

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER
for the week of October 18 - 24

Apothecary – They had their second task force meeting on a visitor satisfaction survey. The new skeleton is now assembled and will be arriving soon. More info is to come.

The magazine “House and Home” has a great article about the Apothecary Shop and Sharon and Robin in their Fall 2015 issue. The pages have been scanned and are attached. I’m afraid the pictures came out rather dark.

Armoury:

Blacksmith – They continue working on a coin press for the Curator of Numismatics, making andirons for Collections for Raleigh Tavern, forging smoker’s tongs for Anderson display, forging a froe for a customer, making firesteels for tinder boxes for Prentis.

Tin Shop – They are fabricating two saucepans for Foodways, making gill cups, completing tinder boxes for Prentis, and beginning to work on lanterns to light the new workshops.

Artificer's Shop – They are engaged in production of saddle valises as well as handling the usual repairs and incidental leather items for use in the Historic Area.

Jay Howlett and Emma Cross, as well as Aislinn Lewis and Jenny Lynn, were mentioned in a web article about the leather stays that were recently made for Aislinn and Jenny. Please go to the following link for the article and pictures:

<http://twonerdyhistorygirls.blogspot.com/2015/10/leather-stays-for-18thc-working-women.html>.

Basketmaker – They continue to split white oak and will begin to weave up some baskets for Christmas sales at Prentis. Please have a look at your baskets, and if they need repair, please bring them to the Basketmakers. Fraying rims need to be fixed ASAP. Thanks!

Bindery – They are working on a rule book for the Cabinetmaker and making books for Prentis (done in full calf skin). They continue working on the music book.

Brickmaker – They are busy constructing their clamp, or kiln, where the bricks made this summer will be fired Nov 18-22. Work will include stacking the 27,000 or so bricks, encasing the green bricks first with previously fired bricks and then a layer of clay, and of course, stacking firewood.

Cabinetmaker – They continue work on the replication of two case pieces and an easy chair, as well as the upholstery for a half set of side chairs. The harpsichord makers are preparing materials for two new spinets and their presentation to the 2016 Working Wood Symposium. The treadle lathe is nearing completion and will be in operation.

Carpenters – They have returned to Great Hopes and are building a small building for storing tools at the Carpenter's Yard.

Coopers – They are repairing casks for the transport program.

Foodways – They are working with Aleworks on a test batch of porter. They are also working on a series of pre-made punch mixes based on 18th-century recipes and practicing on some sugar work for next year's confections program.

Great Hopes Plantation –

Some of the Farming and Domestic Arts staff will learn and practice broom making this week.

Farming: Half of the fields are plowed, harrowed, and sown with clover. On the remaining half, the cornstalks have been harrowed and grubbed off, and the remaining hills need to be harrowed flat. After which, they will begin to plow. They continue to pick cotton as it opens, and work on small woodworking projects.

Domestic Arts: They will be harvesting the rest of the red scarlet radishes and planting another batch. In addition, they will be thinning out the turnips and planting a few more to ensure a big crop, and tending the mustard greens and kale planted last week in the slave garden. They will also use up their large lettuce patch by making a dish called salmagundi made with cold chicken, anchovies, egg yolk, and dressed with a vinaigrette. Guests had a unique experience last week when Chef Anthony Frank from the Lodge cooked for a short while with Domestic Arts Intern Nicole Justice in their Kitchen.

Gun Shop/Foundry – They continue to work on gun locks for a rifle and a cased pair of pistols. The Founders just finished a bronze hand bell for the opening of the Market House. They also are polishing a number of pewter taper sticks for Prentis Store.

Historic Garden – The weather is looking beautiful, and the fall plants are flourishing. The cheese cloth covers have been taken off of the cabbages as they have observed that the cabbage moth has moved on for the season. Strawberry greens are looking great; and to help the strawberry harvest, they are transplanting more plants in the bed. Spinach is now starting to bear true leaves; the onions are not yet up. The pole beans are to be pulled soon, and spring bulbs and flowers are on their way in, as well. The sweet potatoes are still curing. Kale is getting bigger, almost to the size of harvesting, and they can see the first tops of the turnips.

Joiners – Musket Crate³ (the only thing they will be working on is making 3 Musket Crates).

The pictures below: this is a box built by Mr. Howlett that was based on the English officer's chest that was recently acquired by Colonial Williamsburg. The handles and hinges were forged in the Blacksmith shop based on the surviving hardware on the original. The size of the box was modified to accommodate the reproduction of General Washington's folding camp bed that was built in the Joiner's shop last year by Mr. Salisbury. The bed and box will make a brief stop at Mount Vernon next month and then on to Philadelphia to become an integral part of the Museum of the American Revolution's collection.



“A bed in a box.”

Millinery – Sarah Woodyard is now a Journeywoman Milliner and Mantua-maker!!! Congratulations!!!

She finished her last Apprenticeship project Thursday, Oct 14th at 4:05pm.

Friday and Saturday, October 16th and 17th, will see the making of a gold silk damask sacque in the late 1760's style. A professor from the University of New Hampshire is coming down to see the process of 18th-century mantua-making. She is writing a book that is referring to several 18th-century gowns in Charleston, SC. The gown they will be making will be technologically copied from a gown which has no lining, which is also in the same museum collection. Sarah and Abby are preparing for a paper that they will be presenting at a day Symposium in Maryland the first of November.

Printers – They are continuing the presswork for “The Articles of Confederation;” and when away from the press, they are assembling stitched books.

Shoemaker – Whenever possible, they like to demonstrate other parts of the shoemaking trade in Williamsburg. Over the past several years, Val Povinelli has been focusing his research on the wartime production of shoes for Virginia's military forces. Since the early summer, he has been spending time each week at the Anderson Armory discussing the work of Williamsburg's Publick Shoemakers. Using a rudimentary tool kit, he has been repairing shoes for the staff and explaining the difficulties faced by local shoemakers during the War for Independence. Val can usually be found at the Armory on Thursday mornings and the occasional Wednesday.

Silversmith – They are working on various sorts of spoons and salt shovels, Gurney Bowls and a fluted bowl, a “skittle ball” teapot, a pair of patty pans, a small dram cup, Revere Beakers and raised beakers, a thistle cup, trade silver jewelry, rings and letter charms, a 12-inch Montieth, 2 copper vessels (one being raised by the intern, the other by an apprentice), and ladles. The intern is scraping an ingot she cast and will be making a 17th-century bodkin.

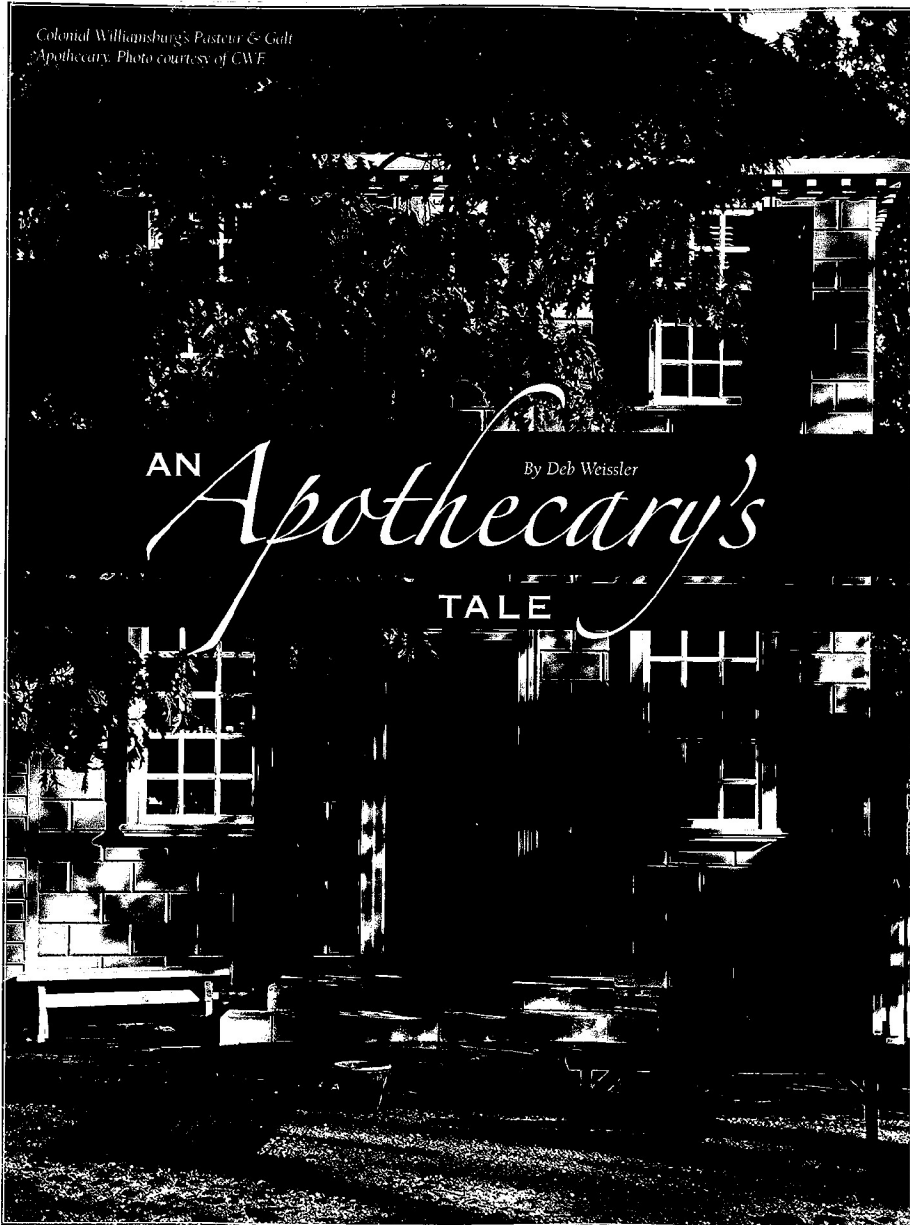
Please note that at any given time, not all of these items will be being worked on, but all will be available to be seen and discussed with anyone who is interested.

Tailors – They are working on the mattresses and curtains for Washington's camp bed and finishing details on the Marquees.

Weaver – They will be dyeing with the only native dye stuff, black walnut – they fought the squirrels and won! Also on the dye list are Madder root (orange), Indigo (blue), and Fustic (Yellow). Good autumnal colors. Much of the items to be dyed will be for the Milliners, who will be using the dyed yarn for a workshop in November. The volunteer from the Wheelwright, Al, is helping them out while his shop is traveling in England and Poland. He helped them build a new warp for blankets.

Wheelwright – The shop will be closed for maintenance Oct 12th-24th. During this time, Andrew De Lisle and Paul Zelesnikar are traveling to the UK on for two weeks. They will study original vehicles in Warwick and Cardiff and visit several shops. The main purpose of their trip is to be inducted into The Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights for the City of London as Yeoman of the Company. There are only 15 positions, and they will be the only American working wheelwrights in the company. Congratulations to them both!!

Wigmaker – They are constructing a Bob Wig, comprised of human and horse hair, which Debbie saw in Germany, a wiglet for one of the AI's, and a hand-knotted base for a new wig for Richard Schuman (Patrick Henry). They also continue to do daily maintenance on wigs used by CW staff to support various programming (plays, Ghost Tours, Rev City, and commercials).



Colonial Williamsburg's Pasteur & Galt Apothecary. Photo courtesy of CWE

AN *By Deb Weisler* Apothecary's TALE

On a late September morning the apothecary shop's aromatic blend of herbs and spices does little to dispel the lingering odor of a camphor unguent compounded the evening before. A cool breeze through the open window clears the air and heralds the arrival of cooler weather. Autumn is welcomed, as it will reduce the number of malarial fever cases they've been treating; but now the changing weather will likely bring an increase in those suffering from rheumatism and influenza. Come December, they will no doubt dispense chalk and cream of tartar aplenty to those who have over-indulged in holiday feasting. A supply of both is already inbound from London.

Welcome to the world of 18th century medicine, where the local apothecary is a one-stop shop for anyone seeking medical remedies, advice or cure, or craving the latest in imported soap, food stuffs, candles, or sugar cones. Today's pharmacies cannot lay claim to a business model that proved successful more than two hundred years ago.

Colonial Williamsburg's Pasteur & Galt Apothecary is the epitome of a well-run 18thc pharmacy. Its collection of antique delft jars are well-stocked and labeled with centuries-old compounds, many of which will still be used in the 21st c. Raw materials and botanicals are carefully stored in labeled bins beneath the shelves, or in the shop's attic.



(left) Finished drugs in liquid, tablet, and ointment form. In front lies a tooth key used for extractions. (right) Various ingredients from 18thc pharmacy books. Photos courtesy of CWE

At its peak, the old Colonial capitol "had at least eight apothecary-surgeons that we know of, but they may not have all owned shops," explains historian and interpreter Sharon Cotner. "Some were in partnership with one another, like Pasteur and Galt. Their hours varied, often working into the night or the holidays if necessary."

Because Williamsburg had fewer than two thousand residents in the mid to late 1700s, the town was unable to support many physicians that were university trained. In England, medical practitioners often specialized—physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, and druggists. Colonial apothecary-surgeons often served all these functions.

Trained through an apprenticeship,

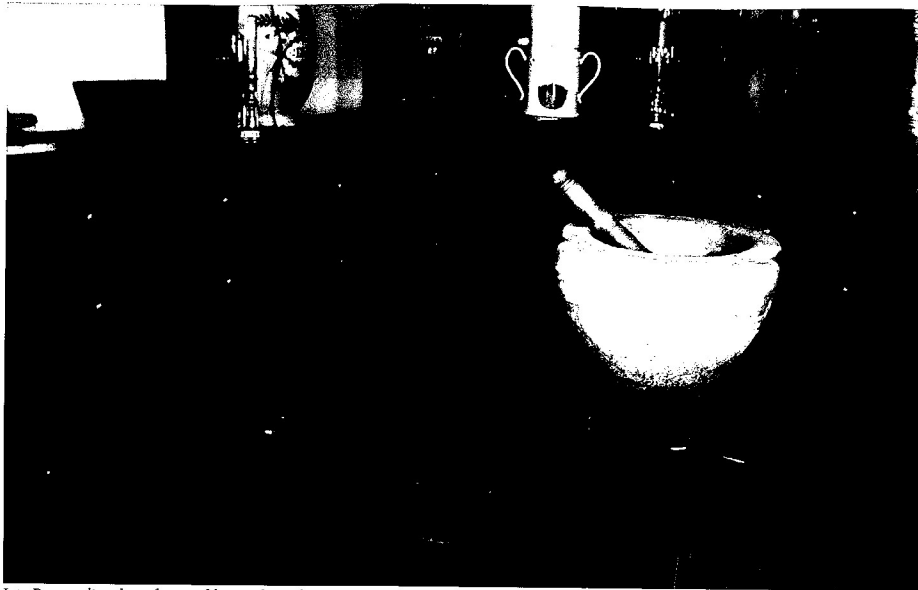
a few had the good fortune of attending medical school, but most did not. They relied on hands-on observations, medical and chemistry books, and a practicing apothecary to guide them in matters of medicine, pharmacology, surgery, and dentistry. Regardless of his education, this medical professional was highly regarded and referred to as "doctor".

Health care was a do-it-yourself venture for many colonial Americans. One didn't need a prescription from their doctor to obtain medicine and many folks often knew enough rudimentary pharmacology to request specific drugs. Why pay for a doctor's consultation plus the medicine when all one needed to do was ask for the drugs desired?

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L to R: arm sling, leg splint, and knee splint. Photo courtesy of CWF

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THE SCIENCES OF MEDICINE, CHEMISTRY, AND BIOLOGY HAD YET TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS ON THE THEORY OF DISEASES, SO APOTHECARIES AND PHYSICIANS ALIKE OFTEN TREATED THE SYMPTOMS RATHER THAN THE CAUSES.

In the face of virulent and infectious diseases however, 18thc medicine was powerless, and the practice of bloodletting and purging were common treatments for maladies which were still poorly understood.

The sciences of medicine, chemistry, and biology had yet to make significant impacts on the theory of diseases, so apothecaries and physicians alike often treated the symptoms rather than the causes. A look through a Williamsburg physician's index of diseases describes symptoms in the mid-1700s that sound foreign today: ague, bloody flux, dropsy, dry gripes, king's evil, and quinsy.

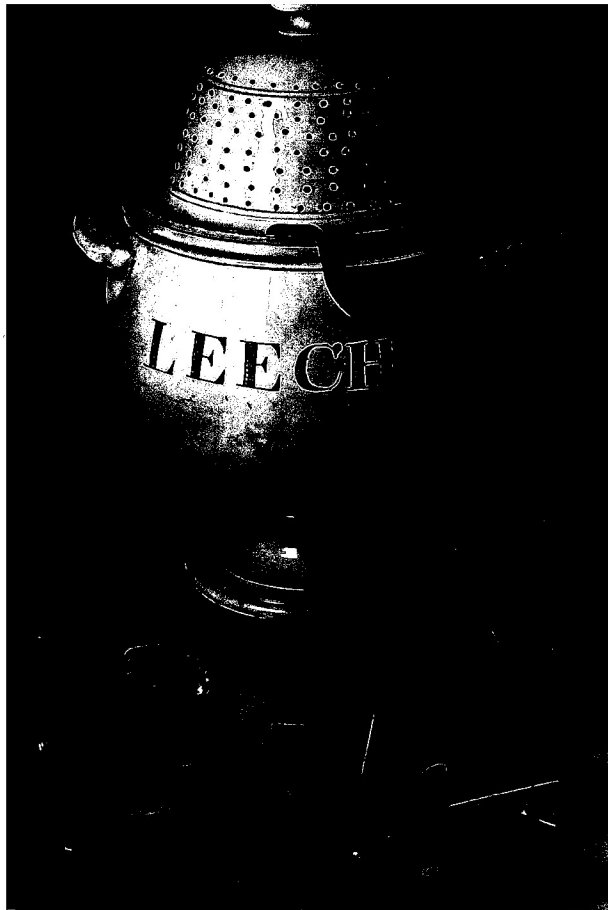
For historians and interpreters like Sharon and supervisor Robin Kipps, the study of colonial diseases and medicine has been a fascinating and satisfying occupation, despite the fact that in the 18thc women would have been excluded from the practice of medicine. "A woman could inherit an apothecary business from her husband, but she could not run the business alone," Sharon explains. "She would have to hire a male apothecary to manage the business for her."

Robin and Sharon are the only full-time employees at the Pasteur & Galt Apothecary that is located in a restored two-story building on the original site of the 18thc shop on Duke of Gloucester Street. They are fortunate to have three willing volunteers and a summer intern to assist in historical interpretations in the shop five days a week. Several volunteers are retired physicians and pharmacists who are contributing their love for medicine in new ways.

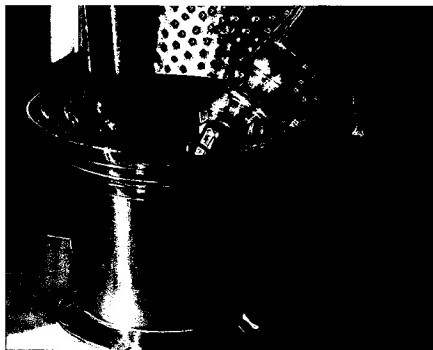
Robin joined the trades department as a summer employee in 1981 and moved to the apothecary a year later. As a former psychology major, her favorite area of study is the history of pharmacy, including the comparison of 18thc plant-based drugs and chemicals. Sharon, who



Apothecary supervisor Robin Kipps points out the various antique tin oxide glazed ceramic storage jars. Photo courtesy of CWF



(top) A jar of leeches serves as a backdrop to various bleeding instruments. (right) A brass mortar and pestle used to compound medicines. Photos courtesy of CWF



specializes in the study of bloodletting, surgery, cancer, and medical theory, started working at the apothecary in 1984. Her background in psychology and forensics made her a natural fit for the apothecary.

Both women have traveled to London to study the roots of Colonial medicine, and have made it a point to visit various medical museums throughout the US. "We've had some very gracious donors who enabled us to attend two conferences in London," Robin explains. "The Society of Apothecaries in London was offering a course in the history of medicine, which was taught on-site at their headquarters where they have been since the 1600s." While in London, they had the opportunity to visit behind-the-scenes at several well-known medical and science museums and botanical gardens.

London apothecaries were originally members of the Grocer's Guild, and together can be traced back to the Guild of Peppers, who formed in 1180, and was responsible for maintaining standards for the purity of spices and for setting certain weights and measures. If you find this an odd name, keep in mind that since prehistoric times, black peppercorns were a highly prized trade good. Until well after the Middle Ages, virtually all pepper used throughout Europe came from India and was often referred to as "black gold". Peppercorns were so valuable that it was accepted in lieu of money in dowries, taxes, and rent.

By the early 14thc, the Peppers were joined by the Spicers, subsequently becoming wholesale merchants dealing in spices and groceries. The trade in spices led to the emergence of spicer-apothecaries, who ground and dispensed herbs and drugs for medicinal purposes. As members of the Grocers' Company, they sold spices, confectionery, perfumes, wines, herbs, and compounded drugs. In 1617 they were granted a royal charter to secede from the Grocer's Company to become The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries.

Authority over medical practice, however, lay with the College of Physicians. In 1704 the Society won a legal battle against the College in the House of Lords, who ruled that apothecaries could both prescribe and dispense medicines. Apothecaries had become the equivalent of today's pharmacies.

LEECHES AND LANCETS, OPIATES AND DRAGON'S BLOOD, SPERMACETI AND CAMPHOR WERE ALL PART OF AN APOTHECARY'S PHARMACOPEIA.

Although not university-trained physicians, apothecary-surgeons dispensed medicines, consulted on health issues, performed surgeries, and practiced midwifery. Doctors Pasteur and Galt apprenticed for part of their education and also trained at St. Thomas's Hospital in London. Galt also studied midwifery and attended medical lectures on the theory of medicine.

Despite their training, medicine in Colonial times was often crude, painful, and expensive. The words "germ" and "sterile" were unknown in regards to disease and infection. Diseases were often classified by their symptoms, not their causes. Instruments were not sterilized, and linen bandages were often washed and re-used.

As visitors to Colonial Williamsburg gather inside today's apothecary, summer intern Courtney Hurt raises a question: "How many of you have ever broken your arm or leg?" Hands go up, particularly among younger visitors, guffawing as they recall their various mishaps.

"Well, in the 18thc they didn't have hard casts or air-boots," Courtney continues. "Instead, if you broke your leg or ankle, you would wear one of these leather splints that were buckled into place, and wasn't designed to let you walk around. You would have to lie in bed for six to eight weeks until the bone set," Courtney said, as faces turned sober. "Because of inactivity, you were at risk of muscle atrophy or blood clots, which was life-threatening. Breaking a bone was serious business back then."

Leeches and lancets, opiates and dragon's blood, spermaceti and camphor were all part of an apothecary's pharmacopeia. Although plant materials were gathered from all over the world, Colonial apothecaries were required by law to import everything they compounded from England. When the Revolutionary War broke out, the apothecaries turned to the Dutch and French West Indies for medicine.

This mortar is original to the 18thc Pasteur & Galt Apothecary. Photo by Deb Weissler.

Today, Robin and Sharon compound all the medicines that are on display, and fashion bandages made from linen purchased at local millinery shops. "Occasionally an employee will be wearing a modern band-aid that must be covered while they're working in the restored area," Robin laughs, "so we'll supply them with a period-appropriate bandage."

Visitors to the shop come away with not only a historical perspective of Colonial medicine, but a renewed appreciation for how far modern medicine has progressed to the present day. "The unique thing about this shop is that Sharon and I are able to give visitors an in-depth look into the history and science of medicine here in Colonial Williamsburg and throughout the colonies," Robin adds. "That's our

specialty and our contribution to the guest experience."

The Apothecary Shop is open five days a week to CFW ticket holders. Robin and Sharon, along with two other former employees, have written a fascinating book entitled *Physick: The Professional Practice of Medicine in Williamsburg, 1740-1775* that can be purchased from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. ■

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