

# “THE MECHANICK’S ADVISER”

## for August 6 - 12

### Armoury:

**Blacksmith** – Various projects are underway this week: They have finished the compass curtain rods for Mt. Vernon and have picked back up on hardware for the red carriage. They are continuing on Dividers for the Wheelwrights, lathe nails for the Carpenters, repair of pruning shears for the Gardeners, tongs, nail headers, and hoes, as well as a pair of scissors.

**Tinsmith** – They are continuing to work on watering cans, cups, cloches, and coffee pots, as well as various repairs.

**Brickyard** – Brickmaking continues daily. “Level and Plumb” continues every day except Mondays from 2:30 – 4:00. The crew has produced around 15,000 bricks so far, and there are two months of brickmaking to go. The staff is starting to slowly dwindle as many of the casual staff are preparing to return to college.

Work also continues on the lime kiln out at the Windmill site. If the Masons can get enough mortar mixed up, they will be able to put the finishing touches on it in the next few weeks. It is over eleven feet tall and is visible just behind the Windmill from the path from the Visitor Center. They love to have folks come out and see one of the neatest things they have ever built!

**Cabinetmaker** – A wide assortment of pieces are underway in the Cabinetmaker Shop. Brian (with Cooper Jonathan) recently completed a pair of coopered mahogany wine coolers (now on sale at Prentis Store). Brian is currently finishing work on a small, ornately carved, oval tea chest out of Caribbean mahogany. Bill is fitting a large, walnut paneled door to the case of a replica 1707 Philadelphia scriptor (writing cabinet) on chest. Kaare is applying finish to a walnut corner chair based on chairs made by the mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century shop of Robert Walker in King George County, Virginia. Harpsichord maker Edward and his Apprentice, Robin, have assembled the case of a spinet (based on a 1726 instrument by London-maker Cawton Aston). Their work on this instrument presently concerns the plucking action, keyboard, and soundboard.

**Carpenter** – They have raised several of the columns and plates for the Raleigh Porch and will continue to frame the ceiling of this new addition to the old tavern for the next week or so. They are also making red oak plaster lath for the same job.

**Colonial Garden** – Baskets of produce continue to go out to the kitchens full of cucumbers, squash, and tomatoes. Seeds saving also continues with dill, cypress vine, beans, and any flower that the Gardeners take delight in. Work on paths continues with the addition of shells. Compost piles have been turned and lumber is being readied to complete the edging of the new beds. Added to the work done this week was a well-needed cleaning of the cistern. The tuberoses are in full bloom, filling the garden and street with its lovely scent. Butterflies, moths, bees, and odd sorts of wasps continue to frantically work over any bloom that is available in the Garden.

**Farming** - Tobacco has been harvested and can be seen hanging in the temporary tobacco house, the Ludwell-Paradise Stable. The cotton is blooming and forming bolls, which will open up later this summer/fall. The squirrels have decided that the corn that is being grown is better than sugar cookies. Pumpkins have been planted to replace the flax and turnips. More cowpeas will be added where the tobacco was growing.

**Foundry** – This week, the Founders have been busy making moulds and pouring silver for our Silversmiths. Items include a handle to a small cup, a foot to a sauce boat, some Spanish milled dollars, and a few "whip-end" salt spoons. Pewter spoons (always a favorite) are being made for Prentis Store, along with bronze marrow and tea caddy spoons, a

pair of bronze candlesticks, and a small presentation piece. They also polished up a few things in the shop that haven't been truly shiny in years, like our large gold-bronze door knocker. A sort of experiment is also underway: blending a couple of types of moulding sand in order to achieve even crisper castings. Some is from Albany, New York, and some is from Knoxville, Tennessee.



Suzie making a sand mould for the Silversmiths.





The polished gold-bronze door knocker.

**Gunsmith** – Richard is continuing work on his pistol set, and Darrin has forged and is filing a bullet mold. He will begin forging parts of a lock after the mold is done. Eric poured a brass buttpiece this week and will be filing it to completion the next couple of days.

**Joinery** – The Joiners have fit all of the paneling into the north wall of the Raleigh and are hard at work fitting the south wall. They are also putting together a brick mold for their friends down in the Brickyard.

**Military Programs** – They continue to conduct activities in the Magazine Yard, interpret the Magazine, and present “The Necessity of Order in Battle” at the end of the day. Additionally, they are sending staff to help out at the Musket Range and crew the new Ax-Throwing Range on the corner of Nicholson and Botetourt.

**Milliner and Mantua-maker** – Taking a two-dimensional image and making it into something a person could wear was one of the ways that a Mantua-maker kept up to date with fashion. So Meg (their graduate-student intern) is completing the rust-coloured gown in the John Collet 1777 print- “The Bachelor’s Fare” (from CW Collection). She quilted nearly all of the green petticoat, and the rest of the staff are helping with designing the trims, cutting out the gown, doing the fittings, and making-up the cap. See the finished ensemble on Sunday, in the Millinery Shop’s Facebook post.







**Music** – This week for “Baroque Music Fridays,” the Governor’s Musick presents a program of mad songs, or pieces sung from the perspective of a character who has gone insane. The Music Department was also recently added to the character tracking system on the CW Explorer app and are looking forward to being pursued by their rabid fan base.

**Printing Shop and Bookbinding** – The Pressmen will soon take the first Gazette form out of the press. David has received the missing “sorts” from the type founder in Massachusetts, allowing him to finish setting page three of the Virginia Gazette. Chad has “The Sentiments of an American Woman” corrected and ready for the press. This handbill will be in production while the next Gazette pages are corrected.

**Bookbinding** – Don continues work on several Washington Dispatch Cases and just completed a blank book for a donor. Barbara and Dale continue work on folders as well as various blank books. The Bindery just delivered fifty waste books to the Prentis Store, assembled by part-time Binder, Bill.

**Silversmith** – The shop is kicking into full gear to finish the Monteith, with every Silversmith assigned their part in addition to their individual projects. Preston is working on several small fluted bowls. Chris has begun work on a small silver patch box. George has been making spoons. William has started planishing his first bowl in copper. Bobbie is working on trade silver and preparing to make a salver. Parker is working on raising a gurney bowl as he waits for the handle for his thistle cup to be cast.



William's Copper bowl ready for planishing.

**Wigmaker** – Maintenance continues on wigs and hairpieces. The next week's Term will be "Petite Wig": a partial wig or demi-wig, the hair of which blends with the wearer's own hair. Similar to a wiglet. Sara has completed a few wiglets in the last few months, and they are now on display in the shop if anyone wishes to see for themselves the marvel that is a Petite Wig.