A Shop in the Back Street: Late Eighteenth Century Williamsburg Through the Ledgers of Blacksmith James Anderson

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A Shop in the Back Street: Late Eighteenth Century Williamsburg through the
Ledgers of Blacksmith James Anderson

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A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of
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Up until the last decade of the eighteenth century, carts and wagons were the most common vehicles that passed through James Anderson's blacksmith shop. These types of vehicles, along with the abundance of plows and hoes that came through his shop, reflected the heavy focus on agriculture that had dominated Virginia's economy from its beginning. Beginning in the early 1790s however the nature of Anderson's work changed. The lengthy pages of plow repairs were replaced by short often single line entries denoting the shoeing of horses and the repair of passenger vehicles. More people brought household items but fewer people held long term accounts and most customers seemed to be just passing through on their way somewhere else.

The thousands of entries recorded in Anderson's two surviving ledger books detail the public side of his blacksmith business in the years surrounding the Revolutionary War. The items he repaired do little however to reflect the location of Anderson's shop, which was situated in the colonial Capitol of Williamsburg, Virginia. Situated just blocks from the capitol building along the city's main thoroughfare, Anderson's blacksmith shop was decidedly urban in location. Through most of his career Anderson's work was typical of a rural blacksmith whose smithy was nestled among rolling farm fields rather than in the center of a city of nearly 2,000 residents. By the time of his death in 1798 though Anderson was an urban smith both by the definition of the work that he performed and the location of his shop within the heart of Virginia's former colonial capital.

This thesis examines two of James Anderson's surviving account books, Ledgers B (1778-1784) and C (1785-1798), to determine if the daily entries in a blacksmith's ledger can provide insight into some of the changes that the city of Williamsburg may have underwent during the late eighteenth century and how these changes may have influenced the types of work that the blacksmith performed. The expectation was that the blacksmith's work would change little over time and would reflect the city's residents as a stable population that weathered the Revolution and the changing political status of Williamsburg and continued on with their daily lives. This proved not to be the case.

The Revolution heavily influenced the decisions that many Williamsburg residents made during the late eighteenth century, including James Anderson. He devoted his shop and apprentices to making wartime supplies, moved to Richmond with the Capitol, and spent time as the Captain of the Company of Artificers. When he returned to Williamsburg, both the work he performed at his private blacksmith shop and the customers for whom he performed the work were different. Most of his customers were new, lived out of town, and came by his shop infrequently. Anderson's shop continued to repair agricultural equipment but this was no longer the mainstay of his business. Shoeing horses and repairing passenger vehicles now consumed much of Anderson's time. These changes appeared to reflect the increasing mobility of Virginia's society as well as Williamsburg's new role as a convenient stop along the road to the new capital city of Richmond.

While many details of Anderson's blacksmith business may never be known, his existing ledger books do provide a glimpse into the daily life of one of Williamsburg's more prominent craftsmen and the changes that both his business and the city itself underwent near the end of the eighteenth century.
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all of the people who encouraged me to keep going and complete the thesis, no matter how long it took and how far away from my research my life took me. To my family, husband and children for sticking by me; to my professors at William & Mary for continuing to support me in my research, and to my co-workers who asked me every day whether I had my M.A. yet. Thank you.
This thesis was completed with the assistance of a great number of people without whom I would not have gotten nearly as far as I did in my research.

I especially would like to thank my Thesis Committee, Dr. Marley Brown, III; Dr. Kathleen Bragdon; and Dr. Frederick Smith for their continued support, advice, and the time they spent reading and re-reading my thesis. Thank you for continuing to hold out hope that I would eventually finish even though years might go by and it would not appear on your desks.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As late seventeenth century travelers wound their way along the dusty horse path and through the small settlement of Middle Plantation, they would pass the homes of many of the colony’s more prominent residents. The new brick church built in 1683 to replace Bruton Parish’s old frame church would come into view, as would the large brick building that housed Virginia’s first establishment for higher education, the College of William and Mary. Founded in 1693 by a royal charter issued by King William III and Queen Mary II of England, the college was only the second institution of higher learning established in the American colonies. In addition to the church and college, Middle Plantation also boasted several stores and mills, an ordinary, and a blacksmith shop.

Blacksmith shops were an essential part of every community. With much of the colony’s developed land devoted to agriculture, there was no end of horse harnesses and ox yokes to repair, wagons and carts to mend, horses to shoe, and a wide array of hoes, plows, and axes to sharpen. The blacksmith’s services also extended into the household as he was called on to make latches, hooks, and locks, and to repair an assortment of metal items from andiorns to frying pans. So essential was the blacksmith, that most of Virginia’s large plantations had their own blacksmiths or at least servants or slaves with enough knowledge of smith work to produce the everyday items that kept the plantation working.

Busiest during the spring planting season and the fall harvest, rural blacksmiths “spent their
lives in a tedious round of sharpening plows, repairing timber chains, and shoeing horses" (Daniels 1993:759). Blacksmiths were always in demand in tidewater Virginia, where tobacco cultivation consumed nearly every patch of arable land and man, horse and plow toiled long hours to plant and harvest the sappy, broad leaved plants. The profit gained from the “amount of tobacco produced by one man’s labor was worth about six times the amount of wheat that one man could grow and harvest” (Herndon 1957:3). In tobacco, Virginia had found the profitable export commodity that its colonial backers had so long sought (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Excerpt from Fry-Jefferson (1751) A map of the most inhabited part of Virginia containing the whole province of Maryland with part of Pensilvania, New Jersey and North Carolina showing the loading of tobacco hogshead for export (Source: Library of Congress).

Domestic crops of corn, grain, fruits and vegetables also were cultivated but these crops were consumed locally and their export closely regulated (Bruce 1935:218). Colonial laws that required “two acres of corne or neere thereabouts be planted for every head that worketh tin the grounde” and stipulated “that every freedman shall fence in a quarter of an acre of ground before
Whitsuntide next to make a garden for planting of vines, herbs, roots, &c.” (Hening 1809-1823:Vol I, 126) suggest that all colonists probably were engaged in some type of agriculture. More likely than not, Middle Plantation’s store keepers, millers, and inn keepers kept gardens behind their houses or businesses and may have even brought their garden hoes, spades, and trowels to the local blacksmith to straighten and sharpen.

In 1699, as Middle Plantation began the transition from a quiet frontier town to the colonial capital of Williamsburg, the settlement’s blacksmith also began a transition from a rural smith to an urban smith. The smithy that was located beside the winding horse path in the country was now the smithy located in the rear lot of a house in the city, perhaps just blocks from the capitol building. His neighbors were not cattle and tobacco but the hundreds of people who flocked to Williamsburg to open shops, taverns, and ordinaries; to work in the government offices; or simply to become part of the life of the rapidly developing city. The ring of his hammer would now echo through a city that less than 70 years ago had been a cluster of houses huddled along a six-mile long palisade that secured “all the lower Part of Virginia” (Yonge 1634:3) from surprise attack by native Americans.

By the mid-eighteenth century, Williamsburg’s population had increased from a few hundred people to an estimated 885 city residents (Hellier and Kelly 1987:21). Skilled artisans, craftsmen, and professionals made their homes in the city. Many individuals who had been instrumental in bringing the capital to Middle Plantation resided there and were influential members in the community. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the city’s population would more than double to an estimated 1,885 people (Kelly n.d.; Hellier and Kelly 1987:1). At least 31 different occupations would be listed by city residents. Only four people however would list their occupations as blacksmith, a seemingly small number to meet the needs of a large and diverse city population.

One of those people was James Anderson, a blacksmith whose shop served the residents of Williamsburg and Richmond for nearly thirty years. This thesis examines two of Anderson’s
surviving account books, Ledgers B (1778-1785) and C (1785-1798), to determine if transactions recorded in a blacksmith’s ledger can provide insight into some of the changes that the city of Williamsburg may have undergone during the late eighteenth century and how those changes are reflected in the types of work that the blacksmith performed. The late eighteenth century was a period not only when Virginians were adjusting to the shift of the capital from Williamsburg to Richmond but a time when expanding road networks made trade easier and travel more common. More towns were springing up to draw people away from farms and plantations and away from the agricultural traditions that had sustained the colony through its first century and a half.

Studies of town growth in tidewater Virginia show Williamsburg at the apex of urban development during much of the eighteenth century in terms of the types and numbers of services its residents provided (O’Mara 1983:218-231). Among only a handful of towns to develop prior to the eighteenth century, Williamsburg was unique in that it was not a port town and had not been formed as a center of regional commerce. Created specifically as the colonial capital, Williamsburg was situated nearly a mile from the deep waters of the James and York Rivers and would never see the tall mast of an English bound trading vessel. Instead shallow draft boats plied the waters of local tributaries, bringing goods to nearby landings where they were brought overland into the city.

Most goods manufactured in the city were made by skilled artisans and craftsmen who provided specialized wares and services for use within Virginia’s domestic economy rather than for export. The blacksmith was one such craftsman. His trade was learned through many years of apprenticeship and service to master blacksmiths, who taught him the art of molding bars of iron into plowshares, axe heads, horseshoes, and candlesticks. As colonial legislation encouraged the development of new roadways that would make Williamsburg accessible from most points in the colony, it seemed that the blacksmith’s trade would be in even higher demand. More roads meant more people traveling, more wagon parts to repair, more horses to shoe. His shop also would be more accessible to rural farmers who before may not have had an easy overland route to his shop.
Interestingly however the increase in road travel and vehicles brought not more work for the blacksmith but an evolution of specialized trades such as coach makers, chair makers, chair painters, harness makers, and wheelwrights that competed with the blacksmith for work. Where previously the blacksmith had made and repaired carts, wagons, and harnesses, the traveling public could now turn to other craftsmen and artisans for those services. In 1775, at least six chair makers, three wheelwrights, and two saddle and harness makers competed with Williamsburg’s four blacksmiths for work (Kelly n.d.).

What was the blacksmith to do? Would his customers stop coming now that new shops had opened to repair their horse harnesses? Could he still make a living by repairing the plows and hoes brought in by nearby farmers and plantation owners? Maybe he should advertise more or post a bigger sign at his shop. Should he change trades and become a chair maker? And what of the new merchandise shop across the street that offered nails and axes for sale amongst its tins of coffee and bolts of lace? Could he count on the city’s residents to bring him their broken forks and teapots to repair, or would they just buy new ones?

Williamsburg blacksmith James Anderson may never have pondered these questions. One of four blacksmiths in the city during the late eighteenth century, his shop was open all year long and saw a steady stream of customers. Some customers were long-time residents who had been bringing their plows, hoes, wagons, and harnesses to Anderson for repair for many years. Many owned farms or plantations outside of town and came each spring and winter with dull, bent or broken plows for Anderson to straighten and sharpen. Other customers visited only once or twice, bringing in a horse to shoe, an andiron to repair, or a lock to key. Some were new customers who were just passing through; others lived in town but had only a small garden and household to manage.

Having established himself in the city during the early 1760s, by the mid 1770s Anderson’s list of services was long and varied. His shop performed farrier work, repaired agricultural
equipment, sharpened axes, made parts for mills, and fixed oyster clamps. Wagons, carts, ox yokes, and horse harnesses all passed through his shop for repair. Apprentices worked at his forges to help turn out nails, hooks, washers, bolts, and nuts of all types and sizes. He also employed gunsmiths and tinsmiths. A set of curtain rods, a tea kettle, candlesticks, a skillet, a pair of kitchen tongs, a flesh fork, and a coffee mill were a few of the household items that his shop repaired. Anderson also did work as a “public” smith for the City of Williamsburg, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and newly formed Continental government. Anderson’s blacksmith work was diverse and his shop busy.

Like most blacksmiths, Anderson had the knowledge and experience necessary to make or repair the thousands of metal items used in daily life. His surviving account books show much about the items that he repaired in his shop off Duke of Gloucester Street but little about the daily rhythms of his life. Almost nothing is known about his wartime activities, aside from a few scant references in official letters and a notation in the Richmond city census. Although his Williamsburg shop stayed open during the war, no records have come to light that detail its wartime output or exactly when Anderson resumed his private smith work.

One thing that is clear from his surviving ledgers is that the nature of Anderson’s blacksmith business changed after the Revolution. While he continued to meet the needs of the longtime residents of Williamsburg, an increasing number of his customers were new and lived out of town. They would come by only once or twice during the year and bring little more than a horse to shoe or maybe a candlestick to repair. The endless days of sharpening plows and hoes were replaced by days spent shoeing horses and repairing household goods. By the time of his death in 1798, Anderson’s work as an urban blacksmith in Williamsburg had completed a transition begun nearly 100 years ago when Williamsburg’s first blacksmiths set up shop in the city. Anderson was an urban smith by the definition of the work that he performed, not simply due to the location of his shop within the heart of Virginia’s colonial capital.
CHAPTER II

A SHOP IN THE BACK STREET

“A little over a century ago blacksmith shops were ubiquitous on the American landscape. They were the necessary ingredients in many communities’ economic viability. Important services included the forging and repair of agricultural implements, transportation equipment, and early industrial machinery, as well as horseshoeing” (McBride 1987:79) (Figure 2). Nearly every town and large plantation had its own blacksmith who toiled to repair the sundry hoes, plows, harnesses,

Figure 2. Illustration showing a blacksmith and apprentice (Source: Holstrom 1904)
and occasional household items used on the plantation. Most blacksmiths also had a practical knowledge of farrier work and would be called upon to shoe and trim horses as well as replace loose horseshoes. From its beginnings, Williamsburg had the services of at least one blacksmith. Among the buildings clustered along the rural country road through Middle Plantation was “a smiths shop” (Anonymous 1930:332). By 1750, blacksmiths Hugh Orr and John Bell had each set up shops in Williamsburg. In addition to blacksmith work, Bell performed whitesmith work. James Geddy and his sons David and William also were established in the city in 1750 and offered gunsmith and silversmith services, “cutlery work, brass casting, and iron founding” (Gill n.d.:28).

Through the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Williamsburg would continue to have the services of at least three resident blacksmiths (Kelly n.d.). That number would peak to five during the mid 1780s before declining again to three following the deaths of two of the city’s better known smiths, James Anderson and John Draper.

Among the records that have survived from that period of Williamsburg’s history are two of the ledger books of local blacksmith John Anderson. The books provide a small window into Williamsburg’s society through hand-written accounts detailing the types of services that Anderson’s “private shop at Williamsburg” (Palmer 1883:221) performed and to whom he maintained lines of credit. Transactions for the periods January 1778-June 1780; October and November 1782; January 1783; and Sept 1784-February 1785 are recorded in “Ledger B.” “Ledger C” records transactions for the period July 1789-April 1798 and includes entries made by Anderson’s son Robert, who closed his father’s outstanding accounts following Anderson’s death in 1798.

When James Anderson came to Williamsburg during the early 1760s he appears already to have been a practiced blacksmith. The son of William and Sarah Anderson of Gloucester County, Virginia, Anderson would have been about 20 years old in 1760. Anderson most likely learned his trade through an apprenticeship to a master blacksmith. Apprentices enter into a contract with a
master craftsman who pledges not only to teach them his trade, but also to ensure they receive an education as well as lodging and meals during their period of apprenticeship (Gill 1971). Apprentices can be as young as eight years of age when they go to live with a master craftsman to learn his or her trade. Apprenticeships may last six years or more, but typically end when the apprentice turns 21. Once their apprenticeship is complete, the young craftsman may spend several additional years as a journeyman, assisting master craftsmen and learning more about their trade.

In her study of eighteenth century crafts in Kent County, Maryland, Daniels (1995:4-5) suggests that trades that required a great deal of capital investment, such as blacksmithing, were more likely to be passed on within the same family, with sons apprenticed to their father’s trades. Also crafts “that required a dedicated shop site, such as a smithy, a brewery, or a tannery, usually descended in families” (Daniels 1995:4). A blacksmith must have ample space to work, store supplies, and if necessary bring in the horses that he would be shoeing. His shop must also have a forge, working table, and space for an anvil were metal can be molded and shaped. His shop may also have additional workspaces or forges where his apprentices can work, bins to store charcoal for the forge, or even an area where wagons could be pulled under cover for repair.

Of all the equipment in the blacksmith’s workshop, the forge and anvil were the most important. “The forge was the heart and the anvil the soul of the blacksmith shop” (Watson 1968:23). Designed to maintain the high temperature needed to work iron, the forge was essential to the blacksmith.

“The forge can be made either single or double, square or round. The square is the best as it can be placed up against the wall, and you will then have more room in front of it. The round forge will take more room, if it is placed in the center of the floor there will be no room of any amount on any side and when the doors are open the wind will blow the fire, cinders and smoke into the face of the smith. This is very uncomfortable. The smokestack, if hung over the fire will sometimes be in the way. Of course the hood can be made in halves and one half swung to the side, but it will sometimes be in the way anyhow, and it seldom has any suction to carry away the smoke and cinders” (Holstrom 1904).
The forge with its open hearth and attached working table always were located near the smith’s anvil. “The exact location of the anvil was an important matter, for every piece of iron had to be heated at least once or twice, and usually four or five times” (Watson 1968:25).

The height of the anvil was determined by the height of the smith who would use it. “When the smith has his hands closed the knuckles of his fingers should touch the face of the anvil and it will be the right height for all-around blacksmithing” (Holstrom 1904). Affixed to a massive stump sunk four to five feet in the ground, a smith’s anvil might weight 250 pounds or more (Watson 1968:25-26) (Figure 3). It was on the anvil that the smith cut, molded, and welded rods of hot iron into the objects of everyday life. Anvils of different shape were used for different types of work. Usually a busy smith’s shop had anvils for farrier’s work, nail making, and molding plow shares in addition to the anvils used for everyday blacksmith work.

In seeking to establish himself in Williamsburg, Anderson probably had been faced with three choices: construct a shop and forge of his own; purchase an already established smithy; or becoming a partner with another blacksmith and share a smithy. Anderson eventually chose to construct his own smithy and by May 1761 had purchased a portion of a lot at the corner of Francis
and Cross (Boutourt) Streets from Dr. William Carter. There he set up his forge and shop in the rear of the lot. Apprentice James Banks joined Anderson at his Francis Street shop in February 1763, serving as Anderson’s apprentice until February 1770 (Gill 1971). Little else is known of Anderson’s work during this early period however.

In 1766, Anderson accepted a position with the city of Williamsburg as a public armorer. He replaced blacksmith John Bell, who had worked as a smith in Williamsburg since at least 1753 (Gill 1971:27; Gill 1989). Bell had served as the public armorer for the city of Williamsburg from 1763 until 1766, when he made the decision to move to Portsmouth and resigned his position. Like the public armorer’s before him, Anderson’s most important task would be to maintain the arms and supplies needed for the city militia. By the beginning of the Revolution, most of the city’s blacksmiths and gunsmiths would be working as public smiths, hired by the Commonwealth of Virginia to make and repair arms, cast shot, fix wagons, and serve as farriers.

By spring of 1776, Anderson had agreed to rent his Williamsburg shop to the Commonwealth of Virginia for a period of six months. Included was the rent of two forges, six sets of tools, eight vices, and five apprentices for work at “Gunsmiths Business” (Palmer 1883:127). In January 1776, Colonel William Finnie authorized Williamsburg bricklayer and builder Humphrey Harwood to underpin Anderson’s shop and construct a forge chimney (Harwood 1776-1794: Folio 1b). The cost of the work was charged to “Continent,” which was the heading Anderson used to denote work done for the newly formed United States or Continental government.

The amount of work that the state had however must have been extensive as Anderson would advertise in the Virginia Gazette several times toward the end of 1776 for additional blacksmiths, gunsmiths, and apprentices to join his shop. Such advertisements were common in the Gazette, where everything from lost horses and runaway slaves to newly imported merchandise from overseas would be advertised. Anderson himself had placed an ad in Gazette several years
earlier advertising the sale of bottles, Saffordshire ware, and pickling jars "JUST IMPORTED from London" at his shop "in the Back Street" (Virginia Gazette 1770:Rind, Sept 27).

Work apparently continued to be plentiful for Anderson for he would place additional advertisements over the next several years asking for journeymen and apprentices (Figure 4). It was during this period that Anderson also purchased the rear portions of two lots (18 and 19) along Duke of Gloucester Street. There he began construction of a new set of forges and shop buildings that would soon become his new shop. Archeological data suggest by 1777 Anderson had constructed a forge building (A-1), a shop building (B), and two free-standing forges (A and B) in the rear of the lots on Duke of Gloucester Street (Brown 1999; Foss 1977). Anderson later would acquire the front portions of the lots, including a house and a detached kitchen that fronted the street.

Figure 4. Excerpt from the Virginia Gazette (1776:Purdie, August 23) showing an advertisement placed by James Anderson for journeymen.

In February 1778, Harwood would bill the Commonwealth of Virginia for the labor of carting four loads of sand, building three forge chimneys, and again underpinning a shop for Anderson (Harwood 1776-1794:Folio 25). Most of this labor would later show up in the archeological record (Brown 1999). Changes in foundation walls would show that Anderson's earlier forge building (A-1) had been expanded to include a shop building (A-2). Scatters of bone button blanks and gunflints around Anderson's original shop building (B) suggest that building may have been converted for use in the production of military supplies. Evidence of two more forges (C
and D), each with a pair of anvil stumps, also was found. A new fence line and privy also had been added and the drainage was improved on both lots with the construction of two arched brick drains.

By 1779, still more construction had occurred on Anderson’s lots. The shop building (B) had been replaced by a forge building (C) that enclosed two new forges (F and G). Anderson’s first forge building (A-1) was expanded yet again to include additional shop space (A-3) and another brick forge (E). Brick walkways and additional fencing were added to complete the separation of the residential front portion of the lot from the now industrial rear portion of the lot. Improvements to the residential portion of the yard were suggested by entries in Harwood’s account books such as “To setting up a grate,” “To laying a hearth,” and to the “building of steps to front door” (Harwood 1776-1794:Folio 22). The entries were made during December 1778 and May 1779.

In spring 1779, Anderson would again be searching for help (Figures 5 and 6). This time he would be looking for a blacksmith, a nailer, and gun stockers. From the wording of the advertisements, it is apparent that Anderson’s business has expanded enough that he has several shops or forges in operation and at least one shop that is devoted to producing nails, where his apprentices turned out an estimated 2,500 nails per week (Gill n.d.). Archeological investigations suggest that Anderson’s shop may also employed tinsmiths, gunsmiths, and button-makers for use by either the Colonial militia or Continental army (Brown 1999).

Figure 5. Excerpt from the Virginia Gazette (1779:Dixon, April 16) showing advertisement placed by James Anderson for a blacksmith and nailer
Figure 6. Excerpt from the *Virginia Gazette* (1779:Dixon, June 19) showing advertisement placed by James Anderson for gun stockers and blacksmiths.

Prior to the introduction of machine cut nails in the late eighteenth century, all nails were produced by hand from rods of iron that were drawn out, hammered, and cut. The earliest machine cut nails, which were available by 1790, still had hand-forged heads that were made from a single hammer strike to the nail head after the plate iron had been cut to the desired length (Figure 7). “Frontier farmers...living one or two hundred miles to the west of Williamsburg—sometimes spent winter days in nail making” (Gill n.d.:18-19). But “where there was a blacksmith...he—or more likely his apprentice—made the nails” (Gill n.d.:18-19).

Figure 7. Illustration showing hand-wrought and early machine-cut nails (Source: University of Utah, Department of Anthropology, IMACs Guide, Section 470:Nails)
The estimated 2,500 nails that Anderson’s apprentices turned out each week for the state’s use would have been quickly consumed for both Anderson’s own public work, and for the public work other craftsmen were doing. Harwood’s accounts show he “Lent the Country” 33,600 nails in January 1778 to “larth” or secure the lath board before plastering the partitions at the hospital (Harwood 1776-1794:Folio 7). In February 1778, Harwood “Lent the Country” 58,000 nails to “larth the Officers Barracks” and in August 1778, lent them another 33,600 nails to larth more rooms of the hospital (Harwood 1776-1994:Folio 25).

Even the smaller projects that Harwood undertook for his private customers required a lot of nails. Work for Doctor William Pastuer in October of 1777 required 2,500 four-penny (4d) nails, along with 80 bushels of lime, 1,000 lath boards, and 2,400 bricks (Harwood 1776-1794:Ledger B, Folio 4b). Lathing and plastering a closet and kitchen back for John Tazewell, Esq. required 500 nails (Harwood 1776-1795:Ledge B, Folio 18). Repairs to the printing shop of Robert Prentis used 300 four-penny (4d) nails and 6 bushels of lime (Harwood 1776-1795:Ledge B, Folio 19). All of these nails were produced by blacksmiths and their apprentices but none of them were purchased directly from Anderson’s shop.

Anderson’s surviving ledgers however indicate that those who came to Anderson’s shop in search of nails typically purchased only a few nails at a time and these were for special purposes, such as for use on a door, for securing a hinge, or nailing a vehicle wheel. These items were not sold by weight or size, but simply by the type of item such as “dog nailes,” “tier nails,” “spikes for a cart wheel,” or “nails for Phaeton wheel.” These descriptions in themselves indicate custom-made items that were likely made as the need arose and were not kept in large bulk quantities.

Nails, as well as other items made by local blacksmiths, could be purchased in bulk from local merchants who often ordered nails by the keg from overseas suppliers. The surviving records of Williamsburg merchants Matthew Anderson and David Low show they kept on hand large quantities of nails. William Richardson of James City traveled to Anderson & Low’s in April of
1785 to purchase 8 broad hoes, 3 spades, 1,200 10d (10-penny) nails, and a large quantity of 30d (30-penny) nails (Anderson Papers 1794-1785). Several days later, Joseph Wade purchased an additional 30 8d (8-penny) nails for Richardson (Anderson Papers 1784-1785). Williamsburg resident Beverly Dickson, Esq. purchased 500 20d (20-penny) nails and a number of 10d (10-penny) nails from Anderson & Low in 1785 (Anderson Papers 1784-1785). That same year, Johnathan Kerby purchased 500 4d (4-penny) nails and 300 12d (12-penny) nails from Anderson & Low (Anderson Papers 1784-1785).

The quantities pennyweights of the nails purchased by Richardson suggested he intended to construct or repair a small building. The pennyweight of a nail correlates to the length of that nail and can be an indication of the type of construction work an individual intends to do. The final states of carpentry work require small nails, generally 2d (2-penny) to 5d (5-penny). Two-penny nails are 1 inch in length; the length of the nail increases 1/4 inch for each pennyweight until 10d (10-penny) is reached. Beyond 10d (10-penny), the pennyweights increases in larger increments until the largest nail size, 60d (60-penny), is reached. Nails between 6d (6-penny) and 16d (16-penny) are used for general construction tasks. House framing and fence construction require larger nails, typically 20d (20-penny) or larger. The 30d (30-penny) nails Richardson purchased would have been 4-1/2 inches long.

Although nail making may have occupied a great deal of his apprentice’s time, it was the repair of agricultural equipment that was the mainstay of Anderson’s private blacksmith business. In an age of horse-powered agriculture, hoes and plows were the staples of the plantation and farm. Their repair typically consumed much of the rural blacksmith’s time. Over two-thirds of the accounts (67.9 per cent) held by individuals between 1778 and 1780 for the repair of horse harnesses or hames, for oxen harnesses and yokes, or for wagons or carts.

At least nine different types of hoes came through Anderson’s shop during that period: harrow, hilling, grubbing, broad, trowel, harrow, fluke, plough, weeding, and garden hoes (Table 1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer</th>
<th>Folio(s)</th>
<th>Plow or Hoe Type</th>
<th>Year(s) of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ambler</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>fluke, broad, harrow</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Anderson</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>trowell, harrow, weeding</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Beall Esqr</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>grubing</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Burwell</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>harrow</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis Burwell Esqr.</td>
<td>12; 88</td>
<td>harrow, fluke, broad</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nath. Burwell Esq.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>broad, harrow, fluke, plough</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Digges</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>trowel</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dixon</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Everard</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>fluke, harrow</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Galt</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>trowell, fluke</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Graves</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>grubing</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphrey Harwood</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>weeding, harrow, broad, narrow</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hunter</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colo James Innis</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>garden, broad</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Johnson</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>harrow, trowel</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Lewis</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>trowel</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lister</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>harrow</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel Maupin</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>hilling, harrow, fluke</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McClurg, Dr.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Nicolson</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>hilling</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Norvell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>harrow, hilling, grubbing</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. William Pasteur</td>
<td>11; 74</td>
<td>fluke</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Powell</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>harrow, fluke</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Prentis</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>harrow, fluke</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Prentis</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Randolph</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>hilling</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Russell</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>hilling</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Saunders</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>hilling, harrow, fluke</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Spratley</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>harrow</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Tazwell Esqr</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Vaughn</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>harrow</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cary Wilkinson</td>
<td>2; 66</td>
<td>hilling, harrow, fluke, grubbing</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamsburg Manufactory</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>fluke</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fifteen people owned two or more different types of hoes. Humphrey Harwood would bring by four
different hoe types, weeding, harrow, broad, and narrow hoes, for Anderson to repair. In exchange
for repairing “4 weeding hoes for corn,” Harwood would give Anderson 1,200 bundles of fodder
(Harwood 1776-1794:Folio 22). Occasionally a customer would request his hoe or plow be
significantly altered, such as when merchant Gabriel Maupin had Anderson make “3 Hilling Hoes
into broad” hoes (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 18).

Coulters, the front blade of the “plough,” seemed to be a part that was particularly apt to
break or become bent. Through the mid eighteenth century plows were heavy wooden affairs that
were most effectively pulled by horses or oxen. “To plow an acre with a yoke of oxen and a crude
wooden plow took twenty-four hours” (Drache 2001). Soil often stuck to the curved wooden plow
share or moldboard that was designed to turn the soil after the leading edge of the plow or coulter
sliced open the ground. The farmer would use wooden paddles to manually scrape away the soil on
the moldboard then continue his labor directing his team of horses or oxen as they tilled the land.
Once tilling was completed, the rest of the farm’s labor was done by hand with hoe and scythe.

The coulter was in fact a relatively new invention, developed in 1731 by Englishman Jethro
Tull (Drache 2001). While the coulter could be made of wood, typically it was an iron bar or blade
that was fastened in front of the mouldboard to slice the soil vertically and relieve the mouldboard
of some of the work of breaking the soil. Another 50 years would pass before another Englishman,
Robert Ransome, would develop a cast iron plowshare that cut through the soil more easily.
Thomas Jefferson had even pondered the problem of the plow and how to increase its effectiveness.
He also had suggested using cast-iron, perhaps affixing several moldboards to a plow, or sheathing
them in iron (Figure 8). This technology however would not come into practical use until after the
turn of the century. During Anderson’s lifetime plows were still made mostly of wood sheathed
with iron.
When merchant Gabriel Maupin came by Anderson’s shop in 1779, he also purchased a “new flukehoe” and a “new coulter.” Earlier, Mary Ambler had purchased a “new Harrow hoe” and a “new fluke hoe” from Anderson (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 6), and John Tazewell, Esq. had purchased a “new hilling hoe” (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 7). Although these and other entries for “new” equipment suggest Anderson’s shop turned out brand new plow and hoes, these tools were available for purchase at local merchant stores (Figure 9). Anderson may have simply acted as a middleman for some of his customers and purchased new equipment for them from area merchants, or Anderson and his apprentices may have fabricated the equipment themselves. Whichever was the case, Anderson’s shop seemed quite capable of meeting the needs of his customers when it came to agricultural-related smith work.

The repair of carts and wagons was another aspect of Anderson’s work that was related to Virginia’s agricultural heritage. These conveniences of the farm and plantation fell into the second most common type of repair work that Anderson’s shop was called on to undertake: the repair of vehicles. Nearly half of the people (49.4 per cent) who visited Anderson’s shop between 1778 and 1780 brought by a cart, wagon, riding chair, or other vehicle for Anderson to repair. Twenty accounts in Anderson’s ledgers between 1778 and 1780 held references to the repair of a cart;
Figure 9. Excerpt from the *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon, April 11, 1771) showing blacksmith's tools for sale at merchant John Greenhow's store in Williamsburg
wagons were referenced in ten accounts. Although at least five other of Anderson’s customers used oxen on their farms or plantations, Mary Ambler was the only one to bring in an ox cart.

Until mechanized production of horseshoes began around 1835, horse shoes also were hand crafted by a blacksmith or farrier. John Moody advertised his services as a “smith and farrier” and offered “to shoe horses in all the different methods practiced in Europe and America” (Figure 10). Custom made to fit each of a horse’s feet, horseshoes could vary depending upon the type of work the horse performed and the surface the horse would be walking on (Gill n.d.:21). In addition to the horseshoes, the blacksmith also forged the horseshoe nails, which were made from a soft metal and ended in a sharp point. Six were needed for each horseshoe and four for each pony shoe (Watson 1968:76). A horse would need to be re-shoed about every three months, as that was generally the amount of time it took for a horse’s hoof to grow out enough to be trimmed or pared again (Watson 1968:75).

![Figure 10](image-url)  
Figure 10. Excerpt from the *Virginia Gazette* (1776: Purdie, June 28) showing advertisement for John Moody, Williamsburg blacksmith and farrier
Anderson shoed horses, trimmed hooves, and removed old horseshoes. In 1779, having two horseshoes put on could cost between 45 and 50 shillings, while having a horse trimmed could cost between 4 and 12 shillings. Some shoeing work was performed at a slightly lower rate, where individual horseshoes cost about 6 shillings. Sometimes customers purchased two shoes for a horse; other times four shoes. Richard Charlton, a Williamsburg tavern keeper, purchased “12 shoes for 3 horses” and had his wagon and riding chair mended (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 3). Doctor James McClurg likewise had his horses shoed all around, purchasing “8 shoes for 2 Horses” (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 40). Every two to three months, McClurg returned to have either two or four shoes replaced.

Interestingly, just over half of the people (56.3 per cent; n = 9) who had Anderson trim their horses did not purchase horseshoes (Table 2). Some residents, like Dr. James Carter, who visited Anderson’s shop at least once a month during the spring and summer of 1779 to have harnesses repaired, plough blades sharpened, and his two horses trimmed, never purchased horseshoes (Anderson Ledger B:Folio 8). Lewis Burwell, Esq. also visited Anderson’s shop regularly in 1778 to have his plows, scythe, and wagon repaired and new pieces made for his ox yoke and harnesses. Once a month Burwell would bring one or two horses in to have them trimmed but never had Anderson put shoes on them.

Some but not all of the people for whom Anderson trimmed but did not shoe their horses had at one time or another however brought a plow, hoe, cart, or wagon in for Anderson to repair. Horses engaged in agricultural work in the fields may not have needed the extra protection on their hooves that horses that routinely pulled coaches or wagons over hard-packed roads or that were ridden long distances may have needed. There does not however seem to be any real correlation between those who had their horses shoed and their occupations or the types of vehicles that Anderson repaired. This likely is due to the small and subjective sample size captured in Anderson’s ledgers, which represent only items that needed repair and not the whole of what an

22
Table 2. Summary of Account Holders Who Had Horses Trimmed But Not Shoed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account Holder</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Anderson Ledger B Folio</th>
<th>Type of Vehicle Repaired</th>
<th>Type of Hoe Repaired</th>
<th>Plough Repair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert Anderson</td>
<td>Merchant/Tavern Keeper</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>trowell, harrow, weeding</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Carter</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>wagon, chair</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Trebell</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>phaeton</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis Burwell Esqr.</td>
<td>Planter</td>
<td>12/88</td>
<td>wagon, phaeton</td>
<td>harrow, fluke, broad</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dixon</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Gilbert</td>
<td>Shoe Maker</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel Maupin</td>
<td>Harness Maker/Saddler</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>hilling, harrow, fluke</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hunter</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>wagon, phaeton</td>
<td>broad</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Plume</td>
<td>Tanner</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

individual may own. The horses that came through Anderson’s shop may be only a handful of the team owned by a planter, or may be the only horse owned by a merchant. Horses were however vital in eighteenth century Virginia as both a means of transportation and as a labor force.
CHAPTER III

WAR COMES TO VIRGINIA

As the prospect of war with England loomed closer and closer, Virginia’s legislators made a fateful decision: move the capital from Williamsburg to Richmond. Located near the falls of the James River, and at the upper extent of its navigable waters, Richmond was on the edge of the Virginia frontier. Beyond the growing port town lay the rugged mountains of the Piedmont region, where Indians still vied with European settlers over the rights to make those rocky hills their home. Just as Middle Plantations residents had touted its advantages over Jamestown, Richmond’s advocates believed their town better suited to face both the perils of the Revolution and the growing needs of the now independent Commonwealth of Virginia.

The relocation of the capital to Richmond was realized in May 1779. With notice posted on March 25, 1780 in the *Virginia Gazette*, the offices of the government, including the General Assembly, the Court of Appeals, the High Court of Chancery, and the General Court of Common Law, commenced the move to Richmond. The last official government business conducted in Williamsburg would occur on 7 April 1780; the government would resume business in Richmond 17 days later.

Already the seat of Henrico County, Richmond would now see the influx of people who formerly traveled to Williamsburg to attend the meetings of the General Assembly and courts. Under the terms of the new state constitution, drafted by the Virginia Convention in 1776, the General Assembly was now composed of a lower house, the House of Delegates, and a upper
house, the Senate. These houses would replace the colonial House of Burgess in representing the interests of the Virginia people. Delegates for the General Assembly were chosen on the last Monday of November each year and the Assembly scheduled its new session 42 days after that (Jefferson 1955:211-212). Any free male, who had lived in Virginia for at least a year and either possessed a value of real property or was enlisted in the militia, had the right to cast a vote for delegates of the county in which he resided. Just as before the Revolution, the scheduled meetings of the General Assembly would be in April and October each year.

The meetings of the General Assembly typically coincided with the meeting of the General Court. Prior to the Revolution, the General Court had been comprised of the governor and the twelve members of the Privy Council. Appointed by the king, the council members held their positions for life and ruled in cases “involving life and limb and chancery cases of great value” (Griffith 1963:14). The Privy Council also had been dissolved under the Virginia Convention and was replaced by the General Court of Law, whose judges or magistrates were elected by the Assembly and commissioned by the governor (Jefferson 1964:124). Meeting four times a year, the General Court heard appeals from county courts and ruled in matters that involved land titles or bounties, or values greater than £10 sterling. Such cases though also could be heard in the High Court of Chancery, which met twice a year.

Despite its steady growth and increasing economic importance, Richmond seemed little prepared for the number of people who would arrive with the first meeting of the Assembly in April of 1780. Accommodations for travelers seemed few and buildings appropriate for housing the legislature had yet to be constructed. “So recently has it become a place of any consequence that accommodations cannot be found for one half the people who are necessarily brought here” (Ambler 1780). Robert Hunter Jr. found Richmond to be “one of the dirtiest holes of a place I ever was in,” while Duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt viewed the city as “beyond comparison, the finest, the most noble and the greatest in all America” (Dabney 1976:32).
Unlike Williamsburg, which was “intended primarily neither as market, manufacturing center, nor port, but as a political and cultural center,” Richmond has its beginning as a commercial venture designed to generate money for its promoter, William Byrd (II) (Fries 1977:108). Although Byrd had fought earlier attempts to establish a town on his lands, by 1737 he had reversed his position and, with the approval of the General Assembly, had laid out 128 lots on his lands (Dabney 1976:12; Duke and Jordan 1983:3-5). Located across the James River from the town of Warwick and “in a pleasant and healthy situation, and well supply’ed with Springs of good Water”, Bryd’s new town was already the location of a store, a tavern, a ferry, and a tobacco inspection warehouse (Virginia Gazette 1737:Parks, April 15-22). Designated the county seat of Henrico County in 1752, by 1779, the town had a population of about 600 people (Dabney 1976:25-26).

The rapid increase in population that Richmond saw during the last half of the eighteenth century was not uncommon as more people made the decision to leave their homes and begin a new life overseas. Between 1760 and 1775, an estimated 125,000 people immigrated to North America from the British Isles (Bailyn 1988:26). With the addition of German immigrants and African slaves, North America saw an average of 15,000 new arrivals per year between 1760 and 1775. The English Register of Emigrants for the period 1773-1775 shows that 8.3 per cent of immigrants came to Virginia (Bailyn 1988:206-207). Anderson’s own parents had emigrated from Ireland to Gloucester County, Virginia.

Anderson left Williamsburg during the summer of 1780 to continue his work as a public smith for the Commonwealth in the new capital of Richmond. His last ledger entries are dated June 8, 1780, just shy of two months after the government offices officially closed in Williamsburg on April 7, 1780. During those first five months of 1780, 60 people would bring their assorted broken farm and household items, horses, wagons, and carriages to Anderson’s shop. As before, all of his customers would hail from Williamsburg or the surrounding counties of James City and York. Forty-two customers, or 70 per cent, had visited Anderson’s shop the previous year, including 13
people who held accounts the year prior to that.

While business had been good during the last years of the 1770s, the early 1780s proved to be a troubled period for Williamsburg blacksmith James Anderson. Employed by the state, Anderson likely had no choice but to follow the government in its move, bringing with him his family, apprentices and journeymen, and all the equipment necessary to continue his work for the state. Several months later however, Anderson would request compensation from the state for the loss of smith’s equipment belonging to the state and for some tools of “my own property” that were destroyed when Brigadier General Benedict Arnold raided Richmond on January 7, 1781.

Such compensation may have been long in coming, for Anderson soon accepted appointment as Captain of the Artificers for the State Arsenal at Point of Fork in 1781 (Gill 1971:26; Palmer 1881:347). The Point of Fork Arsenal, located on the south bank of the Rivanna River in Fluvanna County, served as an important supply depot for Continental forces during the war. Just as the warehouses in Richmond had not escaped the notice of the British, the munitions and stores kept at Point of Fork soon became the target of British forces. The arsenal was captured in June 1781 by Lieutenant Colonel John Graves Simcoe of the Queens Rangers, who succeeded in forcing Baron von Steuben and his militia to abandon the arsenal and destroy most of its supplies. An account of the raid recorded in Lt. Col. Graves’s journal reveals the extensive quantity of weapons, tools, and other supplies that the American militia was forced to leave behind:

"There were destroyed at the Point of Fork, two thousand five hundred stand of arms, a large quantity of gunpowder, case shot, &c., several casks of saltpetre, sulphur, and brimstone, and upwards of sixty hogsheads of rum and brandy, several chests of carpenters' tools, and upwards of four hundred entrenching tools, with casks of flints, sail cloth and wagons, and a great variety of small stores, necessary for the equipment of cavalry and infantry: such linen and necessaries, as would be of immediate service, were divided among the captors. There were taken off, a thirteen-inch mortar, five brass eight-inch howitzers, and four long brass nine pounders, mounted afterwards at York Town: all French pieces and in excellent order" (Simcoe 1844:212-223).
Letters written by Anderson to Colonel Davis in late 1781 suggest that following the British raid efforts quickly were made to resupply the Point of Fork Arsenal. Anderson requested artificers for the arsenal in August but in late November reported that they did not arrive and those already assigned would likely desert if clothing and shoes were not soon supplied (Palmer 1883:347, 625). The difficulties at the arsenal apparently continued, for Anderson wrote again to Colonel Davies in December 1781, complaining that “so arduous and troublesome is his present situation, he much prefers to be relieved from duty altogether and be allowed to pursue his own private business” (Palmer 1883:347, 625, 670). The First Federal Census for Richmond finds Anderson, his family, and several apprentices still living in Richmond in 1782 and Anderson presumably still employed as Public Armorer (US Census 1979).

It is not until late 1782 that Anderson was released from his state duties and could return to Williamsburg, where his shop had apparently escaped British notice. Anderson had kept the shop open during the war, likely performing public work as he reported that one of the “State negroes had been at work for a considerable time” there (Palmer 1883:221). No records of what was produced in Anderson’s Williamsburg shop while he was working as a public smith in Richmond have come to light. As Anderson employed a “State negro” to work in the shop, he may have used the shop solely to produce additional supplies for the wartime efforts. Or, he may have continued to serve the long-time Williamsburg’s residents who were his most reliable customers.

Between 1780 and 1786, Anderson’s time in Williamsburg appears to have been very brief. He appeared to have been more concerned with repairs to his Williamsburg dwelling than to continuing his private blacksmith business. He performed work for only five people over two days in October (30th and 31st) and a day in November (2nd) of 1782. Four of the people were long-time Williamsburg residents who had resided in the city before 1775 and three had held accounts with Anderson prior to 1780 (Anderson 1789-1798).

During this period, Anderson made a transaction with gentleman Dudley Digges, who
bought "a Small Red House Pr. agreement" from Anderson for £18. Dudley Digges and his father, Cole Digges, had originally owned the dwelling and lots that Anderson purchased in 1770 as the new location for his smithy. Digges owned several properties in Williamsburg, including a tavern that today is know as the Brick House Tavern (CWF n.d.). Digges’ transaction with Anderson took place on November 29th of 1782. This lot may be one of the four lots that Digges is recorded as owning within the city in 1782 (Personal Property Tax). While he continues to own four lots in Williamsburg through at least 1790, Digges does not appear on the 1782 Williamsburg census as a city resident and will never again visit Anderson’s blacksmith shop.

While Anderson was getting his house and shop in order, the new General Assembly approved the selling of the capitol and Governor’s palace in Williamsburg to provide additional money to offset revenue losses the state might suffer during the war. Constructed with two long wings joined in the center by a “cross galley,” the two-story brick capitol building had been a focal point of activity during Public Times. “At the Capitol, at publick times, may be seen a great number of handsom, well-dressed, compleat [sic] gentlemen” (Carson 1965:8-9). By 1794, however the capitol building was in such bad repair that the General Assembly authorized the demolition of the eastern half of the building. The sale of its materials would be used to offset the cost of maintaining the western half of the building.

Before the war, the Governors Palace in Williamsburg had been described as “a magnificent structure, built at the publick expence [sic], finished and beautified with gates, fine gardens, offices, walks, a fine canal, orchards, etc." (Carson 1965:9). Constructed around 1709 and standing squarely at the end of Palace Street, the two-story brick building, its courtyard, and gardens occupied 63 acres, most of which were enclosed by a four-foot high brick wall (Reps 1972:175). Two smaller buildings, used as offices of the government flanked the front courtyard to either side of the palace (Reps 1972:176). Used to the hurrying of lawyers, judges, and lawmakers,
the palace and its offices must have seemed eerily silent after the government completed its move to Richmond.

In December 1781, the palace "mysteriously burned" to the ground while in use as a field hospital for American troops (Goodwin 1936:113-114). For a period, the ruins of the palace remained visible and Williamsburg residents took bricks from the rubble for their own use (Kelly 2000:71) (Figure 11). Bishop Francis Asbury later observed that in addition to the palace, "the barracks, and some good dwelling-houses burnt." One of those houses was that of the President of the College of William and Mary. Occupied at the time by French troops, the house had burned under suspicious circumstances. Unlike the governor's palace though, which was left in ruin, the President's house was swiftly rebuilt by the French troops.

Figure 11. *Ruins of the Old Colonial Palace*, ca 1875 (Source: Williamsburg postcards.com)
During Anderson’s next visit to Williamsburg, in January 1783, he performed work for only one person, former Williamsburg resident Edmond Randolph. Randolph had left Williamsburg in 1775 and would not return to live in the city until the late 1780s. Randolph however appears to have been passing through the city at a time when Anderson had briefly returned to oversee repairs to his dwelling. On January 3, 1783 Anderson had contracted with Humphrey Harwood to repair a chimney and “alter an arch of plaster” in his dwelling (Humphrey Harwood Account Books). On January 27th, Anderson repaired the shaft and wheels of a riding chair and replaced the axletree for Randolph. A long time resident of Williamsburg, Randolph had held an account with Anderson in 1779 and would again hold an account from 1789 to 1791.

Anderson also would have Harwood perform additional repairs to his dwelling during May and June 1784 possibly in preparation for Anderson’s return to Williamsburg later that fall (Humphrey Harwood Account Books). It appears to have been during Sept 1784-February 1785 that Anderson actually began to restart his blacksmith business, drawing customers from Williamsburg, as well as from Richmond and Norfolk. Ninety people would hold accounts with Anderson during the six month period recorded in his ledgers. Of those accounts however only eight transactions would be with residents of either Williamsburg or York County. One additional person could be traced to Richmond, five to Norfolk, and one account was held by Norfolk County. The extremely low number of “local” residents that Anderson served during 1784 and 1785 suggests that he may not have been in Williamsburg during this period and had not yet reopened his Williamsburg shop.

A clue to Anderson’s whereabouts during 1784 and 1785 may lie in the types of work that he performed. During 1784 and 1785, a small but important portion of Anderson’s work included the repair and fabrication of ship’s equipment. Most of the ship-related work Anderson performed was for small items such as making a boat hook, a traveler for a jib boom, marlin spikes, or hoops, hooks, eyes, and thimbles. “Sailing ships needed hundreds of metal parts, pulleys, cleats, brackets,
etc. as well as anchor chains. Blacksmiths made all of these parts. Shipbuilders also needed hammers, chisels, saws, nails, and bolts and blacksmiths made them” (Appalachian Blacksmiths Association 2003:2). At least 20 of the accounts held during 1784-1785 were specifically for the repair of ship-related items and include the name of the vessel for which the work was performed (Table 3).

The ship-related items that Anderson repaired varied greatly and showed the depth of his experience and familiarity with working iron. Most of the accounts held during 1784-1785 listed fewer than five items for repair and did not include an itemization of the cost of the service. Captain Loyal had a strap for the Bow sprit made and purchased “a harsp & 2 staples for cabbin

Table 3. Summary of Account Holders and Vessel Types/Names (Source: Anderson 1778-1785)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account Holders</th>
<th>Vessel Type/Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Wormington</td>
<td>brig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Waston</td>
<td>Brig Adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Helery Moseley</td>
<td>Brig Polly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Brown</td>
<td>Schooner Abey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Cunningham</td>
<td>Schooner Harlot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain James Murrow</td>
<td>Schooner Harrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. John Caston</td>
<td>Schooner Jural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Wilcox</td>
<td>Schooner Lightfoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Hutchinson</td>
<td>Ship Commorant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Benjamin Pollard</td>
<td>Ship Harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Drewy</td>
<td>Sloop Polly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Cook</td>
<td>sloop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Ingrum</td>
<td>sloop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton &amp; Kelly</td>
<td>sloop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Robert Taylor</td>
<td>sloop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Trimble</td>
<td>sloop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For Captain Wallace and the "Irish Volunteers" Anderson made among many other things, "4 hoops for Anchor stocks," "6 Duck Bill hooks" with thimbles, "6 large thimbles for topmast stays," 2 mast hoops," and "gallows & windlass hoops" (Anderson 1778-1785: Folio 1784-5b). Among Captain Helery (Hillary) Moseley purchases for the Brig Polly was "one sounding rod" (Anderson 1778-1785: Folio 9b). For Captain Newton, Anderson mended a spring for a bell (Anderson 1778-1785: Folio 36a).

The timing of Anderson’s ship-related work during 1784 suggests that the repairs he performed may have been for private vessels recently released from service with the Continental Navy. Realizing the need for naval fighting vessels to both protect American shipping interests and the colonies seeking independence, Congress formed the Continental Navy on October 13, 1775, only to disband it following the conclusion of the war (US Maritime Service Veterans 1998-2003). By August 1, 1785 the last vessel of the navy’s 64 vessels had been sold. The approximately 1,697 American privateers and merchantmen that had harried and captured British supply, messenger, and fighting ships during the war also were released back to private duty. Smaller vessels, such as the sloops, schooners and brigs that Anderson performed repairs for, may have been used to carry supplies or cargo on trade routes to England or the West Indies. Brigs were common vessels in Virginia’s ports and often the subject of advertisements in the Virginia Gazette announcing newly arrived goods.

By 1788 Anderson apparently had turned his attention back to his private blacksmith shop. He contracted with Harwood to construct or rebuild at least six forges over the next two years. Ledger C, which contained entries continued from Ledger A and made between August 25, 1789 and July 10, 1799, showed a steady increase in Anderson’s business during much of the late eighteenth century. Anderson’s busiest year would be 1791, when 135 people held accounts with his shop for services rendered (Figure 12). Two years before his death in 1798, Anderson would significantly decrease the amount of work that he performed. While this could be interpreted as a
decline in the demand for blacksmith work, it may equally have been a reflection of Anderson's declining health.

An inventory of Anderson's estate at the time of his death in 1798 shows he owned a "blacksmiths bellows," two anvils, two vices, two sledge hammers and a lot each of hammers, files, tongs, and punches (Anderson Papers 1808-1812). "A complete set of smith's tools, including an anvil, bellows, hammers, and vises, could cost as much as thirty pounds" (Daniels 1995:9). Anderson also owned supplies and raw materials necessary for his trade. Valued at $20 dollars each, his bellows and an anvil were the most costly of his tools, which as a whole were worth $102. In comparison, the set of "1 dozen Mahogany chairs" Anderson owned was valued at $24; "Nat, a Negro man blacksmith" was valued at $600. Anderson owned not only the basic equipment necessary for a smith, but also enough additional tools and equipment to perform specialized work and support additional persons working out of his shop.
In her study of artisans in eighteenth century Kent County, Maryland, Daniels (1995:11) suggested that the greater the amount invested in tools, the greater the tendency those tools would be passed down from father to son. Whether a son would choose to follow the trade of his father however was often left up to the son. “The fact that a father was an artisan, even an artisan in a capital-intensive trade, however, did not force his son to follow rigidly in his footsteps” (Daniels 1995:13). Ninety per cent of the times when a father specified that his son father his trade, that trade was “capital-intensive” (Daniels 1995:15). Such was the case for James Anderson, who in 1793 turned over his Richmond blacksmith shop to his son James. Based upon his ledger entries, which include accounts held by Richmond residents, the elder Anderson may have continued to oversee operations in the Richmond shop until his son was practiced enough to run the shop on his own.

Anderson’s Williamsburg house and blacksmith shop was passed not to his sons but to his daughter Nancy (Brown 1999). The task of settling Anderson’s outstanding debts was taken on by Robert Anderson, who spent the next 11 years tracking down Anderson’s customers. Most of the transactions in Anderson’s shop were conducted through the long-term extension of credit to customers. Early ledger entries recorded in English currency the cost of certain services and kept a tabulation of the amount owed (debit) and any balances paid (credits); later entries simply record the tasks performed.

Most accounts record multiple transactions that were paid over a period of time in cash, by bringing in old iron or other usable goods, by performing services to discharge the debt, or by a combination of those methods. For example, Captain Edward Travis brought in 37 lbs of iron to discharge his debt (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 56). Elizabeth Randolph also did the same, bringing Anderson 14.5 lbs of “old Iron” to settle a portion of her debt (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 32). This means of conducting business appears to have been common during the late eighteenth century, when “ready money” was likely scarce and the country’s currency was transitioning from the
English pound to the American dollar. The transition to American currency appears to have been slow, as Anderson continued to record transactions in English pounds, shillings, and pence through 1798, the year of his death.

Some of Anderson’s outstanding accounts were settled by services granted long ago that balanced the amount due. Dr. James Curry’s account of over £77 was settled by previous credits and by the virtue that “this man was the attendant Physician of my fathers family in Richmond” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 287). On Dr. William Carter’s outstanding account of just over £7, Robert Anderson wrote that “My father purchased a horse of this man and I imagine that this account is settled” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 147). Merchant Robert Greenhow’s account was “discharged in meals, money & food” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 15). William Harwood’s account was settled in part by work performed by his late father, bricklayer Humphrey Harwood, and from a settlement from Harwood’s estate (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 4).

A small number of Anderson’s accounts could not be settled. The account holder had died, could not be found, or when they were found they disputed the debt. On an account held by “Stars,” Robert wrote that he “cannot establish this man’s proper name” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 285b). Littlepage’s account was appended with the note that: “This man is dead. It is supposed” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 278b). Mr. Curry, a bookbinder, was “long dead” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio236a), while John Hockady “died in New Kent Co and [was] insolvent” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio267a). Benjamin Blasgrove, Royal Allen, and William Waddle also died insolvent. Of Peterfield Trent, Robert wrote: “This man’s residence I cannot find” (Anderson 1789-1798:Folio 266b).

Just as it had for so many other artisans and craftsmen, the death of James Anderson marked the end of his Williamsburg business. By 1810, Anderson’s Williamsburg blacksmith shops had been dismantled. The house, kitchen, and smokehouse would stand for another 32 years before they were destroyed by a fire that consumed much of the block (Brown 1999).
CHAPTER IV
A DIFFERENT CITY

The Williamsburg of pre-1780 had indeed been a thriving city, alive with the noise and bustle of hundreds of residents going about their daily tasks. Anderson’s surviving account books show his private blacksmith work had steadily increased in the years prior to his move to Richmond. Although located just blocks from the capital building and within what was for that period was a relatively large city, most of Anderson’s work during the late 1770s was related in some way to agriculture. The repair of household items was mentioned in just over a third of Anderson’s accounts (38.3 per cent) during the period 1778-1780. More often than not however, those entries comprised a single item that was nearly lost in a long, long list of repairs for plows, hoes, hames, carts, wagons, and the shoeing of horses. The few household items that Anderson did repair were diverse and reflected the affluence of the city’s residents.

The work that Anderson performed in 1778 was scant and occurred mainly between November 26 and December 22. During that period, 18 people visited his shop. Among them was Mary Ambler of James City County. Her account shows she also visited during January, February, and March of 1778, during which period Anderson performed a number of services for her, including repairing several different types of hoes and coulters, making parts for a cart, and mending a wheel and an oxen yoke. Ambler was the only person to visit Anderson’s shop prior to November 1778, although there are references to accounts carried from a previous ledger that may predate 1778.
Sixty-four people would visit Anderson’s shop in 1779, including many repeat customers. Mary Ambler brought more plows to be sharpened and mended. Lewis Burwell of nearby Kings Mill plantation and Dr. Matthew Anderson of Williamsburg also returned and brought more work for Anderson. Colonel William Finnie, who had brought only an andiron to repair the previous year, now visited every three months and brought horses to shoe or trim. Apparently pleased with the repairs to his phaeton the previous year, Williamsburg merchant Samuel Beall, Esq. brought in his chariot, a set of curtain rods, a bell in need of a hook, a rake, several horses to trim, and other sundry items for Anderson to work on.

Anderson’s ledgers show his customers were all local residents from the City of Williamsburg and the surrounding counties of James City and York. In 1778, all but three customers were residents of Williamsburg; the others lived in James City County. In 1779, 44 customers or 69 per cent were residents of Williamsburg, while nine customers (14 per cent) lived in James City County and seven (11 per cent) lived in York County. The residences of the other four people were unknown, but it is likely that they also resided in the vicinity of Williamsburg.

The steady upswing in Anderson’s private blacksmith business and the stability of his customer base suggest that Williamsburg’s society was relatively stable during the early years of the Revolution. The people who visited Anderson’s shop included many of the more influential and well-known of Williamsburg’s residents. Doctors James Carter, John Minson Galt, Samuel Griffen, James McClurg, and William Pasteur each came by, as did ministers William Bland and John Bracken and attorneys Thomas Everard, Joseph Prentis, Edmund Randolph, and John Tazewell, Esq. James City County planters Lewis Burwell, Esq. and Cary Wilkinson brought enough work to cover two pages of Anderson’s ledger. Wilkinson’s entries included supplies for both Rich Neck plantation and Paradise Estate plantation.

Artisans who held accounts with Anderson included cabinet maker Richard Booker, book binder Thomas Brend, shoemaker Robert Gilbert, bricklayer Humphrey Harwood, tanner William
Plume, and carpenters John Lamb, William Trebell, and James Vaughn. Silversmiths James Galt and John and William Rowsay also brought items to Anderson shop. Butcher George Chaplin came by to have his wagon repaired. The publishers of the *Virginia Gazette*, printers John Clarkson, John Dixon, and William Hunter also held accounts with Anderson. Fourteen of the city’s merchants, including John Greenhow, William Goodson, and James Cocke, Esq., were customers of Anderson’s.

William Armistead, the storekeeper for the Public Store in Williamsburg, and his assistant Thomas Smith each came by Anderson’s shop to have their horses trimmed and shoed. Colonel James Innes, Colonel William Finnie, and Colonel Samuel Griffen also came by to have their horses shoed. Even Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson came by twice in 1780 to have “6 new shoes of his own” put on two horses and later to have two of Anderson’s shoes put on a horse (Anderson Ledger B: Folio 72).

This steady resident population however would slowly change in the years following the Revolution and would be reflected in the types of transactions posted in Anderson’s daily work ledger. Whereas prior to his relocation to Richmond in 1780 Anderson had provided services mainly for Williamsburg residents, by the late 1780s his customers were drawn relatively evenly from within the city and from places as far away as Richmond. Of the 279 people who held accounts with Anderson between 1789 and 1799, less than a quarter (22.9 per cent; n = 64) were Williamsburg residents. Only a small portion (7.5 per cent; n = 21) would reside in surrounding York and James City Counties.

Residents of Richmond however would account for only 16.1 per cent (n = 45) of Anderson’s business between 1789 and 1799; a figure that would nearly equal the amount of business Anderson drew from the local Williamsburg population. Much of the remaining percentage of Anderson’s account holders did not reside in Williamsburg or the surrounding counties. They do not appear on the 1788 Williamsburg property tax list or the 1790 city land tax.
Nor do they appear on the 1790 land taxes for York or James City counties. These account holders comprise the bulk of Anderson's Ledger C accounts, totaling 127 accounts or 45.5 per cent of his business between 1789 and 1799.

In comparing the accounts held by Williamsburg residents in Ledgers B and C, it was apparent that very few of the individuals who held accounts prior to 1780 also held accounts after 1788. Only 24 people (5.8 per cent) out of the total of 412 people who held accounts with Anderson recorded transactions in both Ledgers B and C (Table 4). Nineteen of these account holders were Williamsburg residents, two lived in Richmond, one lived in James City County, and three could not be located. Of the Williamsburg residents, 15 (78.9 per cent) had lived in the city since at least 1775 and eight (42.1 per cent) had lived in the city since at least 1770. The remaining four residents were living in Williamsburg at least by 1782, as they appear either on the Federal census or in the land tax records for that year.

Many historians have contended that by 1782 “Williamsburg had lost more than a quarter of its pre-war population” (Kelly 2000:71). Even during the late eighteenth century visitors to the city had begun to remark on the apparent neglect of the houses and public buildings, the poor condition of the city’s streets, and the lack of trade within the town. “All the public buildings, except the Mad House, are in a decaying situation, as [are] most of the Private buildings, business having almost entirely left this place since the removal of the Government” wrote Onley Winsor, who visited Williamsburg in 1786 (Winsor 1786). His observations were echoed a century and a half later by Reverend Goodwin, who noted in his history of Williamsburg that the “population fell away; for many of the tradesmen now followed the government to Richmond” (Goodwin 1936: 113-114).

In 1782, Williamsburg had a population of at least 1,420 people (US Census 1979). Reconstructed from individual county returns, this population included a relatively even number of white (n = 721) and black (n = 699) residents. The proportion of white to black residents in
Table 4. Summary of Anderson’s Account Holders That Held Accounts Both Prior to and Post-1780 (Source: Anderson 1778-1785; Anderson 1789-1798)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account Holders</th>
<th>Account Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Matthew Anderson</td>
<td>Dec 1778-May 1780; Jan 1790-May 1798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Anderson</td>
<td>Jan 1779-Jun 1780; Aug 1791-Jan 1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Beall</td>
<td>Dec 1778-May 1780; Dec 1789-Oct 1790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. John Bracken</td>
<td>Mar 1780-Apr 1780; Mar 1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis Burwell</td>
<td>May 1780; Jun 1791-Jan 1796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colo. William Finnie</td>
<td>Dec 1778-May 1780; May 1792-Mar 1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Foster</td>
<td>Oct 1784-Jan 1785; Jul 1791-Apr 1792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. John Galt</td>
<td>Nov 1778-May 1780; Dec 1789-Aug 1798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Greenhow</td>
<td>Sept 177-Jun 1780; July 1791-Jun 1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colo. Samuel Griffen</td>
<td>Jan 1780-Feb 1780; Sept 1790-Mar 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Hornsby</td>
<td>Nov 1779-Mar 1780; Oct 1789-Mar 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. James McClurg</td>
<td>Jan 1779-May 1780; May 1791-Jul 1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Nicolson</td>
<td>Jan 1779- Jun 1780; Jan 1790-Mar 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Nicolson</td>
<td>Dec 1779-Apr 1780; Oct 1791-Aug 1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Pasteur</td>
<td>Jan 1779-May 1780; Sept 1789-Mar 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew &amp; Mrs. Pearson</td>
<td>Jan 1780; Oct 1790-Apr 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Powell</td>
<td>Jan 1779-May 1780; Sept 1789-Mar 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Prentis</td>
<td>1779-May 1780; Oct 1789-Jan 1799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Pryor</td>
<td>Nov 1784; Jun 1791-May 1793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Randolph</td>
<td>Dec 1779;Sept 1789-Jan 1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Reid</td>
<td>Dec 1778-May 1780; Nov 1789-Apr 1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Russell</td>
<td>May 1779-Apr 1780; Nov 1793-Jan 1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Southall</td>
<td>Mar 1780-Nov 1782; Oct 1797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Webb</td>
<td>Mar 1779-Dec 1779; Aug 1791-May 1792</td>
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</tbody>
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Williamsburg was consistent with that of the state of Virginia, which in 1790 listed a total population of 691,737 persons, of which 43 per cent (n = 287,959) were black. A majority of households (n = 140; 77.3 per cent) listed at least one black household member, with 18 households listing 10 or more black household members. A total of 181 households are listed on the
reconstructed return, including 48 households (26.5 per cent) headed by women and at least four households headed by free black women.

Data compiled from existing land tax records, the county tax returns, and research conducted by Colonial Williamsburg Foundation suggests that in 1782-1783, Williamsburg’s population included at least 19 merchants, 53 artisans, and 21 professionals (Figure 13). Eight people could be identified as widows, planters, gentlemen, mariners, or military servicemen. The occupations of at least 120 additional people who resided in the city in 1782 were unknown. This large percentage of the population for which their occupations could not be determined has naturally deflated the numbers of individuals employed in known occupations.

Figure 13. Chart depicting artisan occupations in Williamsburg between 1775-1782 (Source: Kelly n.d.; US Census 1790)
Occupational categories that were absent in 1782 but had been present seven years earlier were primarily those related to the government. The various governmental secretaries, the printers of the public newspaper, and the public armor had each re-established themselves in Richmond. John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore and Royal Governor of Virginia, had fled Williamsburg for Yorktown in June 1775. Bookbinder Thomas Brend, who among his services sold copies of government manuscripts, remained in Williamsburg through August 1780, but left shortly thereafter, as he does not appear on the 1782 Federal census for the city nor did he pay land or personal property tax for that or subsequent years (Virginia Gazette 1780:Clarkson-Davis, Aug 19; US Census 1979).

John Brown, a clerk in the Secretary’s Office, and William Rose, who in 1782 listed his occupation as the keeper of the jail, relocated from Williamsburg to Richmond. Both appeared on the 1782 census for Richmond. John Dixon and James Hunter, the self-titled “Printers to the Commonwealth” relocated the offices of the public newspaper to the new capitol. A small announcement in the final Williamsburg edition of their paper, on April 8, 1780, stated simply that the printers “propose removing their office to the town of Richmond immediately, which will suspend the publication of this gazette two or three weeks” (Virginia Gazette 1780:Clarkson-Davis, April 8). Printers William Prentis, William Rind, and Thomas Nicholson, also made the move, relocating their printing offices to Richmond.

Kelly suggests at least 13 attorneys resided in the city in 1775, just five years before the capital was relocated (Kelly n.d.). In 1782, two years after the relocation of the government, Williamsburg was still home to at least six attorneys, most of who had practiced in the city in 1775. In addition, four more attorneys, Robert Nicholas, James Innes, John Tazewell, Benjamin Waller (Jr.) would not appear on the 1782 Federal census but would continue to reside in Williamsburg (CWF n.d.). Those that left the city however did not follow the capital to Richmond; they left before 1780 as a result of the war or died. Labeled as a Loyalist, attorney John Randolph, Jr. would
leave Williamsburg in 1775, vacating his positions as Attorney General and Vice Admiralty Court judge. Attorney Peyton Randolph would die in 1775 and attorney Thomas Everard would pass away six years later, in 1781. Attorney Edmund Randolph left the city in 1775 but did not reappear in Richmond. Randolph returned to Williamsburg by 1788 and was recorded on the 1790 land tax as owning 15 lots in the city.

Other occupational categories that were absent in 1782 were those that could be classified as providers of specialty goods or services. These goods or services however were not unique and could be obtained from or performed by other artisans, merchants, or professionals who still resided in the city. Adam Allan, the proprietor of the Stocking Manufactory, left the city in 1775. Engraver William Waddill, who worked from the shop of silversmith James Geddy, left Williamsburg between 1777 and 1782. Upholsterer Joseph Kidd, hatter John Connoly, bookkeeper Henry Laughton, and artist William Pierce, Jr. also would leave the city between 1775 and 1782.

Many historians and writers have pointed out that Williamsburg lacked trade. They cite the absence of busy tobacco warehouses, wharves teeming with ships on and off loading goods, and manufactories churning out products. In this regard, Williamsburg could be said to lack trade. Situated nearly a mile from the deep draft waters of the James and York Rivers, Williamsburg residents would never see the tall mast of an English bound trading vessel. Shallow draft boats plied the waters of local tributaries, bringing goods to nearby landings where they were brought overland into the city. Most goods manufactured in the city were made by skilled artisans who provided specialized wares and services for use within Virginia’s domestic economy rather than for export.

This was in keeping with Williamsburg’s role as the seat of the colonial government. In its founding, Williamsburg had not been intended as a market town, a port town, or as a center of colonial industry. The public buildings that housed the offices of the colonial government were designed to be the focal point of the city, not the sprawling shoreline of a broad river or the sturdy
docks where cargo vessels tie up awaiting to unload their cargos. Ports on Queen’s Creek and Archer’s Hope Creek were included in Williamsburg’s original design but these were never intended to be more than ancillary facilities. Not until 1772, on the eve of the Revolution, was attention drawn to improving the city’s shipping routes (Hening 1809-1823:Vol. VIII, 556-51, 562).

“Whereas the opening a communication between James river and York river, by a canal or cut to be made from Archer’s Hope creek, through or near the city of Williamsburg, into Queen’s creek, for the navigation of boats and other vessels, with heavy burthens, will be of great advantage to the said city, and to the trade carried on in the said rivers” (Hening 1809-1823:Vol. VIII, 556).

Although a subsequent act authorized trustees to have lands appraised and purchased, the proposed canal between Queen’s Creek and Archer’s Hope Creek never progressed beyond the planning stages.

Perhaps due to its role as the colonial capital, Williamsburg was home to a great number of skilled artisans and craftsman. As early as the mid-eighteenth century Williamsburg was described as “a magnet for mature, skilled workers who at least intended to make a permanent home” (Hellier and Kelly 1986:7). During this period, more of Williamsburg’s residents would list their occupations as artisans or merchants than any other occupation category. Artisans usually were active participants in county and city government and were more likely to establish long-term residency (Hellier and Kelly 1986:7). When St. George Tucker described Williamsburg in 1795 as composed of “genteel families which form a very agreeable society” he was not referring to one group of Williamsburg residents but to all of the city’s residents, including its numerous artisans (Tucker 1795).

At least 31 merchants had advertised their goods and services in the Virginia Gazette in 1770 (Whitney 1983:10). A wide array of imported merchandise, including spices, silks, mahogany, wine, and the latest trends in fashionable attire, was available at local merchant shops. Goods exported from the upper district of the James River showed the diversity of Virginia’s
economic base. Cotton, indigo, wine, beer, candles, shingles, and various agricultural products including seeds, corn, peas, flour, beans, pork, and beef were among the many items exported in 1766 (Virginia Gazette 1766: Purdie & Dixon).

Merchants who advertised their wares listed a surprising variety of domestic and imported goods. John Greenhow’s store, located “near the church, in Williamsburg,” advertised an assortment of dried goods, meats, household goods, farming implements, building materials, gardening supplies, fabrics, clothing, and “many Hundreds of other Articles” (Virginia Gazette 1778:Dixon, Nov 13). “Fresh Garden Seeds” read the headline that advertised goods for sale at John Carter’s store in 1775. Peas, beans, onions, celery, cabbage, carrots, radishes, and lettuce were for sale at Carter’s store, as were a variety of pickled fruits and nuts, spices, coffees, chocolate, fine fabric, gloves, hats, and even “green silk umbrellas”. (Virginia Gazette 1773:Purdie & Dixon, Dec 16). William Page sold “all kinds of merchandise” in the store formerly occupied by Robert Nicolson, tailor (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon, Feb 4).

Along Duke of Gloucester Street, between the capitol and the Market Square, “stood most of the rooming houses, ordinaries, inns, and taverns that became such lively places during the sessions of the General Court or the assembly” (Reps 1972:179). The meetings of the merchants that occurred during Public Times “provided the nearest approach to a central market in the province” (Soltow 1958:471). Lacking a regular meeting place, a great number of merchants conducted their business at the Raleigh Tavern, operated in 1775 by James Southall. Wetherburn’s Tavern stood just down the street, as did a number of other taverns, including those of Jane Vobe and Christina Campbell. By 1775, at least 11 tavern keepers and three boarding house keepers resided in the city (Kelly n.d.).

By 1782, 16 different types of artisan services were available in the city, including most of the services that had been available in 1775. Coach and chair makers, saddlers, harness makers, wheelwrights, and blacksmiths saw to the repair and fabrication of equipment of the traveling
Barbers, wig makers, milliners, tailors, shoe makers, a tanner, and even a mantau maker (dressmaker) resided in the city. Clothing and accessories could also be had at any number of merchant shops. Bricklayers, carpenters, builders, joiners, and cabinet makers could see to the repair and construction of houses and outbuildings and their furnishing.

Comparisons between the 1782 Federal census and the personal property tax for the following year suggest that Williamsburg’s resident population may in fact have been larger than recorded in the census. In 1783, a total of 131 people paid personal property tax in Williamsburg; nearly three-quarters (73.3 per cent; n = 96) of those listed could be matched to individuals listed on the 1782 census. Although the rest of the people were not listed on the census, eight did show up on the 1782 land tax and four more individuals had lived in the city in 1775 and would pay city taxes subsequent years.

Further examination of the land tax showed twelve of individuals listed on the 1782 land tax were deceased and the tax was paid through their estate. The Federal census also contained three individuals that had died after the census was taken; yet they still appear on the census listing and were counted as city residents. As such, the census and tax records each reflect a specific fixed period in Williamsburg’s history, one that captures a standing moment for a population composed of long-time residents, tradesmen, servants, apprentices, and slaves.

Some of the discrepancies in the census and personal property tax lists may be related to relocation of the capital, which uprooted a small percentage of Williamsburg’s population who were directly tied to the government. Among those who did not show up on the census but did pay property tax the following year was James Anderson, blacksmith and Public Armorer for the State of Virginia. Anderson, who had lived and owned property in the city since the 1760s, moved briefly to Richmond between 1780 and 1782 to continue his public duties. He was not counted in the Federal census of Williamsburg but does appear in the Richmond census. He also did not pay Williamsburg land tax although he retained ownership of his shop and dwelling in the city.
Anderson returned to Williamsburg around 1783 and remained until his death in 1798, paying land and personal property taxes from 1783 forward.

Some Williamsburg residents had relocated to Richmond during the early years of the Revolution and were well established within the town by the time the census was taken in 1782. Merchants Richard Adams and William Armistead, watchmaker Charles Edward Ferguson, and barber Anthony Geoghegan were among those who seized the opportunity to relocate their families and businesses to the rapidly growing town prior to the relocation of the capitol. Shoemaker James Drummond, tailor James Slate, stay maker Matthew Pate, and tavern keeper Serafino Formicola had lived in Richmond less than two years when the Federal census was taken in 1782.

A small group of Williamsburg’s residents remained loyal to the British crown and refused to pledge loyalty to the new American government. Branded as Loyalists and subjected to increasing public scorn, at least 16 residents would choose leave the city, traveling to Richmond, Petersburg, or other nearby towns, or returning home to England or Ireland (Kelly 1996). Most would file claims with the British government for losses of lands or property but only a few would have their claims granted (Kelly 1996).

A number of Loyalists advertised their impending departures from the city in the public newspaper. The governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, made no secret of his departure in June 1775. Robert Corbin, Jr., Secretary to Receiver General Richard Corbin, announced his plans to leave in May 1775 (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter May 20). Merchant Robert Miller, who also served as the treasurer for the College of William and Mary, would make his intended departure known two weeks later and would recommend his partner William Maitland to be Bursar of William and Mary College in his stead (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, April 15). Maitland would leave Williamsburg in early 1776 and return to England (Kelly 1996). Samuel Henley, professor of Moral Philosophy at William and Mary College, would advertise his property...
and horse for sale in May 1775, along with his intent “to leave the colony soon” (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, May 6).

During the same period, a number of Williamsburg’s residents who had not openly declared their Loyalist views also left the city. Milliner and merchant Catherine Rathell, who sold an “assortment of Irish linens, ladies black and other coloured silk quilted Petticoats” and other clothing at her Williamsburg store, announced in April 1775 her intent to leave for England and sell all merchandise at her store (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, Feb 25). Rathell’s remaining “Stock in Trade” would be sold in October of 1775 at the Williamsburg Meeting of the Merchants and her personal estate would be sold two months later in December (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, Apr 22, Nov 25).

Milliner Margaret Hunter would leave for England in the spring of 1775 but would soon return to Williamsburg and by 1780 would sell calico, gauze, and other fabrics from a store located across the street from the tavern of Ambrose Davenport (Virginia Gazette 1775:Clarkson-Dixon, Mar 4; Virginia Gazette 1780:Clarkson-Dixon, Feb 12). Barber and wigmaker Edward Charlton and his wife likewise announced in the Virginia Gazette their intent to return to England in 1775 (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, Apr 29). Residents William Craig and Archibald Williamson simply declared their intent to “leave the colony soon.” (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon Hunter). James Atherton would blame his wife for his misfortunes, saying that he intended to leave town but return soon (Virginia Gazette 1775: Dixon-Hunter, Feb 4) (Figure 14).

A relatively recent arrival to Williamsburg, Davenport operated a merchant shop on Waller Street until 1779, when he moved locations and opened a tavern in the “house formerly occupied by Captain Robert Anderson” (Virginia Gazette 1779:Dixon-Nicolson, Oct 2). In August 1780, however Ambrose Davenport advertised his household furniture, two riding chairs, three houses, “a likely young negro fellow,” and a “good number of beds” for sale (Virginia Gazette 1780:Clarkson-Dixon, July 29). He left Virginia shortly thereafter and the tavern, owned by the heirs of
Henry Wetherburn, would become a boarding house under the operation of Robert Nicholson (CWF n.d.).

For some like blacksmith James Anderson, their deaths heralded the end of their business enterprises in the city, the dispersal of apprentices and servants, and the loss of that service. The death of John Turner marked the final dissolution of the merchant business of Allan & Turner. The partners first advertised merchandise in Williamsburg in 1771, selling a variety of dry goods (Virginia Gazette 1773: Purdie-Dixon June 3). With the death of Jacob Allan in 1773, the partnership was dissolved, and George Reid assumed the management of the partnership’s businesses affairs and the settlement of its debts. Upon Turner’s death, an announcement was posted in the Gazette informing the public of the settlement of both Allan’s and Turner’s estates and the release of Reid from his duties (Virginia Gazette 1775: Dixon-Hunter, July 22).

Death actually may have accounted for a rather significant percentage of the population change that Williamsburg experienced during the late eighteenth century. Between 1775 and the first Federal census in 1782, at least 47 Williamsburg residents, including 20 individuals identified as household heads in 1775 would die (Kelly n.d.; Virginia Gazette 1775-1780:Dixon-Hunter). (Table 5). While this number seems small, it accounted for nearly a tenth (9.4 per cent) of the residents listed on the reconstructed 1775 city directory (Kelly n.d.). Many people passed away.
without much notice however the deaths of some of the city’s more prominent residents, artisans, and craftsmen were advertized in the *Virginia Gazette*. The deaths of others are mentioned only in surviving probate records that inventory the accumulated household assets of the deceased. Not all residents however were probated and the majority of Williamsburg’s residents who died between 1775 and the first census in 1782 may not have been recorded at all.

Table 5. Summary of Williamsburg Residents Who Died Between 1775 and 1782 (Source: Kelly n.d.; CWF House and People files n.d; *Virginia Gazette* 1775-1780)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Year Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Aylet</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Frederick Baker</td>
<td>Apothecary/Dentist</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Balsome</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Baxter</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Bowcock</td>
<td>Journeyman Printer</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Byrd III</td>
<td>Planter</td>
<td>1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Camm</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Carberry</td>
<td>Chandler</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Carter</td>
<td>Planter</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Cartwright</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Charlton</td>
<td>Wigmaker/Tavern Keeper</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Cooley</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Craig</td>
<td>Saddler</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Davenport</td>
<td>Surveyor/Cartographer</td>
<td>1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elkanah Deane</td>
<td>Chairmaker</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Dickinson</td>
<td>Cabinet Maker</td>
<td>1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Drewry</td>
<td>Cabinet Maker</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Everard</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Pearson</td>
<td>Dancing Master</td>
<td>1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore Filmer</td>
<td>Chairmaker</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Goodall</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Goodson</td>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Goodson</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Greenhow</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grissel Hay</td>
<td>Boardinghouse Keeper</td>
<td>1799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hunter, Jr.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Hyland</td>
<td>Cryer/Carter</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Jackson</td>
<td>Leather Worker</td>
<td>1782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Summary of Williamsburg Residents Who Died Between 1775 and 1782
(Source: Kelly n.d.; CWF House and People files n.d; Virginia Gazette 1775-1780)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Year Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George LaFong</td>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Laughton</td>
<td>Bookkeeper</td>
<td>1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Moody</td>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Moody</td>
<td>Tavern Keeper</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Moreland</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert C. Nicholas</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Nicholson</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger North</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Orton</td>
<td>Cabinet Maker</td>
<td>1778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Pearson</td>
<td>Tanner</td>
<td>1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Pitt</td>
<td>Physician/Merchant</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Prentis</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Prentis</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Purdie</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Randolph</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peyton Randolph</td>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Tuell</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Turner</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Wiley</td>
<td>Barber/Hairdresser</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V
BLACKSMITH AND FARRIER

While the city’s population was changing, so was the nature of the work that Anderson’s blacksmith shop performed. Through the late 1780s Anderson’s shop performed a large amount of agricultural-related work such as sharpening and straightening ploughs and hoes, repairing axes and oxen yokes, and mending chains. By 1791, the majority of Anderson’s time was occupied with shoeing horses and repairing luxury vehicles and household goods. An occasional plough, hoe, or axe would be brought in for sharpening or repair, but this became increasingly rare as the decade wore on.

Between 1778 and 1780, the repair of a passenger vehicle was mentioned in 16 (19.3 per cent) of the accounts listed in Anderson’s ledger for that period (Table 6). Riding chairs were mentioned in six accounts, phaetons or “faetons” were mentioned in seven accounts, and chariots were mentioned in four accounts. Only one person, merchant Samuel Beall, Esq., brought more than one type of luxury vehicle by for Anderson to repair. Beall brought in both a phaeton and a chariot. Wagons or carts however were mentioned in 29 (34.9 per cent) of Anderson’s accounts between 1778 and 1780.

At least a third of Anderson’s early customers owned both a work vehicle and a passenger vehicle. Tavern keeper Richard Charlton, who owned at least three vehicles, brought both a cart and a wagon. Charlton’s other vehicle was a riding chair, for which he had Anderson do “iron work for the top” of the chair (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 3). George Reid brought his phaeton to...
Table 6. Summary of Anderson’s Customers That Had Vehicles Repaired Between January 1778-June 1780 (Source: Anderson 1778-1785)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer</th>
<th>Folio</th>
<th>Vehicle Repaired</th>
<th>Year(s) of Repair(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ambler</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>oxcart, cart</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Anderson</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Beall Esqr</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>phaeton, chariot</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Booker</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>wagon</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis Burwell, Esqr</td>
<td>12; 88</td>
<td>wagon, phaeton</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nath. Burwell, Esq.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>cart, phaeton</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Carter</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>wagon, chair</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Chaplin</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>wagon</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Charlton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>cart, wagon, chair</td>
<td>1778-1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Clarkson</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>not specified</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continent</td>
<td>47; 86</td>
<td>wagon</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dickinson</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>chair</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dixon</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Egglestone</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>wagon</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Galt</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Goodson</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Greenhow</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>not specified</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphrey Harwood</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Hornsby</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>chariot</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Hubard</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Hunter</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>wagon, phaeton</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel Maupin</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McClurg, Dr.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Nicolson</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Norvell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>chair</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. William Pasteur</td>
<td>11; 74</td>
<td>wagon</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Fate</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>chair</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Plume</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Powell</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Prentis</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Randolph</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>chariot</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Reid</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>phaeton</td>
<td>1778-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Rowsay</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>not specified</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Rowsay</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>chair</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Russell</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>phaeton, wagon</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Starke</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1778-1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt Edward Travis</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Trebell</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>1778-1780</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Webb, Esqr</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>chariot, wagon</td>
<td>1779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cary Wilkinson</td>
<td>2; 66</td>
<td>cart</td>
<td>1779-1780</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Anderson’s for a new pole-pin and chains and later for the repair of springs and stays (Anderson Ledger B: Folio 29). New steps were fitted to Joseph Hornsby’s chariot (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 43). The chariot wheel of George Webb, Esq. received 11 spikes (Anderson 1778-1785:Folio 42).

Nearly two-thirds of York County probate inventories taken during the 1770s included riding equipment and/or wagons (O’Mara 1983:152-153). By 1783, nearly one-quarter (23.5 percent) of Williamsburg’s 132 households would list at least one luxury vehicle on their property tax return. This number would steadily increase through the 1780s (Table 7).

Table 7. Summary of Luxury Vehicle Ownership in Williamsburg (Source: Williamsburg Personal Property Tax Returns)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Tax Return Year</th>
<th>Number of Households Taxed</th>
<th>Number of Households Listing Vehicles</th>
<th>Percentage of Households Listing Vehicles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the mid 1780s personal property tax data for Williamsburg showed a marked distinction between city and county residents in terms of ownership of luxury vehicles, with Williamsburg residents consistently owning more vehicles per household than residents of either James City County or York County (Figure 15). Interestingly while Williamsburg and James City County each had 30 households that listed ownership of luxury vehicles, the overall percentage of households that owned those vehicles was higher in Williamsburg where nearly a quarter of the residents owned riding chairs, chariots, phaetons, or other luxury vehicles. Over the next two years, the percentage of Williamsburg households that owned luxury vehicles would continue to increase, while the percentages of York and James City County households owning those same items would
Figure 15. Chart depicting the percentages of households listing luxury vehicles on personal property taxes between 1782-1790 (Source: Land Tax Records)

decrease.

Vehicles listed on personal property taxes through the 1780s were frequently assessed by the number of wheels each vehicle had rather than by the type of vehicle. By 1785, York County luxury vehicles were separated into three categories: “chair wheels”, “chaise and Phaeton wheels”, and “chariot wheels”. James City County however continued to lump all luxury vehicles together under the heading of “Wheels” through 1790. Williamsburg began to make gradual distinctions in the types of luxury vehicles its residents owned by 1788, adding a comment alongside the “Wheels” column for notation of the type of vehicle owned. These notations indicated riding chairs and post chaises were most popular among the city’s residents. Only a few individuals owned Phaeton’s. Carts and wagons were excluded from personal property tax.

In her study of Williamsburg during the second decade of the nineteenth century, Smart (1986) used personal property tax data to show the city’s residents maintained a level of wealth above that of York County residents. Much of their wealth was not visible to the average passerby
who would have no view of the interior of an average Williamsburg house with its fine furnishings, decorative items, and expensive table and serving wares. A traveler may have noticed an abundance of carriages, riding chairs, phaetons, and other luxury vehicles about the city, but may easily have assumed those belonged to travelers like him. Smart (1986:80) showed that by 1815, 17.1 per cent of Williamsburg’s residents owned at least one carriage. In contrast, only 6.6 per cent of York County residents owned at least one carriage by 1815 (Figure 16).

The increase in vehicle ownership during the late eighteenth century was paralleled by an increase in the number of horses kept by city residents. Although no property tax data is available prior to 1783, in that year just over one-half (59.1 per cent) of Williamsburg’s households would own a horse. The percentage of households that listed horses was substantially higher in the counties surrounding Williamsburg, where nearly all (92.0 per cent) York County households and 84.9 per cent of James City County households listed horses on their 1782 property tax return. By

Figure 16.  Chart depicting the percentages of households listing horses on personal property taxes between 1782-1790 (Source: Personal Property Tax Records)
the late 1790s, the number of city residents who owned horses would increase to 69.5 per cent. This relatively high percentage of horse ownership is reflected in the steady amount of farrier work that Anderson’s shop performed between 1778 and 1780. Nearly half (42 per cent) of the accounts in Anderson’s ledger during 1778-1780 included an entry for “trimming” or “shoeing” a horse.

While many factors may have ensured Williamsburg’s continued existence, probably the most important was the city’s location along what was the only direct means of overland travel up or down the Middle Peninsula. Legislation begun during the mid seventeenth century to develop a system of roadways had made Williamsburg “the most accessible place in Tidewater Virginia” by the mid eighteenth century (O’Mara 1983:141). Inland travelers easily bypassed Jamestown, which was reached only by a spur road and, except during the first few decades of settlement, had not occupied a geographically central place within the colony. Even though it was no longer the capital, Williamsburg still saw travelers as they passed through the city on their way up or down the peninsula.

Colonial legislation historically had directed county courts to authorize the construction of roadways “in such places as to them shall seem convenient, for passing to, and from the city of Williamsburg, the court house of every county, the parish churches, and all public mills, and ferries” (Hening 1809-1823:Vol VII; 64-69). The same act specified that roads would be 30 ft wide and bridges would be 12 ft wide. Penalties also would be imposed for anyone who felled trees onto the roadway, extended a fence into the road, or killed trees within 60 ft of the road. Later acts instructed the county courts to oversee the clearing of waterways of obstructions and the establishment of additional ferries. Such legislation contributed to an increase in accessibility not only for Williamsburg but for many places in the colony where formerly rutted pathways were the most common route of travel.

Between 1750 and 1775, “Williamsburg was the most accessible place in Tidewater Virginia” (O’Mara 1983:141). Situated along “the single greatest thorough-fair in Virginia” where
the roads "are so good and Level that Coaches and wagons of the greatest burden have an easy and
delightsome passage" anyone journeying up or down Virginia's middle peninsula had to pass
through Williamsburg. (Anonymous 1930:330). While the lack of a port may have been
inconvenient for a town established as a regional trading center, Williamsburg had been designed as
a political center. The network of roadways linking the city to its citizens was more significant than
a network of tributaries and rivers that would have linked the city to English trade.

Chairs, chaises, phaetons, and chariots were the "passenger vehicles" of the eighteenth and
early nineteenth centuries (Berkebile 1978:80). Chairs and chaises were both two-wheeled vehicles
drawn by a single horse. While there were several sub-varieties of each vehicle, chairs did not have
a top, while chaises had either a "standing or falling top" (Berkebile 1978:80). Phaetons were four-
wheeled "sporting vehicles" that were distinguished from four-wheeled chariots by the lack of a
driving seat (Berkeile 1978:213). Built for two or four passengers, phaetons were driven by their
owners in much the same way as the smaller riding chairs. Phaetons were very diverse in their
construction and were available with full, partial, or no tops, with the option of "rumble" seats for
servants, and lowered fronts for additional interior space.

Artisans and craftsmen who specialized in making and repairing luxury vehicles were
plentiful in Williamsburg both before and after the Revolution. By 1775, at least six chair makers, a
chair painter, two harness makers, a saddler, three wheelwrights, and four blacksmiths were located
the city. Coach maker Elkanah Deane had established his shop on Palace Street in 1772, where he
made "all kinds of coaches, chariots, post chaises, phaetons, curricles chairs, and chaises, with
harness of every sort" (Virginia Gazette 1774:Rind, May 14). Coach, chaise, and harness maker
John Shiphard [Sheppard] operated a shop behind the capitol along the street leading to Capitol
Landing (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, April 29) (Figure 17). Next door to Shiphard were
coach makers Halliday & Co., established by William Halliday in 1772. Coach maker Charles
Taliaferro maintained a shop at College Landing (Virginia Gazette 1775:Dixon-Hunter, June 3).
All of these craftsmen competed with the Anderson for work. Agricultural-related repairs may have been the mainstay of his blacksmith business, but Anderson’s shop also repaired passenger vehicles. Services listed in his ledger include making spikes for Chariot wheels, repairing plates for saddle trees, fixing Phaeton polepins and chains, and making bolts for a Chariot.

When Anderson moved to Richmond in 1780 to continue his work for the state, most of Williamsburg’s chair, carriage, and harness makers continued to offer their services in Williamsburg. John Sheppard (Shiphard) and chair maker Charles Taliaferro both remained in Williamsburg. The 1782 census also finds Samuel A. Bell, now listed as Samuel Abell residing within the city and continuing his coach making business. Wheelwright Robey Coke, also remained in Williamsburg.

A few coach and chair makers did leave Williamsburg or died before Anderson’s return in the early-1780s. Coach maker Elkanah Deane passed away in 1775. His widow Elizabeth advertized their house and her husbands shop for sale in the Virginia Gazette (1775: Purdie, Oct 21). (Figure 18). By December of that year, Elizabeth had rented the shop to Edward Roberts, a saddler and harness maker, and John Howard, a coach painter. They advertized their shop as located at “the late Mr. Elkanah Deane’s shop, near Palace Street” (Virginia Gazette 1775: Purdie, t
To be SOLD, or RENTED,

THE HOUSES and LOTS of the late Elkanah Deane, deceased, pleasantly situated in Palace Street. There is a Well of good Water on the Premises, an exceeding good Garden and Piaulce at the Back of the Dwelling-House, all well paved in, and there are several Springs, and a Run of Water through the same. The Houses are in good Repair, and some of them but lately built.

---And on Tuesday the 18th of November next will be sold, for ready Money, the HOUSEHOLD and KITCHEN FURNITURE, a large Quantity of COACHMAKERS, JOINERS, and BLACKSMITHS TOOLS, belonging to the said Deane.

---There are on Hand, and will be sold remarkably cheap for Cash, an elegant PHÆTON, and DOUBLE and SINGLE CHAIRS of several Sorts, finished in the best Manner.

ELIZABETH DEANE, Administratrix.

N. B. All Persons indebted to the said Estate are requested to make immediate Payment, and Bonds will be expected from all who do not settle their Accounts at the meeting of the Merchants; those who have any Demands against the said Estate are desired to bring them in, properly proved.

WILLIAMSBURG, October 22, 1775.

Figure 18. Excerpt from the *Virginia Gazette* (1775:Purdie, Oct 21) showing advertisement placed by Elizabeth Deane

Dec 15). By 1776, William Halliday had rented Deane’s shop. Coach painter R. Campbell Thompson and coach makers Samuel A. Bell and Edward Roberts were working in Deane’s shop in 1777.

Coach maker William Halliday (Holiday) and blacksmith John Moody also passed away before Anderson’s return. It may have been shortly following the death of William Halliday that the coach making business at Deane’s shop was disbanded. By 1801, the Deane’s dwelling and shops had been dismantled and the lot was vacant (Stephenson 1956). Although Samuel A. Bell appears to have remained in Williamsburg, his partner Edward Roberts moved to Maryland. Campbell Thompson, Jones Deane, John Howard, and Obadiah Puryear, who all worked for different periods of time in Deane’s former shop, also appear to have moved on by 1782 (US Census 1979).
The surviving pages of a local blacksmith's account book show Williamsburg to be a convenient place for a blacksmith to work during the mid-eighteenth century. At least four blacksmiths worked in Williamsburg during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Located just a few blocks from the capitol, James Anderson's blacksmith shop was open all year long. He undertook a variety of tasks ranging from the rough work of sharpening plows and shoeing horses, to the finer and more intricate work of repairing household items and fabricating harness and carriage pieces. He also had the skills to fabricate and repair items for small vessels ranging from sloops to brigs. Anderson also performed private work for Williamsburg's residents as well as for the residents of the surrounding counties and for towns as far away as Richmond and Norfolk. He also performed public work for the local institutions, county governments, and the state of Virginia.

Interestingly, although Anderson was an urban smith by virtue of his location within the city and the customers for whom he performed work, nearly all of the work he performed prior to 1780 was agricultural-related. Reminiscent of the rural blacksmith who "spent their lives in a tedious round of sharpening plows, repairing timber chains, and shoeing horses" (Daniels 1993:759), much of Anderson's work before 1780 involved repairing plows and wagons, sharpening hoes and axes, or shoeing horses. The repair of household items comprised a surprisingly small proportion of the actual work that Anderson performed. Only rarely would Anderson be called upon to repair an andiron, fix the tines on a flesh fork, patch a kettle, or repair a
curtain rod. Also infrequently would a customer bring by a carriage or coach for repair; more often carts and wagons passed through his shop.

The nature of Anderson’s work however began to change after his return from Richmond in the mid-1780s. Increasingly transportation-related work such as coach and carriage repair was recorded in his account book. The agricultural-related work that he had performed almost exclusively prior to time in Richmond was limited to accounts held by a few individuals who would bring their plows and hoes in once or twice a year rather than once every couple of months. The shoeing of horses, which had seemed to comprise a small but necessary part of Anderson’s work prior to 1780 also increased noticeably during the late 1780s and 1790s.

Frequented almost exclusively by Williamsburg’s residents prior to 1780, by the early 1790s Anderson’s shop would serve an increasing number of residents who did not reside in Williamsburg. In 1779, 69 per cent of Anderson’s customers were Williamsburg residents and an additional 25 per cent lived nearby in James City or York Counties. In comparison, less than a quarter (22.9 per cent) of Anderson’s customers between 1789 and 1798 were Williamsburg residents and only 7.5 per cent lived in James City or York Counties. The other two-thirds of Anderson’s customers were not local to Williamsburg. Of the accounts held by Williamsburg residents, over a third (37.5 per cent) were held by individuals who had held accounts with Anderson prior to 1780.

Although a number of people certainly left Williamsburg to follow the capital to Richmond that number may have been inflated by the number of people who left the city for reasons related to the Revolution. Following the war, Williamsburg maintained a relatively steady population through the final years of the eighteenth century. The county seat of mostly rural James City County, Williamsburg’s residents represented just over a third (33 per cent) of that county’s population in 1790. A respectable percentage compared with Richmond, which accounted for 31 per cent of Henrico County’s population and was the most populous town in Virginia in 1790.
By the time the first Federal census was taken in 1782, Williamsburg would have a population of over 1,400 persons (US Census 1979). This post-Revolutionary war society would include at least 181 households that engaged in a diverse range of mercantile, craft, and service-related occupations. In addition to the number of merchant’s shops in the city, at least 16 different types of artisan services were available to residents and travelers. Blacksmiths, barbers, milliners, carpenters, bricklayers, saddlers, harness makers, coach and chair makers, cobblers, gold and silver smiths, were among those who resided in the city. Occupational categories that were absent in 1782 were primarily those related to the functioning of the government.

While Williamsburg’s population may have changed little on paper, the city itself had begun to change by the late eighteenth century. The lengthy entries detailing the sharpening of plows and the repairing of horse harnesses and oxen chains in Anderson’s earlier ledger seem to reflect the heavy focus on agriculture that continued to shape Virginia’s history through the eighteenth century. The interior areas of tidewater Virginia in fact had remained largely unsettled into the early eighteenth century, as settlement moved instead north and west along the tidal regions of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries in search for arable land for tobacco production. The towns that began to emerge during the late seventeenth century did so largely as a result of the Town Acts of 1680 and 1691. These acts led to the establishment of six port towns: Norfolk, Yorktown, West Point, Urbana, Hampton and Nansemond (Suffolk) (Bergstrom 1980:20, 214). Williamsburg, which would serve as Virginia’s second capital city, was not established until 1699, and it also was brought into being through a legislative act that transformed Middle Plantation into the second colonial capital of Virginia.

With the removal of the Colonial capital to Richmond in April of 1780, Williamsburg had in effect become just another town along the Great Wagon Road. Whereas previously the businesses had catered to government officials and those attending the courts, now business owners sought those traveling through town on their way up or down the peninsula. The increase in
transportation-related work that Anderson’s shop saw during the late eighteenth century seems to be a reflection of an increasingly mobile Virginian society, which traveled along a network of roads that still converged on Williamsburg. Whereas prior to the late eighteenth century “there existed not a single incorporated town in Virginia and Maryland and only two villages of any size, Jamestown and St. Mary’s” (Middleton 1953:40), now port towns sprawled along the waterways and roads connected crossed the countryside connecting people to services and to each other.
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VITA

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Ms. Kathleen Marie Child was awarded a B.A. in Economics, with honors, from St. Mary’s College of Maryland, in 1989 and currently is working toward completion of a Masters of Arts in Historical Archeology from the College of William and Mary in Virginia. As an undergraduate, she maintained an undeclared minor in Anthropology and acquired considerable archeological experience through involvement with numerous Phase I and II level archeological investigations of prehistoric and historic period sites, including excavations at Susquehanna (1987-1988), Cross Manor (1989), and St. Mary’s City (1988-1989). While a student, she was employed with Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum (1987-1989), Historic St. Mary’s City (1988-1989), and independent cultural resource contractor James Gibb (1986-1989), as well as for the Maryland Gifted and Talented Program in Archeology (1988) as a teaching assistant. Her graduate studies at William and Mary focused on historical archeology, specifically, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in Virginia and Maryland.

Ms. Child joined R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc., in 1989 as an archeological assistant. Currently a Project Manager, Ms. Child has gained experience through participation in and supervision of excavations of prehistoric and historic period sites from numerous temporal periods and physiographic settings. She has supervised or participated in data recovery efforts at three Late Woodland/Mississipian period village sites and has supervised Phase I through Phase III level investigations of numerous short-term habitation sites from the Early Archaic through Late Woodland Periods. She also has participated in data recovery and mortuary excavations at a sixteenth century prehistoric settlement. Her experience in historic archeology includes supervision of Phase I through Phase III level investigations at middle seventeenth through modern twentieth-first century sites in settings spanning rural agrarian through urban developed. She also has supervised mortuary excavations at several eighteenth to nineteenth century historic cemeteries, including one adjacent to Gettysburg Battlefield.

Ms. Child has authored and co-authored many technical reports while employed with R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc and has presented two original research papers at the Mid-Atlantic Archeological Conference, including one on the regional significance and research potential of two historic sites related to the early development of Leonardtown, Maryland.