

Glassford & Henderson Transcription Project
George Washington's Mount Vernon

Essays submitted to the Mount Vernon Mystery Midden Blog

American History 4110: Colonial America, 1607-1763
University of Central Florida
Dr. Rosalind Beiler
Spring 2013

by

Michelle Bakels
Julia Bennett
Laura Braddock
Robin Dunn
Andrew Heer
Morgan Holman
Altuan McGarvin
Nicholas Powers
Marian Price
Danielle Rodriguez
Jonathan Saunders
Richard Sickles
Allison Siegel
Joelle Simpson
Sarah Steele

The following essays have not been edited for content or grammar. They are provided as an example of the entire body of work submitted by the students.

A Captain and Customer

Michelle Bakels / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Working on the Mt. Vernon Mystery Midden project with my Colonial American History class at the University of Central Florida this semester has been exciting and eye-opening. We have been transcribing ledgers from John Glassford, a Scottish shopkeeper in Virginia during the 18th Century. Glassford organized his ledgers in pages of Debits and Credits where he listed the clients name, date of purchase, and items purchased. These ledgers do not only reveal what people in the 18th Century were purchasing, but they also tell us what kinds of people were making transactions with Glassford.

One clients name intrigued me so I sought to find out more about this customer. His name is Captain William Bronaugh and he lived in Virginia for his entire life from 1729-1800. Information discovered about his biography tells us that it was possible that he was doing transactions with the Glassford store. His purchases in 1759 and 1760 tell us he was a wealthy, religious man. Capt. Bronaugh's transactions include a prayer book, various types of fabric, and items and services for his horse.¹

His transactions towards the end of this entry fall between March 1, 1760 and March 14, 1760. This actually coincides with the marriage to his first wife, Margaret Strother, on March 10, 1760.² Three months prior to this marriage we can see Capt. Bronaugh's purchase of women's shoes.³ It could be possible that these were for the then Miss Margaret Strother. Margaret Strother was one of three of Capt. Bronaugh's wives. Margaret died December 26, 1761, six months after the birth of their only child Mary Mason Bronaugh. In 1762 Capt. Bronaugh remarried to Mary Doniphan whom with he had eight children. After Mary's death in 1781 he remarried for the third and final time to Rebecca Craine in 1783 whom with he had three children.⁴

Captain William Bronaugh had a prominent place in society during his time. Bronaugh was a member of George Washington's council and was appointed Captain of the Virginia Regiment in 1754 under Washington's command.⁵ The Virginia Regiment served in the French and Indian

¹ William Bronaugh, et al, Ledger 1759-1760, Colchester, Virginia, folio C 1759 060D, from the John Glassford and Company Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

² Ancestry.com. "William Bronaugh (b. January 16, 1729-30, d. March 1800)" April 3, 2013. <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/m/i/t/Russell-G-Mitchell/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0713.html>

³ William Bronaugh, et al, Ledger 1759-1760, Colchester, Virginia, folio C 1759 060D, from the John Glassford and Company Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

⁴ Ancestry.com. "William Bronaugh (b. January 16, 1729-30, d. March 1800)" April 3, 2013. <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/m/i/t/Russell-G-Mitchell/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0713.html>

⁵ Marquis, Ablbert N. *The Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy*, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1987. As accessed at <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/m/i/t/Russell-G-Mitchell/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0713.html>

War and as a result in 1771 Capt. Bronaugh was given six thousand acres of land for his service.⁶ Five years after the listed transactions with the Glassford store, in 1765, he was a signing member of the protest against the Stamp Act.⁷ The Stamp Act was a tax imposed by the British to the colonies on all printed materials from London and was not received well by the colonists.⁸

We can see from the numerous transactions we have been deciphering as a class that John Glassford had a successful shop where he sold a variety of items to the Virginia colonists. His clients ranged from farmers to reverends to military men. A closer examination of his account books along with outside research reveals the lifestyles and biographies of some of his most interesting customers. It is especially interesting to see a member of Washington's council show up as a customer at the Glassford store.

⁶ National Genealogical Society Quarterly, December 1958: page 21. As accessed at <http://www.harlor.co.nz/getperson.php?personID=I10801&tree=Kromer-Schraishuhn>

⁷ National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. *Lineage Book Vol. VIII*. Pittsburgh: Press of Pierpont, Siviter & Company, 1894.

⁸ Independence Hall Association. "The Stamp Act." April 3, 2013. <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/related/stampact.htm>.

Pumps: A Women's Obsession

Julia Bennett / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

In the British colonies during the 18th century, women or mainly their husbands were making orders for “Womens Pumps”.¹ What is striking about this is the fact that women today commonly call their favorite pair of heels, pumps. This has been a popular name for these types of shoes since the 16th century.² This term, “pumps”, from the eighteenth century still holds its meaning today. They are shoes with a heel and are generally worn during a special occasion. But you would not find any patent leather or a strappy pair of rhinestone heels here. These pumps were made of fabric, preferably silk, and embroidered with elaborate floral prints.³ They had a thick heel and only a medium ranged height, one to two inches. They were modest and normally not seen by others unless they were dancing, for a women's dress went right down to the floor. In this case modest means no open toed shoes or backless pumps because if they would wear these they were going out, so they would most likely be dancing or doing another form of socializing.⁴

Something the women were not shy about was the prints they chose to embroider onto the fabric. Floral and color were very common in a pump during this time. It was a fashion statement and in the colonies most women who could afford it did as much as they could to mimic their English counterparts back in London. Though women who did not live by these means probably wore one type of shoe with a small heel and might have owned one pair of the embroidered pumps as her wedding shoes. These prints were commonly hand embroidered by the lady who planned on wearing them and then given to the shoemaker to be fitted and made into a shoe.⁵

The British women who came to live in the new colonies came from all types of backgrounds and women today are also from a wide range of cultures and social statuses. Pumps are a stigma in fashion and an item that is owned that exemplifies one's personal taste; they hand embroidered theirs and we pick from thousands of different styles.

¹ Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia*, folio 36C, from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58.

² McClellan, Elisabeth. "Women's Dress 1700-1800." *Historic Dress in America 1607-1800*. N.p.: George W. Jacobs, 1904. pp. 391.

³ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Shoes*, 2009.300.1482.

⁴ Molly Kerr, e-mail.

⁵ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Shoes*, 2009.300.1482.

The Lost Colonel of Virginia

Laura Braddock / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

One of the first accounts that my partner Marian and I transcribed was that of Colonel Bertrand Ewell. His debit account was interesting to me for many reasons the first was that he was identified as a Colonel, meaning that he had some sort of military career. The second reason this account grabbed my attention was because on December 22, 1759 his son charged the account not the Colonel. This was a simple action but the question of where was the Colonel peeked my curiosity. In this blog I will explore what is known of the story of Colonel Bertrand Ewell.

Bertrand Ewell's parents came to the American colony in the early 1700s, the exact date is unknown but believed to be between 1700 and 1710. Charles Ewell, Bertrand's father, settled in Virginia and became wealthy through land acquisition in the 1730s. Charles died in April 1722 leaving Bertrand a handsome inheritance. Bertrand was willed "two hundred and fifty acres out of that tract at Tolliver's mount...and one Negro girl named Moll for him and his heirs."¹

What is known about Bertrand Ewell is that in his youth he surveyed land in Virginia as a county surveyer and helped to formally establish the town of Dumfries Virginia.² At some point he entered the Military the year is unknown. Bertrand rose through the ranks by 1748 he was a Captain and was an officer as early as 1753. Also unknown still is what he was doing in December 1759, and whether or not his absence was related to his Military work.³

Two years later 1750 he was married to Frances Kennerit a woman of German decent. The couple had many children. There are twelve confirmed children of Bertrand and Frances Ewell. Charles Ewell the last child of Bertrand was born on September 29, 1760. This is interesting to note because on that same day two gallons of rum was charged to the Colonel's Glassford Account. The family was most likely celebrating the child's birth.⁴

Another connection that I found to the Debit account is for December 22, 1759 part of that transaction states "To ¼ Rum Pr [Per] order from the Forge." In my research on Bertrand I discovered that he owned Iron Forges in Virginia. This transaction so close to Christmas leads

¹ Charles Ewell, "Will of Charles Ewell" Jan. 13, 1722. "Ewell Family Info." GeneaJourney. <http://www.geneajourney.com/ewellinfo.html> (accessed April 4, 2013).

² Paul Casdorph. *Confederate general R.S. Ewell: Robert E. Lee's hesitant commander*. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2004.

³ The Next Generation of Genealogy Sitebuilding. "Col. Bertrand Ewell b. 1715 Prince William, Virginia, USA d. 1793 Prince William, Virginia, USA: JHBL Genealogy." Welcome to LatrobeFamily.com. <http://latrobefamily.com/genealogy/getperson.php?personID=I16186&tree=mytree> (accessed April 4, 2013).

⁴ Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia, folio C_1759_064D*, from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association). The Next Generation of Genealogy Sitebuilding

me to believe that Bertrand was buying the rum as a Christmas gift to his workers. The “Per order” leads me to believe that the workers were coming in as they got off their shift.⁵

Due to the owning of vast lands and Iron forges in Prince William county the Ewell family became well established in the community and county. Through marriage the Ewell family became associated with the Washington family and though that relation became distant relatives of the first President.⁶

Finding information on the success and failures of Bertrand Ewell after his father’s death is difficult. Partly because the Archives have been damaged through time and partly, I think, because historians have not looked for him in the existing files. I believe that someone asking the right questions and looking in the right places, more information will be found on this interesting lost Colonel of Virginia.

⁵ Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger*. Paul Casdorff, 3.

⁶ Paul Casdorff, 3.

Smoking, Hot Money: The Use of Tobacco as Currency

Robin Dunn / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Tobacco was a very large part of the agricultural lifestyle in the colonies. When the colonist figured out that tobacco could grow well in the climate, the Chesapeake area soon became the lead tobacco grower and a staple crop in the community. This helped the economy grow and become a trading post. Tobacco also became important because it was used as a currency since gold and silver were hard to come by and there were also many different kinds of currency that were used to pay for items so the value was always different. Another reason that tobacco was a good currency was that it was reliable and safe to use and the exchange value was always good.¹

In the John Glassford and Alexander Henderson (G&H) documents there have been multiple entries of people ordering tobacco and also using it as a currency. In one of the documents I transcribed, dated August 10 1759, I found a man named Reverend James Scott who purchased a couple of hogshead of tobacco and after that it said “for cash”.² When it comes to this transaction, I think that Rev. Scott was using this tobacco for personal use. When it comes to the “for cash” I think that he is stating that the Reverend might used the tobacco as cash and trade it with other people for goods that he needs.

In the latest documents that my partner and I transcribed I saw the most use of tobacco as a currency. Thomas Connell and William Buchanan both used tobacco as a currency when they paid off their credit from G&H. In November 1760 Connell traded 1 hogshead of tobacco. This brand of tobacco was TCN.³ The tobacco was branded by individual farmers to keep track of the tobacco that they sold and also for the buyers to know who grew the crop.⁴ I don't know if the brand of the tobacco is important when it comes to selling it or trading it since there are many different brands that I have seen. Buchanan also used 1 hogshead tobacco a currency as well on 25 of October. The brand that Buchanan had was GDN.⁵

The use of tobacco in the colonial period was very important not just to the lives of the individual people but also to the economy since it helped build up the trading community in the Chesapeake. Although the colonies only traded with England since they were under

¹ Tobacco, “Economic Aspects of Tobacco during the Colonial Period 1612-1776” Website, 2 April 2013. <http://archive.tobacco.org/History/colonialtobacco.html>

² Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia*, folio 025 Credit and 060 Debit, from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association), 060Debit

³ Henderson, *Ledger 1758-1760*, 025Credit

⁴ Tobacco, “Tobacco during the Colonial Period”

⁵ Henderson, *Ledger 1758-1760*, 025Credit

contract, it ended working for them in the long run. Since tobacco was so valued the items they trade where equal in value to the tobacco.⁶

⁶ Tobacco, “Tobacco during the Colonial Period”

Dumfries

Andrew Heer / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

In my last transcript I kept running into this weird word and after spelling it out I got the name Dumfries, I figured that I must be reading this word wrong so I decided to look it up online. It turns out Dumfries is in fact a word, in fact it's an old settlement. There is actually very little information on this town, which when you consider how much product went through this settlement you'd think that there would be more information it. Dumfries was known as a thriving port settlement. People came to Dumfries to drink at the taverns, but mainly to go to its many shops. Back in the early 1750's and 1760's Dumfries was a port that rivaled Boston, New York, and Philadelphia which I found absolutely shocking.

Dumfries was first populated by Richard Gibson in 1690 when he opened a gristmill on Quantico Creek. Later in 1731 more and more businesses came to take advantage of the Quantico Creek which allowed easy access for the imports and exports of goods. The town was named by John Graham after Dumfriesshire, Scotland his hometown. Like most of Virginia Dumfries main cash crop was tobacco. However after the revolutionary war the city fell apart, when the main crops switched from Tobacco and the new United States had a more expanded trade outlook with Europe, and since it was easier to access city's such as New York, Philadelphia and Boston(amongst others) Dumfries was forgotten. Today Dumfries is still celebrated in Virginia as one of the older towns in the state. The residents still take pride that they live in a place that played such a vital role in early colonial American history, the place where important families went to buy and sale goods including the Washington's. Dumfries the once great port of the colonies.¹

¹ The Town of Dumfries, <http://www.dumfriesva.gov/about-the-town/history>
2.Historic Dumfries Virginia, Inc. <http://www.historicdumfries.com/index.html>

Buttons

Morgan Holman / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

A great variety of buttons were used on men's clothing during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Generally thread and fabric covered buttons were most common on civilian clothing and metal buttons were used on military clothing but button molds have been found at military digs, in some cases in great numbers. Some extant garments have metal buttons covered with fabric. The least common of the buttons were horn, which were made in small numbers in England and exported.¹

Thread buttons were used on men's shirts and other undergarments from the late 17th into the early 19th century. Thread buttons were less expensive than bone, wood or metal and they would not break during the strenuous beating and scrubbing used by the laundresses. Unlike buttons made of other materials, thread buttons are soft and comfortable to lay against while sleeping. Thread buttons are individually hand made from either unbleached, off white, or white strong 16/2 linen thread and are approximately 1/2" in size. There is a small thread shaft at the back to sew to your undergarment.

Death head buttons were used on men's coats and waistcoats throughout the 18th century. They were used on everyday business attire not for best dress. Death head buttons are a good size for a coat and hand made on a bone blank of silk thread. Dorset buttons originated in southern England where their name is derived. Throughout Dorset, thread buttons became a cottage industry beginning in the early 18th century and continuing to the third quarter of the 19th century. Families, prison inmates and orphans were employed in the manufacture of thousands each year, which were used throughout the UK and exported all over the world.

Horn buttons, only 1/8" thick, worked well for spatterdashes and gaitered trousers but were sometimes used in other outer clothing. These strong durable buttons were competitive in price with other types but available in limited numbers in the 18th century since the making of them was slow. Being stamped or pressed out of horn they would also lack the center hole of the wood and bone buttons but a hole would be added later.

Sleeve buttons were used on the sleeves of men's shirts and women's shifts from the early 18th to the early 19th century. Cuff links are often confused with sleeve buttons but are structurally different. It is believed people of all economic standing wore sleeve buttons. Sleeve buttons were issued to soldiers of several military regiments including the 17th of Foot in 1776 and the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment in 1778. These buttons were made of excellent quality 1/2" domed buttons and are available in brass and German silver.

¹ The Mattatuck Historical Society, "Waterbury Button Museum." Last modified 2010. Accessed April 3, 2013. <http://www.mattatuckmuseum.org/button>.

Buttons played a major role in the clothing of the 18th century and continues to play a role in our clothing today. The material it was made of reflected class standing, occupation, and several other aspects of a person's life.²

² Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia*, folio 105, from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

Sugar: It's not always sweet at the end

Altuan McGarvin / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Sugar, a crop with so much history is still making headlines today as it did in the 18th Century. The history of the sugar can go all the way back to the sugarcane used back in India at 350AD. It was first introduced in the New World by the Dutch in 1625 where they carried the crop from South America to the Caribbean islands where it was grown in Barbados and the Virgin Island. The British and Europeans first used Native Americans as sugar cultivators but because of the rise of illness and death, they replaced them with African Slaves create more sugar. Around this time, the eating habits of some of the Europeans immigrants in the New World changed as they now started to use Candy, tea, cocoa, processed foods and other things that used sugar. The European colonization of America caused the Carribean to become the #1 supplier of Sugar. With the demand for sugar higher, the carribean needed more man power to make the sugar. Hence the Slave labor used in the Caribbean helped lower cost of the sugar being made. The Economies of Barbados and Guadeloupe was based on the sell of sugar.

By the 18th Century, the popularity of sugar was at an all-time high. Britain became one of the nations that used sugar more than usually, consuming 5 times more sugar in 1770 than in 1710. Sugar passed Grain as the Most hottest commodity in the European trade. Planters began using manure to get more production out of sugar. Sugar was in high demand and the prices soared. One of the pitfalls of sugar production is that it kills the soil and its hard for that soil get back to normal. Because of this, The Europeans would get into wars with the Native Americans because The natives didn't like how the Europeans was treating the land and trying to take all of their land away. Sugar affects the environment in numerous ways:

- Forests must be cleared to plant sugar
- Wood or fossil fuel is needed in processing steps
- Waste products from processing affect the environment
- Parallel consumption of other items related to sugar, including coffee, tea, chocolate, etc all collectively put additional resource requirements on the environment

Because of this, Native Americans and European intruders would butt head over environmental issues. The slave trade which had Britain, French and Portugal was tied to the availability of the European good that could be exchanged for on the African Coast, an efficient merchant marine that could transport the slaves to the Americas and sugar and tropical products to return to Europe, where the triangular trade began.

The mortality rate was 8 to 18%. For Economic Reasons the Trader took responsibility of the merchandise but the first half of the 18th century continued to be the scene of deadly illnesses such as chicken pox and measles. Some 23 million African slaves that were caught died before reaching American Soil.

Bibliography

Shah, Anup. "Sugar." - *Global Issues*. N.p., 25 Apr. 2003. Web. 10 Apr. 2013.

Viera-Vargas, Hugo R. "CARIBBEAN: Sugar and Slavery in the 17th Century." *CARIBBEAN: Sugar and Slavery in the 17th Century*. N.p., 02 May 2012. Web. 10 Apr. 2013.

Buckram the Fabric That Did it All

Nicholas Powers / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

While I was reading and transcribing ledgers from the Mt Vernon dig sight I found many odd products being ordered again and again. One of the most popular I kept seeing was Buckram. I have never heard of such a thing in my life. Based on the way it was ordered it became apparent to me that it was a type of cloth. Henderson sold over twenty seven yards of this cloth in the month of January.¹ Just knowing that it was cloth was not enough for me. I wanted to know what buckram was used for. Was this a silk type fabric used by the wealthy? Was this a soft fabric used for bedding and pillows? The truth about buckram is much more simple and useful than all that, but it was very necessary in the daily life of colonists in America.

Buckram is a very stiff cloth that was made out of cotton. It is occasionally covered in a glue substance to make the product firm. This form of fabric has been around since the middle ages. The product is used as a stabilizer, which allows fabric to take shape and be heartier. It was ordered in great numbers in the ledgers which leads me to believe that it is relatively inexpensive. However the many uses of buckram show that it is truly a key staple in all aspects of colonial life.²

Buckram does have many uses due to its ability to maintain its shape. It is used in hats by men and for ladies bonnets as well. This is so they do not have to put wiring or a frame for the material to maintain its shape. It is used in the pleats of curtains so they can keep their form. Suits were able to be made more elaborate because the coarseness allowed for more detail.³

In this men's suit you can see that the sleeves have folded sides at a tight angle. Regular cotton would not have held its form like this.

Whether the person wearing the hat wanted it to be elaborate or simple, buckram was able to take the desired form and be durable which was very important during this time.

Another important use of buckram was its ability to protect. So colonists used buckram as a type of book cover. They did not have cardboard back then, and the heavyweight fabric was perfect for protecting the pages of the book.

Buckram is still used in curtains today to keep a more folded look. This look is considered fashionable back in the colonial American times as well as today.

¹Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia*, folio C_1759_060C, from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

² Whitt, Kay "Making bags: What the Heck is Buckram" Sew Serendipity. Blogger. June 18, 2008. <http://blog.sewserendipity.com/2008/06/making-bags-what-in-heck-is-buckram.html>

³ Buckram. Dictionary.com <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Buckram>

As you can see there were many uses for this material. I also believe this material was a staple in many aspects of their lives. I feel it took the place of cardboard due to its stiffness. The colonists as well as other Europeans used this fabric to form the fashions of the day. I find the ingenuity refreshing, as well as important to the overall life of colonists.

Cloth in the 18th Century

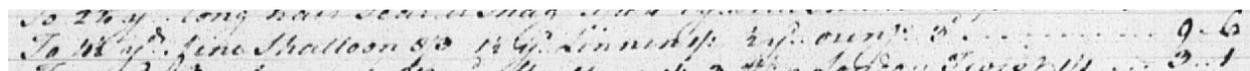
Marian Price / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Cloth in the 18th Century was not what it is today. Most people would think that this was a somewhat obvious statement, but the extent of the differences is hard to grasp sometimes. A completely different world with entirely new (or old) perspectives is often like this. Most of the cloth that we own today is machine-made. It takes maybe an hour to do what would have been days worth of work. Due to this, we have different types of cloth now than we did then. From account books and other documents from the period, we can determine exactly what these varied cloths were. There are several mentioned, including shalloon, ozengs, which was short for osnaburgs, and silk.

Silk is very common today, and is one of the only cloths that has survived with relatively few changes over the years.

Shalloon is a light woolen fabric that is sometimes worsted twill. It was used in varying weights as a coat lining. The 18th Century was marked by a period of social elitism, in the sense that everyone was aware of fashion and just had to have what Mrs. Jones down the lane had. People competed to have the nicest houses, the most land, property, etc. This extended to how they dressed. Current dyeing techniques made several different colors possible, creating a kaleidoscope of skirts and petticoats bustling down the streets of the colonies. Shalloon was common, easily come-by, but it was hardy and could withstand the wear and tear of a normal day. The coloring and technique in which you wore it helped to determine where you stood in a society marked by a constant need to be the most fashionable.

Ozengs, which was a nickname for osnaburg, was a rough, very course linen-like material used in everything from clothing like breeches and suits to sheets, tablecloths and carpetbags. A cloth like this would have been invaluable to everyone from the average farmer to the richest man in his mansion. The Colonists had great uses for practical things, and osnaburg was about as practical as it comes. Osnaburg back then would be the equivalent of our cotton or polyester blends of today. It was in everything, was used for everything, and was everywhere. In the Glassford transcription project that we are working on, osnaburg is mentioned in over half of the entries we have transcribed.



In this line, if you can read the writing, you can see yards of both shalloon and ozengs being ordered by John Vilot. He was the customer on this account, and a patron at the store owned by Henderson, the writer of these account books. The shop was located near Mount Vernon in the years surround 1760, when this specific account was written. Ozengs are mentioned time and again in Henderson's account book, but to my knowledge it never says what the cloth was specifically being used for at that time. It would be fascinating to discover each person's own uses for a cloth that everybody needed. Whether for table linens or clothing, osnaburg was important.

The quality of your clothing was a symbol of your status in society. Were you rich enough to have nice clothes? Or were you too poor to own more than one or two sets of clothing? Rank was extremely important in the society, so the quality of peoples' clothing, and the contents thereof, were equally so. Shalloon, osnaburg, silk were useful in the material as well as social world, for the way a colonist was able to use them determined their standing in society, and their place in the world.

Learning History from a Blind Student's Perspective

Danielle Rodriguez / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Since I have been blind from birth, I was never familiarized with how to write and I never actually saw what the letters in the alphabet look like. However, there is a different and effective process of learning that I am able to utilize. While most students learn through visual methods, I learn history through a process of listening and memorization. I think of history as a long, detailed story and I use memorization to keep the events of that story in chronological order.

With this project, I faced several new challenges but was not discouraged. The first challenge I was forced to overcome while completing this project was that the documents were in image format. I had to rely on my teammates to provide detailed descriptions of the documents and how the pages were arranged in order to visualize and organize them. Once I was able to organize the images in my mind, I tried to think of how each image might look in Braille, which is the method commonly used by the vision impaired for reading and writing.

Another challenge I faced was taking the 18th century images of handwritten words and converting them into Braille. My teammates and I went word by word and letter by letter through the document to make sure it would match the print version. We also had to stop several times while they tried to figure out 18th century handwriting, which can be difficult just like how print can be difficult for me. I also had to explain that Braille is different from print because it has its own unique symbols that differ from the letters in the alphabet. For example, A in print is the letters / in Braille.

Despite these difficulties, this project has been a unique learning experience for me in many ways. It has been an interesting way to learn about 18th century life because I am not used to using images this way. The project was also a great way to practice working and communicating with others, which are skills that I see beneficial to both the sighted and the blind. I hope more blind and visually impaired students can participate in this project.

In order to make this goal possible, I would like to offer some insight and feedback. If possible, the documents should be placed in an alternative format, such as audio or Braille. If the documents were available in an alternate format, a blind student could more easily access the material and wouldn't just type the information up. They could play a greater role in the team by attempting to decipher and figure out the words. If image format is the only one available, a caption should be included that explains what appears in the image as most screen reading programs used by the visually impaired do not have the capability to do this. I hope these suggestions are helpful and that you gained a better understanding of learning history from a blind student's perspective.

The Unappreciated Importance of the Common Tools

Jonathan Sanders / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

As early American scholars it is crucial that we do not overlook even the most insignificant items, such as pins and needles, for these seemingly trivial objects played a consistent role in the day to day life of the early Americans. Pins and needles were applied to the production of clothing or other woven objects. In fact pins were used to hold cloths together in the absence of buttons, which I presume was an indication of a lower class individual. There were several different types of pins that early Americans would used on an everyday basis, such as, “larger whites, short whites which were used in the sewing process, and minikens which were used to hold women’s clothing in place”.¹ The applications of pins could range from binding files together to adding additional hair to wigs. In addition to producing the clothing the pins and needles were also required to repair torn apparel. The process of producing a simple piece of clothing was time consuming or expensive, so repairs were frequently needed. Needles were required for knitting and knitting was a mainstay in 18th century commerce and society. Knitting was gender sanctioned as a woman’s skill. Knitting actually became part of a colonial girl’s education as it prepared her for the role of wife and mother.² The skill in which a woman could knit played an important part in the income of her family. Wealthier families did not have to sell hand-knit items but the less wealthy women did. Hand-knit goods were also bartered for goods at merchant shops. The entries In Glassford and Henderson ledger that I received have a few mentions of the purchasing of pins and needles, and as I continued to transcribe the entries I discovered that I could almost guess why, in this case, George Haden had purchased them. George Haden received knitting needles on October 29th.³ Once I realized this I assumed that the purpose of purchasing the needles was to be able to knit warmer clothes for the upcoming winter. This is an example of how not only did the colonists use the pins and needles to knit and make a profit, but also to be able to improve their situation. The other entry that contained needles that struck me was of John Fryar in the same page set. John Fryar bought knitting needles and brass needles on June 9th.⁴ This entry struck me as strange because there was an effort to differentiate between knitting needles and brass knitting needles. Once again I have tried to put myself in their position and I have guessed that the brass needles are a gift. After discovering how these seemingly negligible items were actually essential to colonial life I have began to wonder what other objects have I passed over or if their importance is a product of the colonists ingenuity to make the best out of a precarious situation.

¹ Breen, Eleanor. “The Archeology of pins” Mount Vernon mystery midden. September 24, 2012. <http://mountvernonmidden.org/wordpress/?p=887>

² Strawn, Susan M. and Melanie Falick. *Knitting America: A glorious heritage from warm socks to high art*, 1st edition, Minneapolis: MBI, 2007. Pg 13-14. Computer/1st/ E-Book.

³ Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia*, folio 2, from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

⁴ Glassford/Henderson, 02, 1759, folio 2, Db, library of congress

How valuable is your hogshead today?

Richard Sickles / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

To some eighteenth century colonialists, this hogshead is much more valuable than the pink, snouted one you were probably thinking of. Designed to carry large quantities, the hogshead, a sort of large barrel, proved valuable for planters and merchants selling namely sugar, alcohol or tobacco. Colonial Virginia's main cash crop was tobacco.¹

The land proved good for growing and tobacco proved to be a valuable export. Strict laws created through the "Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730" by then Governor William Gooch and a strict inspection process kept the bad tobacco, which was burned and destroyed, from being exported.² A hogshead of good tobacco was equaled to about a thousand pounds of packed and pressed tobacco and during the mid eighteenth century, a tobacco farmer would clear between £10 and £12 pounds-sterling per hogshead produced.³ Merchants like John Glassford and Alexander Henderson would provide credits and bills of exchange from other merchants for the farmers due to the lack of monetary currency in Colonial America. The tobacco farmer then could purchase tools for him, fine linens and pins for the lady of the house and a gallon of rum to celebrate. Tobacco was not the only crop to be measured in a hogshead. Alcohol was a staple in this time and quenched many colonists thirst. Rum, Brandy and wine were also sized up and sold as a hogshead ranging from sixty to sixty five gallons depending on the contents. Sugar was especially valuable and due to the immense process the Caribbean sugar plantations, the cost to buy was high and profits soared.

In conclusion, hogsheads were shipped, sold and exported over seas and throughout the colonies. In merchant stores, like Glassford and Henderson, in and around Virginia, hogsheads of tobacco were a common site in their daily ledgers and transactions, especially in the years of 1759 - 1761.⁴ Firmly pressed and filling each hogshead and weighing over a thousand pounds each, tobacco was truly the cash crop and chief export to England. And the great circle of Atlantic shipping with its rum, wine, sugar and tobacco were all a large part of society and to help with the tough lifestyle required of colonial times. After all, the news and debates that guided America through its birth happened in the taverns throughout the colonies. These exports and imports provided, to America, the hogshead is invaluable.

¹ Tobacco Photo: Wood, L. Maren. Learn NC, University of North Carolina, "The Founding of Virginia." Last modified 2013. Accessed April 3, 2013. <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-colonial/2029>. Hogshead photo: www.suffolkbarrel.co.uk

² Stacey Lorenz, "'To Do Justice to His Majesty, The Merchant And The Planter": Governor William Gooch and the Virginia Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 108, no. 4: 345-92, http://www.vahistorical.org/publications/Abstract_1084_Lorenz.htm (accessed April 3, 2013).

³ Gill, Jr., Harold. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, "Excerpts from Research Report on Tobacco Marketing." Last modified 2000. Accessed April 3, 2013. <http://www.history.org/history/teaching/ewsletter/volume2/images/tobaccoeconomy.pdf>.

⁴ Alexander Henderson, et al. *Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia*, 102 [C_1759_102C], from the *John Glassford and Company Records*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

Earl Grey, Anyone: Tea Services in 18th Century Colonial America

Allison Siegel / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Although they might not have had Earl Grey or Chamomile as we think of it today, Consumers during the 18th century still enjoyed a nice hot cup of tea in a social setting. Whether it is in the home during a meal or in a social gather with neighbors, individuals living in Colonial America at the time would have all of the services needed for such an event. Only 15 years later the Boston Tea Party would in America.

In an article by Lorena Walsh titled “Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency: Living Standards and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1643-1777”, Walsh discusses households at all levels of wealth and their ability to buy a wide range of nonessential items that were once considered unimportant. “Beginning about 1715 the tidewater elite began to acquire a greater array of material goods that facilitated a style of living that more clearly set them off from the ordinary folk.”¹ Of such items, tea services were a common household amenity one would choose to purchase.

Tea kettles, saucers, and cups were required to drink tea in full ritual fashion. As living in the city became a more social event with “social spaces [becoming] divorced from work places, storerooms, and sleeping quarters, and each area [being] furnished with increasingly specialized equipment appropriate to the activities, formal or informal, there pursued.”²

With this in mind, it was no wonder I found a set of tea service goods being purchased by a client of the Henderson stores in Colchester, Virginia. On April 3rd, 1760, James Lane Senior purchased a tea kettle, tea pot, china cups and saucers, along with one pound of tea.³ These items are even listed as being ordered by Henderson in the year 1759.

Many questions arise from this particular purchase made by James Lane Senior. Did he purchase these items for his own needs, or were they purchased per his wife’s orders? Were they for common household use, or were they for special occasions to entertain company? Did he live in the city in a higher income home being able to afford such luxuries, or did he live in the countryside only being able to purchase a few items to improve his standards of living?

From the 17th Century to the 18th Century, the style of living for colonists changed drastically. “Items of comfort and convenience were no longer luxuries, but rather were becoming essential to life... while the elite were making use of a wide variety of new luxury products to define their status.”⁴

¹ Walsh, Lorena S. “Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency: Living Standards and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1643-1777”. *The Journal of Economic History* 43.1 (1983): 110.

² Walsh, 111.

³ Glassford and Henderson, Ledger, 1759, Folio 139D, Library of Congress, Virginia.

⁴ Walsh, 117.

Rum in Colonial American Society

Joelle Simpson / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Rum was the cheap, plentiful, and tasty beverage of choice for many Colonial Americans regardless of social status. Although the more fancy types of rum were produced in the Caribbean, domestic rum was also very popular in the Colonies. Oftentimes, the water from the Atlantic Ocean and local rivers was unsafe for consumption, which was why the colonists turned to alcohol for refreshment.¹

The popularity of rum began to emerge during the late 17th century. The first American rum distillery was established in 1664 on present-day Staten Island.² By 1770, more than 140 rum distilleries were in existence.³ The average man, woman, and child consumed approximately 3 gallons of rum per year.⁴

Molasses is the main ingredient of rum. Molasses is a refined sugar. Sugar is cultivated by slaves in the Southern Colonies and in the Caribbean. As more rum was consumed, the need for more slaves also increased. Because these African slaves were so skilled in the cultivation of sugar, more of it could be produced. This is part of the reason why its prices were so cheap and its availability was so widespread.

Rum was definitely a necessity to those living in Colonial America. Pints of Rum were purchased at least once a month, if not twice.⁵ It was an important staple for those wishing to survive especially with the water being so dirty. Larger quantities of rum were purchased around holidays. This alcoholic beverage would serve as a social bonding element. Families and friends would gather around the table and drink while enjoying meals. If slave owners were feeling kind, they would purchase an extra bottle of rum for their workers during Christmastime.⁶

The relationship between social status and rum consumption is almost non-existent. The majority of white Americans enjoyed this drink daily without having to worry about large costs. African American slaves on the other hand, rarely drank any alcohol at all. Slave owners restricted them to water so that their work would not be adversely affected.⁷ Only during the

¹“Drinking in Colonial America,” Colonial Williamsburg, accessed April 1, 2013.

<http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/holiday07/drink.cfm>

²Salinger V., Salinger. *Taverns and Drinking in Early America*. (Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 12.

³Salinger, *Taverns and Drinking*, 4.

⁴“Drinking in Colonial America”

⁵Alexander Henderson, et al. Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia, folio 041, from the John Glassford and Company Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

⁶Alexander Henderson, et al. Ledger 1758-1760, Colchester, Virginia, folio 041, from the John Glassford and Company Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Microfilm Reel 58 (owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association).

⁷“Spirits and Spirituality: Alcohol in Caribbean Slave Societies,” Kislak Foundation, accessed April 1, 2013. <http://www.kislakfoundation.org/prize/200102.html>

holidays would slaves ever get to savor the sweet flavor of rum or any other alcoholic beverage for that matter.

The southern colonies grew plenty of sugar, but not nearly enough to satisfy the growing demands for rum. Plenty of rum distilleries purchased sugar and molasses from their Caribbean counterparts in order to push out more of their product.⁸ These trade deals eventually became a part of the infamous triangular trade. The Middle Colonies and New England took in sugar for the rum from the Southern Colonies and the Caribbean. European nations purchased American sugar and rum. African nations along the coastal regions also received rum from America in exchange for more slaves.

Alcohols, mainly rum, beer, and whiskey, played a large role in American society. Alcohol was associated with good health, although drinking too much was looked down upon. Colonial men would get together with their neighbors and talk over drinks. Mothers would give their children a glass of rum to cure a cold. Politicians would take a sip to show the townsmen how connected he was to the common people.⁹ The overall vibe alcohol brought was positive and remained that for centuries.

⁸“Drinking in Colonial America”

⁹“Drinking in Colonial America”

A Brief History of the Blue Gold

Sarah Steele / University of Central Florida / Spring 2013

Most would not think that dye for clothes would be important in colonial America, surely such a small item in day to day life an item we don't even think about today could not affect our history. The dye indigo however did just that, it helped built an economy in the south along with rice. Indigo comes from the Middle East and over many centuries spread throughout the old world. The dye was rare however and expensive making it a symbol for wealth and royalty in many cultures. The plant became a major crop in the Caribbean in the 17th till the start of the 18th century, the Dutch and English needed to keep up with the demands for the dye. However once the sugar plantations became established in the early 1700s in the Caribbean, indigo was forgone in favor of the new cash crop. The colonists in the 1700s saw this as an opportunity, many areas tried to grow the crop for profits. The profitable crop found its new home in the Carolinas in the 1740s. Eliza Lucas Pinckney was the girl that started this new cash crop for the Carolinas; she experimented with different seeds sent from India to find a desperately needed cash crop. Her success with indigo happened at the perfect time, the rice crops prices were falling. Indigo crops spread throughout the Carolinas and became one of the major crops grown, second to rice. The crop however would not last past the revolutionary war; cotton took over as the major cash crop. Indigo however helped built an economy in the south and was traded throughout the colonies.

Bibliography

Morgan, Ted. *Wilderness at Dawn: The Settling of the North American Continent*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993.

Schulz, Constance B. "Eliza Lucas Pinckney" in G. J. Barker-Benfield and Catherine Clinton (eds.) *Portraits of American Women from Settlement to the Present*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.