60	104[1]
Lancaster	Christopher Ayscough (Lot near Capitol)	70	52.10
Mary w/dau Jemima	John Dixon	70	52.10
Nanny w/dau Sukey Hinderkin	James Geddy (Palace Green)	65	51.05[2]
Sall (also called Sukey Hamilton) w/daus Mary & Sukey	James Horrocks (W&M)	140	105
Sall w/son Harry	George Gilmer	70	104[3]
Tidus	Robert Carter Nicholas (England Street)	55	41.05
Tom	John Dixon	60	45

[1](price includes Sall & Son Harry)
[2](£10 deducted after Sukey's death)
[3](price w/ Young John)

(Value and Price are in pounds and shillings)

Instead, Fauquier was one of a small number of men and women in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Virginia to allow his slaves to select their next master. The governor's legacy was a conscious statement of his belief that his bond laborers could choose wisely a new master. Fauquier's bequest indicates his acknowledgment that his enslaved men and women, like white men and women, had the ability to think critically and make decisions that would affect their lives for the better. Fauquier wrote about his belief that members of all races deserved to be treated fairly in an October 5, 1760, letter to Jeffery Amherst. The governor noted

> I most sincerely wish it had been the policy of these Colonies to treat Indians with that Justice and Humanity you show to them. This and this alone, (if any thing can do it) must make them our Friends. White, Red, or Black; polished or unpolished Men are Men.

Fauquier's legacy is also an indication that he knew that his bond laborers had information about the qualities and personality of potential masters from direct contact with these individuals and from conversations with other people. Enslaved men and women saw and perhaps waited on men who visited the governor at the Palace. In addition, his slaves had knowledge about the characteristics of prospective owners from family and friends, enslaved and free, who lived in Williamsburg and on nearby plantations.

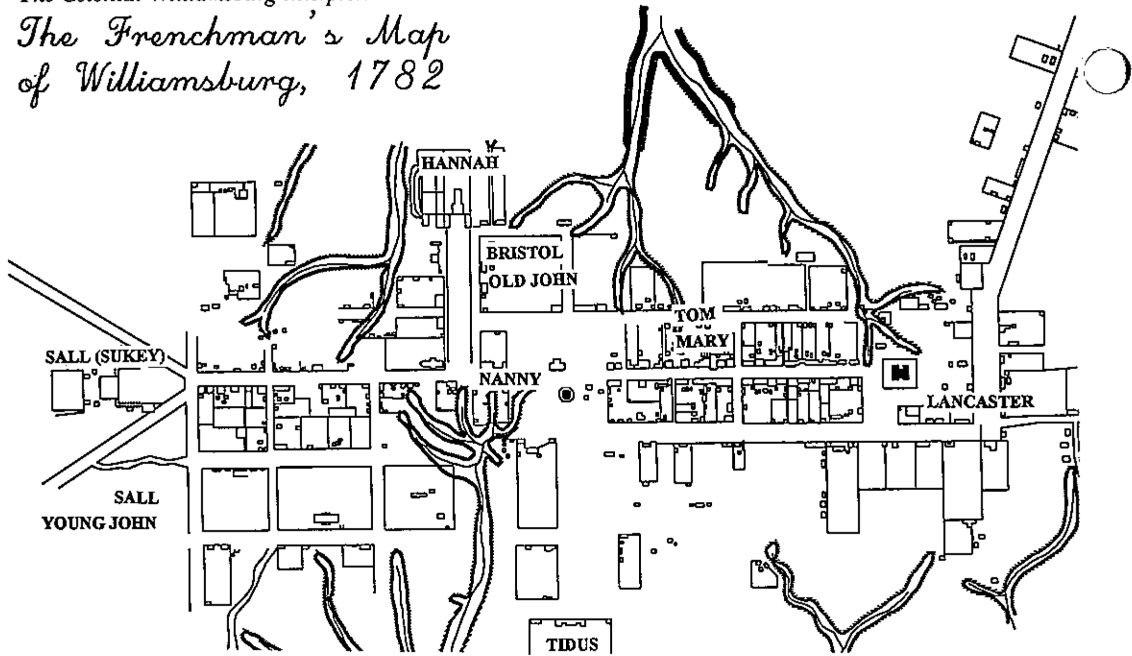
Although Fauquier did not give his slaves their freedom, he allowed them the autonomy to make an important decision. There were three possible choices for these men and women. First, they could run away. Second, they could select a new master who lived in another part of Virginia. Third, they could choose to stay in Williamsburg where they had family and friends. The first two options would not have enabled these enslaved me

women, and children to have maintained the ties that they had to their "family" at the Governor's Palace. The inventory of Fauquier's estate includes the names of the men who became the masters of the deceased governor's slaves. The choices that Fauquier's bond laborers made reveal the strength of the family and friendship ties that joined the enslaved men and women who lived at the Governor's Palace to one another and to other individuals in Williamsburg.

Francis Fauquier stipulated that anyone selected as a new owner by one of his slaves could purchase the individual (or individuals in the case of a woman with a child or children) for 25 percent less than his or her appraised value. Details in the governor's inventory indicate that three slaves—Young John and a woman named Sall and her son Harry—were not able to find someone who was willing to purchase them. The appraisers of the governor's estate valued Young John at £60. Sall and Harry were worth £ 70. The discounted price for the three slaves was £ 97.10, £ 6.10 less than the £104 that George Gilmer of Williamsburg paid for them. Perhaps Gilmer purchased these individuals because he wanted a domestic worker, someone who could serve as a waiting man, and a boy who could run errands for him in Williamsburg. If Young John was the slave named Jack whom Fauquier sent to the *Virginia Gazette* office in March 1764, Gilmer might have known about it. Sall, Harry, and Young John joined a household of two adult females and three children who ranged in age from three to thirteen years of age. Doctor Gilmer lived on the James City County side of Williamsburg until he moved to Albemarle County by October 1771. He may have taken Sall, Harry, and Young John with him when he left Williamsburg. Gilmer had 29 slaves on his plantation in Albemarle County in 1782. Unfortunately, the Albemarle County Personal Property Tax Lists do not include the names of slaves in the 1780s. Gilmer lived in Albemarle County until the time of his death on November 29, 1795. The doctor owned slaves when he died, but he did not include their names in the bequests that he made in his will.

The remaining five men, five women, and four children in Fauquier's Virginia household became the property of the masters they chose. Bristol and Old John selected Thomas Everard as their new owner. Everard, the clerk of the York County Court, lived on Palace Green. He might have had as many as 21 slaves—seven women, three men, and eleven children—in Williamsburg when he bought Bristol and Old John. Bristol and Old John probably had seen Everard often, because he was a frequent visitor to the Palace. Everard witnessed Fauquier's will and received an appointment to appraise his estate. The proximity of Everard's house to the Palace may have been especially important to Bristol. He was described as a "new negro" when the vestry clerk for Bruton Parish recorded his baptism in the parish register in early 1767. Bristol's first friendship ties after he arrived in Virginia from West Africa were with those individuals he met while at the Palace. These people included Fauquier's other slaves and white indentured servants; bond laborers who ran errands to the Palace for their masters; enslaved men and women hired out to Fauquier by their masters; and free blacks. It is possible that Old John was one of Fauquier's slaves in 1760 when the governor ordered two enslaved men and a boy to keep the Reverend John Camm from entering the Governor's Palace. If so, Old John had been part of Fauquier's household for at least eight years. His selection of Everard as his new master would have enabled him to maintain ties to blacks, free and enslaved, who traveled to and from the Palace.

Perhaps Everard bought Bristol and Old John because of their skills as waiting men and the distinction that they would add to his household. Everard was an orphan at Christ Church Hospital in London when he became an apprentice to Matthew Kemp, a Williamsburg merchant, in 1735. He became an important local official, and it is likely that he had acquired a household staff that reflected his prominence as clerk of the York County Court, Bruton Parish vestryman, clerk of the House of Burgesses' Committee for Courts and Justice, registrar of the Court of Vice-Admiralty, judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty, trustee for the founding of the Public Hospital, and mayor of Williamsburg in 1766 and in 1771. Everard hired Bristol to Governor Botetourt several times between January 1769 and May 1770. He may have done the same with Old John in January 1769. Everard died in 1781 and, unfortunately, no probate documents concerning



Location of some of Fauquier's slaves in Williamsburg.

his estate survive. Everard's slaves were sold or became the property of his daughter Martha and her husband, Isaac Hall. Isaac and Martha Hall lived in Petersburg in the 1780s.

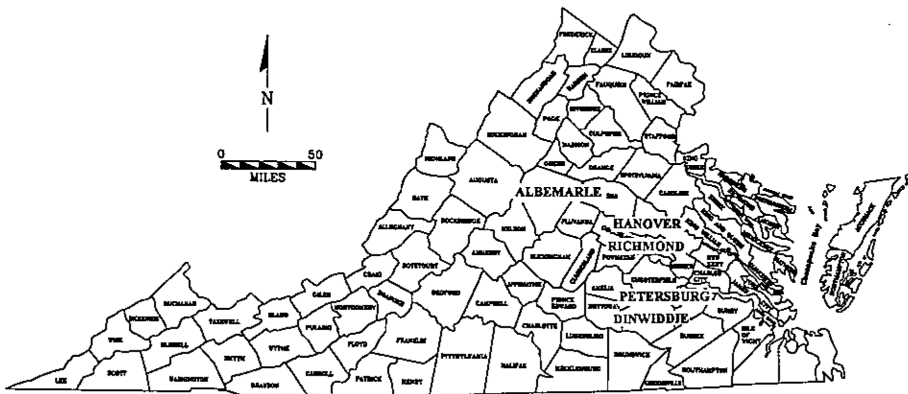
Fauquier's Sall chose the Reverend James Horrocks, the President of William and Mary and Thomas Everard's son-in-law, as the new master for herself and her two daughters, Mary and Sukey. Perhaps Sall turned to the Reverend Horrocks because of his position in the colony and as a way to maintain ties to Bristol and Old John. The price that Horrocks paid—£105—for the three slaves reflects Sall's skill as a cook and the fact that she was of child-bearing age. Sall and her two daughters joined seven other bond laborers—four women and three children—in the Horrocks household. However, by November of 1768, Horrocks decided to sell Sall, also known as Sukey Hamilton, and one of her daughters. An advertisement in the *Virginia Gazette* announced that "SUKEY HAMILTON, cook to the late Governor, with her youngest daughter, 7 years old, will be sold before Mr. Hay's door on Thursday the 15th of December next. Credit will be allowed for six months, bond and proper security being given." Sukey's baptism on July 4, 1762, suggests that she was the daughter sold with her mother. Mary might have died by the time that Horrocks decided to sell her mother and sister, or perhaps she was old enough to be separated from her mother. Why would Horrocks agree to purchase these slaves and then decide to sell two of them a few months later? Perhaps the minister found that he did not need a cook, or he may have calculated that he could make a tidy profit by selling a skilled slave woman and her child whom he had purchased at a discount. In any case, Horrocks' decision severed the ties that Sall believed that she had secured when she chose him as her master.

Lancaster asked Christopher Ayscough to purchase him. The two men had worked together as gardeners at the Governor's Palace. Ayscough and his wife were two of Fauquier's white servants. Perhaps Lancaster and Ayscough developed a friendship based on the type of work that they performed at the Governor's Palace. Ann Ayscough received £250 for her "Fidelity & Attention" and her economy in managing the kitchen at the Palace from Fauquier. Ayscough probably used part of his wife's legacy to purchase Lancaster, a slave woman named Lucy, and five other slaves. He also bought a house and lot on the James City County side of Williamsburg. In October 1768 he announced that he had opened a tavern that faced the south side of the Capitol. Lancaster probably tended the garden on Ayscough's lot. It is possible that Lancaster served food and drink in addition to looking after the horses that belonged to his master's customers. Ayscough decided to leave the tavern keeping business in 1770. In September of that year he informed readers of the *Virginia*

Gazette of his decision and of the sale he planned to have at his house on the 27th of that month. Ayscough noted that he would sell "nine Negroes, one an exceeding good cook wench, and a fellow who is a fine gardener." Perhaps the tavern keeper had purchased Sall from the Reverend Horrocks in an attempt to attract more customers to his establishment. There is no information about the person who purchased Lancaster at Ayscough's sale.

Nanny selected the silversmith James Geddy as the new master for herself and her daughter, Sukey Hinderkin. Geddy lived on Lots 161 and 162 on the corner of Duke of Gloucester Street and the Palace Green. Sukey Hinderkin died between the time that Geddy agreed to purchase the two slaves and the time that he became Nanny's master. Fauquier's executors deducted £10 off the price of £ 51.05 that Geddy was to pay for the mother and daughter. Geddy owned several slaves in 1768, including a young slave woman. Two years later he announced that he had "a likely Negro Wench, about eighteen years old, with her child, a boy" for sale. Perhaps Geddy did not need this woman after he added Nanny to his household. Geddy took Nanny and his other slaves with him when he moved his family to Dinwiddie County in 1777. Nanny's name appeared on the 1782, 1783, and 1784 Dinwiddie County Personal Property Tax Lists. The move to the Southside might not have broken all of Nanny's ties to other Williamsburg slaves. Members of several Williamsburg families—the Blairs, the Burwells, the Powells, and the Everards—also took their enslaved men, women, and children with them to their new homes in Petersburg or to their plantations in Dinwiddie County in the 1770s and the 1780s. Nanny had either died or been sold to a new owner by the time that the 1785 Personal Property Tax List was taken.

Fauquier's Titus selected Robert Carter Nicholas, Treasurer of the Colony of Virginia, as his new master. Perhaps the role that Nicholas played as a trustee for the charity school established in Williamsburg by the Associates of the Reverend Thomas Bray for black children, slave and free, influenced Titus's decision. Nicholas portrayed himself as a kind master in a January 1767 announcement for two runaway slaves. He told readers of the *Virginia Gazette* that "As I have been always tender of my slaves, and particularly attentive to the good usage of them, I hope wherever these fellows may be apprehended that they will receive such moderate correction as will deter them from running away for the future." Titus joined a household of twelve tithable slaves in 1768. He was one of nineteen tithables in Nicholas' house on the James City County portion of Williamsburg the following year. It is possible that Nicholas moved Titus to his property in Hanover County when he left Williamsburg in 1777. Nicholas died at his plantation known as "The Retreat" in Hanover County on September 8, 1780. His widow Ann and their underage children moved to Albemarle County where they remained until the end of the Revolution. Titus might have been one of 120 slaves belonging to the estate of Robert Carter Nicholas in Albemarle County in 1782. The widow Nicholas had returned to Williamsburg by late 1783. There is no evidence that Ann Nicholas brought Titus



Distribution of some of Fauquier's slaves in Virginia.

with her, so perhaps Nicholas gave Titus to his daughter Sally when she married John Hatley Norton in 1772 or to the Nortons at the time of his death. A clue to Titus's whereabouts turned up in a letter John Hatley Norton received from Charles Payne, the overseer of his Fauquier County plantation, on September 22, 1789. Payne enclosed "A List of the people that will want clothing this fall" with his letter. This list included a slave named "Tetus," possibly a variation of "Titus." The position of Tetus in Payne's list suggests that he may have been the husband of Jane and that they had two children, Let and "Tetus Child."

Three slaves—Mary and her daughter Jemima and Tom—turned to John Dixon as their next master. Evidence in the York County Court records suggests that these three individuals moved to the household of the printer John Dixon. Perhaps Tom and Mary were married and the printer agreed to buy them because he needed a slave to do household work and another to work in his shop. Dixon had his house and business on Lot 48 (printing office). Dixon may have left Jemima in Williamsburg when he moved to Richmond in 1780, because he had hired her to a resident in the city. Jemima appeared on the 1783 Williamsburg Personal Property Tax List as a slave under sixteen years of age who belonged to John Dixon. Perhaps Jemima joined Mary and Tom in Richmond before the 1784 Williamsburg Personal Property Tax List was taken. These three slaves either died or were sold to a new master before John Dixon died in Richmond on April 27, 1791. Tom, Mary, and Jemima were not among the seven slaves who appeared in the May 1792 inventory of the printer's estate.

There is little information about the man whom Doll selected as her master. He was one Richard Johnson, possibly a resident of nearby New Kent County, or maybe he was a part of the Johnson family who lived on the James City County side of Williamsburg. Johnson died sometime before 1773 and the executors of his estate might have sold Doll to Governor Botetourt. The inventory of Botetourt's estate in October 1770 included a slave named Doll. If Doll returned to the Palace she would have been with Hannah again. It is likely that Hannah asked one of Fauquier's executors to purchase her for the next governor so that she could remain at the Palace. It is also possible that Hannah had worked at the Palace during the administrations of William Gooch (1727–1749) and Robert Dinwiddie (1751–1758). A woman named Hannah was baptized on May 6, 1754. The fact that the Bruton Parish vestry clerk noted that this woman belonged to the Honorable William Gooch suggests that Hannah had been a part of Gooch's household for a long time and that she was still associated with the former Governor. Perhaps Gooch appointed a member of the Council to sell Hannah to his successor when he returned to England in May 1749, and Dinwiddie may have done the same when he left Virginia in 1758. If Hannah had been at the Palace since 1749 (and possibly earlier), it is likely that Fauquier's executors bought Hannah for the new governor because of her knowledge of daily work at the Palace. Hannah was one of the eight slaves who appeared in the inventory of Botetourt's estate. She either worked in the garden at the Palace or helped the governor's butler, William Marshman, with the day-to-day work at the Palace. After Botetourt's death John Randolph informed the Duke of Beaufort that the deceased governor's personal property included "several Negroes accustom'd to work in the Gardens and Park." Randolph and Botetourt's other executors also noted that "The Slaves are reckon'd orderly & valuable, and perhaps may be convenient to our next Governor. His Lordship brought over with him a good many white Servants, and, after a short Trial, found it convenient & necessary to purchase & hire Negroes to assist in the business of his Family, and do the Drudgery without doors." Perhaps Hannah and Doll remained at the Governor's Palace and became a part of the household of Governor Dunmore who followed Botetourt.

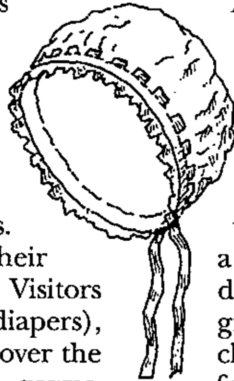
Francis Fauquier's legacy to his enslaved men, women and children provides an opportunity to examine the interconnected world of whites and their slaves and to learn about the impact of the actions of masters on the lives of their bond laborers. Initially, Fauquier's death did not loosen the ties that his slaves had to each other and to other enslaved individuals in Williamsburg. The governor's legacy allowed his bond laborers to maintain their connections to kin, neigh-

bors, and friends. His slaves were among a small number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century enslaved men and women who could control the destiny of their own families. In addition to proximity to family, it is likely that Fauquier's bond laborers took a potential owner's reputation and treatment of slaves, the type of work to be done, and a previous connection with an individual into consideration when making their selection of a new master. It is known that sixteen of Fauquier's seventeen slaves became the property of men who lived in Williamsburg.

However, Fauquier could not predict how the actions of the nine subsequent owners would affect the lives of this group of enslaved men, women, and children. The Reverend James Horrocks sold Sall and Sukey a few months after he purchased them. Christopher Ayscough did not need Lancaster after he left the tavern keeping business. James Geddy took Nanny to Dinwiddie County in 1777. It is possible that George Gilmer moved Sall, Harry, and Young John to Albemarle County. Titus might have ended up at Robert Carter Nicholas's plantation in Hanover County in the late 1770s, in Albemarle County in the early 1780s, and in Fauquier County by the end of the 1780s. Jemima probably was in Richmond with John Dixon's other slaves by 1784. Fauquier's legacy did not protect the majority of his seventeen slaves from the instability and uncertainty that characterized the lives of slaves in eighteenth-century Virginia. The actions of most of the new owners disrupted the kin and personal connections that Fauquier and his slaves had tried to preserve. Ultimately, these men, women, and children—like other bond laborers in eighteenth-century Virginia—experienced the misery of separation from family and friends that Fauquier had hoped to spare them. ■

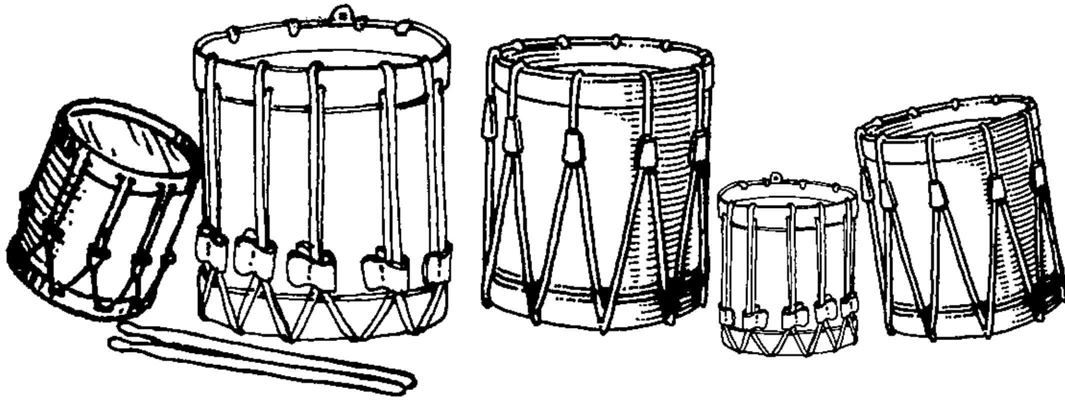
Welcome, Little Stranger

"Welcome, Little Stranger," the family story line program at the Margaret Hunter Shop, showcases clothing made from *Instructions for Cutting out Apparel for the Poor.* Using first person interpretation, Elizabeth Carlos (Doris Warren) and James Slate (Mark Hutter) use the child bed linen and basket to show and explain baby clothes, and the rearing of children in the 1770s. Each gives views from their own gender perspective. Visitors are introduced to clouts (diapers), pilchers (wool covers for over the clouts), shifts, baby shirts, gowns, frocks, robe blankets (the eighteenth-century version of baby bunting), caps, and the mother's nursing shift. Other millinerial goods to be seen that were not included in the *Instructions for Cutting out Apparel for the Poor* are pudding caps, infant stays, pin pillows, a white satin gown that may be used for christening, and the ever popular white muslin gown with silk sash for child, boy or girl.



All these may be examined by the visitors, while they listen to "modern" eighteenth-century philosophy concerning swaddling, stay-wearing by little ones, and decide when is the proper time for a boy to be breeched. The discussion naturally progresses from baby clothes to child's wear, to wedding wear for both the young lady and her gentleman, and naturally back to baby wear. (Funeral wear included on request.) The program is presented from 1:30 to 3:00 on Saturdays and Sundays through the end of the year.

Millinery Staff



Women's Service with the Revolutionary Army

By Kaia Danyluk

Kaia has worked at the Military Encampment for the last two summers. This past spring she graduated from the College of William and Mary with a degree in history. This article is based on a research report she did for Dr. John Selby at the College and John Caramia at Colonial Williamsburg.

The American Revolution has proved to be a fertile ground for study. One can find works as theoretical as the ideological nature of the war and as practical as detailed troop movements in particular battles. The contributions of the men who drafted the documents of the Revolution, commanded the forces, fought in the war, and offered support have been well documented. The Revolution was not a one-gender war, however. Many women participated in the success of independence, and it is time their stories are told. This article will recount the contributions of those women who offered their services to the military, although those women who remained on the home front played important roles as well.

Today, women who followed the army are referred to as "camp followers," even though that term was not used in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately for the reputations of those women, "camp follower" has the stigma of prostitution attached to it. In reality, very few women engaged in that activity in the American army. Even if they had attempted it, the American soldiers had so little with which to pay them, that a prostitute would not have been able to earn a living. She would have been more likely to ply her trade in a British camp, where soldiers could offer better compensation. In fact, commanding officers of the American forces went to great pains to avoid having prostitutes in camp. They believed the presence of women of "ill-repute" was detrimental to the health and morale of the soldiers. Colonel McDougall of the 1st New York Regiment ordered, "No Woman of Ill Fame Shall be permitted to Come into the Barricks on pain of Being well Watred under a pump, and Every Officer or Soldier who Shall Bring in Any Such woman will be tryed and Punished by a Court Martial." General Artemus Ward held similar opinions. On June 30, 1775, he ordered, "that all possible care be taken that no lewd women come into camp, and all persons are ordered to give information of such persons . . . that proper mesures be taken to bring them to condign punishment, to rid the camp of all such nuisances." Apparently, Ward was not making an idle threat, for on February 10, 1776, two "lewd" women were drummed out of his camp. These orders suggest that the occasional woman of ill-fame appeared in camp. On the whole, however, those females who followed Washington's army were seeking other methods of employment. They needed the army, and while Washington and the other officers did not like to admit it, the army needed them. Washington thought that the presence of women in an army camp distracted the soldiers; he claimed they got in the way of operations, detracted from the professional appearance of the camp, and even enticed soldiers to desert. But, if Washington did not permit women in camp, he stood to lose a number of good soldiers. Men with families in need asked for furloughs or deserted in order to provide for their destitute loved

ones. For example, Private Ralph Morgan sought a furlough in December 1775 because his wife and children had no roof over their heads. Morgan received a discharge. Since the Continental Army could not afford to discharge a soldier every time he needed to assist his family, Washington was obliged to permit some women to follow the camps. He wrote to Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris:

> I was obliged to give Provisions to the extra Women in these regiments, or lose by Desertion, perhaps to the enemy, some of the oldest and best Soldiers in the Service . . . the latter with too much justice remarked "Our wives could earn their Rations, but the Soldier, nay the Officer has naught to pay them."

In the same vein, Washington wrote to Major General Henry Knox, "The number of Women and Children in the New York Regiments of Infantry . . . obliged me . . . to allow them Provision or, by driving them from the Army, risk the loss of a number of Men, who very probably would have followed their wives."

Washington was indeed faced with a dilemma. While he could not afford to lose men because of their families, he could not afford to feed every hungry mouth that sought assistance from the army, a problem that continued throughout the war. More and more destitute civilians fled to the army for help, while the army could barely provision its own troops. Washington and his officers attempted to keep the number of dependents traveling with the army to a minimum. On August 4, 1777, Washington wrote, "the multitude of women in particular, especially those who are pregnant, or have children, are a clog upon every movement. The Commander in Chief earnestly recommends it to the officers to use every reasonable method in their power to get rid of all such as are not absolutely necessary." To ensure that only those who were absolutely necessary to the army drew provisions, commanders continually called for reports about women with the army. They wanted to know how many women they had, their marital status, their health, and the duties they performed. In 1776, General Andrew Lewis, writing from near Williamsburg, stated "Officers of Companies are to return a list of the names and number of women they have, and whether single or married, in order to have them examined."

In 1779, Fort Sullivan's commanding officer ordered returns (an official report or list of statistics) of all soldiers, women and children in the garrison. Only those listed on the returns would be able to receive provisions. In 1781, Adjutant-General Hand wrote to the Board of War, "I wish it could be determined what number of women should draw rations in a regiment or rather what proportion their number should bear to that of the men; and whether Children be allowed Rations." That same year, Lamb's Artillery ordered returns with, "An exact return of all the Women with the Army who draw Provision from the Public is to be given in at the Orderly Office, as soon as may be." And in 1782, Washington was still requesting accurate information. He wrote, "A Return of the number of women in the several regiments which compose this army, certified by the commanding officer of the Corps they respectively belong to, is to be given at the Orderly Office on Thursday, the second of January next."

Sometimes regimental commanders desired to know the health status of the women as well. In 1777, while marching from

Princeton, the commanding officer of a Delaware Regiment ordered:

> That the Weomen belonging to the Regt. Be paraded tomorrow & to undergo an examination [probably for venereal disease] from the Surgeon of the Regiment at his tent except those that are married, & the husbands of those to undergo said examination in their stead. All those that do not attend to be immediately drumed out of the Regiment.

Those women who did not pass muster, that is, those who were unmarried, did not perform a necessary task, or were infected with venereal or other types of disease were often sent away. Those fortunate enough to obtain permission to stay drew anywhere from one-quarter to one full ration, depending on what duties they performed.

A good portion of women earned their rations by doing laundry for the soldiers and the officers. Being a washerwoman may not have been a glorious job, but it was a necessary one. Colonel Ebenezer Huntington wrote that he was "endeavoring to hire some women to live in camp to do the washing for [him] self and some of the officers." Some laundry duties were detailed to women to justify giving them rations, as in the case of David Cornwall's wife. Cornwall's commanding officer, Captain George Fleming, wrote to a Colonel Lamb:

> David Cornwall tells me you will admit his Wife to draw Provisions, provided I certify she is a Washerwoman to the Company; if that will be sufficient, I willingly certify it, as the Man behaves exceeding well, and it gives me pain to think a Woman should want Victuals, when her Husband is faithfully doing his Duty with me, & it out of his power to help her.

Other women were permitted to remain as laundresses in the camp as a reward for their own or their husbands' good service. In the same letter to Lamb, Fleming pleads the case of another army wife. "I have been unfortunate in losing Peter Young, by his taking a hearty draught of cold Water. I propose continuing her [Young's wife] still a Washerwoman belonging to the Company, as a small recompense for her long Service & late Husband's, in case she chooses." Ordinarily, women could draw provisions if they performed laundry services; in addition, they could charge by the piece for what they laundered. Whether women tried to take advantage of this opportunity or whether they were just trying to earn enough money to survive is unclear. However, the army did step in to regulate prices when it believed women were overcharging. In 1780, officers at West Point fixed laundry rates. The orders stated that:

> the following Prices be paid for Washing; to the Women, who draw provisions, with their respective Companies; For a Shirt two Shillings; Woolen Breeches, Vest and Overalls, two Shillings, each; Linen Vest, and Breeches, one Shilling, each; Linen Overalls, one Shilling and Six Pence each; Stock, Stockings and Handkerchief, Six Pence each; the Women who wash for the Companies, will observes these regulations.

Overcharging soldiers for washing was a serious offense. In 1770, Sergeant John O'Neill made it clear that "those who will presume to Charge more than the price afore mentioned [one half-dollar per dozen articles] will immediately be ordered out of the Camp & not to be suffered to return." Although some officers feared laundresses may have extorted the soldiers, they still recognized the need for the services washing women provided and set about trying to regulate them to assure their good behavior and to prevent their becoming nuisances. In May of 1778, Fort Schuyler's garrison orders forbade women to wash clothes in the fort or its ditch. In October of 1778 in Fredericksburg, Pennsylvania, officers were ordered to watch women to prevent them from washing clothes in the river the men used for drinking water. If any woman was guilty of such an action, she was to be placed in the guardhouse. And in July of 1779, orders of the 1st Pennsylvania Regiment forbade women to wash in front of the tents or to throw soap suds or any other refuse on the parade grounds.

Some women also worked as cooks, in order to assist the army and perhaps draw extra cash. When soldiers entered the army, they formed messes. These messes were generally composed of six men who shared various housekeeping chores, including getting water, chopping wood, and cooking meals. However, on occasion, women of the regiment earned a bit of extra money by cooking for some men. Hannah Thomas earned £58.2.6 for cooking for twelve men in the Quartermaster General's Department during October 1780. In Fishkill in 1782, Sarah Parsell cooked for the wheelwrights, a Mrs. Creiger cooked for the blacksmiths, and Mrs.

Lloyd cooked for the express riders. For 12 days of work done that January, Parsell and Greiger were paid 2 shillings per day. Lloyd worked from May through September at 10 dollars per month.

Certain women were also allowed to draw provisions in return for their cooking services. Richard Platt wrote to a Mr. Else, "The QM genl. Having agreed, in consideration of the Wives of Hezekiah Gibson and Elihu Cary, cooking for each, for a mess of artificers, which superseded the necessity of two men being employed on that Business, that one Ration should be allow'd, daily, to each of those women." One should note, however, that in most of the examples, women cooking for the army were cooking for retainers to the camp, such as blacksmiths and wheelwrights, not for regular soldiers. Most often, soldiers did their own cooking, unless they could afford to pay someone else to do it, or unless a soldier's wife was kind enough to do it for free. One example of a woman cooking for regular soldiers is that of Sarah Osborne, who followed her husband throughout the war. Osborne testified in a pension application that she washed for the soldiers, in addition to sewing and baking. She also remembered cooking behind the American line, one mile from the battle of Yorktown. She carried beef and bread to soldiers in the trenches, saying, "It would not do for the men to fight and starve too." Osborne recalled being in the habit of cooking for four soldiers, and she carried their breakfasts to them on the morning of Cornwallis's surrender. Osborne appears to have been able to draw provisions for her services, but she does not mention receiving payment for cooking for the soldiers.

Another way for women to earn money and rations with the Continental army was through nursing. The army preferred female nurses to male ones, not only because nursing the sick has traditionally been a female task, but also because every woman nurse meant one more man freed for fighting in the line. Therefore, commanders desired to hire women to perform the difficult tasks of nursing. Nurses were in constant demand and short supply throughout the war. Although a woman serving as a nurse could hope to receive regular pay and retain a job throughout the war, the job brought with it hazards that many women may not have considered worth the money. Nurses were constantly exposed to deadly diseases such as smallpox and all manner of camp fevers; in addition to being relegated to the dirtiest jobs, such as cleaning up after soldiers ill with bloody flux and other diseases involving evacuations. Officers therefore alternately bribed and threatened women to take up nursing. They promised full rations and an allowance for volunteer nurses or threatened to withhold rations from women who refused to volunteer. However, there was a great demand for women to nurse sick soldiers, and despite the hazards, some women stepped up to assume the task.

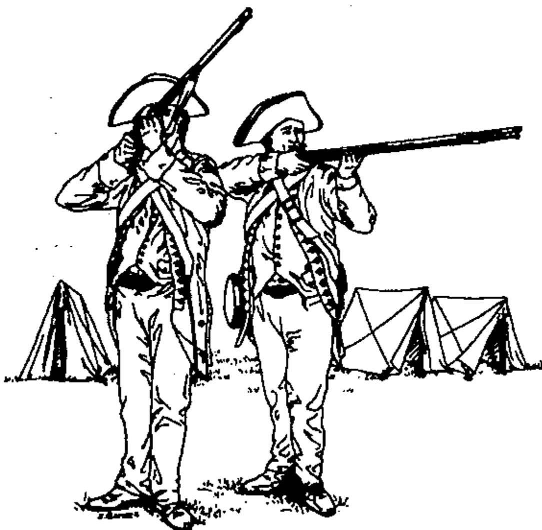
A Congressional Resolution of July 27, 1775 allowed one nurse for every ten patients in Continental hospitals. The Congress allowed two dollars per month as a salary for these nurses, though matrons (women who supervised nurses and acted as liaisons to surgeons) were allotted four dollars per month. In 1776, Congress raised nurses' pay to four dollars per month, and in 1777, to eight dollars per month, possibly in an attempt to entice more women into nursing or to retain nurses dissatisfied with their jobs. Despite Congressional efforts to increase the number of female nurses for the army, there remained a shortage throughout the war. Regiments constantly sought women to nurse their sick and wounded.

The General Hospital in Massachusetts needed nurses for Cambridge and Roxbury in the spring of 1776. Advertisements promised preference to Boston and Charlestown women. A few months later in Williamsburg, the *Virginia Gazette* advertised a request for nurses. In July of 1776, Nathanael Greene wrote:

> The sick Being Numerous in the Hospital And But few Women Nurses to be Had, the Regimental Surgeon must Report the Number Necessary for the sick of the Regt and the colonels are Requested to supply accordingly.

Indeed, the need for nurses was so great that commanding officers, in their eagerness to procure them, sometimes overlooked suspicious circumstances in order to obtain women for nursing. In April of 1777, General Israel Putnam questioned a woman named Elisabeth Brewer after she left British-occupied New Brunswick, New Jersey. Putnam wrote to Governor William Livingston that Brewer "has an Inclination of entering the Hospital as a Nurse; in which employ-

ment she has been before employ'd at this place, and the Surgeon giving her a good Character, I have that purpose to detain her here for that purpose—If you have any Objections and will let me know, I will send her Irnmediately to you." Apparently, Brewer was permitted to take up nursing duties with Putnam's units. The fact that she had arrived from a British-held town did not cast enough suspicion on her to prevent the army from using her skills. Perhaps Putnam should have inquired more carefully into Brewer's background and motives, for in June 1777, Brewer was found guilty of espionage. Fortunately for the Continental Army responsible patriot nurses also answered the call. In July of 1776, orders for the Pennsylvania battalions at Ticonderoga stated that one woman be chosen from each company to go to the hospital at Fort George to nurse the sick. Returns for the hospital at Albany in July 1777 record nine female nurses. In Schenectady in August 1777, Dr. Dirk Van Ingen set up a small hospital and "hired a couple of Women and a Couple of men to attend on the sick." In 1778, Washington ordered his regimental commanders to employ as many nurses as possible to aid regimental surgeons. The Albany hospital in 1778 reported 12–13 male nurses and 11–12 female nurses. In March 1780, the Albany hospital provided provisions for female nurses and their children, as well as for female and child patients. Nurses Rachel Clement (with two children) and Mary DeCamp (with one child) received two rations each, while Mrs. Perkins (with three children) and Sarah Lancaster (with one child) received one ration each. Nurses without children, Grace Gilbert, Susannah Low, May Antrim, Sarah Demont, and Mrs. McMurry, received one ration each.



Nurses' duties were generally related to keeping the hospital and its patients clean. Only when surgeons and surgeons' mates were unavailable did nurses administer medicine or attend to dressing wounds. The "Rules and Directions for the better regulation of the military Hospital of the United States" described nurses' duties. They must stay clean and sober, empty chamber pots as soon as possible after use, wash new patients, wash the hands and faces of old patients, comb patients' hair daily, change linen, sweep out the hospital, sprinkle the wards with vinegar (as a disinfectant) three to four times a day, and deliver dead patients' belongings to the ward master. Nurses were forbidden to be absent without the permission of their supervising physicians, surgeons, or matrons. They were also expressly forbidden to steal from patients and faced punishment if they did.

Women provided all of the above services to the army, content to do so while remaining within their traditional female role. There were some women, however, who chose to break out of traditional gender roles and defend their country by taking up arms against the enemy. A few examples exist of women who, by virtue of circumstances, fought the enemy as women. There were also women who concealed their sex and joined the army disguised as men.

Controversy exists over how exactly women participated in the war as combatants. Many have heard stories of "Molly Pitcher," who attended the cannon of her fallen husband. Some scholars believe "Molly Pitcher" to be a generic term for all women of the army who may have assisted soldiers in this way. Direct evidence exists of at least two women who did perform such duties—Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley and Margaret Cochran Corbin.

Mary McCauley followed the Seventh Pennsylvania Regiment. Her husband, John, was an artillery man. During the Battle of Monmouth, New Jersey, on June 28, 1778, Mary hauled water to the cannon so the sponger could swab out the barrel. John collapsed during the battle, either because of a wound or the extreme heat of the day, and Mary immediately took his place at the cannon. She assisted in firing it with the rest of

the crew for the remainder of the battle.

Margaret Corbin was the wife of John Corbin, an artillery man, who was killed in the Battle of Fort Washington in November 1776. Margaret stepped up to fill her husband's place at the cannon, assisting in sponging and loading. Margaret was wounded by grape shot in the arm and the chest, and as a result was disabled for the rest of her life. She was an original member of the Invalid Regiment that Congress created in 1777 to care for disabled soldiers. In 1779, Corbin was granted a stipend of $30 and a lifelong pension of half a soldier's pay. She was the first American woman to receive a disabled veteran's pension.

Other women served in the war by passing themselves off as men. Deborah Sampson Gannet and Anna Maria Lane fought with Washington's army dressed as male soldiers. Sampson was born in 1760, in Plympton, Massachusetts. She enlisted in 1782 with Captain George Webb's Company of the 4th Massachusetts, passing as Robert Shurtleff. Sampson performed admirably, achieving the rank of corporal, fighting in the Battle of White Plains, and sustaining injuries twice in the service of her country. Upon discovery of her sex, she was honorably discharged and later granted a pension for her services. The Massachusetts legislature declared, "that the Said Deborah exhibited an extraordinary instance of female heroism by discharging the duties of a faithful, gallant soldier." As compensation, the legislature awarded her $4 per month, commencing from 1 January 1803. In 1816, the legislature increased her pension to $6.40 per month and, in 1819, to $8.00 per month. Sampson spoke about her wartime experiences as a circuit lecturer. She recalled that she enlisted because she wanted to avenge all the wrongful deaths of colonists by British soldiers. Though she appeased those who would call her unfeminine by saying, "I indeed recollect it [her enlistment] as a foible, and error and presumption," she did "recollect it with a kind of satisfaction." Despite her experiences, or perhaps because of them, Sampson went on to praise motherhood and encourage women to raise children and leave wars and politics to men.

Anna Maria Lane was another woman who was not content to leave such affairs to men. Lane most likely married her husband, John, before 1776, when he enlisted in the Con-

necticut line under General Israel Putnam. Lane accompanied her husband, though it is unclear if she did so as a woman of the army or a disguised soldier. By the Battle of Germantown, however, she was attired in men's clothing. According to the Virginia General Assembly, Lane, "in the revolutionary war, in the garb, and with the courage of a soldier, performed extraordinary military services, and received a severe wound at the battle of Germantown." After the war, Lane and her husband relocated to Virginia. John served in the Public Guard, and both were permitted to draw pensions for their service. History knows of two other women who fought for their country. One, Sally St. Clare, was a Creole girl who lost her life in the war, and the other is known only as "Samuel Gay," discovered and discharged for being a woman. One can only theorize about others who may have masqueraded as men in the service of their country and remained successfully undetected.

Women who offered their services to the army made a difficult decision. They chose to give up the security of home and embark on a journey that offered discomfort, hardship, and danger. They worked hard to make a living for themselves and their families, in addition to supporting the army and its cause. Some even broke traditional gender roles in order to serve their country. They worked just as hard and suffered just as much as the men they worked beside. Despite Abigail Adams's famous plea to "remember the ladies," many of the contributions of Revolutionary War era women have been forgotten. It is only appropriate now to remember their courage and sacrifice, honoring them as well as the fighting men they supported.■

The Professional Gardener's Trade in the Eighteenth Century

by M. Kent Brinkley

Kent is landscape architect in the Department of Landscape and Facilities Services.

As the eighteenth-century capital of the Virginia colony, Williamsburg became a focal point for politics, the courts, trade, and material consumption due to its many merchants and regular, open-air markets. Since the city contained some fine town homes and gardens, it became the locus of an active trade in garden seeds and plants. Several local gentry gardeners, and their"curious" friends of scientific learning in England exchanged information and specimens. A lesser-known aspect of Williamsburg's gardening history concerns the influences and spread of horticultural knowledge by professional English- and Scottish-trained gardeners. As tradesmen, English- and Scottish-trained gardeners were never present in large numbers in Virginia, though their influence was certainly profound. [Note: The word "professional" in this article is used specifically to draw a distinction between someone who was formally trained as a full-time gardener and a talented amateur for whom gardening was a part-time avocation.] An examination of the professional gardeners' trade and training reveals much about why such men came to America. It also reveals how their presence in Williamsburg led to the establishment here late in the eighteenth century of a commercial landscape plant nursery.

Botany.

While horticultural books were available and widely purchased by local gardeners, it was through personal contacts and friendly advice to neighbors and acquaintances that professional gardeners helped spread sophisticated horticultural knowledge and expertise to an ever-widening circle of interested amateurs. Mostly gentry gardeners in Virginia were eager to learn how to garden successfully in a climate vastly different from that of England. Because of climatic differences, Virginia gardeners were ultimately forced to experiment. People particularly valued the advice of a trained gardener living or working nearby to help achieve greater success.

Aspiring professional gardeners in eighteenth-century England learned their trade by serving a lengthy apprenticeship under a "head" gardener. Following a tradition that went back to the Middle Ages, gardeners (though many had respectable, middle-class backgrounds), were always regarded as servants in the households in which they were employed. Gardeners were always men who often had little identity as individuals. Sometimes unskilled adolescent boys and working-class women might be hired seasonally to collect grass clippings after turf was scythed or to hand pick caterpillars and other pests from the flowers and vegetables. But everything else on a large English estate, other than the most menial tasks, was done by the resident staff of apprentices and journeymen gardeners. It took a small army of gardeners to accomplish these chores. Available documentation concerning the lifestyles of eighteenth-century English gardeners is not extensive, but enough data exists to construct fairly typical cycles of daily life on most estates. The gardeners, young and old, all boarded together, usually in lean-to sheds on the north side of the walled kitchen garden, often sleeping two or three in a bed. If they worked for a large estate, their meals were provided for them. Usually the head gardener was given separate quarters in a specially-equipped outbuilding or garden pa

vilion for himself and his family, if he had one.

Their work day usually started at six in the morning or earlier, and ended around six or eight o'clock at night. After supper the gardeners had to study gardening, botany, and other sciences until bedtime. Work was dictated by weather and season. Major construction work had to be accomplished within the usually short weather "window" between the moderately dry summer and the wet late fall months. If left too late, the soil became heavy and waterlogged.

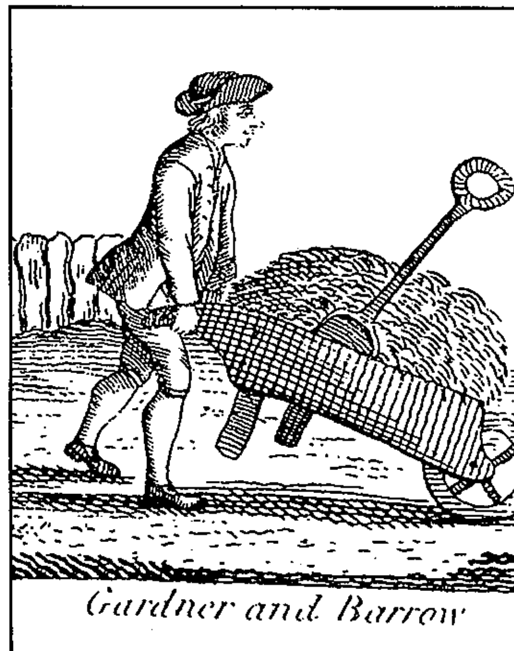
Each apprentice or journeyman gardener on the estate was expected to adhere to a set of rules established by the head gardener, or perhaps by the owner himself. They would be fined or their pay docked if they left their tools and implements dirty, if they smoked while on the job, or were absent from work without permission. Fines could also be levied for other infractions, such as not having a pruning knife on their person or failing to wear the gardener's trademark apron. They could be given stiff fines if they did not know the basic knowledge expected for their rank or position, such as the proper Latin names for common garden plants or the names for each particular tool of their trade and their respective use(s) or purpose(s).

A gardener's apprenticeship period could vary, but generally it lasted about three years. The new "journeyman gardener" could either remain in the employ of the estate where he apprenticed or he could leave and become a "jobbing" or contract gardener on his own. If he chose the latter course, he usually had to purchase a full set of his own tools, which cost the large sum of £7 or £8. Regardless of the career path he chose, he could expect to receive a wage of about three or four shillings a day. If he had no other sources of income, this modest salary was just enough money to support a modest lifestyle for himself, a wife, and one child. London offered the best job opportunities for journeymen gardeners, because of the growth of its suburbs and the location of many large nursery gardens that employed a large labor force. While jobs were available, the plentiful supply of gardeners kept daily wages low. As a result, the standard of living of most jobbing gardeners in urban areas tended to run from mediocre to poor.

Most great English estate gardens underwent revisions in the second quarter of the eighteenth century due to the growing preference for a more natural style. The gardens of large town houses in English cities, however, remained geometrically-configured until the very end of the century. This was probably due to the need for organization within the very limited space available for urban gardens. Large town house gardens were typically laid out and planted by local jobbing gardeners and nurserymen to meet the needs and desires of their upper middle-class owners.

To assist needy fellow tradesmen and their families, gardeners who worked near or within the cities often joined gardeners' societies and lodges. One group of London gardeners formed the Society of Gardeners in the late 1720s. These organizations fulfilled both a benevolent and professional purpose and were organized very similar to Masonic lodges, with elected officers, and membership dues. These gardeners' lodges exerted much influence over their members and even the communities around them until the 1820s.

Scottish gardeners appear to have been the most sought-after gardeners in Georgian England. The Scots seemed particularly desirable because of their ambition, their willingness to work hard, and their reliable and frugal natures. Their gardening education was well above average and typically included studies in geology, chemistry, meteorology, physics, and botany. Many young aspiring Scots gardeners broadened their learning to



Gardner and Barrow

Gardener interpreter Terry Yemm.
Photo by Kent Brinkley

other areas, such as dancing, fencing, chess and backgammon, and skill with a musical instrument in order to become a more well-rounded individual who could advance further in life. With such an ambitious work ethic, it is little wonder that professionally trained Scots gardeners were so much in demand throughout Britain and her American colonies.

The most common career path for the journeyman to the position of head gardener was to work hard and secure a favorable reputation, to acquire good references from all previous employers, and to secure a head gardener's post with a minor gentleman on a small- to moderate-sized estate. Head gardener posts on large estates could seldom be attained without a proven track record on a smaller estate in a similar position. Thus, advancement to this level often took many years.

For those who did not have the talent, education, or organizational ability to be promoted to the post of head gardener even on a smaller estate, a life of poverty and destitution in old age was always a possibility. Some of the larger nurserymen in northern English and Scottish towns paid very low wages to their employees and, thus, forcibly kept their workforce in squalid living conditions. The supply of journeymen gardeners in these urban areas typically exceeded the demand. Finding a good job was difficult, and competition for the available gardeners' jobs in these localities was apparently quite fierce. In the colonies, however, quite the opposite conditions existed. Gardeners trained to English or Scottish standards were relatively scarce and many young journeymen gardeners chose to emigrate to America. Less competition here allowed them to better their lot and increase their employment chances. Undoubtedly, some of these expatriates were probably just one or two steps ahead of the law and/or debtor's prison.

A well-kept and elegant garden had long been regarded in England as a visible symbol of the owner's taste and sophistication. Therefore, one of the English gentry pastimes was to visit and experience each other's gardens. Naturally, the owner of an estate wanted to make the best impression possible. He also wanted to ensure that his gardeners treated his guests hospitably, and that they received direct and courteous answers to their questions about the plants and the garden's daily management.

It was usually the duty of the head gardener to escort important visitors around the estate. This task, while often time-consuming, had decided advantages. Wealthy guests often tipped handsomely for such personal tours, and these contacts could result in an outside design commission for the particularly knowledgeable and deferential head gardener. Lancelot "Capability" Brown, the most famous of all eighteenth-century English landscape gardeners-turned-architects, got his start doing design works on a part-time basis. While head gardener for Lord Cobham, at Stowe, in Buckinghamshire, he conducted tours of Cobhams estate. Brown's reputation quickly spread, and his services became more in demand. After Lord Cobham's death in 1751, Brown left Stowe to go into business for himself as a full-time designer. He was among a select few head gardeners who successfully managed to have a lucrative new career for himself by giving design advice to wealthy patrons.

A head gardener's duties were quite diverse. His major responsibility was to see that there was a continuous supply of fresh vegetables for the kitchens and flowers for the house. The head gardener had to see that the gardens and greenhouses were always kept neat and clean. He had to introduce as many new and exotic plants as possible. He had to supervise the storage of roots, fruits, and seeds, manage the sale of any excess produce, and direct all new construction work on the estate. In addition, he had the dail

duty of supervising and educating his apprentices, serving as a tour guide for visitors, and sometimes to even act as a night-watchman to foil potential poachers!

With all these responsibilities, many head gardeners felt that they were sorely underpaid. Those who worked on a medium-sized estate earned about £40 a year, with about eleven shillings a week returned to the owner for their board. Aside from visitors' tips, there were few other income opportunities available. It was not unusual for a head gardener to handle the wages of his gardening staff and construction contracts, which could total as much as £3,000 or more a year. No matter how much they improved themselves or the staff, it was rare for employers to increase their wages. A head gardener usually had to leave one job and go to another if he hoped to increase his earnings. New positions were secured via contracts on a yearly basis, and good references were absolutely essential. Even for the most talented and conscientious gardener, one employer with a bad disposition or bearing a grudge over a small transgression could easily ruin his career.

If employed by a great peer with a large estate, a head gardener was truly at the pinnacle of his profession. Many men felt themselves fortunate to have advanced that far, and most were content to do their demanding jobs for the rest of their careers from this lofty plateau. Only a select few aspired (and even fewer managed) to ascend any higher. Aside from giving design advice, the only other career alternatives were to go into business by opening a seed shop or plant nursery or to write and sell gardening books to a gentry clientele ever-hungry for practical design and cultural gardening advice.

The gardener-turned-designer often faced stiff competition from men with different backgrounds. Painters, architects, builders, doctors, pharmacists, and minor gentlemen often decided to try garden design as another way to make money. The professionally trained gardener did have a clear advantage due to his horticultural knowledge, but he still needed a sense of the prevailing tastes in garden design. Finally, because he would still be seen as a servant in his client's eyes, he would have to constantly display tact and diplomacy, personal wit and charm, and social refinements so necessary in the day-to-day dealings with his social betters, in order to succeed. These demands were formidable

Gardener interpreter Wesley Greene.
Photo by Kent Brinkley

enough to deter many gardeners from attempting design work for the gentry. A few, such as Thomas Spence of Byfleet in London, managed to do quite well by limiting his design efforts to smaller, urban gardens for upper middle-class clients.

Commercial plant nurseries were located near every large city in England, but only the largest and most aggressive operations provided their owners with a sufficient income to support a modest lifestyle. For most of the eighteenth century, however, the horticulture trade was centered in London, providing a wide variety of offerings. In 1730 there were approximately thirty important seedmen living and working in the capital city. By 1760 that number had grown to at least thirty nurserymen and ten seedsmen.

There were many successful London nurseries, such as Thomas Fairchild's nursery at Hoxton on London's outskirts, Robert Furber's nursery at Kensington, and James Lee's nursery at the Vineyard, Hammersmith. Fairchild was the occasional recipient of plant seeds sent from Virginia by naturalist Mark Catesby, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Two of the most famous and successful nursery operations in England were Loddiges Nursery, founded by Conrad Loddiges, the German gardener of Sir John Sylvester; and Brompton Park Nursery, founded in 1681 by four noted master gardeners, Roger Looker, Moses Cook, John Field and George London. Loddiges, located in Hackney, was also noted for its introduction and availability of plants from the Ameri-

can colonies.

Brompton Park was propelled to greatness in the 1690s under the operation of George London and his new younger partner, Henry Wise, after London's original partners had died or had sold out to him. The popularity of London and Wise was due to the combination of their design skills and their ability to anticipate the latest gardening fashions. These talents, coupled with maintaining a large enough inventory in their nursery to meet virtually all demands for plants needed in their expansive design schemes, assured their business success. Their work had a profound influence on early gardens in the colonies, such as the one at the College of William and Mary.

Compared to the total number who practiced the trade, few professional gardeners ventured to write gardening books. Those few who did managed to become quite wealthy from it, and also managed to achieve a degree of immortality for their efforts. Gardening books were constantly being published in England. Between 1730 and 1750, twenty-four major gardening books were published, and sixty-six tomes appeared between 1765 and 1785. The most notable among the authors of this productive period in garden literature was Scots gardener, Philip Miller.

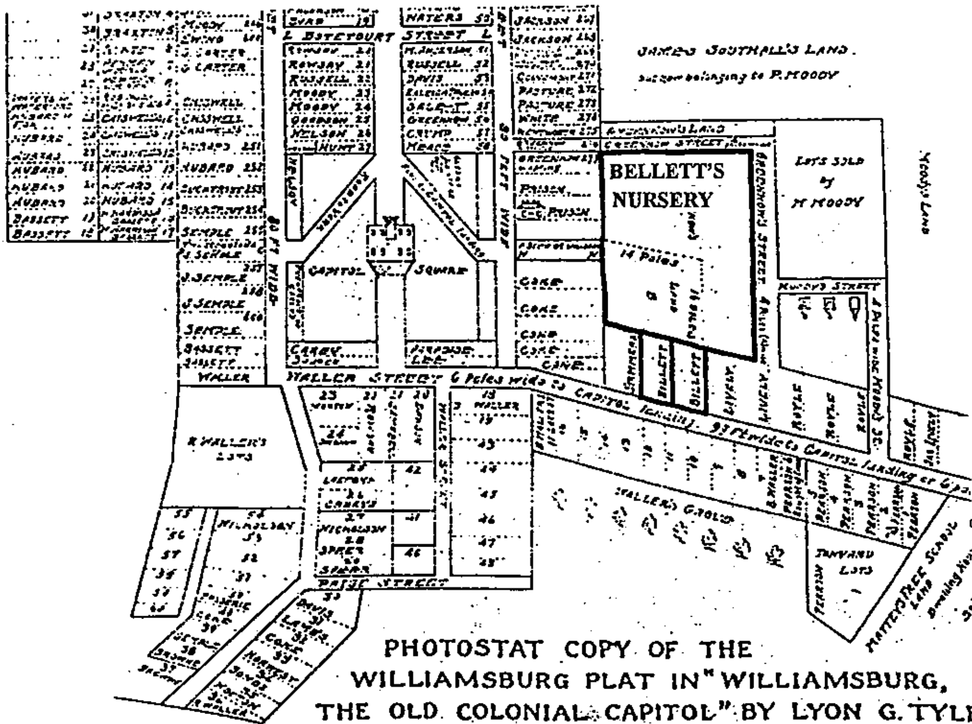
Born in 1692, Miller was first a florist, then became gardener to the Company of Apothecaries. His book, *The Gardener's Dictionary,* went through sixteen editions, the last one appearing in 1771 long after his death. A more obscure, but no less important book entitled, *City Gardener,* was published by Thomas Fairchild in 1722. Fairchild's work is unique in that he was the sole Georgian garden writer who wrote specifically about town gardens, and was the only one who wrote for an amateur audience. His competitors wrote exclusively for professional readers, and so their books usually were little more than a calendar of monthly or seasonal tasks. Miller's and Fairchild's books were among those purchased for the personal library shelves of several notable gentlemen in Virginia.

After reviewing the typical lifestyles of eighteenth-century English and Scots gardeners and the conditions by which they had to make a living, it is little wonder that many of them ultimately chose to abandon servitude and low wages in their homelands and take their chances in the American colonies. Though some of those who emigrated may have remained in servitude in Virginia, nonetheless their chances to improve their lot financially, with less competition, were substantially enhanced.

Several professional gardeners in colonial Virginia worked as head gardeners at either the Governor's Palace or at the College of William and Mary, or both. Some gaps exist in surviving records, but the names and dates of the head gardeners at the Palace are known. They are as follows: Thomas Crease (1720 to about 1725–6); Christopher Ayscough (1758 to 1768); James Simpson (1768 to 1769); James Wilson (1769 to about 1771); and John Farquharson (1771 to 1781). Those who worked for the College are: James Road (1694 to ?); Thomas Crease (1726 to 1756); James Nicholson (1756 to 1773); and James Wilson (1773 to 1780). We also know that Crease (in 1738), Ayscough (in 1759), and Wilson (in 1774) placed advertisements in the *Virginia Gazette* offering to sell garden seeds directly to the public, in order to augment their regular incomes. Several other gardener tradesmen were in Williamsburg at various times during the eighteenth century, and a few placed advertisements in the newspaper to offer their services for hire. One was George Renney who arrived from England during the late summer of 1769, and hoped to settle down here and find work "by the year, to keep in order a few GARDENS, at a reasonable price." Other surviving documentation reveals that several English and Scottish gardeners were living in Virginia during the eighteenth century, including a William Henderson in Westmoreland County (in 1742); Nicholas Hingston in Alexandria (in 1798); David Mathesons in Stafford County (in 1775); Alexander Petrie in Richmond (in 1783-88), and later (1796) in Norfolk; and James Stewart (in 1775). There were undoubtedly many others whose names

Advertisements.

GEORGE RENNEY,
GARDENER,
From ENGLAND,
INTENDING to settle in this place, will undertake, by the year, to keep in order a few GARDENS, at a reasonable price. Should he not meet with encouragement in this way, he would be willing to engage with any Gentleman in the country.
WILLIAMSBURG, Sept. 28, 1769.



PHOTOSTAT COPY OF THE WILLIAMSBURG PLAT IN "WILLIAMSBURG, THE OLD COLONIAL CAPITOL" BY LYON G. TYLE

and places of residence are now lost.

One final, late eighteenth-century Williamsburg gardener deserves mention. He was seedsman and nurseryman, Peter Bellett. Little is known of his birthplace or professional training, but it is thought that Bellett emigrated from France sometime in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. By the mid-1780s, he and a Dutchman named Kroonem were partners in a Philadelphia seed store, advertising themselves as "florists, seedsmen, botanists and gardeners." Kroonem minded the store while Bellett frequently made trips to Baltimore, Alexandria, Richmond, Petersburg, and Norfolk to sell seeds directly to customers there.

In 1794, Bellett sold his seed store interest to his partner, and moved his family south to Williamsburg. He eventually purchased twenty acres on the west side of Capitol Landing Road, directly behind the Coke-Garrett House, and opened a landscape nursery. [*Note:* Sadly, the site of Bellett's Nursery has today been all but destroyed by the later construction of Lafayette Street and the railroad tracks. Both features run directly through the middle of what was the former nursery site].

Bellett must have re-located to Williamsburg to seize an opportunity to meet what must have been a growing regional demand for plant material. From the steady growth of his operation over a ten-year period, we know that he helped create further demand by his constant, aggressive marketing to promote his wares. He periodically placed sales advertisements in all of the newspapers in the region. He even prepared printed catalogs annually and distributed them to store owners in Petersburg, Richmond, and Norfolk to act as sales agents for him–no doubt on a commission basis. Williamsburg residents Joseph Prentis and Joseph Hornsby, among others, purchased seeds, plants, and fruit trees directly from Bellett.

By 1804 Peter Bellett's Williamsburg plant nursery reached the height of its success, with an astounding inventory of 100,000 fruit trees being grown by Bellett and his staff of eight slave gardeners. Later that year, however, for reasons which are today not entirely clear, Bellett placed his entire nursery, garden tools, livestock, and all of his slaves up for sale, and announced his intention to move to New York state. He apparently never made it. While successful in selling a part of his holdings two years later, Bellett was still trying to divest himself of the remaining property. By December of 1807 he was dead, and his widow, at least one son, and five daughters remained in Williamsburg.

Bellett is just one example of that group of foreign-born, professionally-trained gardeners who, through hard work, determina-

Yemm and Greene in the Colonial Nursery.

Photo by Kent Brinkley

tion, and aggressive marketing of themselves and their wares, were able to realize what we today call "the American dream." Coincidentally, by doing so they also helped to spread horticultural knowledge and the awareness of gardening as a fine art, a somewhat novel concept to most Virginians who tended to regard a garden as primarily a place for growing cabbages and lettuce for the table. In their own humble ways and through simple, everyday tasks, professional gardeners helped their clients to see the aesthetic as well as the practical potentials of gardening. Through their efforts, and those men with the wherewithal to indulge in ornamental horticultural experimentation, a "garden" in this country eventually came to be regarded as a place of repose and reflection, a place where art and artifice could be displayed, and as a source of visual delight. Their efforts helped to create a market for ornamental plants and gave rise to the commercial landscape plant nurseries in this country.

This is the story that long-time Colonial Williamsburg employees and costumed gardeners, Wesley Greene and Terry Yemm, are endeavoring to tell visitors at the Colonial Nursery. This interpretive and plant sales site opened in the spring of 1996 on lots located directly across Duke of Gloucester Street from Bruton Parish Church. Through the efforts of many dedicated front-line and support staff from several departments, as well as volunteers, this project has been a great interpretive as well as a financial success for the Foundation.

The daily and seasonal tasks of eighteenth-century gardeners were not so vastly different from those confronting gardeners today. Even the mentoring system of educating gardeners under the guidance of a more experienced senior has not changed radically from practices in vogue 200 years ago. However, the major difference between the lives of eighteenth- and late twentieth-century gardeners lies in the fact that gardeners of that early era lived largely in an uncertain, though perhaps benevolent form of paid servitude. Another major difference is that modern technological advances have eliminated much of the backbreaking manual labor required of eighteenth-century gardeners. Science and technology have reduced not only the need for maintaining large labor forces, but have enabled today's professional gardeners to accomplish more work within a shorter period of time and with far less physical effort.

As interpreters, we may now be able to impart to our visitors a greater appreciation for the contributions that the professionally-trained gardeners of the eighteenth century made to the gardening world in America. While seeking a better life in the New World, these men helped to pass on Old World gardening knowledge and, perhaps most importantly, to impart a new appreciation of the expanding world of horticulture in all its many forms and fashions. Their contribution was one facet of the much broader process of "taking possession of the land," which, in turn, was part of the story of our "Becoming Americans." ■

NEWS FROM THE *Curators*

By Jan Gilliam

Jan is assistant curator for exhibits in the Department of Collections and Museums.

This November at the DeWitt Wallace Gallery look for three new exhibits celebrating the decorative arts of the South. "Furniture of the American South: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection" explores the regional traditions of workmanship and style that pervaded the South from Maryland to South Carolina in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Curators Ron Hurst and Jon Prown have spent years surveying Colonial Williamsburg's extensive collection of furniture, giving special attention to pieces made in the South. The old furniture galleries at the Wallace Gallery underwent extensive renovation in preparation for this exhibit, that will include over 150 pieces of furniture. Accompanying the exhibit is a new book, *Southern Furniture 1660–1830: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* by Ron and Jon that features many of the pieces in the exhibit as well as three essays about the South. The book is extensively illustrated with both color and black-and-white photographs.

The second exhibit is "Virginia Samplers: Young Ladies and Their Needle Wisdom." For years, associate curator Kim Ivey has studied and written about southern needlework, in particular, samplers made in Virginia, and she has been instrumental in developing our collection. Although Colonial Williamsburg purchased its first sampler in 1930, not until 1978 did the Foundation buy the first Virginia sample. This exhibit places the pieces within the context of the lives of the young women who created them and explores the specific elements that link the samplers with a particular region or teacher. Kim has been able to place many previously unattributed samplers in a particular school or area. The exhibit consists of over 100 objects, more than half made in Virginia. While the majority are from Colonial Williamsburg's collection, other museums and private individuals have loaned some special pieces. Kim also wrote the illustrated catalog that accompanies the exhibit.

The third exhibit that celebrates the South, "Mark Catesby's Natural History of America: The Watercolors from the Royal Library Windsor Castle," focuses on the work of one individual who made a lasting impression in Virginia. Some are familiar with Mark Catesby through the old Colonial Williamsburg film *The Colonial Naturalist* or more recently have seen him in person at Carter's Grove as portrayed by Robb Warren. But many have never seen the original watercolors from which the rare books and eighteenth-century prints have been derived. While Catesby lived and traveled in Virginia and the South in the early eighteenth century to document the flora and fauna, he finished and published his work in London. Catesby's original watercolors have been in the royal collection at Windsor Castle since they were acquired by George III in 1768. Curator Margaret Pritchard has been instrumental in helping to secure them for exhibit in the United States for the first time. The fifty-two watercolors made their debut at the Huntington Library in California last spring. After a stop in Houston, they are now on view here at the Wallace Gallery. Accompanying the exhibit of the Queen's collection of watercolors are selections from Colonial Williamsburg's Catesby material including books and prints created in the eighteenth century from the original watercolors. In addition, the Williamsburg selection will include watercolors and prints by Catesby's contemporaries. Hurry to see this exhibit because the royal watercolors will only be on display for a short time before they travel to Georgia and then return to England. The Colonial Williamsburg portion will remain on view for most of 1998. The exhibit is accompanied by a well-illustrated catalog. An in-depth collection of essays about Catesby and his work will be published early next year.

There is a lot to see this winter at the museums. Plan to spend some of those cold winter days inside to enjoy and explore our rich cultural background. Also do not miss the opportunity to see "Art and Mystery: Recreating the Trades at Colonial Williamsburg," an exhibit honoring the talented tradespeople who have practiced their trades here at Colonial Williamsburg over the past decades. In the next issue look for news about the fun, new exhibits at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center. There will be much to see there as well.■

COOK'S CORNER

by Laura Arnold

Laura is a historical interpreter in the Department of Historic Buildings.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted."

These familiar words from Ecclesiastes are often associated with the coming of fall and the traditional image of cooks displaying the fruits of their labors at harvest festivals and county fairs. Much time in the eighteenth century was spent on preserving foods harvested in the autumn. Because of the long growing season in Virginia, which made the double planting of some crops possible, spring, summer, and fall were busy seasons for preserving food from family gardens. For the eighteenth-century housewife, food preservation was a year-round responsibility, a task she had to fit into her daily household routine. Spring and summer fruits such as peaches, cherries, raspberries, and gooseberries were turned into jams and jellies, preserved in brandy, dried, or converted into wines and vinegar. Archaeological investigations at Wetherburn's Tavern uncovered 42 bottles of Morello cherries. Perhaps Mr. Wetherburn had a bumper crop of cherries one year and preserved them by placing the dried or fresh fruit in bottles with sugar and brandy before sealing the bottles with corks and rosin. The number of receipts for using and preserving cherries attests to their popularity. Mary Randolph's instructions for drying cherries end with the reminder that "they make excellent pies, puddings, and charlottes.")

CHARLOTTE

Stew any kind of fruit, and season it in any way you like best; soak some slices of bread in butter; put them while hot, in the bottom and round the sides of a dish, which has been rubbed with butter—put in your fruit, and lay slices of bread prepared in the same manner on the top: bake it a few minutes, turn it carefully into another dish, sprinkle on some powdered sugar, and glaze it with a salamander.

Lima, snap, and string beans and peas were welcome fresh additions to the family diet. Along with corn, the staple food of slaves, they were dried for future use. *The Compleat Housewife* included a receipt "To Keep Green Peas until Christmas." Dried peas appeared on the table as a popular winter soup or a side dish to accompany a roasted meat. Throughout the spring and summer, the thrifty housewife harvested seeds to plant when the growing cycle began again the following year and dried herbs for medicinal and culinary use.

The ripening of root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, potatoes, and turnips signaled the beginning of fall. Root vegetables buried in dirt, ashes, or sand could be safely stored until the next spring. Apples were dried or turned into cider and jellies. October was considered the best month for brewing beer for spring consumption. Thomas Jefferson noted in October 1792 that "17 bushels of winter grapes make 40 gallons vinegar." Since vinegar appears as a primary ingredient in pickling receipts and as a condiment in cooking, its preparation was an important event in the fall cycle of chores. Gourmet vinegars so popular in modern cookery have their roots in eighteenth-century cookbooks in which instructions appear for making pepper, tarragon, honey, and raspberry vinegars. Then, as now, apples were the basic ingredient for making vinegar, although Jefferson and the following receipt from *The Compleat Housewife* indicate that other fruits were also used.

TO MAKE GOOSEBERRY VINEGAR

Take gooseberries full ripe, bruise them in a mortar, then measure them, and to every quart of goosegerries put three quarts of water, first boiled, and let it stand till cold; let it stand twenty-four hours; then strain it thro' a canvas, then a flannel; and to every gallon of this liquor put one pound of feeding brown sugar; stir it well, and barrel it up; at three quarters of a year old it is fit for use; but if it stands longer it is the better: this vinegar is likewise good for pickles.

Mary Randolph suggested that late October was the best time to prepare the salt brine for curing beef. Salt cured meats were the third largest export during colonial times, and hams were often sent as gifts to friends and family in Great Britain. The reputation of Virginia ham and the taste for it were well established by the eighteenth century. The pound of meat given to slaves along with their weekly peck of corn probably consisted of lesser cuts of poor quality pork, although whole hams were given to slaves on special occasions such as Christmas. Archaeological evidence from slave quarters at Mount Vernon revealed that George Washington's slaves were provided with both better and lesser cuts of meat.

Thomas Jefferson advised diversifying slaves' diets with salted fish. West African slaves were not accustomed to large amounts of meat, and preferred to add familiar spices to dried vegetable stews or to use their meat ration to flavor the "pot liquor" in which vegetables were cooked.

Preserving pork and beef occurred in early winter after harvest season was over and cooler weather was conducive to the butchering of large animals. Large cuts of pork were rubbed with a mixture of salt, saltpeter, and brown sugar and then placed in tubs of dry salt. The meat was turned every day for up to six weeks. Then the ten-day smoking process began. The meat was washed to remove excess salt, coated with black pepper (the eighteenth-century insecticide), and hung in the smokehouse over a smoldering fire.

Curing beef required large quantities of the salt brine Mary Randolph recommended preparing in October. Large cuts of beef were covered with salt for ten days and then cleaned before placed in the brine. In another ten days, the beef would "be fit for the table." Mrs. Randolph advised saving the brine and butchering the animals in succession to have a steady supply of meat. February was considered the best month for drying beef for summer use, a process that consisted of salting the meat, placing it in brine for three weeks, and covering it with bran before hanging it in a cool, dry place. Smaller cuts were pickled or potted. *The Compleat Housewife* provides a simple receipt for twentieth-century cooks to try.

TO POT BEEF

Take six pounds of the buttock of beef, cut it in pieces as big as your fist, season it with large spoonful of mace, a spoonful of pepper, with twenty-five or thirty cloves, and a good race of ginger; beat them all very fine, mix them with salt, and put them to the beef; lay it in a pot, and upon it two pounds of butter: bake it three or four hours, well cover'd up with paste; before it is cold take out the beef, beat it fine, putting in the warm butter as you do it, and put it down close in pots; if you keep it long, keep back the gravy, and if it wants seasoning, add some in the beating; pour on clarified butter.

Note: "Paste" refers to pastry. Mary Randolph's receipt for a "paste" for meat dishes recommends pouring half a pound of melted butter or boiling hot meat drippings into a quart of flour. Add as much water as will make it a paste, work it and roll it well before you use it.

When winter gave way to spring, the colonial cook brewed beer for October consumption, checked her supplies of vinegar to use later for pickling fruits and vegetables, and took advantage of the season's low humidity to dry herbs and fruits. Once again, a familiar passage from the Bible served as a gentle reminder of how the cycle of seasons determined the pattern of colonists' lives:

> For, lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.
>
> Song of Solomon

(Information for this article was based on material prepared by Wendy Howell for her "Colonial Cook's Calendar" and "Seasonality of Foodstuffs in the 18th Century" and suggestions from Dennis Cotner and Rob Brantley of Historic Foodways. Cookbooks cited were E. Smith, *The Compleat Housewife* (1753), and Mary Randolph, *The Virginia Housewife* (1824).■

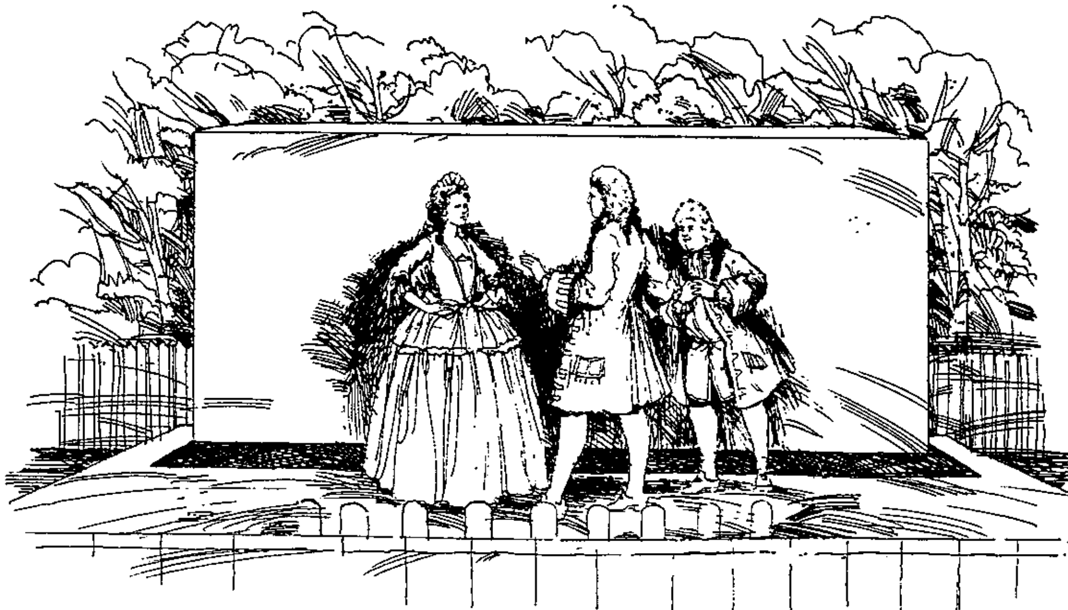
An Apple

Cherries

Anine Plumb

Pear

Pine Apple



A Brief Documentary History of the American Company of Comedians

by Christina Cortright Westenberger

Christina is a theatrical interpreter in the Department of Historic Trades, Presentations, and Tours.

The city (Philadelphia) was visited by a company of players, styling themselves as the American Company. They had for several years been exhibiting in the islands, and now return'd to the continent in the view of dividing their labors between Philadelphia and New York. At Boston, they did not appear, so peevish was the edict of the may'r, or at least of those authorities which were charged with the custody of public morals. The manager was Douglas, rather a decent than a shining actor, a man of sense and discretion, married to the widow Hallam.

Alexander Graydon

David Douglass, printer, arrived in Jamaica circa 1745 and there joined a theatrical troupe, that by 1755 was in need of recruits. Fortunately, Lewis Hallam, Sr., arrived in Jamaica in the spring of 1755 with his family and remnants of the London Company of Comedians. Unfortunately for Hallam and his family, he died the next year. David Douglass not only became the manager of the company at the time of Hallam's death, but he also married his widow. In the fall of 1758 Douglass ventured, with his ensemble to the British North American coast. The following is a brief documentary history of that company, the American Company of Comedians, and their journey from 1758 to 1774.

November 6, 1758

New York Mercury

Mr. Douglass Who came here with a Company of Comedians, having appl'd to the Gentlemen in Power for Permission to Play, has (to his great Mortification) met with a positive and absolute Denial.

December 12, 1758

New York Mercury

WHEREAS I am informed, that an Advertisement of mine, which appeared some Time ago in this Paper, giving Notice that I would open an Histrionic Academy, has been understood by many, as a Declaration, that I proposed under that Colour, to Act Plays, without the Consent of the Magistracy:

THIS IS THEREFORE TO INFORM THE PUBLICK, That such a Construction was quite foreign to my Intent and Meaning, that so vain, so insolent a Project, never once entered into my Head; It is an Impeachment of my Understanding to imagine, I would dare, in a publick Manner, to aim at an Affront on Gentlemen, on whom I am dependent for the only means that can save us from utter Ruin. All that I proposed to do was, to deliver Dissertations on Subjects, Moral, Instructive, and Entertaining, and to endeavour to qualify such as would favour me with their attendance, To speak in Publick with Propriety. But as such an Undertaking might have occasioned an Enquiry into my Capacity, I thought the Publick would treat me with greater Favour, when they were informed that I was deprived of any other Means of getting my Bread; nor would that have done any more than barely supplied our present Necessities.

DAVID DOUGLASS

Douglass learned quickly from his mistake in New York and secured permission from the governor of Pennsylvania and the council to play in Philadelphia before arriving in the city. Although permission was granted on April 5, 1759, the company met with opposition.

August 30, 1759

Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia)

I have shewn, that the Reading of Plays, or any other Books of that Kind, is a dangerous and sinful Entertainment, that corrupts our Hearts, and separates the Holy Spirit from us. You will now, perhaps, ask me, if it is unlawful for a Christian to go to the Play-house. I answer, that it is absolutely unlawful; as unlawful as for a Christian to be a Drunkard, or a Glutton, or to curse and swear

. . . . When you see the Players Acting with Life and Spirit, Men and Women equally bold in all instances of Profaneness, Passions, and Immodesty, I dare say you never suspect any of them to be persons of Christian Piety; you cannot, even in your Imagination, join Piety to such Manners, and such a Way of Life.

The players generally met with more delight and enthusiasm in the southern colonies.

March 6, 1760

Maryland Gazette (Annapolis)

Monday last the THEATRE in this City was Open'd, when the Tragedy of the ORPHAN, and LETHE (Dramatic Satire) were perform'd in the Presence of his Excellency the Governor, to a polite and numerous Audience, who all express'd a general satisfaction. The principal Characters, both in the Play and Entertainment, were perform'd with great Justice, and the Applause which attended the whole representation, did less Honour to the abilities of the Actors than to the taste of their Auditors.

August 11, 1761

Newport Mercury (Rhode Island)

The following Recommendation was signed by the Governor, Council, and near one hundred of the Principal Gentlemen of Virginia:

> *The Company of Comedians under the direction of David Douglass have performed in this Colony for near twelvemonth; during which time they have made it their constant practice to behave with Prudence and Discretion in their Private Character, and to use their utmost Endeavours to give general satisfaction in their Public Capacity. We have therefore thought proper to Recommend them as a Company whose behavior merits the Favour of the Public, and who are capable of entertaining a Sensible and Polite Audience.*

November 3, 1761

Newport Mercury (Rhode Island)

On Friday evening last, the Company of Comedians finished their Performances in this Town by enacting the Tragedy of Douglass for the Benefit of the poor. This second Charity is undoubtedly intended as an expression of Gratitude for the Countenance and Favour the Town has shown them, and it can not without an uncommon degree of Malevolence be ascribed to an interested or selfish view, because it is given at a time when the Company has been Irreproachable; and with regard to their skill as Players, the Universal Pleasure and Satisfaction they have given is their best and most Honourable Testimony. The Character they brought from the Governor and Gentlemen of Virginia has been fully verified, and therefore we shall run no risk in pronouncing that "they are capable of entertaining a Sensible and Polite Audience."

August 23, 1762

Petition to the General Assembly of Rhode Island

To the Honourable General Assembly of the Colony of Rhode Island, now sitting at East Greenwich, August 23d, 1762:

The petition of us, the subscribers, inhabitants of the County of Providence, humbly sheweth that a number of stage-players have lately appeared, and a play-house has lately been built in the town of Providence, that the inhabitants of said town being legally called by warrant did, at their late town meeting, by a large majority, pass a vote that no stage-plays be acted in said town; yet the actors, in defiance of said vote, and in defiance of the public authority of said town have begun, and are daily continuing to exhibit stage-plays and other theatrical performances, which has been, and still is, the occasion of great uneasiness to many people in this colony, but more especially to your Honours petitioners in this county, humbly conceiving that so expensive amusements and idle diversions cannot be of any good tendency among us, especially at this time, when the colony as well as others is labouring under the grievous scarcity of hay and provisions.

Wherefore your petitioners pray that you will take this matter into your considerations, and make some effectual law to prevent any stage plays, comedies, or theatrical performances being acted in this Colony for the future.

The American Company of Comedians played but two seasons in Rhode Island. On August 30, 1762, an *Act to Prevent Stage Plays and other Theatrical Entertainments within this Colony* was passed, ending theatrical entertainment in New England.

October 13, 1765

Charleston [S. C.] Gazette

On Friday last, Mr. Douglass, director of the Theatre in this Town, arrived from London with a reinforcement to his Company. We hear he has engaged some very Capital Singers from the Theatres in London, with a view of entertaining the Town this Winter with English Operas. It is imagined, when he is joined by the Company from Barbados, that our Theatrical Performance will be executed in a manner not inferior to the most applauded in England. The Scenes and Decorations, we are informed, are of a Superior kind to any that have been seen in America, being designed by the most Eminent Maker in London.

Each time the American Company of Comedians played in the city of Philadelphia, they met with opposition. Generally they were confronted with letters in the newspaper, but there were occasionally other attempts at ending the entertainments:

February 17, 1767

Votes of the Assembly (Pennsylvania)

A Remonstrance presented to the Assembly of Pennsylvania

A Remonstrance from a great number of the inhabitants of the City and County of Philadelphia of several religious denominations was presented to the House and read, setting forth that they have with much concern observed the design to establish stage-playing by erecting a theatre in the suburbs of this city, and being apprehensive of the pernicious consequences thereof, conceive it necessary to express their earnest desire that every lawful measure may be taken to discourage the continuance of those attempts that are now made to promote such a design. That the direct tendency of stage-plays to divert the minds of the people and more especially of the unwary youths from the necessary application of the several employments by which they may be qualified to become useful members of society, renders it expedient for every well wisher to our trade and commerce to exert his endeavors to suppress them.

February 26, 1767

The Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia)

By AUTHORITY, By the AMERICAN COMPANY, At the new THEATRE, in Southwark, Tomorrow, being Friday, the 27th of February, will be presented, a COMEDY, written by CONGREVE, called, LOVE FOR LOVE. . .

Mr. Congreve's Comedies are allowed to abound with genuine Wit, and true Humour, but in Compliance with the licentious Taste of the Time in which they were written, the Author has, in some Places, given the Rein to his wanton Muse, and deviated from those Rules of a more refined Age, and chaste Stage require: The Reviver of this Play has taken the Freedom to crop such luxurances, and expunge every Passage that might be offensive either to Decency or good Manners.

New York, December 17, 1767

Pennsylvania Gazette Report

The expectation of seeing the Indian Chiefs at the Play on Many Night occasioned a great concourse of People. The House was Crowded, and it is said Great Numbers were obliged to go away for want of Room.

The Indians regarded the Play, which was Richard III, with Seriousness and Attention, but, as it cannot be supposed that they were Sufficiently Acquainted with the Language to Understand the Plot and Design and enter into the spirit of the Author, their Countenances and Behavior were rather expressive of Surprise and Curiosity than any other Passions. Some of them were much Surprised and Diverted at the Tricks of Harlequin.

In Massachusetts in 1750, an act was passed to "Prevent stage-plays and other Theatrical Entertainments." Douglass somehow eluded this particular law for several weeks in the summer of 1769, following the company's brief engagement in Albany, New York.

July 24, 1769

Boston Postboy & Advertiser

Mr. Douglass will this evening deliver a moral, satirical and entertaining lecture on various subjects. Among which are, the Heads of Alexander the Great, a Cherokee Chief, a cuckold; -a quack doctor; . . . To begin precisely at eight O'clock. Tickets for admission may be had at the Bunch of Grapes in King Street and at Green & Russell's in Queen Street at a Dollar each. Lecture held at a large room in Brattle St. Formerly Green & Waller Street.

June 14, 1770

Virginia Gazette (Purdie/Dixon)

Yesterday Mr. Douglass, with his company of comedians, arrived in town from Philadelphia, and, we hear, intend opening the theatre in this City, on Saturday, with the Beggar's Opera, and other entertainments.

September 6, 1770

Maryland Gazette (Annapolis)

The merit of Mr. Douglass' company is notoriously in the opinion of every man of sense in America, whose opportunities give him a title to judge—take them all in all—superior to that of any company in England, except those of the metropolis. The dresses are remarkably elegant; the dispatch of the business of the theatre uncommonly quick; and the stillness and good order preserved behind the scenes are proofs of the greatest attention and respect paid to the audience.

Y.Z.

January 2, 1772

Virginia Gazette (Purdie/Dixon)

Next Week the Theatre in Norfolk will be opened by the American Company of Comedians, where they are to remain but a short While, as they intend for this Place again by the Meeting of the General Assembly, and to perform till the End of the April Court. They then Proceed to the Northward, by Engagement, where it is probable they will continue some years.

November 17, 1773

The Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia)

To the PRINTERS of the PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE.

GENTLEMEN,

I COULD not help taking Notice of a Piece in your last Paper, signed Philadelphus, wherein the Author has, in a particular Manner, traduced and maltreated the American Company of Comedians, at present in this City. After perusing the ancient Code of Laws of this Government, he undertakes to prove three Inferences, 1st. That the Players are Vagrants and Sturdy Beggars. 2d. That the Playhouse in this City is a public Nuisance. 3d. That a Licence or Protection granted to the Players is void, being without, and contrary to, Law. . .

What are theatrical Representations but the Picture of real Life in Miniature, circumscribed to the Limits of a few Hours: And can real Life be truly and justly represented, but by contrasting Virtue with Vice? Here is an Alternative; if Youths are so depraved as to reduce to Practice, what is shewn upon the Stage for the Purpose of Ridicule, the Crime is their own, not the Actors. If mankind were so perfect as to need no Reproof, it would have saved the Satyrists a World of Trouble, and deprived our dramatic Writers of that Fame they now so justly merit.

This Writer endeavours to include the Players under the Words Vagrants and Sturdy Beggars. . . These itinerant Comedians are authorized in every Government where they go; Stage playing is the visible Means of their Living, which cannot be considered as a State of Idleness; and, while they can reimburse Individuals for their necessary Expences, have a legal Settlement any where. Their Proceedings are like the rest of Mankind, and therefore exculpate them from the Stigma of Sturdy Beggars. —They publish their Bills; every one sees them; and any one may come who chooses, paying the annexed Prices, this is neither Compulsion or Begging; it is a tacit Contract between the Parties, —paying the stated Sum—Admission to the Theatre. . . .

As to the second conclusive Head—The Playhouse in this City is no Nuisance, even in the strictest Acceptation of Hawkins; that it draws together a large Concourse of Coaches, People, &c. is evident; but to the Disturbance of the Neighbourhood—denied. The prudent manager of the Company, wisely foreseeing this Inconvenience, erected the Theatre in the Suburbs of this City, where but very few, and those of the worst Sort, resided, that no Nuisance might arise therefrom. . . .

I am not a Player, though I argue for them, but only a Well-wisher to the Stage, as far as it conduces to the Refinement, Edification, and Amusement of Mankind. And as Hawkins says, the Nuisance of Plays consists in the Abuse of them, so may we add, of all Arts, Sciences, Professions and Denominations. Has any Thing been conducive of greater Evils among men, then Disputes in Religion? Yet we must not infer from thence, that all Religion should be abolished, because it has been productive of Feuds, Schisms and Bloodshed.

I am, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

PHILALETHES.

November 3, 1774

Williamsburg Gazette (Purdie/Dixon)

Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of the ***AMERICAN CONTINENTAL CONGRESS,*** *held at Philadelphia on the 5th of September 1774;*

> *Eighth. That we will, in our several Stations, encourage Frugality, Economy, and Industry, and promote Agriculture, Arts, and the Manufactures of the Country, especially that of Wool; and will discountenance and discourage every Species of Extravagance and Dissipation, especially all Horse-racing, and all Kinds of Gaming, Cock-fighting, Exhibitions of Shows, Plays and other expensive Diversions and Entertainments.*

The American Company of Comedians realized their fate on October 24, 1774, but did not end their theatrical endeavors. Many members of the company continued on to Kingston, Jamaica, and performed there throughout the years of the Revolution, after which they returned to the North American coast. Several performers ventured to the London stage to ply their trade but found little success. David Douglass, upon arriving in Jamaica, continued with the company only a brief period before he returned to his original trade as a printer.

Editor's Notes

Farewell

The editorial staff of *the interpreter* bids a fond farewell to Planning Board member Stacey Omo who left in August to join her husband in Germany. Thank you for your contributions to this publication.

Happy travels!

Footnotes

Because of space limitations we are unable to include most footnotes/endnotes with articles in this publication. Anyone interested in these references, feel free to contact the editor or assistant editor.

This issue of *the interpreter* is dedicated to Conny Graft, Editorial Board member and Interpretive Education and Support director, who is leaving her full time position to spend more time with her family. The good news is that Conny will remain with Colonial Williamsburg on a part time basis and will concentrate her efforts on visitor research. The editorial and departmental staffs thank you for the creative leadership, support, and good humor you have shown over the years. Enjoy your new hours of leisure, and maybe you'll have time to write a few articles for us!

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