

# Interpreter

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

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## Dohicky Arundel: A Documentary History

by Samuel K. Fore

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History hasn't been particularly kind to Dohicky Arundel. Perhaps it is due to the fact that there is very little known about him. E. G. Swem's voluminous *Virginia Historical Index* has no entries for him. There are very few references to him in the writings of the day, and even then only the mention of his unfortunate demise at the Battle of Gwynn's Island in the correspondence of general-grade officers and high-ranking government officials.

Committee of Safety vice president John Page, for example, proclaimed, "no one seems to regret the Loss of Arundel, who lost his Life by the bursting of a wooden Mortar which was foolishly constructed and he obstinately persisted in his Resolution to fire, though dissuaded from it by every one who saw it." Alexander Purdie put it a little more eloquently when he printed, "His zeal for the service lost him his life."<sup>1</sup> Just who was this man, Dohicky Arundel?

Born Louis O'Hicky d'Arundel in the Alsace region of France, he was the son of Thomas, a lieutenant colonel of the French regiment de Berg. He attended the military academy in Strasbourg and, in 1768, was an artillery officer candidate. His studies were interrupted in 1770 with the death of his father, and he contemplated his future. But later that year, he was transferred to Sante Domingue as a volunteer. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in June 1771 and would later be promoted to the rank of first lieutenant in the military service of the French crown.<sup>2</sup> For reasons unknown, he ventured to North America during the early months of the War for Independence.

New York delegate to the Continental Congress Francis Lewis recommended Arundel—as he signed himself—to the Continental Congress on January 6, 1776. Recognizing that his military skills would be very useful, he was screened by Benjamin Franklin and Col. Arthur St. Clair, who deemed that Arundel be put into military service. Arundel was to be sent to the New York Department of the Continental Army.<sup>3</sup>

However, a letter of introduction from Dr. Franklin to Maj. Gen. Charles Lee seems to have changed those plans. On March 18, 1776, Congress directed Arundel to repair to the Southern Department, under the command of General Lee, with a captain's commission and orders to raise a company of artillery.<sup>4</sup>

Unbeknown to both Lee and Arundel, the Virginia committee of safety had already appointed a commander of the state's sole company of artillery, Capt. James Innes. Due to his inexperience or, better yet, the promise of a promotion to major, Captain Innes graciously resigned shortly thereafter, and Arundel assumed command. With his experience and ardor, Lee was confident that Arundel would soon make the unit "fit for service."<sup>5</sup> With the exception of an advertisement for recruits in Purdie's *Virginia Gazette* for May 24, 1776, the current documentary record reveals nothing of the activities of

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Captain Arundel until the Battle of Gwynn's Island in early July 1776.

The comprehensive listing of original documents from nineteenth- and twentieth-century auction catalogs—*American Manuscripts, 1763–1815*—lists only one record of a letter written by Dohicky Arundel. The letter still exists, albeit in very fragile condition, in the private collections of the James S. Copley Library in La Jolla, California. Though addressed only to “General,” it can easily be assumed that the recipient was his commander, Maj. Gen. Charles Lee. Translated from the French, his long letter is printed here, so that we may read his words and, perhaps, draw new conclusions.

Williamsburg the 27th of June 1776

General

Permit me to add my voice to that of a public who loves you who misses you and who no longer breathes until the moment which will return you to my eyes. I would wish that in the accounts which I am to give you of my department I were happy enough to be able to do so *viva voce*. Your presence General is most necessary to us. The Ship has need of a good pilot; the ship is here but unfortunately the pilot is not. I flatter myself that I am sufficiently well known to you not to be suspected of being a courtesan, I am a soldier and truthfulness is my first guide.

## Timeline

**February–April 1776**—Capt. James Innes recruiting and training an artillery company formed by the Virginia Council.

**March 18, 1776**—Congress directs Capt. Dohicky Arundel to the Southern Department under command of Gen. Charles Lee with orders to raise a company of artillery. Innes resigns his commission in the artillery in favor of Arundel.

**May 15, 1776**—Fifth Virginia Convention unanimously adopts resolution instructing the colony's delegates in the Continental Congress to introduce a motion for independence. Captain Arundel was probably in command of the artillery company that discharged cannon and small arms fire when the British flag was struck from the Capitol and a Continental hoisted in its place. (Jane Carson, *James Innes and His Brothers of the F. H. C.* [Williamsburg, Va.: 1965], 91.)

**May 26, 1776**—Dunmore sails to Gwynn's Island in Mathews County, Virginia.

**June 12, 1776**—Fifth Virginia Convention passes the first Declaration of Rights adopted in America.

**June 27, 1776**—Writing from Williamsburg, Dohicky Arundel, Captain Commander of the Virginia Artillery, explains to Gen. Charles Lee his difficulties and successes in the effort to acquire munitions and artillery transport. “He purchased every piece that could be spared from posts around the tidewater to assemble a battery of impressive firepower: two eighteen-pounders, two twelve-pounders, five nine-pounders, three six-pounders, and two field pieces.” (John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia* [Williamsburg, Va.: 1988], 125.)

**June 29, 1776**—The Convention adopts a constitution for the independent Virginia and elects Patrick Henry its first governor.

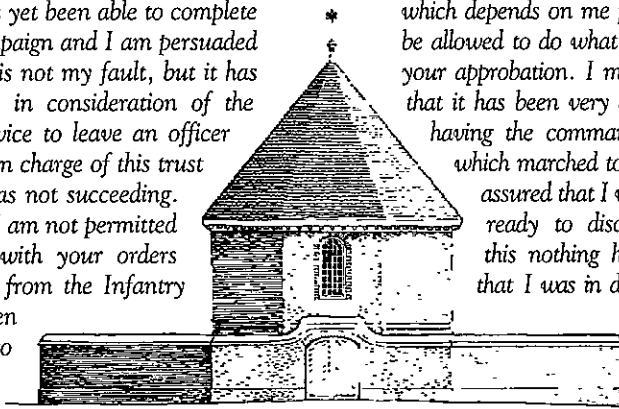
**July 6, 1776**—Patrick Henry is inaugurated as the first governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**July 9, 1776**—American gunners take only about an hour to drive the British and Lord Dunmore's loyalist troops off Gwynn's Island. Dohicky Arundel, who died in the firing of an experimental wooden mortar, is the one casualty on the American side.

I have not as yet been able to complete entirely my campaign and I am persuaded General that it is not my fault, but it has been impossible in consideration of the good of the service to leave an officer for a long time in charge of this trust seeing that it was not succeeding. You know that I am not permitted in accordance with your orders to take anyone from the Infantry and I have even been refused two or three officers who had served in the

Artillery. I arrived this morning from the camp near Gwins Island where I remained for ten days. I spared neither care, nor pains, nor fatigue to have everything necessary to defend this section which is besieged by the fleet of Lord Dunmore. But it has been in vain that I did everything that depended on me to put everything in order in short time. There is neither order nor regularity in what concerns the works needed for the public service. At the end of ten days I did not see myself in the slightest bit advanced than on the first day. The reason is simple—I cannot make myself obeyed as to the orders I give relative to the works we need. There be no order in this matter. The workmen do what they please and undertake work which they are then not in a position to do. I will give you only one example. The man who undertook to make the gun carriages for the cannons which were to be used at Gwins Island works, it is said that he is doing it, six weeks to do a work which I can assure you he could have finished in six days if he had wished to work or if someone had obliged him to do it. As it is a matter of bad will entirely I suppose that one should for the good of the service have orders relative to this matter.

Our Batteries could have been completed ten days ago if I had been allowed to do my job. I do not promote anything which I am not in a position to make good and am in a position to do when it is desired—the calculation or estimate is very clear. Now we have ten days lost and five or six will pass before we are ready. There surely are fifteen days which we have lost and from which the enemy will have profited. I was obliged to come here myself in order to have orders in conformity, which those we need. I leave tomorrow and I shall neglect nothing



which depends on me providing that I shall be allowed to do what is my job and merit your approbation. I must admit, General, that it has been very difficult for me after having the command of a detachment which marched to the camp and being assured that I would find everything ready to discover that far from this nothing had been begun and that I was in danger of being dishonored and unable to give any service to the country. The management of the powder and

of the military supplies has been refused by the commandant of the camp and I also had the unpleasantness of finding that the orders which I had given relative to the guard and to the security of the powder had not been observed despite the suitable orders which I had given to my sentinel but he was not in a position to execute them. Furthermore the guard of the magazine [in Williamsburg] had the impertinence to say that I was giving myself too much authority because I had taken the liberty to order that after the retreat no one should enter the powder magazine unless he had the countersign, and adding the precaution of if he entered going without light. He pretended that his key was to serve as countersign and was in very bad humor because my sentinel who knows a little about military service did not wish to recognize his key.

Permit me also General to note that it is always very disagreeable for me to see my cannons removed every day by order of the committee under pretext that these cannons belong to the province and that Congress has none. This alone is capable of denying much to the service because it could happen as it did effectively happen one time to me that having a list of all the cannons which are in the various sections of the province I need to have them transported from one section to another and at the moment that this happens to find that the cannons have been removed without my having been informed which can do me a great wrong in the particular case and in general to the service without I being at fault. Since your departure nearly a third of the cannons have been removed for the ships without my having known anything about it until the moment when I needed them and I no longer found them where they were supposed to be. The Battery of Jamestown has been and is still entirely

dismantled. You will understand General that it is very hard after all the pains I took to mount this battery, to place the cannons in position to find them removed in order to place them on the ships. In six more weeks we shall be an Artillery Corps without caissons that is to say a corps without soul.

In advising you of all these inconveniences of which you will readily understand the consequences I would consider it a marked favor on your part General, if you would have the kindness which bears upon the service as well as my own satisfaction to give your orders on this subject in order that I may know which is Artillery which is at my disposition and that the Artillery, in my department will be alone under my orders, that nothing is to be transported without my being informed, that all the military effects and the powder be under my management or under that of the commanding officers in my absence in my entire department according to your proper orders where there will be a certain number of carpenters and of marshals here only for the Artillery and who will be under my direction. I shall be held responsible immediately to the commanding officer or to the General if he is there for all that I have done or caused to be done and that I shall these preceding articles. If after that I am found to be at fault blame will fall only on me and only I will be to blame. It is the only way to act otherwise it is impossible ever to do anything which seems to do well, however many pains I take.

I repeat General my excuses for the length of my letter but the importance of the subject will readily excuse what has been said too bluntly. My zeal for the service and for good order is the only reason. Dare I add to all this that you have the kindness to remember the promise which you had given me to augment my Corps to 150 men and two officers of whom one is Mr. Pierce and also the salaries and those of my officers which were to be settled. They are overdue by over two months and they need them. As for myself I have not drawn at all since I am here and I am waiting to know what I am to expect before drawing since the date of my commission as well as my rations and the expenses of my trip from Philadelphia to here which you had promised would be

reimbursed to me. I beg you to heed my prayer on this subject. I do not ask for more than will maintain me honorably but the stipends about which Congress spoke to me hardly suffice for fifteen days in view of the expenses which I have been obliged to carry in my condition in the regiment. I leave all this to you.

I beg the favour of you General to be so good to let me have an answer so soon it is possible, as I want nothing as for the good of the Service, I hope you'll be so kind to take that matter in Consideration I'll spare no trouble and no fatigue to do all what is in my power but should be very Glad to do it under your Command, all will your appear me more easy if that should happen. I'll pray you'll be convinced of that and of the Regard and Respect with which I Remain,

General,  
Your most humble servant,  
Dohicky Arundel  
Capt. Commander of the Virginia  
Artillery  
Williamsburg the 27th of June 1776

(From the collection of  
The James S. Copley Library.)

<sup>1</sup> Julian P. Boyd, ed., *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1950), 468-470, "Particular account of the attack and rout of Lord Dunmore," *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), July 19, 1776, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert Bodinier. *Dictionnaire des officiers de l'armée royale qui ont combattu aux Etats-Unis pendant la guerre d'Indépendance, 1776-1783*. (Vincennes: Ministère de la défense . . . , 1982), 366, and *Les Officiers de l'armée royale combattants de la guerre d'Indépendance des Etats-Unis: de Yorktown à l'an II*. (Vincennes: Service historique de l'Armée de terre, 1983), 142-143.

<sup>3</sup> Worthington C. Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1906), 58n, and Paul H. Smith, ed., *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), 108-109 and 203-204.

<sup>4</sup> William B. Willcox, ed., *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 12 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982), 342-343, and Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 4: 211-212.

<sup>5</sup> Julian P. Boyd, ed., *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1950), 288-290, and "The Lee Papers, Vol. I, 1754-1776," *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1871* (New York: Printed for the Society, 1872), 479.



Gardner and Barrow

## Bothy's Mould

Presenting the latest dirt (mould)  
from the gardener's hut (bothy).

### "A Very Needful Work" *The Gardener's Calendar, 1787*

by Wesley Greene

Wesley is a garden historian in the *Landscape Department*. You can often find him in costume in the *Colonial Garden* across the street from *Bruton Parish Church*.

Should an interstellar cartographer pass through our solar system, it is certain that he, she, or it would describe our small, blue orb as the "water planet." It is our most abundant and most precious resource. It has also been the single most important limiting feature to gardening throughout human history, and it was around the transportation of water that our earliest inventions revolve.

The *shaduf* (or swipe) is often pointed to as the world's first simple machine, invented by the ancient Assyrians sometime before 2200 BCE. It is made of an upright, forked pole into which a horizontal pole is set with one end bearing a bucket and the other end a counterweight. The bucket is then dipped (or swiped) into the water. The mechanical advantage afforded by the counterweight makes it easier to swing the bucket around to irrigation ditches or reservoirs. A single man can move approximately 600 gallons of water per day with the *shaduf*.

The Assyrian king Sennacherib, who ruled between 705 and 681 BCE, is often credited with inventing a system of buckets mounted on a conveyer belt or chain that raised water from one level to the next in the hanging gardens of Babylon. Archimedes (287–212 BCE) improved on this with the invention of the Archimedes screw, which is still used to raise water from one level to a higher level. Ctesibius (285–222 BCE), a Greek scientist and contemporary of Archimedes', is credited with inventing the double-action lever pump for drawing water from wells at about the same time the Romans began constructing their famous aqueducts.

All early writers on horticulture stress the importance of having a reliable source of water. Pliny the

Elder records in the *Natural History* (circa 73 CE): "There is no doubt that it is proper to have gardens adjoining the farm-house and that they should be irrigated preferably by a river flowing past them, if it so happens, or if not, be supplied with water from a well by means of a wheel . . . or ladled up by swing-beams."

Pliny also distinguishes the quality of water from various sources: "the most useful for the purpose being water from streams, which is extremely cool and very sweet to drink; water from a pond or brought by a conduit is not so useful, because it carries with it the seeds of weeds. However, it is rain that nourishes plants best, as rain-water also kills insects that breed on them."

The benefit of rainwater over all other sources has long been recognized, and gardeners to this day see improved growth after a rain that cannot be duplicated with water from the tap. This has nothing to do with the insecticidal properties or any of the other fantastic attributes that have been assigned to rainwater over the centuries.

Nitrogen is the most abundant element in our atmosphere, making up 78 percent by volume of the air we breathe. Rainwater, particularly during thunderstorms, washes down significant levels of readily available nitrogen, and it is this that produces the luxuriant growth you see after a summer thunderstorm.

It is remarkable how often people from the eighteenth century and before seem to intuitively understand processes for which they did not have the technology to test scientifically. Philip Miller observed in the 1759 edition of *The Gardeners Dictionary* that "Rain water, which seems to be the purest of all those we know of, is replete with infinite Exhalations of all Kinds, which it imbibes from the Air."

The quality of water for irrigation has long been judged by its source. River water is generally preferred over pond water; they are both preferred



over well water. Thomas Hill, who wrote *The Gardener's Labyrinth* in 1577, England's first garden book, cautions us about well water: "But if the Gardener be forced to use Wel-water, drawn especially out of a deep Well, or the water out of some pit: he ought then to let the same drawn up, stand for two or three daies together, or at the least for certain hours in the open aire, to be warmed of the Sun."

The belief that water taken directly from a well is harmful to plants was repeated in almost all garden works for the next three hundred years. Philip Miller wrote in the 1759 edition of *The Gardeners Dictionary*: "Where Kitchen Gardens are supplied with Water from Wells, there should be a Contrivance of large Cisterns; into which the water should be raised, to be exposed to the Sun and Air some Time before it is used, for the Rawness of this Water, when fresh drawn from Wells, is not agreeable to the growth of Vegetables."

Richard Bradley agreed in the *Dictionarium botanicum* (1728), but gave us a remedy should we not have the leisure of letting the water stand in cisterns: "Pump-Water from a deep well is not proper for plants till it has been exposed for some time to the Air and Sun, or else has had a little Earth . . . thrown into it which will correct its Rawness."

It is not entirely clear what is meant by rawness in the water source. It may be the colder temperature as cold water, imprudently consumed, was considered unhealthful for people in the eighteenth century. An incident that occurred in August 1771 in the city of New York was recorded in the September 5, 1771, edition of Rind's *Virginia Gazette*: "Tuesday last a woman in this city, being in a perfect state of health, having drank a draught of cold water, was suddenly seized with a fit, and expired in a few minutes after. The Thursday following one Smith, who was a crier at a vendue-house in this town, in drinking cold water, when he was overheated, was soon after taken ill, and died a short time afterwards."

What time of day the water was applied was equally as important as its source. Pliny tells us in the *Natural History*: "For gardens the times for watering are in the morning and the evening, so that the water may not be heated by the sun. It only suits basil to water it at midday." This is a long-held maxim for watering the garden that holds true today, although our understanding of why morning and evening watering is preferable has changed over the centuries.

Richard Bradley advised in the *Dictionarium botanicum* (1728) that "the Evening in the hotter Season, is the most proper Time for that Operation, because that the Water will then have Time enough to mix itself with the Earth, before the too scorching Heat of the Sun can exhale it, or occasion it to scald the Roots of the Plants, which would be the Case, if we water Plants in the Heat of the Day."

We carried this wisdom with us to America. Robert Squibb (*The Gardener's Calendar*, 1787) advised gardeners in the Carolinas: "This work should be done always in the evening about two hours before sun-set that the water may have time enough to soak in before the sun comes on the plant the next day."

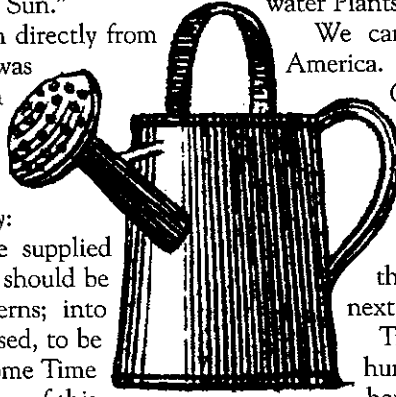
Traditions that endure for hundreds of years almost always have a basis in truth or practicality.

Other than in the cultivation of tropical plants, well water temperature or "rawness" is not a consideration for garden plants. The real benefit of allowing water to stand during the day and watering at night is avoiding the excessive evaporation that daytime watering produces. On a hot day in July, you can lose 50 percent or more to evaporation. When water is hauled from wells, this translates to hundreds of pounds of water lost to evaporation.

Watering during the day, while a wasteful practice, is not harmful to most plants. There are, however, some exceptions for which the eighteenth-century wisdom holds true. Batty Langley notes in *New Principles of Gardening* (1728): "Whenever you water cucumbers . . . you wet their leaves as little as possible, which Work is best done in an Evening, and thereby will be dry by the morning."

Cucumbers do, indeed, resent wet foliage on a sunny day; melons are even more sensitive. John Randolph of Williamsburg cautioned about watering melons in *A Treatise on Gardening*: "Watering is very requisite, but in much smaller quantities than Cucumbers, and the water should be laid on at a distance from the stems."

Most eighteenth-century writers advised that melons should be watered in trenches that border the beds rather than over the top of the foliage. It is a well-known fact among gardeners today that a wet season at the time melons are ripening will destroy the vines in just a few days. For this reason, hoops were fashioned over the melon beds in better eighteenth-century gardens so that they could be covered during



rain storms. Randolph advised, "They ought to be covered in all hard rains. The frames should not be too heavy. Many use laths in imitation of covered wagons."

It is hard for a twenty-first-century gardener to imagine what a difficult task watering was in the eighteenth century. During the summer months at the Colonial Garden, on a daily basis, we empty and fill from the well a 200-gallon cistern—largely with the help of children. This involves moving one hundred two-gallon buckets. Each bucket weighs about twenty pounds, so to fill our cistern one time we have to move 2,000 pounds of water and bucket.

Actually, we have to move it twice—first from the well to the cistern to correct its "rawness" and then from the cistern to the garden. So in reality we are moving close to 4,000 pounds per day. Rather than watering at night, we water first thing in the morning and spend the rest of the day recruiting guests to refill the cistern. This all-day task represents about the same amount of water that a modern oscillating sprinkler will deliver in one hour.

In eighteenth-century Virginia, this task was performed by enslaved gardeners, a resource most residents did not have. John Custis lamented in a 1738 letter to Peter Collinson: "I kept 3 strong Nigros continually filling large tubs of water and put them in the sun and watered plentifully every night, made shades and arbors all over the garden almost; but abundance of things perished; notwithstanding all the care and trouble, so that my garden is very much impaired."

Hauling water from the well, filling cisterns, and distributing it with watering cans was an onerous task. Landon Carter complained on

May 29, 1771: "Gardiner Johnny is growing a Villian again, he pretends to have been watering, but the earth is crackt where he waters."

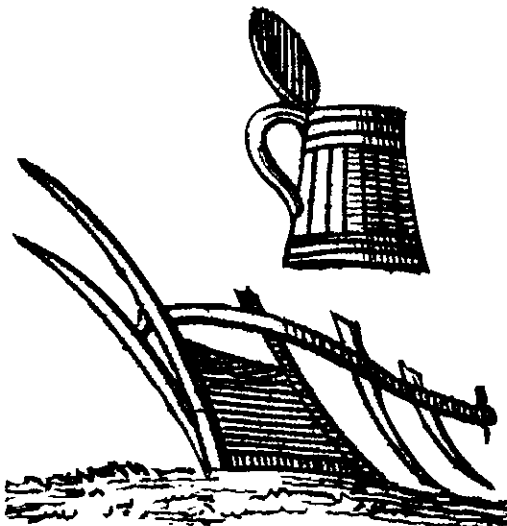
This complaint was about the kitchen garden, but Carter's irrigation attempts for field crops suffer from the same lack of enthusiasm from his labor force. Field irrigation generally involved a system of ditches in which the water flow was controlled by earthen dikes. On June 14, 1774, Carter wrote, "Again the business of watering to keep things alive is an evil to those who don't want to water; for my overseer at the Fork, though it was not more than 10 or 12 hoe fulls to stop a run and float his Plant Patch at any day, has done but very little since I was there Pretending the time spent in watering."

It is not clear how common the kitchen garden was in the eighteenth-century urban household, but it is almost certain that the ability to move water was a major limiting factor. We see from the Custis account that even households with the labor to move water had a difficult time maintaining the garden in a dry year.

For most households, the garden was at the mercy of the weather so that garden produce could not be depended upon to feed the family but functioned more to provide the luxuries that complemented the typical fare of meat and grain. It is also significant that John Randolph, a member of one of the wealthiest, most prestigious families in Virginia, wrote exclusively about vegetables and herbs in his *Treatise on Gardening*. He did not waste ink on roses or posies; he wrote about cabbages and cucumbers.

This seems to indicate that vegetables and fruits had a much higher value than what we give them today. It also makes one wonder if Robert Beverley's indictment of Virginia gardens in the *History and Present State of Virginia* (1705) that they were not "fit to bear the name of gardens" was really more about the difficulty of gardening in Virginia than disapproval of Virginia gardeners.

We know, through dendrochronology, that the early years at Jamestown were plagued by drought, and dry years are a fact of gardening in Virginia to this day. Even in England, where rainfall can be better relied upon, Miller wrote in *The Gardeners Dictionary* (1754): "Water is one of the most considerable Requisites belonging to a Garden: if a Garden be without it, it brings a certain Mortality upon whatsoever is planted." How much harder it must have been to garden in the drought-prone Virginia colony.





## COOK'S CORNER

### Some Fun Things To Do with Your Food

by Jim Gay

*Jim is a journeyman in historic foodways in the Department of Historic Trades.*

Visitors to the Palace and Randolph kitchens often ask the historic foodways staff to choose their favorite period recipe. As individuals, we all have our own opinions about how to respond. Sometimes, we interpret the question to mean our *most challenging* recipe. At other times, we talk about the recipe that *we most like to eat*. So, with apologies to my coworkers, who probably have their own favorites, here are mine.

Each of these eighteenth-century recipes has an interpretation that can be prepared in modern kitchens. Since eighteenth-century recipe writers assumed their reader was a cook, sometimes the obvious (to them) ingredient or procedure was excluded. Consequently, we have to read between the lines. Sound familiar? Where applicable, substitutions such as canola oil for butter are noted. These are fun to cook, from easiest to hardest. They are all fun to eat.

#### Chocolate Cream<sup>1</sup>

*Take a pt. of cream wth. a spoonful of chrap chocolate boyle tm well together mix wth it the yolks of 2 eggs & thicken & mill it on the fire thn pour it into yor chocolate cups.*

This is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, handwritten chocolate recipe in North America. It dates to about 1700 and was written by an anonymous housewife believed to be a Randolph or someone closely associated with the Randolphs.<sup>2</sup> It works wonderfully with American Heritage Chocolate sold in our Historic Area stores. This chocolate is made by Mars Inc. and was largely inspired by the chocolate made by historic foodways. This

recipe will have a different taste and thicker consistency if refrigerated. In colonial times, it was probably eaten at room temperature as a dessert. Modern chocoholics would call this a *ganache*, thickened with eggs yolks. It's great eaten straight, as a sauce over cheesecake, or as something to dip strawberries into. We use it in *Loaff[s]*, *Spanish fashion* provided at the end of this article.

So here's the translation:

- 4 oz. American Heritage Chocolate, grated into a powder
- 1 pint heavy cream
- 2 egg yolks
- sugar to taste

1. Combine the chocolate and cream in a saucepan and slowly bring the cream up to a simmer, stirring continuously to melt the chocolate. When the chocolate is melted, taste the mixture and add sugar if desired.
2. Temper the egg yolks to prevent scrambling. Whisk the egg yolks together until well combined. Whisk into the egg yolks a tablespoon of the hot chocolate mixture. Add some more of the chocolate until you have about a quarter of a cup. Then return it all to the main saucepan and bring the whole to a boil for a minute or two.
3. Take saucepan off the heat and pour chocolate into your serving cups.

#### To Make a Curry of Catfish.<sup>3</sup>

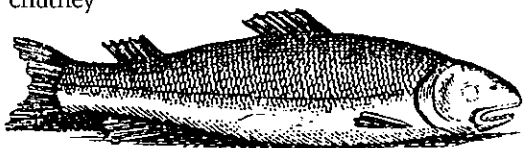
*Take the white channel catfish, cut off their heads, skins and clean them, cut them in pieces four inches long, put as many as will be sufficient for a dish into a stew pan with a quart of water, two onions, and chopped parsley; let them stew gently till the water is reduced to half a pint, take the fish out and lay them on a dish, cover them to keep them hot, rub a spoonful of butter into one of flour, add a large tea-spoonful of curry powder, thicken the gravy with it, and pour it over the fish; be careful to have the gravy smooth.*



How easy is this? Stew it, strain it, and thicken what's left! Now, here is this recipe translated into modern "food speak":

- 1 lb. of boneless catfish, cut into bite-sized chunks
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 handfuls of fresh parsley, rough chopped
- 3 or 4 cups of water [or chicken broth]
- 1 or 2 tbsp. of curry powder
- 2 tbsp. of butter or canola oil
- 2 tbsp. of flour
- salt and pepper

Optional condiments: diced scallions, diced carrots, raisins, diced hard-boiled egg, diced bacon, whole onion rings, grated coconut, chutney



1. Sweat the onions and one handful of parsley in butter or oil. Season with salt and pepper.
2. When the onions are translucent, add the catfish cut into bite-sized chunks along with 3-4 cups of water or broth.
3. Over high heat, bring the liquid to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer. Cover and cook the fish until firm, about 12-15 minutes. Remove the fish from the liquid and put it into a covered dish.
4. Bring the remaining liquid to a boil and reduce it to one cup.
5. In a small bowl, make a roux by melting the butter and working in the flour until smooth. Cook, stirring constantly, until it is a golden color. Add the curry powder and combine well. Let cool.
6. Add the curry and butter mixture to the hot liquid and bring it to a boil. Stir until thickened.
7. Take the gravy off the heat and add in the catfish. Cover the pan and let the flavors combine for a few minutes.
8. Serve over rice.

Although not in the original recipe, other condiments such as scallions and chutney work wonderfully with this dish.

#### Apple Fritters<sup>4</sup>

*Pare some apples and cut them in thin slices, put them in a bowl, with a glass of brandy, some white wine, and quarter of a pound of powdered sugar, a little cinnamon finely powdered and the rind of a lemon grated: let them stand some time,*

*turning them over frequently; beat two eggs very light, add one quarter of a pound of flour, a tablespoonful of melted butter, and as much cold water as will make a thin batter; drip the apples on a sieve, mix them with the batter, take one slice with a spoonful of butter to each fritter, fry them quick, of a light brown, drain them well, put them in a dish, sprinkling sugar over each, and glaze them nicely.*

This one is a little more work and a lot more calories. But you have the option of throwing away the apples and simply drinking the marinade!

- 2 or 3 Granny Smith apples, cored and pared
- 4 oz. brandy
- 4 oz. white wine
- ½ cup granulated sugar (not confectioner's sugar)
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- lemon rind from 1 fresh lemon
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour for batter
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour for dry coating
- 4 oz. of melted unsalted butter or margarine or canola oil for frying
- sugar for dusting

1. Mix the brandy, white wine, cinnamon, lemon peel, and sugar together in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Pare and core the apples. Slice them however you wish: either lengthwise as half moons or across to appear like donuts. Either way, make sure the core and seeds are removed. Quickly place the apple slices into the brandy mixture to prevent them from oxidizing (turning brown). Leave them in the mixture for a few hours, turning occasionally.
3. Mix the eggs, flour, and a tablespoon of melted butter. Add cold water to this mixture to make a thin pancake or crêpe batter. Set aside.
4. Drain the apples in a sieve. Lightly pat the apples dry with a paper towel and then lightly coat them with flour. Shake off the excess flour and put them into the batter, coating both sides. Set aside for about 30 minutes to let the batter adhere to the apples.
5. Fry the apple slices in melted butter to a light brown.
6. Drain the fritters on a sieve or cooling rack. Dust them with granulated sugar and transfer them to a flat sheet pan. Put the apples under a broiler set on high for a minute or two to melt the sugar.



*In Apple*

### To Make an Onion Pie<sup>5</sup>

*Wash and pare some potatoes and cut them in slices, peel some onions, cut them in slices, pare some apples and slice them, make a good crust, cover your dish, lay a quarter of a pound of butter all over, take a quarter of an ounce of mace beat fine, a nutmeg grated, a tea-spoonful of beaten pepper, three tea-spoonfuls of salt; mix all together, strew some over the butter, lay a layer of potatoes, a layer of onions, a layer of apples, and a layer of eggs, and so on till you have filled your pie, strewing a little of the seasoning between each layer, and a quarter of a pound of butter in bits, and six spoonfuls of water; close your pie, and bake it an hour and a half. A pound of potatoes, a pound of onions, a pound of apples, and twelve eggs will do.*

This recipe is far and away one of the most popular recipes in historic foodways. It is a wonderful accompaniment to roasted pork. Every ingredient works together. The apples and onions sweeten the potatoes and eggs, and the butter and seasonings tie everything together. This is a pie, meaning it has a top crust. If your pie-making skills are a little rusty, I suggest you buy frozen puff pastry available at our local supermarkets. A ten-inch pie pan works best.

4 small Yukon Gold potatoes  
2 large Granny Smith apples  
2 medium yellow onions  
8 large eggs  
3 tbsp. kosher salt  
1 tbsp. freshly cracked pepper  
½ to 1 grated nutmeg  
½ to 1 tsp. mace  
4 oz. butter  
frozen puff pastry or homemade pie crust

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. Boil the eggs. [Put the eggs in cold water and bring them to a boil. Remove them from the heat and let them stand for 15 minutes. Then, plunge the eggs into cold water.] When eggs are cool, shell and slice them.
3. Pare and slice the potatoes, apples, and onions. Slice everything ¼-inch thick. Place the apples and potatoes in a bowl of water to prevent oxidation.
4. Roll out the bottom crust and set it into the pie pan.
5. Mix the salt, pepper, nutmeg, and mace to together in a single bowl.
6. Drain and dry the apples and potatoes with a towel.

7. Begin the layers from the bottom up with potatoes, then eggs, then apples, and then onions. Sprinkle each layer with a little of the seasoning and little bits of butter. Continue filling and seasoning the pie until you are out of ingredients.
8. Put a top crust on the pie and crimp the edges. Cut 4 or 5 slashes on top crust to allow steam to vent out.
9. Bake for 45–50 minutes or until the crust is a nice golden brown.



### Pain a l' Espagnole.

#### Loaf Spanish-fashion [sic]<sup>6</sup>

*Cut off the tops of six rolls, take out all the crumbs, fill them with a ready made [chocolate] cream, and cover them with the tops that were cut off, soak them in sweet Spanish wine, about a quarter of an hour; then wipe and flour them; fry of a good colour, and glaze them with sugar.*

This recipe actually might get you arrested, because anything this rich and decadent is probably illegal. I use the chocolate cream listed above, but you could actually substitute a prepared pudding of any flavor. Alternately, it could work with a fruit filling or even fruit preserves. The recipe is more safely accomplished by frying, then filling, rather than soak, fill, and fry.

6 dinner rolls from the Raleigh Bakery,  
preferably a few days old  
1 750 ml. bottle of white wine, sweetened to  
taste  
1 lb. lard, or equivalent amount of clarified  
butter or vegetable oil  
all-purpose flour for dusting  
sugar for glazing  
chocolate cream recipe from above or other  
sweet filling

1. Make the chocolate cream and set aside. Do not refrigerate.
2. Carefully remove all of the outer crust from the dinner rolls with a fine grater. Cut the

- tops from the rolls and dig out the soft white insides with a paring knife. Take special care not to puncture or tear the bread shell.
3. When all the rolls are done, soak the shells and tops in the wine for about 15 minutes.
  4. Drain the rolls, then lightly powder them dry inside and out with flour. (Do not fry them soaking wet or you will risk a grease fire.)
  5. Deep fry the rolls and tops until golden brown.
  6. Drain the rolls, then fill them with the chocolate cream or other filling.
  7. Put the tops back on and lightly dust with sugar.
  8. Just before serving, put the rolls under the broiler for a few minutes to melt the sugar.

Thomas Jefferson said that to really get to know a people, one had to "look into their kettles" and "eat their bread."<sup>7</sup> If you try some of these recipes, you, too, might have some new insights into Jefferson's charge.

<sup>1</sup> Anonymous, Unidentified Cookbook (manuscript), circa 1700, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

<sup>2</sup> Katharine E. Harbury, *Colonial Virginia's Cooking Dynasty* (Columbia: University of Southern Carolina Press, 2004), xiv.

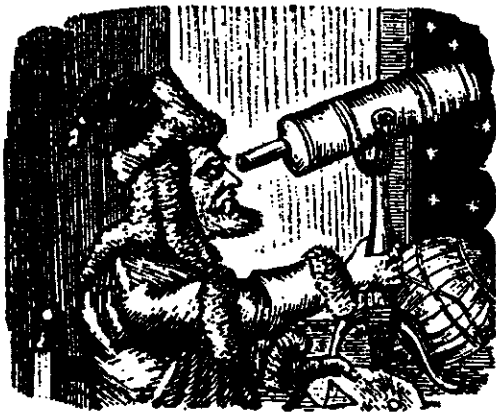
<sup>3</sup> Mary Randolph, *The Virginia House-Wife* (1824), ed. Karen Hess (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1984), 72.

<sup>4</sup> Randolph, *Virginia House-Wife*, 155.

<sup>5</sup> Hannah Glasse, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* (Rev. ed., 1796, repr. Schenectady, N.Y.: United States Historical Research Service, 1994), 259.

<sup>6</sup> George Dalrymple, *The Practice of Modern Cookery adapted to Families of Distinction as well as to those of The Middling Ranks of Life* (Edinburgh 1781), 399.

<sup>7</sup> James Parton, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson, Third President of the United States* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1883); 316; digital version 2006: <http://books.google.com/books?id=HRMNA0VQaS0C&pg=PA316&lpg=PA316&dq=thomas+jefferson+look+into+their+pots&source=web&ots=Sqb1SPLarY&sig=WP8e2MqxZPzDeUPWFbBZsujZuq8#PPA316,M1>,



## Q & A

**Question:** Did the 1776 adoption of the Declaration of Rights and the Constitution for the new Commonwealth of Virginia make any fundamental changes in the rights of women in the Commonwealth, or did their legal status remain pretty much the same until the later recodification of Virginia laws? (from Phil Shultz, actor/interpreter, Public History)

**Answer:** The Declaration of Rights and the Virginia Constitution adopted in June 1776 did not have the effect of changing the legal status of women as such. People often forget that constitutions lay out the form of government, but they usually do not spell out the nuts and bolts of the administration of justice, the criminal code, inheritance, or all the laws and regulations that apply to daily life and the institutions that have jurisdiction at various levels.

Phil is correct that the revision of the laws of Virginia to bring them more into line with republican ideals was not completed until 1779, and even then not all of the revised laws were enacted. (For example, Bill 82, Jefferson's "bill for establishing religious freedom," received two readings but was tabled during the war and not taken up and passed until 1785, effective 1786.)

Moreover, despite the promise of republicanism, American independence had little direct effect on the legal status of women. Marylynn Salmon, a historian of women's legal status, has said that only three changes occurred as a direct result of independence. After the Revolution, most of the states broke from English tradition and allowed absolute divorce (don't know the date for Virginia). Reforms in inheritance laws benefited women with the abandonment of the English law of primogeniture that had favored the eldest son in cases of intestacy. Reforms in inheritance law gave daughters increased rights to family property as a result of the republican emphasis on equality.

No sudden revolution in the legal status of married women occurred either. Wives remained *femes covert*s in 1830 just as in 1750. But steady improvements in the ability of wives to own and control property, especially in the rules on separate estates ("premarital agreements" to us today), indicate that the married women's property acts in the various states represented the end of an evolutionary process, not a radical break from post-Revolutionary trends as historians once thought. (Linda Rowe, historian, *Historical Research*. See also, Marylynn Salmon, *Women and the Law of Property in Early America*, Chapel Hill, N.C., 1986.)

**Question:** In the Spring 2007 Interpreter George Percy's account of the voyage to Jamestown states that "the fleet fell from London . . . and we anchored in the Downes." What were the Downes? (from Max Hamrick, master weaver, *Historic Trades*)

**Answer:** What Percy was talking about is an area of the sea that lies between the Thames Estuary and the Straits of Dover. It is a protected area off the east coast of Kent that was a favored holding position for ships awaiting a fair wind for an outward voyage. (In another context altogether, *downs* also refers to the treeless undulating chalk uplands of the south and southeast of England.)

**Question:** To what language group did the Virginia Indians belong?

**Answer:** The Powhatan Indians belonged to the Algonquian (or Algonkian) language group. The Algonquian languages were (and some still are) spoken in Canada, New England, the Atlantic coastal region southward to North Carolina, and the Great Lakes region and surrounding areas westward to the Rocky Mountains. Among the numerous Algonquian languages are Cree, Ojibwa, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Micmac, Arapaho, and Fox-Sauk-Kickapoo. The term *Algonquin* (often spelled this way to differentiate it from the family) refers to a dialect of Ojibwa.

**Question:** Where is the oldest tree in town? (from a volunteer via Julia Eccleston, supervisor, *Guest Service and Orientation*)

**Answer:** The English yew (*Taxus baccata*) at the Custis site on Francis Street is our oldest tree and possibly the only eighteenth-century plant we have. Because it is hollow, we cannot date it with certainty. From his own correspondence and from John Bartram's observations on a 1769 Williamsburg visit, however, we know that John Custis grew yews. (Wesley Greene, garden historian, *Landscape*)

**Question:** *Isn't there an eighteenth-century quote about being able to see both the James and York rivers from a cupola in town? (from a volunteer via Julia Eccleston, supervisor, Guest Service and Orientation)*

**Answer:** Former Colonial Williamsburg landscape architect Kent Brinkley wrote in a Fall 2000 *Interpreter* article: "In 1777, traveler Ebenezer Hazard wrote an account stating that a wonderful view of the entire city could be seen from the cupola of the main building (the Wren) at the College of William and Mary. He went on to state that the James River was easily seen from that vantage point, and, on a clear day, one could view the waters of the York River (from *Taking Possession* resource book, page 211). In December 1988, curious about this description, I [Kent Brinkley] tested the view of the area from the Wren cupola. I wanted to do this test specifically at this time of year so that trees in leaf would not obscure my vision. Not surprisingly, I ultimately discovered that, because of the vegetative growth of trees in this area since 1777, today, one cannot even glimpse either river from the cupola."

**Question:** *We're familiar with the story of how Gov. Francis Nicholson established and planned the city of Williamsburg. What was his involvement in the founding of Annapolis, Maryland, before he came to Virginia? (from a volunteer via Julia Eccleston, supervisor, Guest Service and Orientation)*

**Answer:** When Nicholson arrived in Maryland as governor in 1694, talk of moving the capital from St. Mary's City had been afoot for more than a decade, as the center of population began to shifting away from the region around St. Mary's. Further, the old capital represented the center of Catholicism in a colony earmarked for increasing domination by the Protestant Church of England after the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689 and the ascendancy of William and Mary.

Newly arrived Governor Nicholson called his first meeting of the Maryland assembly in September 1694 to discuss a new location for the seat of government. An act passed in October to establish "the Chief place and Seat of Justice within the Province for holding of Assemblies and Provinciaall Courts" at the virtually defunct site of Arundelton, toward the northern edge of settlement and no more centrally located than St. Mary's, angered Maryland's Catholics as well as Protestant residents of St. Mary's (remember that Catholics were always a minority in Maryland).

The final act passed by the assembly and endorsed by Nicholson directed commissioners "to survey and lay out in the most comodious [sic] and convenient part and place of the said Towne six Acres of Land intire for the Erecting a Court House and other buildings as shall be thought necessary and convenient" and specified the dimensions and plan for a building to house both the assembly and the Anne Arundel County court.

While the original plan for the city of Annapolis, as the new capital was called in the spring of 1695, was lost in the 1704 burning of the state house, circumstantial evidence credits Nicholson with the design. This evidence includes Annapolis's radical divergence from the character of other Maryland port cities established before Nicholson's arrival, as well as the example of Nicholson's behavior in establishing Williamsburg in 1699. No other person's name is associated with the Annapolis plan, except for the frontier surveyor who assisted with the project and who seems an unlikely person to have created the formal town plan.

In designing Annapolis, Nicholson used principles of baroque town planning with which he, a military man, may have been familiar from past observation. He made use of two natural knolls to create two circular spaces balanced by open squares and intersected by radial streets. While the inspiration was clearly taken from European design, the details of Nicholson's plan would be considered inexact by a professional town planner of his day. It is unclear whether Nicholson was doing the best he could with a site that had already been modified and built upon earlier or whether he, as a nonprofessional in the field, simply did not truly understand the principles requisite for a "perfect" design. (source: John Reps, *Tidewater Towns*)

**Question:** *Interpreters like to point out that the Wythe House is one of our most original buildings. How can we know how "original" historic buildings are? Is there a ranking somewhere of the most original sites? (from Christina Smith, site interpreter, Geddy House)*

**Answer:** It would be difficult if not impossible to rate our buildings in the Historic Area according to degrees of originality. I understand the origins of the question in the romantic desire to stand in an untouched space, but in fact, it diverts attention from more important ways of looking at our buildings.

First of all is the metaphysical question: What is an original building? You may recall that Colonial Williamsburg used to tout the

fact that we had eighty-eight original buildings in the Historic Area. This was done to divert criticism from the unfounded notion that we reconstructed all our buildings.

Let's look at that list of eighty-eight buildings. It's worth noting that, in fact, there were more than that number when we first started. We unfortunately dismantled a few such as Tazewell Hall. You can also add one or two buildings such as the Saunders House on Ireland Street, which is a mid-eighteenth-century brick house that was left off the list as it stands forlornly outside of the Historic Area.

The buildings on the official list ranged from those that had a lot of early fabric, such as the Everard House (framing, brick foundations, woodwork), to others that had very little and were taken down and reconstructed using a few of the old timbers, such as the Moody House.

Is the Moody House original? What percentage of fabric do we need to make the 1749 Coffeehouse fragments found in the Armistead House and its brick foundations near the Capitol an original structure? It is impossible to judge it in this fashion.

The Wythe House certainly would appear to have been altered little in the past 250 years. The plan now is very similar to what it was in the 1750s; yet additions had been made to the house—doorways punched in, porches, and other changes.

There are thousands of bricks in situ from the day they were laid by Wythe's bricklayers; however, most of the woodwork and chimneypieces in the house are modern (twentieth-century Colonial Williamsburg Foundation restoration work). Even the brickwork has been patched in a number of places (such as around the front door) where it had been changed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The wood cornice on the exterior appears to be nineteenth century but similar to the one that was probably on the building during Wythe's time. Thus for brickwork, the Wythe House is fairly well intact and does give a good sense of the quality of brickwork attainable in the capital in the mid-eighteenth century.

In terms of interior finishes, the Wythe House is a good reconstruction, but it would not be the house I would invite people to

visit in order to see the kind of woodwork typical of the better residences of the city. Thus, an individual building can vary widely in terms of significance.

None of our original buildings survives untouched by later generations of homeowners or restorers. Nowhere are there original roof coverings—all the clapboards or wood shingles were either replaced in the nineteenth century with new ones when they wore out or were torn off and replaced by concrete asbestos shingles in the early days of the restoration.

The same goes for plastered walls. One of the first things Colonial Williamsburg did when it restored a building in the early days was to remove all the plaster to see what was underneath as well as to investigate the structural quality of the framing.

So, throughout the Historic Area, we are missing important pieces of information. Original plaster could tell us about color washes on the walls or whether wallpaper had been installed. Some elements have survived well; others have disappeared leaving little trace.

For readers of the *Interpreter*, I would suggest starting off by reading Marcus Whiffen's *Eighteenth-Century Houses of Williamsburg*. Although it is now out of date and due for revision, it still provides a fairly accurate review of the conditions of each of the important early houses in town. Usually, the last paragraph of each individual write-up describes the condition of the building at the time of its restoration by Colonial Williamsburg as well as what elements had to be replaced or renewed with modern materials.

The Department of Architectural Research has started the revision process based on what we have learned over the past twenty-five years of research. Unfortunately, most of this material is still in draft form. You can see the drafts for about a half dozen buildings posted in a section called "Articles" on the Architectural Research Department's page on the CWF Research Division website. We plan to get all of the major buildings online as we have the opportunity.

(Carl Lounsbury, architectural historian, Architectural Research)

*Q & A* was compiled by Bob Doares, training specialist in the Department of Interpretive Training.



# Archaeology at Jamestown: A Century-Long Pursuit

by Kelly Govain

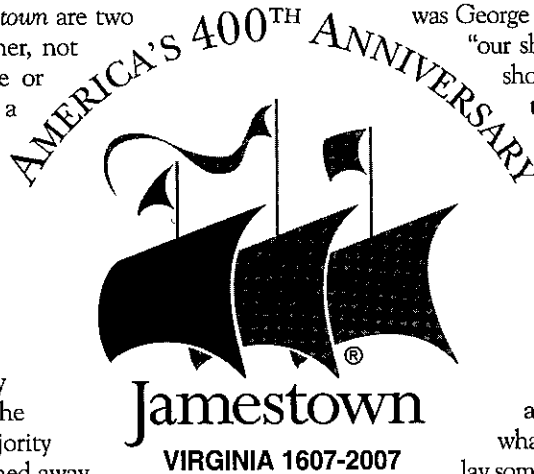
*Kelly is a training specialist in the Department of Interpretive Training and was an archaeological intern in the summer field school on Jamestown Island in 2001.*

Archaeology and Jamestown are two words often heard together, not only for the past decade or so, but for more than a century. Archaeologists from practically every generation have taken a stab at finding the remains of the 1607 fort. Although many found artifacts and other bits and pieces of evidence of the seventeenth-century site, each had come to the conclusion that the majority of the fort had been washed away into the James River. It wasn't until 1996, after two years of excavation, that the Jamestown Rediscovery team found convincing evidence to the contrary.

Throughout the nineteenth century, all that remained of the original seventeenth-century settlement was the 1639 church tower, which lay in ruins. In 1893, the newly formed Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities acquired the ruins and twenty-two and a half acres surrounding it. Four years later, founding member of the APVA Mary Jeffrey Galt took it upon herself to begin excavations surrounding the church tower. Her amateur work began a century-long pursuit of archaeological work to find what remained of the Jamestown settlement.

In the early years of the twentieth century, in preparation for the tercentenary commemoration in 1907, engineer Col. Samuel H. Yonge began excavations while building a seawall designed to halt erosion to the island. Yonge had done extensive research on the site and mapped out his findings. Based on what he considered to be the rate of erosion that had occurred in recent years and the concentration of artifacts surrounding the church tower, Yonge determined that the majority of the fort had washed away into the James River. According to a scale map he drew following his findings, only the easternmost bulwark closest to the church remained on the island.

We can't fault him too much for his inaccurate assumptions, because he was using what primary documents were available to him. One in particular



was George Percy's accounts that state, "our shippes doe lie so neere the shoare that they are moored to the Trees in six fathom water." Because that depth was so far out into the river, it was only logical for Yonge to assume that the fort lay out there as well. Yonge must be credited with finding the foundations of the third and fourth statehouses as well as determining that what little remained of the fort lay somewhere between the church tower and the Confederate earthworks.

Several years later, in 1934, following the National Park Service's acquisition of the remaining land on Jamestown Island, another effort at excavation began. This time archaeologists and architects both were brought together to examine the site. Unfortunately, the differing objectives of each expertise hindered the progress of their efforts, and the possibility of finding the fort was lost. Following this disastrous attempt at collaboration, J. C. Harrington stepped into the picture.

Having been trained in both architecture and historical archaeology, thus eliminating the potential for conflict among collaborating groups, Harrington was the perfect man for the job. His work began in 1937 and continued until 1949. During that time, he excavated the Jamestown Glasshouse and kept detailed drawings and records of his findings throughout the site. Despite Harrington's meticulous work, there was still not enough convincing evidence that the original fort remained.

As the 350th anniversary in 1957 inched closer, yet another effort was made. John Cotter became supervisor of archaeology at the NPS side of the island and excavated areas referred to as the Elay-Swann site. Another archaeologist, Joel Shiner, worked on the APVA side of the property.

Based on his finds of early Native American artifacts and late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century artifacts, Cotter determined that the original fort was unlikely to be found on the eastern side of the island. Although Shiner un-

covered an early-seventeenth-century armorer's forge and layers of colonial artifacts within the Confederate earthworks to indicate the possible vicinity of the fort, his small-scale excavations produced nothing conclusive.

The layers within the earthworks were put on display for visitors during the anniversary celebration indicating the highest level A as Civil War zone, level B as colonial trash, and level C as prehistoric Native American artifacts. This exhibit caught the eye of William and Mary graduate student Bill Kelso, who decades later became head of the Jamestown Rediscovery project.

As yet another anniversary year loomed on the horizon, historians and archaeologists remained convinced the majority of the fort lay in the middle of the James River. Hoping to have at least a small display of seventeenth-century artifacts from the original fort, the APVA, in 1994, created the Jamestown Rediscovery project to uncover whatever portion might be left.

Based on the archaeological work conducted over the last century, they knew part of the fort remained and determined this was the time to begin a large-scale investigation with a group of well-trained professionals. Kelso, with extensive experience in excavating other seventeenth-century James River settlements, was appointed head archaeologist. He was hopeful that more of the fort remained on the island, and set his primary goal as finding the remaining bulwark and palisade line.

Following a recommendation by his mentor and fellow archaeologist Ivor Noël Hume,

Kelso began excavations south of the church, closest to the seawall. In 1996, the team found what they sought: the bulwark and part the southernmost palisade line. The angle made by that bulwark, led them to believe that another bulwark likely remained somewhere near the Confederate earthworks.

After thirteen years of excavations, the Jamestown Rediscovery team has determined that only the westernmost bulwark has been lost to the James River; they are working to uncover as much of the rest of the fort as they can. Visitors to the 400th anniversary commemorations were able to experience much more than those during previous anniversary events.

The Archaearium, a new archaeology museum erected over the old statehouse site, displays many of the artifacts found. Visitors can also now see reconstructed palisade lines and the frame of a building that sat along the southern palisade wall. It only took a little more than a century to bring the history of Jamestown to life. It makes you wonder, what new discoveries will the 450th anniversary bring to light?

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## Abraham of Barbados

by Pete Wrike

Pete is an interpreter in the Department of School and Group Services.

Juleigh Clark of Colonial Williamsburg's John D. Rockefeller Library drew my attention to an interesting advertisement from a July 1776 *Virginia Gazette*:

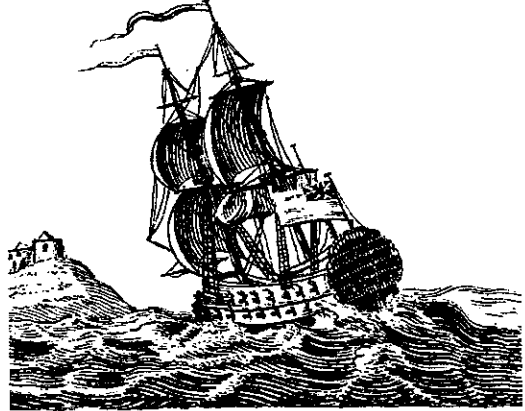
TAKEN up at Layton's warehouse, in Essex county, about the latter end of last month, and now in my possession at that place, a negro man who cannot or will not tell his master's name, but denies having any in this country; says, as well as he can be understood, that his name is ABRAHAM; that he was sent here in a ship with many others from Barbados, by his master there, to fight for lord Dunmore; and that he ran away from the ship, within a few days after he came to him. He appears to be between 30 and 40 years of age, of the middle size, slim made, speaks very broken, his face marked in the manner the grown negroes from Guinea usually are, had on a country made cotton cloth coat, linen short breeches, a kind of coarse [t] willed linen shirt, and had with him a very rusty tomahawk. His owner is desired to apply, pay charges, and take him away.

JAMES BOWDRIE.<sup>1</sup>

There are two ways to interpret the information in this ad: Abraham was from Barbados and an escapee from Dunmore's forces, or he was a Virginia slave with a plausible story to cover his tracks. Largely circumstantial evidence and a few documented events have a bearing on this episode, but we may never know which interpretation is correct.

James Bowdrie's appeal for Abraham's owner to "apply, pay charges, and take him away" tells us that Bowdrie himself is reasonably certain that someone in Virginia will claim the runaway. According to Bowdrie, Abraham refuses to speak his master's name, and his speech is difficult for Bowdrie to understand, possibly deliberate obfuscation on Abraham's part. Nonetheless, Abraham and Bowdrie understand each other well enough to for Bowdrie to give a fairly detailed account of Abraham's story in his *Gazette* runaway notice. That Abraham "speaks very broken" and carries marks "in the manner [of] the grown negroes from Guinea" suggests his African origins but neither confirms his enslavement in Barbados nor rules him out as a Virginia slave.

Discovery of what Barbadian vessels might have entered Virginia in mid- to late-June 1776 provides an interesting corollary to, if not confirmation of, Abraham's story. No systematic vessel entry and clearance records exist for this time in Virginia, by either British or emerging Commonwealth of Virginia authorities. There may have been others, but only one Barbadian vessel is known to have entered Virginia's waters in the period under investigation. On Sunday, June 23, a Barbadian vessel, the *William and Charles*, sailed past Cape Henry into the Chesapeake Bay.<sup>2</sup>



The *William and Charles* is known only because she ran hard aground on Willoughby's Point (current-day Willoughby Spit) about midnight, Sunday, June 23, 1776. In response, the Virginia militia under Maj. Andrew Leitch gathered twelve men, including Virginia Navy Lt. Thomas Herbert, and commandeered an unarmed pilot boat. They boarded the stranded brig after dawn, assured themselves that the cargo was destined for Dunmore, and arrested the crew. Leitch found 311 puncheons of rum and a few barrels of limes on board. He ordered Herbert to lighten the brig, in order to free it from Willoughby's Point, and sent four of the brig's crew ashore under guard.

Meanwhile, the British tender *Fincastle*, of ten carriage guns, spotted the activity and bore down swiftly to investigate. Lt. John Wright, R.N., quickly and correctly assessed the plight of the *William and Charles* and opened fire on the pilot boat, which fled under the fire from the *Fincastle*. Meanwhile, on board the stranded brig, Lieutenant Herbert threw five puncheons overboard, hoping to free the brig and drift to shore. He got the remaining patriot militiamen off in the brig's longboat, with the exception of one man who lingered too long in the hold. Late Monday, June 24, the *William and Charles* anchored off Gwynn's Island.<sup>3</sup>

The *William and Charles* belonged to a Barbadian named Walsh, and the crew was

understandably elated when the *Fincastle* drove the patriots off, re-floated the brig, and hoisted British colors. The sight of the *Fincastle* and the *William and Charles* under British colors bolstered morale at Gwynn's Island. Once the brig's cargo became known, morale rose even further. The cargo of rum would quite adequately serve the needs of the fleet and Dunmore's floating town. With the island's water diminished in quantity and quality, the arrival of a supply of rum was timely.<sup>4</sup> Presumably, if there were slaves on board the *William and Charles* intended for Dunmore's forces, they, too, would have been a welcome sight.

Is there a chance that Abraham was aboard the *William and Charles*? Again, circumstantial evidence allows for that possibility. That Tuesday evening, June 25, 1776, patriot militia Major Leitch reported the incident off Willoughby's Point to Col. James Hendricks, commander of American forces in Hampton Roads. Hendricks promptly notified Brig. Gen. Andrew Lewis in Williamsburg, along with his caustic observations on the Barbadian crew and their decided Tory sympathies,<sup>5</sup> likely shared by Abraham's supposed master Walsh in Barbados. Hendricks also spoke about "the whole of the people on board" the *William and Charles*, suggesting a considerable number of persons in addition to the crew. These might have included Abraham and other slaves sent from the island to help fill Dunmore's Royal Ethiopian Regiment alongside escaped Virginia slaves who had joined Dunmore after he published his Emancipation Proclamation in November 1775.

If Abraham's story that he was sent to Dunmore from Barbados was true, he must have made the decision to make a bid for his freedom almost as soon as the *William and Charles* anchored off Gwynn's Island on June 24, 1776. In this scenario, his lack of knowledge about Virginia waterways and byways very likely contributed to his capture at Leyton's Warehouse. Moreover, as a runaway, in these times, Abraham was subject to arrest by either side.

Abraham's seizure is the only one documented at the end of June 1776 in Essex. Layton's warehouse was several miles north of the main road (now State Route 17—George Washington Highway) and on the river, an unlikely place to be "taken

up" if Abraham traveled by land. In fact, the description of Abraham's capture—"taken up at Layton's warehouse"—strongly implies seizure on the river.

Then as now, a peninsula above Layton's constricted the river and increased the current's speed. On an ebb tide it was difficult for sailing vessels and small craft to move upriver making it a likely spot for a runaway on the water to be spotted and taken. (See Layton's warehouse, Gwynn's Island, and the adjacent region shown on the accompanying contemporary map. The author placed an inset map to amplify the difficulties of navigating above Layton's warehouse.) Whether by land or water, a "few" days with Lord Dunmore plus travel to Essex County might total four to seven days. That figure works if Abraham arrived at Gwynn's Island in the third or fourth week in June, possibly on board the *William and Charles* or some other Barbadian vessel.

No further reference to Abraham beyond the runaway advertisement has been found. The few extant records on James Bowdrie

*By his Excellency the Right Honourable JOHN Earl of DUNMORE, his Majesty's Lieutenant and Governour-General of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia, and Vice-Admiral of the same:*

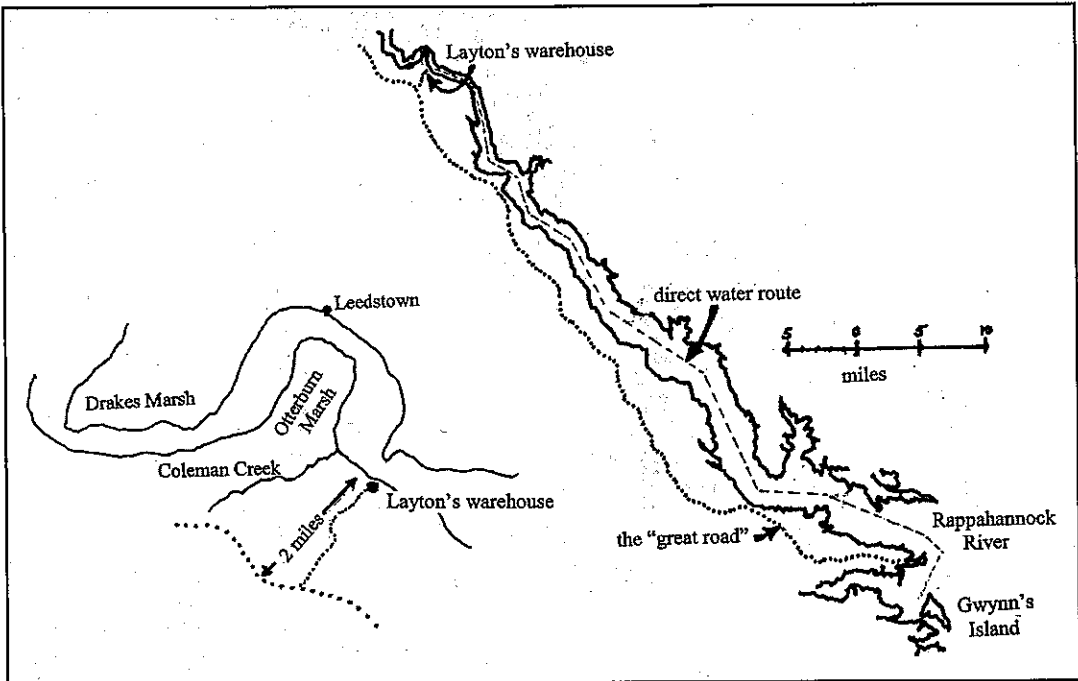
A P R O C L A M A T I O N .

AS I have ever entertained Hopes that an Accommodation might have taken Place between Great Britain and this Colony, without being compelled, by my Duty, to this most disagreeable, but now absolutely necessary Step, rendered so by a Body of armed Men, unlawfully assembled, firing on his Majesty's Tenders, and the Formation of an Army, and that Army now on their March to attack his Majesty's Troops, and destroy the well-disposed Subjects of this Colony: To defeat such treasonable Purposes, and that all such Traitors, and their Abettors, may be brought to Justice, and that the Peace and good Order of this Colony may be again restored, which the ordinary Course of the civil Law is unable to effect, I have thought fit to issue this my Proclamation, hereby declaring, that until the aforesaid good Purposes can be obtained, I do, in Virtue of the Power and Authority to me given, by his Majesty, determine to execute martial Law, and cause the same to be executed throughout this Colony; and to the End that Peace and good Order may the sooner be restored, I do require every Person capable of bearing Arms to resort to his Majesty's S T A N D A R D, or be looked upon as Traitors to his Majesty's Crown and Government, and thereby become liable to the Penalty the Law inflicts upon such Offences, such as Forfeiture of Life, Confiscation of Lands, &c. &c. And I do hereby farther declare all indentured Servants, Negroes, or others (appertaining to Rebels) free, that are able and willing to bear Arms, they joining his Majesty's Troops, as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper Sense of their Duty, to his Majesty's Crown and Dignity. I do farther order, and require, all his Majesty's liege Subjects to retain their Quitrents, or any other Taxes due, or that may become due, in their own Custody, till such Time as Peace may be again restored to this at present most unhappy Country, or demanded of them for their former salutary Purposes, by Officers properly authorized to receive the same.

GIVEN under my Hand, on Board the Ship *William*, off Norfolk, the 7th Day of November, in the 16th Year of his Majesty's Reign.

D U N M O R E .

G O D S A V E T H E K I N G .



Map showing Layton's Warehouse to the mouth of the Rappahannock River and water and land routes to Gwynn's Island. Enlarged section shows the two miles overland from the warehouse to the "great road."

provided no clues to Abraham's fate after his initial capture at Leyton's, so perhaps his Virginia owner turned up to claim him from Bowdrie after all. This possibility leaves us to wonder about the source of the story Abraham communicated to Bowdrie.

<sup>1</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), July 26, 1776 supplement, p. 2, col 1.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Jennings Wrike, *The Governors' Island, Gwynn's Island Virginia During the American Revolution* (The Gwynn's Island Museum and Brandylane Publishers, 1993), 62. The *William and Charles* does not appear in shipping records, nor do Barbados vessel entry and clearance records for the period 1765 to 1800 exist. Records in nearby islands and the Virginia Naval Office lists do not reveal records of a *William and Charles*. The newspaper *Barbadian Mercury* has few extant copies for this period. Lloyds lists for 1764, 1769, 1776, 1777, 1778, and onward do not list a *William and*

*Charles*. The cargo of 311 puncheons (1 puncheon equals 84 gallons) indicates a brig of approximately 90 tons.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 62–63. It was usual in Colonial Office records of shipping and other contemporary maritime documents to exclude the numbers of slaves that commonly augmented crews. Probably the *William and Charles* had few white crew and additional "crew" that were slaves shipped from Barbados. Abraham claimed that his Barbadian owner sent him to Virginia, not the island's governor unless the governor was his master. The four crew taken ashore were certainly white. Slaves among the crew would have remained on board to assist the patriot militiamen. This was common practice.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 63. Also *Virginia Gazette*, June 28, 1776.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* From "Extract of a Letter from Colonel Hendricks to Brigadier General Lewis, dated Hampton, June 26, 1776," *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, vol. 5 (Washington, D.C., 1966), 755–756. The author has documented more than five hundred slaves who served the king during Lord Dunmore's campaign against Virginia (June 1775–July 1776).

## New at the Rock



### New Items in Special Collections

*The Book of Common Prayer* (London: Mark Baskett, 1766) bound with *The Holy Bible* (London: Mark Baskett, 1768). This work belonged to the Greenhow family, colonial residents of Williamsburg. The research value of the piece stems from some twenty pages of written addenda and genealogical material. Dates covered stretch from John Greenhow (1724–1788) through the early nineteenth century.

Appraisal and inventory of the Williamsburg property of the late Doctor William Pasteur, July 26, 1791. Pasteur was a one-time mayor of the city and partner in the Pasteur-Galt Apothecary Shop on Duke of Gloucester Street. The document lists sixteen Negroes by name.

Ferroussat de Castelbon. *Réflexions sur la mauvaise Qualité du Platre* (Paris: chez Lottin, 1776). This rare work in French discusses the poor quality of plastering in the era, traces its use from Roman times, and suggests methods to arrive at better fabrication.

Rodgers, John. *The Divine Goodness Displayed, in the American Revolution* (New York: Samuel Loudon, 1784). This pamphlet contains a sermon preached in New York on December 11, 1783, the date appointed by the Continental Congress as a day of public thanksgiving throughout the United States for the signing

of the Treaty of Paris. The biblical text is taken from *Psalms* 126: 3, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

Photo Album compiled by Frederick H. Ball, circa 1910–1911. Frederick H. Ball and his wife, Merrill Proctor Ball, lived in the Peyton Randolph House in the early twentieth century. Ball served as general manager of the Piedmont & Tide-Water Land Company. This album consists of fifty black-and-white photos of buildings, landscapes, and people in various areas of Virginia. Photos of buildings in Williamsburg include Person's Garage, the J. R. Daly House, the C&O Railroad Depot, Ball's business, the Old Debtor's Prison, the Marshall House, Bassett Hall, Bruton Parish Church, Nicholson School, the Wren Building, and the Peyton Randolph House. Notable events that are recorded in the photographs include a large group of African Americans assembled for a boat launching at Queen's Creek and a Washington's Birthday celebration at Nicholson School. The album also includes a photograph of Rosewell Plantation before it was damaged by fire in 1916. [The album is housed in the Visual Resources Collection. Please contact Marianne Martin, visual resources librarian, if you wish to see the album.]

Submitted by George Yetter, associate curator for the architectural drawings and research collections, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library.

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