# *Questions & Answers*

VOL. 3, No. 1 February 1982

SUBJECT INDEX: ENERGY SOURCES IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY WILLIAMSBURG

Today we are all challenged to find better ways to use and conserve our energy sources. Our visitors are very interested in learning how people living in the eighteenth century provided heat and light for their homes in the cold and darkness of a bitter winter. Using the artifacts around us we can re-create in the imagination of our visitors the contrast between cold and heat and darkness and light, and the importance of "fire" in the lives of all men and women who lived in the colonial period.

We hope that the answers to the following questions about colonial energy use provided by Harold Gill of the Research Department will help you in your interpretations.

Where would most of the Williamsburg residents have gotten their firewood?

Wood dealers who owned land around town supplied townspeople with their firewood. The Burwells of Carter's Grove sold many loads of wood. The following newspaper advertisement (dated December 1774) sums up the situation: For sale 400 acres in York County, 4 miles from town with "as much Timber as may pay for it in one Year, by selling Wood to the Inhabitants of Williamsburg."

Can it be estimated how many cords of wood would have been used to maintain a fire in a family kitchen during a year?

We can make only a very rough estimate--about fifty cart loads a year (a cart load a week). For a vivid contrast, see Fithian's Diary, (U.Va. Press) p. 61.

Are there any references to the scarcity of firewood in the Williamsburg area during the eighteenth century?

We can find no references stating that firewood was scarce in the Williamsburg area, but the implication of leases (see answer #4) and other documents is that colonial Virginians were concerned about the supply and worked toward conserving it.

Is there any evidence that there were attempts to conserve wood and/or plant new trees?

Yes, leases for property often stipulated that the timber was not to be cut.

Other than the Palace and Capitol, do we know of other buildings using coal before the Revolution?

The College and many private houses in Williamsburg burned coal. We know this from advertisements for "chamber coal" and iron grates. Such homes as the Peyton Randolph House and John Carter's half of the brick duplex on Duke of Gloucester Street were equipped with coal grates and coal houses.

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What price did Governor Botetourt pay for a bushel or ton of coal?
10 pence per bushel.

From whom did he purchase the coal for the Palace?
Botetourt bought coal from Anthony Hay, who was supplied by Norfolk merchant Neil Jamieson, and from George Wythe, who was probably acting as agent for someone else.

How did the price of coal compare with the price of charcoal or wood?
Charcoal cost between sixpence and 7½ pence per bushel; coal, 10 pence per bushel. It is impossible to make a comparison of these with wood, which was usually sold by the cart load. The Burwells of Carter's Grove supplied wood to Williamsburg residents at prices ranging from 7½ pence per load to 6 shillings per load. The price variation may have resulted from the fact that some people provided their own cartage and the more expensive was delivered. The size of the vehicle may have varied as well.

From whom did Governor Botetourt purchase his charcoal and wood?
We do not know who sold charcoal for use in the Palace kitchen. In 1769 Botetourt bought some wood from the estate of Philip Ludwell. Most wood for the Palace fireplaces probably came from the Palace Lands. The Palace account book from Badminton detailing "work Done with the Cart" shows many days' labor in "hawling Wood from the Park."

Were there any laws in Williamsburg during the colonial period that attempted to regulate fire safety especially in the taverns?
The article on the Fire Engine in The Interpreter for January 1982 discusses all known fire regulations for Williamsburg. Nothing specifically about taverns is mentioned in extant city ordinances.

Was fire insurance available?
Fire insurance was available from English companies. We know of policyholders in Norfolk but not in Williamsburg. The Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia was not established until 1795, and the earliest policies for Williamsburg properties are dated 1796--well outside the colonial period.

Was there a chandler in Williamsburg or were candles made at home?
Not only was there a chandler in Williamsburg but imported candles were sold in many local stores. The Burwells of Carter's Grove purchased candles from both merchants and local chandlers. Some people, no doubt, made candles at home, but judging from candle-making equipment appearing in personal estate inventories, the practice was certainly not regularly carried on in most homes.

Erratum: In response to Peter Ross's question concerning our statement about locksmiths in Williamsburg, we should have said that in addition to repairing locks, there were also blacksmiths who made locks.

# Questions & Answers

VOL. 3, No. 2 April 1982


SUBJECT INDEX: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

This issue of Questions and Answers addresses some of your questions about court procedures and eighteenth-century crime and punishment. Today, as at any time in history, the crimes committed and the punishment established give great insights into the values held by that society. Harold Gill has provided all of the answers for this issue.

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Please define the following legal terms.

--Benefit of clergy, No benefit of clergy

In its original sense, benefit of clergy denoted the exemption accorded to clergymen from the jurisdiction of secular courts or from arrest or attachment on criminal process. Afterward it meant a privilege of exemption from the punishment of death accorded to such persons as were clerks (all who could read). This exemption from capital punishment was anciently allowed to clergymen only but afterwards to all who were connected with the church, even to its most subordinate officers; at a still later time to all who could read whether ecclesiastics or laymen. It does not appear to have been extended to cases of high treason nor to mere misdemeanors.

The privilege was claimed after the person's conviction by a motion technically called "praying his clergy." As a means of testing his clerical character, he was given a psalm to read (usually--or always--the fifty-first) and, upon reading it correctly, he was turned over to ecclesiastical courts to be tried by the bishop or a jury of twelve clerks. They heard him and his witnesses on oath. This privilege greatly mitigated the extreme rigor of criminal laws but was found to involve such abuses that Parliament began to enact that certain crimes should be felonies "without benefit of clergy," and finally it was altogether abolished in the reign of George IV. The United States Congress in 1790 enacted that there should be no benefit of clergy for any capital crime against the U.S., and if this privilege formed a part of the common law of the states before the Revolution, it no longer exists.

Prisoners convicted of certain crimes in Virginia were allowed to claim benefit of clergy. The right to claim benefit of clergy was not allowed to persons convicted of willful murder, rape, treason, arson, horse-stealing, burglary, or robbery. In 1732 the right was extended to women, Negroes, mulattoes, and Indians. At the same time the reading requirement was eliminated.

Those who were granted benefit of clergy were burnt in the hand--that is, branded on the "Brawn of the left Thumb." If a prisoner was convicted of a homicide other than willful murder (manslaughter, self-defense, etc.), he was branded with the letter M. For all other felonies the letter T was used. The brand served as an identifying mark because a person was allowed benefit of clergy only one time. The granting of benefit of clergy restored all citizenship rights to the prisoner.

(Black's Law Dictionary)

Please define the following legal terms (continued)

--Corruption of the blood, No corruption of the blood

In English law corruption of the blood was the consequence of attainder, specifically that the attainted person could not inherit lands or anything else from his ancestor nor could he retain those he already had or transmit them to any heir. Attainder is the extinction of civil rights and capacities that took place whenever a person who has committed treason or a felony received the death sentence.

In Virginia the laws concerning felony offenses did not allow attainder to corrupt the blood or cause forfeiture of estates. According to Black's Law Dictionary, corruption of the blood is unknown in America.

--Ears nailed to the pillory

This was presumably the punishment to habitual offenders for relatively minor offenses. This form of punishment was effective in two ways; first, by causing the offender to be publicly humiliated while standing at the pillory, and second by leaving lasting scars. (By the way, there were cases of people coming to court for certification that they were not habitual offenders but that their ears were scarred in another way, such as by an accident.)

--Sentenced to hang or to starvation or pressing

Hanging was the sentence for murder, robbery, housebreaking, and other serious crimes. Starvation and pressing were not legal punishments in Virginia.

Where was the phrase "pass before the bar" first used in a legal sense and under what circumstances was it used?

The term bar has more than one legal usage. In the Inns of Court, a partition separated the seats of the readers (instructors) from the rest of the hall. Students, after they had attained a certain standing, were called from the body of the hall to take a principal part in the exercises of the house. Hence the phrases "to be called to the bar" (to be admitted a barrister) and "to cast over the bar" (to disbar or deprive of the status of a barrister).

The bar also refers to the barrier or wooden rail marking off the immediate precinct of the judge's seat at which prisoners are stationed for arraignment, trial, or sentence. This bar soon became synonymous with court as in the phrase "at bar", i.e., in court, in open court. "Trial at bar" meant a trial before the full court in which an action or indictment is brought.

If a white man of property had been convicted of a felony in the eighteenth century, did he lose his voting rights?

If a person was convicted of a felony, he was usually executed if he was not pardoned or was not granted benefit of clergy. If he was pardoned or granted benefit of clergy his civil rights were fully restored.

How were blacks tried if they committed a crime?

If a slave committed a capital crime, that is, a crime punishable by death, he was tried before a county court of Oyer and Terminer specially appointed by the governor. This court had the power to set the punishment and carry it out. If a slave committed a crime punishable by corporal punishment, he was tried before the regular county court.

How did they punish unmarried pregnant women?

In 1661-1662 a law fixed the fine for (unmarried) males and females found guilty of fornication, proved by confession or oaths of two witnesses, at 500 pounds of tobacco. They were sometimes required to do public penance in their parish churches. When an offender was a servant, the 500 pounds of tobacco was paid by his or her master, and the servant remained in servitude six months beyond the original term of service. If the master refused to pay the fine, the servant was whipped. Fines were double if fornication with a black or mulatto was proven.

The 1661-1662 laws do not mention penalties for free women who bore illegitimate children. However, the presence of such a child would of course be proof of fornication. In the case of a servant woman giving birth to a bastard child, the law of 1661-1662 was quite clear. She was to pay her master 2000 pounds of tobacco OR serve her master two years beyond her regular term. Since few servants would have been able to pay such a sum, the penalty was usually the additional years in servitude. After 1696 the penalty was reduced to 1000 pounds of tobacco or one year extra service. These penalties were designed to compensate the master for his trouble and expense and the servant woman's lost work time.

The 1696 law noted that a free woman who bore an illegitimate child fathered by a black or mulatto had to pay 15 pounds to the parish in which the child was born or be sold herself into five years' service by the parish.

It is important to note that the father (if named) of the bastard child was responsible for the upkeep of the child. If he was a free man, he was to save the parish in which the child was born any expense of caring for the child. If he was a servant, he was to make satisfaction to the parish for the expense of caring for the child after completion of his term of service. When a servant woman's master was proved to be the father, he was required to pay for the upkeep of the child and was not entitled to the two years' extra service from her. (Instead, her two years' extra service was sold to someone else.)

A law of 1727 spelled out specific penalties for free women who bore illegitimate children. They were fined 500 pounds of tobacco or 50 shillings or received 25 lashes. This was reduced in 1769 to 20 shillings and there was no whipping even if the woman failed to pay the fine.

If we can draw conclusions about the values of a society or its moral standards from its laws, then we might say that the society of Colonial Virginia was more concerned about keeping illegitimate offspring off the "welfare rolls" than in punishing people for promiscuous sexual behavior. However, legislation alone does not reflect, except in the most general way, personal values.

For what crimes might "ducking" be used in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

Though the county courts were authorized by law to construct ducking (not dunking) stools if they saw fit, apparently very few offenses were punishable by ducking. In fact, research has uncovered only one such offense so far. "Whereas oftentimes many brabling (quarrelsome) women often slander and scandalize their neighbours for which their poore husbands are often brought into chargeable and vexatious suites . . . after judgment passes for damages the women shalbe punished by ducking" if their husbands refused to pay the damages to the injured party. Incidences of actual duckings in Virginia are extremely rare.

What was the punishment for overpricing in the taverns? Did the punishment apply to the tavern keeper or the owner?

When an ordinary license was granted, the tavern keeper had to post a bond. If found guilty of overcharging, the tavern keeper (who was not necessarily the owner of the property) forfeited the bond. We know of no example of forfeiture for overcharging in colonial Virginia.

# Questions & Answers

VOL. 3, No. 3 June 1982

SUBJECT INDEX: WINDOW SCREENS, GEORGE WYTHE, THOMAS EVERARD, BLACKS AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

We hope this potpourri of questions and answers will increase your knowledge and enrich your interpretations. Harold Gill has provided the answers to your questions.

Please remember to send any questions you have to Jane Strauss.

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How did Virginians cope with the insect problem?

Window screens were not unknown in Virginia and there are references to people owning them. Mosquito netting was often used on bedsteads and there are formulas for ridding beds of bedbugs. But, for the most part, it seems that insects were tolerated with patience.

Was George Wythe more interested in the federal government than state government after the Revolution?

It is difficult to determine, but Wythe was definitely interested in the federal government since he took part in the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

Was he ever approached for appointment to a federal office?

Wythe was considered for--but not actually offered--a post in Washington's administration. Washington considered Edmund Pendleton and George Wythe among the top five prospects as federal judge of the U.S. district that included all of Virginia. President Washington decided it would not be tactful to make Wythe a belated offer others had refused. Cyrus Griffin received the appointment.

Was Thomas Everard a trained or practicing lawyer or was he simply familiar with the law?

There is no evidence that Everard was a practicing lawyer. He was obviously familiar with the law through his office as clerk of the York County court.

What role did free black males have in the political process in Virginia in the eighteenth century? Could they vote if they owned property and were they legally available for election?

Free black males--even if they were property owners--played no part in the political process. They were specifically eliminated in legislation about voting and office-holding.

When were pencils first used?

Pencils have been in fairly wide use since the early seventeenth century, The Oxford English Dictionary gives the earliest written reference to pencils

as 1612. "Black Lead Pencils" were advertised for sale in Williamsburg in 1775 and earlier.

Can it be determined how much John Page paid yearly for his room at Wetherburn's Tavern? In terms of purchasing power was it less expensive than the single rate of 7s. 1/2d.?

We have no information on what rate Page paid for his private room and no way of comparing it to the single-night rate. It may have cost him more than the usual rate if he had many requirements as to furnishings, service, etc. On the other hand, if he provided his own furniture, servant(s), etc., the room may have cost very little on a yearly basis.

What was the difference between apothecary and physician?

In England

Physicians, whatever their formal training (usually a university degree), were addressed as "doctor" and practiced among the upper classes. They treated most illnesses but were not really general practitioners. As gentlemen and scholars they did not work with their hands as surgeons did, or engage in a trade as apothecaries did.

Surgeons rarely held university degrees but were trained by apprenticeship or by hospital instruction. They dealt with anatomical emergencies, superficial growths, and skin diseases. These services were considered peripheral to the art of medicine, and though they were required by all classes of people the social position of surgeons was inferior to that of physicians.

Apothecaries also lacked the social standing of physicians. The term "apothecary" was applied to anyone who compounded and sold medicines and drugs. From selling drugs it was but a short step to prescribing them.

In Virginia

From necessity the line separating the work of gentlemen from that of tradesmen and craftsmen was not clearly defined. Whatever their training (or lack of it) colonial practitioners were generally addressed as "doctor".

What evidence is there that eighteenth-century Williamsburg residents held more than one job at a time like Peter Pelham? Was the term "moonlighting" used for this practice?

Many Williamsburg residents were involved in more than one enterprise (but they did not "moonlight" as we think of it--work two jobs for wages; "moonlighting" in this sense is not an eighteenth-century expression). Men such as Alexander Craig, who was in the harness making business and also owned and operated a tannery, were entrepreneurs.

Where and how was tar for "pitch and tar" obtained?

After pine trees had been tapped for all their turpentine, the trees were cut down and hewn into billets (pieces the size of firewood). The billets burned in an oven-like arrangement of soil and tiles. As the billets burned, the tar was released and drained off through a hole at the bottom of the oven.

According to a 1798 encyclopedia, pine tar was prepared "in great quantities in Norway, Sweden, Germany, Russia, and North America, and in other countries where the pine and fir abound."

Was rice grown in this area? Could the roots of the rice plant be used as scrubbers in dish washing?

There is no evidence that rice was grown on a commercial scale in the vicinity of Williamsburg in the eighteenth century. However, one soldier reported during the Revolution that he was rice growing at Burwell's Mill near Williamsburg. However, this man had never seen rice growing before, and he may have been mistaken. We have no information about the roots of the rice plant being used as scrubbers in dish washing.

What is the figure on top of the coat of arms in the College Chapel and what does it symbolize?

The figure is a griffin (also spelled gryphon), a fantastic animal with the wings, head, front legs, and talons of an eagle, and the tail and hind legs of a lion. The griffin symbolizes the union of strength and swiftness.

Were there street cleaners in Williamsburg? If there were, who employed them and paid their wages?

There were no street cleaners in Williamsburg so far as we know.

# Questions & Answers

VOL. 3, No. 4 August 1982


In January 1983, the Department of Interpretive Education will initiate the CORE CURRICULUM for all Historic Area interpretive staff. This issue of Q's and A's will address some Q's you may have about the CORE CURRICULUM. The September issue of The Interpreter will further describe the program.

What is the CORE CURRICULUM?

Presently the CORE CURRICULUM organizes a division-wide program of BASIC COURSES and ADVANCED COURSES concerned with historical content and with interpretive techniques for the presentation of that content. In the BASIC COURSES interpreters acquire a foundation of knowledge upon which to build as they proceed through the program. BASIC COURSES focus on general areas; ADVANCED COURSES focus on specialized topics building on the BASIC COURSES. This divisional in-service curriculum, together with a three-hour Foundation Up-Date, will be provided for all interpreters in January and February 1983.

How does the CORE CURRICULUM apply to your work as an interpreter?

a. The two-year program of BASIC COURSES will provide historical information and assistance with presentation skills for all interpreters who have been hired since January 1980. All other interpreters may choose to take the BASIC COURSES of study or select a set of three of the ADVANCED COURSES described in 2.b. (Tapes of the BASIC COURSES will be available to all interpreters after February 1983 through the Department of Interpretive Education office.) In addition to a brief discussion on interpretive methods, there will be three main courses offered in each year of the two year program of BASIC COURSES. Interpreters hired after January 1980 will be eligible for the elective curriculum once they have completed the BASIC COURSES.

The BASIC COURSES are:

| 1983 Courses | 1984 Courses |
|---|---|
| *Virginia Society in Profile* | *Folkways: Everyday Behaviour and Occasional Customs in Colonial Va.* |
| *The Growth of Virginia's Pre-Industrial Economy* | *Evolution of Government in Colonial Va.* |
| *Fine Things/Plain Things: Virginia's Material Culture* | *The Revolution in Virginia and Its Aftermath* |
| *Interpretive Methods* | *Interpretive Methods* |

b. Interpreters hired before January 1980 not choosing the BASIC COURSES will take a set of ADVANCED COURSES. These interpreters will be asked to indicate their preferences from the following 1983 offerings:


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SUBJECT INDEX: THE CORE CURRICULUM PROGRAM, 1983

1983 ADVANCED COURSES:

SET A
*Learning from the York County Project*
*Household Economy*
*Architecture: Social Spaces*

SET B
*Women in Virginia Society*
*Household Economy*
*Afro-Americans*

SET C
*Period Clothing*
*Household Economy*
*Agricultural History of the Chesapeake*

SET D
*Afro-Americans*
*Agricultural History of the Chesapeake*
*Williamsburg's Buildings and Designers*

SET E
*Women in Virginia Society*
*Household Economy*
*Learning from the York County Project*

SET F
*Women in Virginia Society*
*Period Clothing*
*Architecture: Social Spaces*

SET G
*Learning from the York County Project*
*Period Clothing*
*Williamsburg's Buildings and Designers*

SET H
*Learning from the York County Project*
*Agricultural History of the Chesapeake*
*Afro-Americans*

The 1983 offerings have been developed primarily in response to the March 1982 survey you completed.

What are the plans for future programs in the CORE CURRICULUM?

In years to come, in addition to more advanced courses, other options of study may be available to interpreters with extensive interpretive experience here. These may include independent study, seminars, and focused tours of other museums. We anticipate that this phase of the program most likely will be introduced in 1984.

Who are the members of the teaching faculty?

Faculty members have been chosen according to their knowledge and expertise from the staff of Colonial Williamsburg and The College of William and Mary. This year's faculty will be introduced in the 1983 catalogue.

How have interpreters helped the teaching faculty prepare their courses?

The BASIC COURSE faculty invited interpreters to participate in lunchtime discussions to talk about their work. Approximately fifty interpreters joined in these discussions. Faculty members are also observing interpreters at work to understand more fully the scope of the job and the pressures and demands placed upon interpreters.

How will the courses of the CORE CURRICULUM be structured?

Both the BASIC COURSES and ADVANCED COURSES will consist of class lectures, discussions, readings, and application sessions. (Brief course outlines and bibliographies will be available after the September issue of The Interpreter. There will be an assessment at the end of each course, followed by a two-week period called the *practicum* during which interpreters practice on-the-job application of the course material. The *practicum* follow-up will conclude with small group discussions within each interpretive department.

When will interpreters learn more about the courses offered?

The catalogue of the CORE CURRICULUM, listing courses offered, faculty, and course descriptions, will appear in the September issue of The Interpreter, as will general policy statements regarding attendance, assessments, etc. It will include your registration form and further instructions for enrollment.

If you have any additional questions about the CORE CURRICULUM, please contact your Master Teacher or any other representative of the Department of Interpretive Education.

The Core Curriculum Committee

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Museum Staff to Visit in November

In November we anticipate about 35 interpreters to be visiting Colonial Williamsburg for several days. These interpreters are from Greenfield Village and the Henry Ford Museum. The purpose of their visit is to watch interpretation at Colonial Williamsburg and to get to know members of our interpretive staff. Would you have any interest in "putting-up" an interpreter in your home for several days? It could be quite a stimulating experience. If you are, we will try to match you with interpreters who share your interests. By October we should be receiving a list of these people. All we need to know now is whether you might be interested in hearing more about this opportunity. We do plan at least one social event to which you and your "foster" interpreter would be invited.

Please call Bill Tramposch (ext. 2711) if you are interested.

Questions & Answers

VOL. 3, No. 5 October 1982

We hope these short professional profiles of the faculty members for the CORE CURRICULUM and CWF Update will acquaint you with their professional training and experience as well as with their special areas of interest.

Linda R. Baumgarten: Curator of Textiles

Ms. Baumgarten is responsible for the research, cataloging, conservation, and collecting of textiles and costumes for the department of collections. She received her B.S. and M.S. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in textile-related arts and her M.A. in Early American Culture in the Winterthur Program from the University of Delaware. Before assuming her position as Curator of Textiles in 1978 Ms. Baumgarten was Associate Curator of Textiles at the Valentine Museum, Richmond. She has published articles on textiles.

Peter V. Bergstrom: Research Fellow and Adjunct Lecturer at the College of William and Mary.

As a research fellow, Mr. Bergstrom is in charge of codification and quantification of the York County Biographical Data Bank and Project Manager of the York County Tract Map and Plantation Management Study. He received his A.B. in 1970, his M.A. in 1972 from Marquette University, and his Ph.D. in 1980 from the University of New Hampshire. His graduate work reflects his interest in religion in the colony of Maryland (a demographic study) and the markets and merchants of colonial Virginia.

Reginald D. Butler: Research Fellow

As a research fellow, Mr. Butler is responsible for the training of interpreters in black history and for the preparation of an Afro-American sourcebook. He received his B.A. from Western Washington State University in 1968 and his M.A. at Johns Hopkins University in 1981. Mr. Butler is currently a Ph.D. candidate in history at Johns Hopkins University. From 1980-1981 he was a Smithsonian Institution Fellow in Early American History.

Ed Chappell: Director, Architectural Research

Mr. Chappell is responsible for the research and training related to architecture and landscape at Colonial Williamsburg and for the conservation and architectural research of the Historic Area. He received his B.A. in history from the College of William and Mary and his M.A. in architectural history from the University of Virginia. Mr. Chappell's museum experience has been as Architectural Historian of the Kentucky Heritage Commission and as Archaeologist of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. His publications reflect his interests in historical architecture.

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SUBJECT INDEX: INSTRUCTORS' VITAE FOR CORE CURRICULUM AND CWF UPDATE

Patricia A. Gibbs: Research Assistant

Ms. Gibbs conducts research on topics of current and future interest for the research department while teaching classes for HAPO. She received her B.A. from Guilford College in 1963 and her M.A. from the College of William and Mary in 1968. Ms. Gibbs has been with CWF since 1965, where she was first a historic sites apprentice and later a hostess before assuming her present position in 1968. Her special interests are colonial taverns and domestic life.

Harold B. Gill, Jr.: Historian

As historian Mr. Gill is the head of the projects office at CWF's research department. He is also deeply involved in historical research and writing. Mr. Gill received his A.B. and A.M. at the College of William and Mary before doing graduate work at Howard University and the Newberry Library Institute on Quantitative History. He has worked as a historian for CWF for twenty years and during this time he has published several books and many articles concerning his varied interests in the agricultural, crafts, and the economy of colonial Virginia.

John M. Hemphill II: Research Fellow

As a research fellow, Mr. Hemphill is researching and writing a book-length manuscript on the royal governors of eighteenth-century Virginia. He received his A.B. in history from Johns Hopkins University in 1948 and his M.A. in history at Princeton University in 1950. From 1954-1956 Mr. Hemphill was a Fullbright Scholar at Kings College, London. In 1964 he received his Ph.D. from Princeton University, where he wrote his dissertation on Virginia and the English Commercial System, 1689-1733. Mr. Hemphill's museum experience has been with CWF from 1952-1954 and 1956-1958 as a research associate, and since 1979 as a research fellow. His publications represent his interests in the history of colonial Virginia.

Kevin Peter Kelly: Research Associate

Mr. Kelly is now the historian and the projects manager of the "York County Project" as well as the researcher and teacher of colonial social history. He attended Michigan State University, where he received his B.A. in 1965 and his M.A. in 1966, and later, in 1972, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Washington. From 1973-1975 Mr. Kelly was a fellow at the Institute of Early American History and Culture and an assistant professor of history at the College of William and Mary. From 1975-1977 he was an assistant professor of history at Bowdoin College before assuming his duties with CWF's research department in 1977. His publication is concerned with seventeenth-century settlement patterns in Surry County.

Philip David Morgan: Fellow at the Institute of Early American History and Culture

Mr. Morgan received his B.A. at Cambridge University, England, and his Ph.D. from University College, London. His numerous publications reflect his interest in the life, work and culture of blacks in the colonial south.

Sumpter T. Priddy III: Teaching Curator

As teaching curator Mr. Priddy brings to all interpreters his knowledge of eighteenth-century material culture. He received his B.A. in the History of Architecture at the University of Virginia in 1975 and his M.A. in Early American Culture at the University of Delaware in 1981. Before assuming his present position he was first curatorial intern in CWF's Department of Collections and the Curator of Exhibition Buildings from 1979-81. Mr. Priddy's publications reflect his interest in material objects and their historical significance.

Robert C. Birney: Senior Vice President for Education, Preservation, and Research

Mr. Birney, as Senior Vice President for Education, Preservation and Research, has responsibility for the overall supervision of the Historic Area Programs and Operations Division as well as managerial responsibility for the performance of the departments of archaeology, architecture, archives and records, audiovisual, publications, and research. Before joining the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation as director of planning in June 1978, Mr. Birney was vice president of Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachussetts, 1968-1978, where he was directly involved in the planning and development of the college. From 1954 to 1968, he taught psychology at Amherst College. Mr. Birney received his B.A. from Wesleyan University in 1950 and his masters and doctoral degrees in psychology at the University of Michigan.

Dennis A. O'Toole: Vice President of Historic Area Programs and Operations

When Mr. O'Toole became vice president of Historic Area Programs and Operations in April 1982, he became responsible for all interpretive programming and other operations and services in the Historic Area and at Carter's Grove. He joined the CWF staff in January 1979 as director of Group Visits and Educational Programs and then, in May 1979, became deputy director of Historic Area Programs and Operations. Mr. O'Toole is a graduate of Princeton University, and he holds a M.A.T. from Harvard University and a Ph.D. from Brown University in American colonial history. He has had varied teaching experiences both at the high school and college level and has acted as a consultant to several museums and historical agencies. From 1972-1978 Mr. O'Toole was curator of education at the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution.

John Selby: Professor of History, The College of William and Mary

In addition to teaching and doing research, Mr. Selby is a regular lecturer on the colonial period for our interpreters. He received his A.B. from Harvard College in 1950, his M.A. in history in 1951, and his Ph.D. in history from Brown University. Mr. Selby taught history at the University of Oregon in 1955-1961 before coming to CWF as assistant director of research. In 1966 he joined the history department at the College of William and Mary and became acting editor of The William and Mary Quarterly. Mr. Selby has published widely on the colonial period.

Gail S. Terry: Assistant Research Archivist

Ms. Terry is involved in the physical maintenance of the collections of the research archives as well as assisting people who wish to use them. She received her B.A. in history at the University of Tennessee in 1978, and she is currently working on her M.A. in history at the University of Maryland.

Lorena Leeback Walsh: Research Fellow

Ms. Walsh's task as a research fellow is to write a book-length study of plantation management in the colonial period. She received her B.A. from Marietta College in 1966, her M.A. in 1967 and Ph.D. in 1977, both from Michigan State University. Ms. Walsh has been a research associate at the St. Mary's City Commission from 1972-1980 in addition to being consulting historian for Historic Annapolis, Maryland. She has published widely and her articles demonstrate her interest in the settlers and their way of life in Maryland during the colonial period.

Mark R. Wenger: Research Architect

Mr. Wenger conducts research and writes reports on designated architectural research projects while providing information to other departments and researching buildings in the Historic Area. He received a Bachelor of Environmental Design at North Carolina State University in 1975, a Bachelor of Architecture at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 1977, and a Masters of Architectural History at the University of Virginia in 1980. Mr. Wenger has been at CWF since 1980. He has published an article on the Governor's Palace.

John Colin Moon: Director of the Company of Colonial Performers

When appointed the director of the Company of Colonial Performers in 1980, Mr. Moon became responsible for the programs of theatrical history, eighteenth-century entertainment, and student music and dance while retaining his former responsibilities for the Fife and Drum Corps, the Music Teachers Room, the Militia, and the Magazine and the Guardhouse. From the age of fifteen, when Mr. Moon joined Her Majesty's Scots Guards, he pursued his interest in music and drill and field training while serving with distinction in the British Army. In 1962 he was appointed Senior Drum Major of the Brigade of Guards and the British Army.

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For your information:

The Association of State and Local History (AASLH) offers a number of seminars and courses each year that may be of great interest to you as interpreters. Margie Weiler in the Norton-Cole House has the catalogue for your investigation.

Questions & Answers

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1983 New Year's Resolution Issue:

Let's dismiss (dismyth?) this old year with a resolution for the new. Although our interpretations are impressively myth- and rumor-free, let's resolve to stamp-out those little hobgoblins of innaccuracy who still confront us on our roads to more reliable interpretations.

1. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

people were shorter in the eighteenth century. The short antique beds prove it.

People were not significantly shorter in the eighteenth century. Records indicate that soldiers (white males) during the Revolution averaged only .63 inches shorter than army recruits in 1957 and 1958. The antique beds are actually about six feet long, the same as modern standard size beds. For example, a random sample of beds in exhibition buildings shows that none is shorter than 74"(6'2"), most are several inches longer than that, and some are as long as 80½". They appear shorter because of high ceilings and tall bedsteads.

2. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

for sanitary reasons, a bit of the stem was broken off pipes before they were reused.

Archaeologists find many pipestem fragments because pipes are easily broken. There is no evidence that smokers broke off the end of the stem to make a clean mouthpiece. They weren't aware of "germs" anyway.

3. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

Williamsburg has so many one and a half-story houses because there was a tax on two-story houses.

There were no taxes on buildings during the colonial period, so this does not explain the existence of story-and-a-half houses in Williamsburg. These simply follow the pattern of the vast majority of houses in colonial Virginia. They are single-story houses with finished attics for additional living space.

4. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

glazed headers tell us that a building dates from the early eighteenth century because after 1750 there was a law against burning hardwoods. Hardwood was required to make a fire hot enough to glaze brick.

There was no colonial Virginia law against burning hardwoods.

5. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

mirrors came in two pieces because a tax was placed on larger pieces of glass.

The old story about a tax on large pieces of glass appears to be completely without foundation. Harold Gill has determined that no

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such law existed in Virginia; and in England every attempt was made to encourage manufacturing in the eighteenth century, not to hamper it. Also, if one compares very large, two-piece looking glasses with smaller examples of the same form, the larger will often have a single unit containing more surface area than that of the combined surfaces of the smaller ones.

According to Sumpter Priddy, Baroque looking glasses (those of the so-called "William and Mary" and "Queen Anne" styles), the top of the upper mirror often has arches and curves cut to conform to the shape of the molded frame. As a rule, the glass is also bevelled around these edges. The grinding of the bevels around the curves and edges would be much easier to achieve on a smaller piece of glass than on a larger one. Additionally, if it broke during grinding, a smaller and thus cheaper piece was lost. This theory is supported by the fact that most glasses of plain, rectilinear form are made of a single piece--and this includes most Rococo and almost all neo-classic examples.

6. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

a French traveler remarked that in bad weather, the Duke of Gloucester Street was a mile long and a mile deep.

In Jane Carson's We Were There, Descriptions of Williamsburg, 1699-1859, none of the travelers describes the Duke of Gloucester Street (or main street) as a mile long and a mile deep. Several of them talk about the unpaved main street; that it is deep with sand; aggravating in summer because of the dust, sand, and heat; one mentions that the main street is "sloppy" during a rainy period.

7. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

Thomas Jefferson jogged up and down the Duke of Gloucester Street.

Jefferson clearly believed that exercise was beneficial to the health. In letters to his wife and to Peter Carr he recommended it highly. "Walking is the best possible exercise," he told Carr. "Games played with the ball and others of that nature, are too violent for the body and stamp no character on the mind." Whether he felt that "jogging" or running were "too violent," we don't know. Jefferson recommended that Carr walk in the afternoons and said that half an hour's walk in the morning was also beneficial. One may well have seen Jefferson walking for exercise in Williamsburg when here as a student and later in his various governmental capacities. But "jogging up and down the Duke," probably not.

8. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

Thomas Jefferson wrote that the Palace Green was planted with catalpa trees.

On his drawing of the Palace (circa 1779), Thomas Jefferson noted the "rows of trees 100f. apart" on Palace Street. He does not mention the type of tree. These were doubtless the trees that General de Lauberdiere mentioned in his journal (July 1782), in which he noted the "very fine palace, built at the extremity of a handsome street planted with catalpas." De Lauberdiere's is the first statement we have that the trees were catalpas.

9. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
Pigs were free to roam the streets of Williamsburg.

By law pigs were penned to prevent their escaping from the small farms into the streets of Williamsburg.

10. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
town criers announced the news to Williamsburg residents.

Purdie and Dixon's Virginia Gazette for July 16, 1772, reported that the Williamsburg Court of Common Hall had enacted a by-law

> for constituting a Watch to consist of four sober and discreet persons, who are to patrol the Streets of the City from ten O'clock every Night till Daylight the next Morning, to cry the Hours, and use their best Endeavours to preserve Peace and good Order, by apprehending and bringing to Justice all disorderly People, Slaves, as well as others.

The watchmen were essentially policemen and firemen and only incidentally "criers" of the hours. The term "town crier" is associated with early New England, not colonial Virginia.

11. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
George Washington refused to marry Martha until she let her hair grow longer.

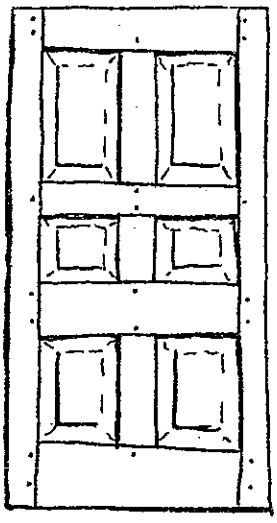
There is no evidence that George Washington "refused" to marry Martha Custis for any reason, let alone such a frivolous and meaningless reason as the length of her hair. From what we know of Washington such an action is totally out of character.

12. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
cobblestones were used to line the streets of Williamsburg.

There is no evidence that cobblestones lined the streets of Williamsburg.

13. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
"H" panels in doors had a religious significance, meaning heaven and hell.

Mark R. Wenger replied to this rumor by saying that he was aware of no eighteenth century source which would indicate that religious significance was ascribed to panelled doors (i.e. - "H" for heaven and hell, or the "cross and Bible"). The configuration of door joinery was, I believe, determined by traditional methods of assembling panelled elements:



A. Panels are enclosed by a frame composed of vertical members (stiles) and horizontal members (rails).

B. On the outer edges of a panelled element (whether a door, or an entire wall), the outer stiles run all the way through.

C. Within these outer stiles, rails are continuous.

D. Inner stiles are therefore broken by the rails.

A six panel door is a good example of this. I think it is best then, not to attribute door panel configurations to religious symbolism.

14. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
a button in the newel post indicated that the house was paid for.

As in the preceding case, the tradition concerning an ivory button in the newel appears to have no basis in historical documents. Occasionally such traditions are proven to be true. However, in the absence of this sort of confirmation, we should avoid making traditional explanations part of our interpretation. Let's try to stick with what we can demonstrate or at least infer from historical documents.

15. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
a man could legally beat his wife with a stick if it was not bigger than his thumb.

No law to this effect existed in colonial Virginia. Completely false.

16. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
a woman could be put in the pillory for showing her ankles.

There is no evidence whatsoever for this. Many illustrations dating from the colonial period show working women wearing their hems at ankle length or above.

17. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
the "refusal room" at Carter's Grove is so called because it was there that Mary Cary refused George Washington's proposal of marriage, as did Rebecca Burwell when Thomas Jefferson proposed marriage.

George Washington was never enamored of Mary Cary. Rather his infatuation was with her sister Sally Cary Fairfax, wife of George William Fairfax. It began in the early 1750s and continued for seven or eight years. Though Washington seems to have been genuinely in love with her, she was married to his friend and neighbor. Though they sometimes corresponded, circumstances precluded any proposal of marriage in the so-called "refusal room" at Carter's Grove or anywhere else. The Washingtons and Fairfaxes remained friends for many years.

Jefferson had a schoolboy infatuation for Rebecca Burwell of Fairfield, Gloucester County. Though he seems to have contemplated marrying her, he never actually proposed in the "refusal room" or elsewhere. He indicated at one time that a proposal might be in the offing, but that he would ask her to wait for marriage until he had traveled abroad. In the meantime Rebecca married Jacquelin Ambler. Somehow this youthful romance has overshadowed his marriage to Martha Wayles Skelton on New Year's Day 1772, which Dumas Malone says "ushered in the happiest period of his life."

18. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
there was a law in Williamsburg that stated sheets in the taverns had to be changed once every two months.

The law required eighteenth-century tavern keepers to furnish "good, wholesome, and cleanly lodging and diet for travellers," but there was no specific reference to changing sheets. Conditions varied in taverns as in today's hotels and motels. Clean sheets seem to have been the exception rather than the rule if travelers' accounts are accurate. One person even went so far as to carry his own sheets with him. However, inventories of the better taverns in Williamsburg list more sheets than beds, so clean linen was probably available at these taverns most of the time.

19. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
people did not bathe or change their clothes very often in the eighteenth century.

People rarely record such personal and routine information about themselves, so there is no way to answer the questions adequately. There is no reason to think that most colonial Virginians did not bathe and change clothes regularly. William Byrd II in his History of the Dividing Line indicates on occasion that he was relieved to be able to bathe after several days' travel in the wilderness. Inventories, newspaper ads, and other sources refer to outbuildings used as laundries, soaps, and laundrying equipment. The curator of textiles tells us that methods of "dry cleaning" were used on silks and other fancy fabrics.

20. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
there are two necessaries in each garden in Williamsburg because one was used while the other was cleaned.

Many Williamsburg house lots had only one necessary house and some had none. Even at Westover plantation the evidence is conclusive that there was only one necessary house. No evidence points to a "spare" house.

21. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
women were not allowed to come in the front door of an eighteenth-century tavern.

Firstly, women did not often frequent taverns, although there are records of them sleeping there occasionally when traveling, dining with family or friends, and attending balls at taverns. There is no evidence that when an eighteenth-century woman entered a tavern she had to use a back or side door. It is likely that most women would not have wanted to be in a boisterous barroom. The custom of a separate ladies' entrance or waiting room appears to be a nineteenth-century one. Even today some English pubs have a public bar where local men congregate to drink and play darts and a quieter lounge bar, where women feel more welcome.

22. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
the pineapple became a symbol of hospitality because it resembles the pinecone, a symbol of hospitality to the Greeks.

The research staff checked several reference books on symbols and found nothing about the Greeks' using the pinecone as a symbol of hospitality. To them it was a fertility symbol.

The traditional explanation for the pineapple's use as a symbol of hospitality is that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the fruit was so exotic and rare in England, it was a mark of the host's special esteem for his guest to serve pineapple.

23. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .
Public Times was when the burgesses were in session.

To ~~Williamsburg~~ colonists Public Times meant only that the General Court or Court of Oyer and Terminer was in session. Public Times were in April and October (when the General Court met) and again in June and December (sessions of Oyer and Terminer). The Meeting of Merchants usually coincided with court dates. The General Assembly met for long periods--sometimes months at a time. Thus, the House of Burgesses were sometimes in session during Public Times.

24. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

kitchens were separate from houses because this arrangement was thought to reduce the danger of fire to the main house.

In 1705 Robert Beverley wrote, "All Their [Virginians'] Drudgeries of Cookery, Washing, Daries, etc. are perform'd in offices detacht from the Dwelling Houses, which by this means are kept more cool and Sweet." Current scholarship on detached kitchens in the Chesapeake area emphasizes their role in the segregation of different social groups. Reducing the risk of fire was not a reason for separating kitchens from the main houses. A balanced explanation of separate kitchens should therefore mention a concern for fire, but the emphasis should be on social factors. I think the wisdom of this approach is apparent when we consider that dozens of seventeenth century frame houses survive in New England where cooking was done in the house. Whereas, in Virginia, where kitchens were separate, not one seventeenth century frame house is known to exist.

25. RUMOR HAS IT THAT . . .

portrait painters in the eighteenth century had canvases already made up with figures and torsos and just painted in their clients' heads.

The "headless body myth" has a relatively short history and we believe it began sometime in the 1930s when the formula-like poses and prodigious output of certain artists engendered among scholars a theory that itinerant portrait painters spent their winters preparing a supply of canvases with painted bodies and backgrounds. The so-called myth has applied to both eighteenth and nineteenth-century painters without much evidence to support it.

It probably would be erroneous to state that the technique never was employed by artists working in eighteenth-century America since we can only judge its presence by the incomplete evidence available to us today.

The evidence we do have consists of the paintings which survive and the slim recorded documentation on artists methods during those years, as in the cases of Jeremiah Theus in Charleston from ca.1740 to 1774, and Charles Willson Peale whose early career in the mid-Atlantic colonies is well known. No mention of such a practice is made in any references to these two painters or their work, although we do learn that several sittings with the subject were required for completing a likeness. Furthermore, no large-scale (meaning oil on canvas and near life size) headless likenesses by eighteenth-century portraitists in America have been discovered.

Finally, scholars have not been able to detect any physical evidence in existing paintings that bodies were painted well in advance of the heads Such physical evidence might include overlapping paint layers along the neck and chin areas as well as along the circumference of the head where it joins the background.

We are pleased with the number of host/hostesses and escorts who have achieved the status of Senior Interpreter as well as those who are working toward this position. We wonder if some of you had questions concerning the qualifications required for applying for this position. If so, here they are:

Qualifications (list minimum qualifications for job--education, experience, other) High school or equivalent; two years college with specialization in history or equivalent experience; good communication skills; minimum of four years experience, regular or year round casual status, as a Foundation host/ hostess or escort at an above average or higher level of performance for the year immediately preceeding application, works at all sites and in all programs for which he or she has been trained unless prohibited for medical reasons; participation in an exchange training course or its equivalent; certification as proficient in three interpretative skill areas by a committee made up of a staff person from the appropriate research or curatorial department, the director or master teacher of the Interpretive Education department, and at least one staff person from the candidate's home department.

Erratum: The short professional profiles of the faculty members of the Core Curriculum stated Harold B. Gill, Jr.'s graduate work was done at Howard University. This work was done at Harvard University.

- MERRY CHRISTMAS -