

**EDUCATING EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BLACK
CHILDREN:
The Bray Schools**

A Thesis

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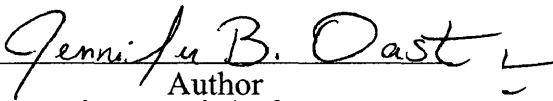
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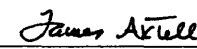
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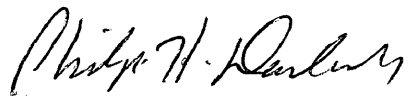
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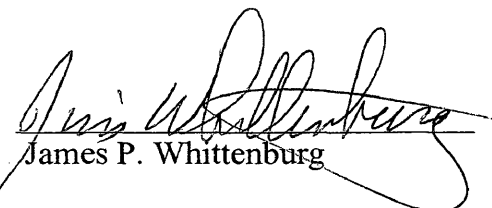

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ABSTRACT

Between 1758-1776, English clergymen and philanthropists, the Associates of Dr. Bray, initiated and funded several schools for black children in the American colonies. They were driven by a desire to Christianize the slaves and free blacks and improve their lives generally through education.

Not surprisingly, the Associates' efforts led to mixed results in the various colonies. In Virginia, the schools in Williamsburg and Fredericksburg suffered from intractable slaveowners, economic problems, and an inability to keep a teacher. Other schools intended for Virginia never got off the ground due to similar problems. The school in Philadelphia, in contrast, was much more successful and was the only Bray school to survive the Revolution.

Based on a collection of letters between the Associates and their colonial partners, this thesis explores the differing attitudes towards blacks among Britons, southerners, and northerners on the eve of the American Revolution. It also exposes how southern colonial attitudes toward slaves differed from those that would be held by their children and grandchildren. It is notable that some slaveowners were sending their slaves to school just a generation before slave literacy was prohibited. Finally, this thesis attempts to answer the most difficult question of how the Bray schools affected the lives of the black children themselves. Although not many children were privileged to attend, the effect the schools had on individuals, their families, and their communities is incalculable and important.

CHAPTER 1: THOMAS BRAY AND HIS ASSOCIATES

Isaac Bee grew to manhood during the turbulent early 1770s in Williamsburg, Virginia. Working for Council president John Blair, he had many opportunities to hear revolutionary leaders of the colony debate the meanings of freedom and slavery and the desirability of freedom from Great Britain. The rhetoric must have been inescapable; he heard it at home and in the streets of the Virginia capitol. Fortunate enough to have attended school for a short time, Isaac Bee could read and perhaps write. He may have read revolutionary pamphlets or inflammatory opinions in William Rind's *Virginia Gazette*. By 1774, Isaac Bee fervently believed in his right to freedom, not freedom from Britain but from slavery and from his new owner, Lewis Burwell of Mecklenburg County, Virginia. During the humid Williamsburg summer of 1774, Isaac Bee became a runaway slave.¹

Bee had enormous advantages in his run for freedom. According to the advertisement Burwell placed in the *Virginia Gazette* in September 1774, Bee was a light-skinned mulatto, born of a free father, John Insko Bee, and a slave mother owned by John Blair.² He had the advantage of connections with the Williamsburg black community, both slave and free, through his former work at the home of John Blair. But what made Bee most unusual is that he had received a formal education, for at least a short while, in reading, writing, and religion while a child in the Blair household. He was one of the lucky few to attend the Bray school, established in 1760 for the education and Christianization of slaves and free blacks. He was about ten years old when his name appeared on the class roster sent by school administrator Robert Carter Nicholas to the benefactors of the school in November 1765.³ Comparatively few black children had the

¹Purdie & Dixon's *Virginia Gazette* 8 September 1774.

²Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, *Enslaving Virginia: Becoming Americans, Our Struggle to Be Both Free and Equal*, 1999 (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1998), 605.

³Robert Carter Nicholas to The Reverend John Waring, 27 December 1765, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777*, ed. John C. Van Horne

opportunity to attend any type of school in the eighteenth century, like the ones founded by the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray; the influence that each educated slave had on his or her community, while difficult to calculate, was surely great. The schools sponsored by the Associates in Williamsburg and Fredericksburg, Virginia, and in other cities including New York, Philadelphia, and Newport, Rhode Island, served the black community between 1758 and the revolutionary war.

A study of the individuals involved in all aspects of the Bray schools, from the benefactors in Britain to the administrators in the colonies and the black children themselves, is valuable not only to analyze the impact of the schools on the black community, but also to illuminate the ironies of the larger English world, which subjected Africans and their descendants to slavery but still sought to save their immortal souls. The successes and failures of these schools in Virginia and Pennsylvania are indicative of the complex racial attitudes of eighteenth-century Britons and Americans.

Almost a century before Isaac Bee was learning to read in Williamsburg, a young man named Thomas Bray was learning the value of education in Shropshire, England. The son of middling parents in rural, seventeenth-century England, only his special success at school allowed him some social mobility in his world. In March 1674/75, he entered All Souls College, Oxford, as a *puer pauper*, a poor boy. This testifies to his family's humble status in society, as does his being forced to abandon his education after three years due to his family's troubled financial circumstances.⁴ As academic doors closed to Thomas Bray, he entered the Anglican ministry, in which he was to make significant humanitarian and religious contributions at home in Britain and in the colonies. Perhaps his unpretentious background helped him develop an unusual sympathy for the oppressed; he certainly gained an appreciation of the benefits of

(Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 241.

⁴Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 2.

education. In 1699, he founded the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.), and in 1701 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.), two organizations dedicated to spreading religious tracts and establishing parochial libraries, the former in Britain, the latter in the colonies. Near the end of his life in January 1723/24, he established The Associates of the Reverend Dr. Bray, an organization specifically founded for the religious and secular education of blacks and, to a lesser extent, Indians.

Bray is mostly a forgotten figure, except among historians of the Anglican and Episcopal Church, where he has garnered the title of “post-Reformation Saint.”⁵ He was probably not “the greatest cultural force in the history of colonial America,” as one of his religiously motivated biographers penned.⁶ But John Henry Overton’s honest characterization of the man perhaps more flattering: “Bray is a striking example of what a man may effect without any extraordinary genius, and without special influence.”⁷ Despite a lack of ‘extraordinary genius,’ Bray’s work prospered through a combination of hard work, vision, and genuine, if paternalistic, concern for those in need. By working to Christianize blacks in America, he felt he was sharing something that would be of great value to them. Bray, and the men who followed in the organization he designed, did, indeed, make many important contributions to the religious and cultural development of the American colonies. In addition to the schools founded by the Associates, forty-one libraries were established and over 22,000 books donated to the colonies in the eighteenth century, all for the purpose of exporting Protestant Christian culture to British America.

While the S.P.C.K. and the S.P.G. were founded through careful consideration of the perceived needs of the poor in Britain and the colonies, the Associates of the

⁵John Wolfe Lydekker, *Thomas Bray, 1658-1730: Founder of Missionary Enterprise* (Philadelphia: The Church Historical Society, 1943), 5.

⁶Edgar Legare Pennington, *The Reverend Thomas Bray* (Philadelphia: The Church Historical Society, 1934), 46.

⁷John Henry Overton, “Thomas Bray,” *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939) IV:240.

Reverend Dr. Bray was founded almost as an accident. Through his work with the two former organizations, Bray developed a friendship with Abel Tassin, sieur D'Allone, a wealthy French Huguenot refugee employed by Queen Mary and King William.

D'Allone was so impressed by Bray's plans to share Christianity with the slaves in America that he bequeathed 900 pounds in his will to "Dr. Bray and his Associates,"

that the yearly Income or proceed thereof be bestowed & employed in the Erecting a School or Schools for the thorough Instructing in the Christian Religion the Young Children of Negro Slaves & such of their Parents as shew themselves inclinable & desirous to be so instructed.⁸

D'Allone died in 1723; on 15 January 1724/25, Bray appointed four friends as his first "Associates" so that the trust might be on sound legal footing in the case of Bray's own death. Bray and the Associates immediately began dispensing the money from the fund by purchasing books for instructing blacks in Christianity and then shipping them to members of the colonial clergy for distribution. After Thomas Bray died in 1729, the work allowed by D'Allone's bequest and later charitable gifts continued by the Associates and their successors until the Revolutionary War put the patrons on the opposite side of a war from the objects of their benefaction.

Although in many ways Thomas Bray did extraordinary things with an ordinary life, he was not exempt from the common prejudices of the day. Bray showed great concern for the souls of slaves but did not condemn slavery itself. He apparently saw no irony in increasing the number of clergy in the colonies by supporting them with slave labor. For example, in April 1701, Bray granted a missionary headed for Maryland funds to purchase two slaves to work in the glebelands.⁹ Like virtually all of his contemporaries, he saw slavery as a fact of life, an institution of classical and biblical antiquity that would always be with them. He accepted the idea that African inferiority

⁸Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 5.

⁹Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 6.

qualified them for nothing but positions of the lowest rank in society. However, Bray's attitudes also brand him as a native of the British Isles rather than the British Empire. He lived in a slaveowning society, a place with few slaves and less prejudice than found in slave societies, where almost every aspect of society was touched in some way by the omnipresence of slavery.¹⁰ Bray and his fellow British philanthropists were naive about the concerns of slave owners in the colonies, especially in the southern lowcountry, where blacks comprised a large proportion of the population. Whites in these areas worried that allowing their slaves to be converted to Christianity would require automatic manumission, and that teaching them to read and write would make them more unhappy with their lot in the social and economic hierarchy, more ripe for revolt. These concerns, of which Bray and the Associates proved themselves blithely ignorant, were prime factors in determining the success and failure of their efforts in the colonies.

In the years immediately after Bray's death, the Associates donated time and part of D'Allone's bequest to the founding of Georgia, since the uplift of London's poor had always been one of Bray's favorite causes.¹¹ Simultaneously, they promoted the creation parochial libraries, establishing ones in Savannah, Georgia and Germanna, Virginia in 1735, and another in New Haven, Connecticut in 1736.¹² Shortly thereafter the Associates began to ship religious texts to Anglican ministers and other individuals in America for the religious education of the slave population, and even for distribution to literate slaves, themselves. For example, in June 1736, a South Carolina "gentlewoman" named Ann Drayton wrote the Associates thanking them for the parcel of books they had sent her. The Associates noted in their minutes "that all her negroes were instructed in

¹⁰Philip D. Morgan, "British Encounters with Africans and African-Americans, circa 1600-1780," in Bernard Bailyn and Morgan, eds., *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 157-219.

¹¹Charles T. Laughler, *Thomas Bray's Grand Design: Libraries of the Church of England in America, 1695-1785* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1973), 70.

¹²Laughler, *Thomas Bray's Grand Design*, 86.

the Christian religion, some of whom could read and instructed others.”¹³

In the 1730s the Associates also made the first attempts to teach blacks directly, by sending catechists directly to the colonies with the expressed purpose to preach to blacks. Their initial effort was a dismal failure. The first two catechists, sent to South Carolina in the 1730s, were inexplicably assigned by local leaders to Purrysburg, a town with virtually no blacks. They ministered to the white population while waiting for permission to serve the slaves of Charleston. Permission never arrived; one of the missionaries died in Purrysburg, the other moved north to settle in Massachusetts. For almost two decades the Associates put aside their endeavors in the colonies and refocused their efforts on building parochial libraries in England and Wales.¹⁴ They made a second attempt to proselytize directly to blacks in the early 1750s, when another catechist was sent to minister to slaves recently sent to Georgia. However, the colony had too many uses for this well-educated man for him to spend much time among the young colony’s blacks. In just a few years, he became superintendent of the silk culture industry, Savannah representative to the Commons House of Assembly, justice of the peace, and a vestryman. The Associates terminated his position as catechist in 1761.¹⁵

By the late 1750s, the Associates were clearly troubled as to how to fulfill D’Allone’s bequest appropriately. In 1757, they were to make an important connection with Benjamin Franklin, already a famous figure throughout the British Empire, who was to provide vision and leadership in the founding of schools for blacks in the colonies. In January of that year, longtime Secretary John Waring wrote to Benjamin Franklin about the goals and efforts of the Associates. Waring proposed the idea of itinerant schoolteachers for blacks in America, modeled after the successful circulating schools in Wales already financially supported by the Associates. The concept of a school for

¹³Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 91.

¹⁴Laugher, *Thomas Bray’s Grand Design*, 72.

¹⁵Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 16-20.

blacks was not entirely foreign to the Associates; in 1753 they had sent the Rev. Joseph Ottolenghe a collection of 154 books, including psalm books, primers, and horn books, to aid in the establishment of a school for blacks in Georgia.¹⁶ Franklin, however, had already set sail for London, where he would work for five years representing Pennsylvania in a quarrel with the Penn family, but his wife passed the letter on to the Rev. William Sturgeon, who was then serving as a catechist to the blacks in Philadelphia under the auspices of the S.P.G.¹⁷ Apparently, it was Sturgeon who initially proposed the idea of permanent schools for blacks; a fruitful exchange of letters between the men led Franklin to take Sturgeon's idea to the Associates in London.

Franklin was excited about the possibilities for success such a program could have, when he wrote to Waring:

A separate school for Blacks, under the Care of One, of whom People should have an Opinion that he would be careful to imbue the Minds of their young Slaves with good Principles, might probably have a number of blacks sent to it; and if on Experience it should be found useful, and not attended with the ill Consequences commonly apprehended, the Example might be followed in the other Colonies, and encouraged by the Inhabitants in general.¹⁸

At their meeting on April 5, 1758, the Associates approved a three-year test of Franklin and Sturgeon's plan for a school in Philadelphia at a cost of twenty pounds per year. Sturgeon was the director the new school, which opened to immediate success on November 20, 1758.¹⁹

The favorable advent of the Bray School of Philadelphia brought Franklin respect among the Associates, who unanimously elected him to membership in the organization on 2 January 1760. In the minutes of the Associates on that day, the Secretary recorded

¹⁶Laugher, *Thomas Bray's Grand Design*, 70, 86.

¹⁷Struthers Burt, *Philadelphia: Holy Experiment*, Doubleday, Doran, and Co.(Garden City, NJ, 1945), 150-51.

¹⁸Franklin to Waring, 3 January 1758, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 124.

¹⁹Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 20-21.

that a “worthy person” had donated ten guineas a year for five years toward the establishment of more schools based on the Philadelphia model. The Associates hoped Franklin would aid them in determining suitable locations for additional schools as well as securing contacts in the chosen cities to act as trustees and administrators.²⁰

Two weeks later, the Associates met again, with Franklin sitting as a member. Franklin recommended Williamsburg as an ideal location for a new school, along with New York City and Newport, Rhode Island. Williamsburg, the capital of one of the most populous and influential colonies, was a natural choice; Franklin also had close ties there to William Hunter, who shared with him the distinction of being Postmaster General to the colonies, and was, like Franklin, a printer (of the *Virginia Gazette*). Franklin nominated Hunter and also the Rev. Dr. Thomas Dawson, who was both president of the College of William and Mary and the minister of Bruton Parish.²¹ Franklin had met Dawson at least once before, in April 1756, when the college awarded the Philadelphian its first honorary degree. Franklin was probably not aware of the internal problems facing Dawson and the College at the time, which had turned Dawson into “a hopeless drunk” and hastened his death in November 1760.²² Nevertheless, Franklin agreed to write the two men, and Secretary Waring assembled packages of books to be mailed to each of the three proposed sites as soon as possible.²³

Franklin’s influence on the Associates continued while he remained in London and afterward; he was elected chairman of the organization in the fall of 1760 and retained the distinction until he returned to the colonies in the spring of 1762. In 1763,

²⁰Minutes of the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray, 2 January 1760, *A Documentary History of Education in the South Before 1860*, ed. by Edgar W. Knight (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1949), I: 140-41.

²¹Minutes of the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray, 17 January 1760, Knight, *A Documentary History*, I:141.

²²Susan H. Godson et al., *The College of William and Mary: A History* (Williamsburg, VA: King and Queen Press, 1993), I:90-1.

²³Minutes of the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray, 17 January 1760, Knight, *A Documentary History*, I:141.

Franklin wrote to the Associates in London with a positive account of the Williamsburg Bray School, which he had just visited, and a promise to visit and report on the other schools soon.²⁴

²⁴Minutes of the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray, 6 October 1763, Knight, *A Documentary History*, I: 154.

CHAPTER 2: THE SCHOOL IN WILLIAMSBURG

William Hunter and Thomas Dawson accepted the charge to establish the school in Williamsburg. They hired a mistress for the school, Anne Wager, found a location for the schoolhouse, handled the finances, and enrolled the first students. Along with the invitation to open the school, the Associates sent Dawson and Hunter over 230 books and pamphlets in February 1760. They designated most of the books for use in the school, but one, a valuable folio of religious writings, was donated to the College. Five copies of the Reverend Thomas Bacon's *Four Sermons, upon the Great and Indispensible Duty of All Christian Masters to Bring Up Their Negro Slaves in the Knowledge and Fear of God* were sent for the education of the slaveholders, to encourage them to support the religious education of their slaves.²⁵ Not all of the books sent for the use of the school children can be identified by the short title noted by Waring, but they are clearly a combination of religious texts, such as books explaining the catechism, and texts created for the teaching of general literacy skills. An identifiable example of the latter sent to the school in Williamsburg is Henry Dixon's *The English Instructor; or, The Art of Spelling Improved. Being a More Plain, Easy, and Regular Method of Teaching Young Children*, forty copies of which were sent in this initial shipment of books for the use of the children.²⁶ Curiously, they also included a handful of copies of a work designed for the instruction of Indians in Christianity, *The Knowledge and Practice of Christianity Made Easy to the Meanest Capacities; or, An Essay Towards an Instruction for the Indians* by Thomas Wilson.²⁷ There is no evidence that the Bray School in Williamsburg ever enrolled any Indian children, who were not numerous there in the second half of the eighteenth century.

²⁵John Waring to Thomas Dawson, 29 February 1760, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 120n, 146.

²⁶Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 259n.

²⁷Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 96n.

Classes began on Monday, September 29, 1760, probably in the rented building belonging to Dudley Diggs on the northeast corner of Henry and Ireland Streets (financial records show they were certainly there at least between April 1762 and December 1765, at which time they moved to a building owned by John Blair on Capital Landing Road).²⁸ In June of the next year, the Associates responded to the good news of the opening of the school by sending a package containing several dozen more books, most of which were simply additional copies of the ones they had initially sent. However, they also included in the second shipment five Bibles, twenty-five New Testaments, and twenty copies of the *Book of Common Prayer* “to be given to the Children when qualified to use them at Church.”²⁹ Over the years that the school was in session, the Associates sent additional copies of these works as requested by the trustees. The cost of purchasing or printing and then shipping these books and pamphlets was a significant investment by the Associates over and above the funds they provided annually for the salary of a teacher. These works reinforce the dual nature of the school’s curriculum, which centered on both the spiritual and temporal education of the children.

Although the Associates had called for an enrollment of thirty pupils, “The school was opened with 24 scholars, (as many as I think as one Woman can well manage)” Hunter reported in a letter to the Associates in early 1761. In the same letter, he reported the death of the unhappy Dr. Dawson, and recommended two additional trustees: the Rev. William Yates, who succeeded Dawson as rector of Bruton Parish and president of the College, and Robert Carter Nicholas, a member of the House of Burgesses. His overall judgment on the health of the new school was very favorable, however.³⁰ Hunter himself died later that year, leaving the affairs of the school entirely in the hands of Yates and Nicholas. They worked together on the project until Yates’ death in September 1764.

²⁸Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 253-54.

²⁹John Waring to William Hunter, 1 June 1761, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 158.

³⁰William Hunter to John Waring, 16 February 1761, Knight, *A Documentary History*, I:165-66.

From that time onward, Nicholas remained the primary and often sole administrator of the Bray School of Williamsburg until its close in 1774.³¹

Robert Carter Nicholas, without a doubt, was the man in Virginia who did the most to make the school a success. At the very least, his longevity meant that he could see the project through. He was relatively young, in his early thirties, when approached by the Associates to serve as trustee. As his name indicates, Nicholas was a scion of two very powerful Virginia families, the Carter and Nicholas clans. He was the son of George Nicholas, a physician, and Elizabeth Carter, a granddaughter of Robert “King” Carter, but was reared by his uncle John Carter of Shirley Plantation after becoming an orphan at the age of six. He attended William and Mary and was a lawyer by profession. He had served in the House of Burgesses for York County since 1755, had been elected mayor of Williamsburg in 1757, and was a member of the Board of Visitors of William and Mary when the Associates sought him out. While administering the Bray School, Nicholas continued to serve in these political capacities and then became treasurer of the colony in 1766.³² It was unavoidable that he would be involved in the political intrigues of the revolutionary era, but he took a conservative course; while he opposed Patrick Henry’s Stamp Act Resolves in 1765, he introduced the resolution to designate June 1, 1774 as a “day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer” in support of Boston during the British embargo.³³

Nicholas’s acceptance of the trusteeship was dutiful but not optimistic. In his acceptance letter of 17 September 1761, he wrote “tho I have no very sanguine expectations of the schools insuring the Intentions of the pious Founders you may assure the society that no endeavours of Mine shall be wanting to procure the wishes for success.” He noted in the same letter that he intended, with Yates, to draft some needed

³¹Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 23.

³²*Enslaving Virginia*, 623-24.

³³“Robert Carter Nicholas” *Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Historical Almanack* (cited 7 December 1998); available from www.history.org/people/bios/bionic.htm; INTERNET.

regulations for the school.³⁴ Almost a year later, Nicholas continued his guarded tone as to the success of the school. He wrote in much the same language on 23 June 1762: “I must own to you that I am afraid the School will not answer the Sanguine Expectations its pious Founders many have formed but we will endeavour to give it a fair Trial”³⁵ Benjamin Franklin noted the same cautious attitude in 1763 when the business of the Post Office led him to Williamsburg. After meeting with Nicholas about the status of the school, Franklin wrote to John Waring that “He appears a very sensible & very conscientious Man, and will do his best in the Affair, but is sometimes a little diffident as to the final Success, in making sincere good Christians of the Scholars.”³⁶ Nicholas’s continued correspondence with the Associates reveals his many worries and frustrations with the finances of the school, the health of the schoolmistress, the progress of the students, and the behavior of their masters.

In 1762, Nicholas and Yates drew up a list of several regulations for the owners of the students and for the schoolmistress. These guidelines reflect their and the Associates’ ideals for the school and address some of the problems with which the school was dealing. They also give a detailed account of the desired curriculum of the school. The owners were asked to commit to allowing their slaves to attend regularly for at least three years. The rules directed the owners to send the children to school clean and well dressed, and even went so far as to propose a uniform for the students. The owners were also requested to allow the mistress to chastise their slaves “without quarreling or coming to School on such Occasions; [the owners] must by no means encourage or wink at the Children’s Faults.”³⁷ Finally, the owners were encouraged to set good examples at home for the students.

Guidelines for the schoolmistress required her to open the school at 7:00 a.m. on

³⁴Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring, 17 September 1761. Knight, *A Documentary History*, I: 146.

³⁵Nicholas to Waring, 7 October 1762, Knight, *A Documentary History*, I: 150.

³⁶Franklin to Waring, 27 June 1763, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 199.

³⁷Nicholas to Waring, 30 September 1762, (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 189-90.

winter mornings and an hour earlier in the summer; she was also guided by the regulations to keep the students busy with their work during the entire school day. She was told to teach the students proper spelling, reading, and pronunciation, to read the Bible and memorize the catechism. She was to teach the slaves religious principles “most useful in the Course of private life,” such as faith and good manners.³⁸ Teaching the children to pray and escorting them to church as often as services were held by the minister was part of her responsibility, as was assigning Sunday homework so that they would stay busy and out of trouble on the Sabbath. She was to instruct them to avoid “lying, cursing, swearing, profaning the Lord’s Day, obscene discourse, stealing &c., [and] obliging them to get by Heart such Parts of the Holy Scriptures, where these Things are forbid & where Christians are commanded to be faithful & obedient to their Masters, to be diligent in their Business, & quiet & peaceable to all Men.”³⁹ The mistress was also directed to teach the girls to knit, sew, and “such other Things as may be useful to their Owners.”⁴⁰ Finally, she was to be watchful of her young charges between school hours, and see that “they in all Things set a good Example to other Negroes.”⁴¹ The curriculum was designed to offer the children skills and values that would be useful to them materially and spiritually in the future, but also to make the children more useful to their masters and more accepting of their place in the community.

The Associates were pleased with the regulations laid out by Nicholas and Yates. John Waring called them “most judicious and excellent Rules drawn up for the Good Government & direction of the Negro School.”⁴² Nicholas, replying to Waring’s naive enthusiasm with a tired and honest voice, replied in his next letter

the Rules transmitted to you, were rather what I would
wish to have comply’d with, than what I expected would

³⁸Nicholas to Waring, 30 September 1762, (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 191.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid

⁴²Waring to Nicholas, [March 1764], Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 204.

be given at once; however I must endeavour to enforce them by Degrees; I assure you, Sir, however strange it may appear, 'tis a very difficult Business I am engaged in. I find it necessary to manage it with great Delicacy.⁴³

In the following year, Nicholas does not seem to be doing much better: "I have tried to enforce some of the Rules, which you were pleased to approve, but find they are not well relish'd; however, I will persevere."⁴⁴ It was the owners of the slaves, it appears, who had problems with the rules. Later in 1765, Nicholas noted that the owners were unwilling to commit their children to attend the school for any length of time, so that he was forced to "relax a little in hopes that Things might be put upon a more agreeable Footing."⁴⁵

One of the more serious problems faced by the school throughout its tenure was its financial footing. The Associates provided twenty pounds annually for the salary of a teacher in its schools in Philadelphia and New York, and hoped that the sum would likewise suffice in Williamsburg. Dawson and Hunter immediately determined that it would not be enough to secure a teacher in Williamsburg. Dawson immediately began a fundraising program by subscription that was interrupted by his early death. One extant subscription list is headed "To forward the good Intentions of the Associates of the late Dr. Bray, and to encourage and promote the Instruction of Negroes in the Christian Faith," and is followed by the names William Dawson, Thomas Dawson, Thomas Robinson, John Graeme, John Blair, James Wray, and N. Walthoe along with promised subscriptions totaling seventeen pounds.⁴⁶ It is unlikely that this money was ever collected for the use of the school, however, because Hunter did not support the idea of a subscription campaign. He wrote to Waring after Dawson's death that "As I did not approve of raising the additional Money, by a petty Subscription, I have not attempted it

⁴³Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring 21 December 1764, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 233.

⁴⁴Nicholas to [Waring] 13 September 1765, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 236.

⁴⁵Nicholas to Waring, 27 December 1765, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 240.

⁴⁶Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 154n.

... I judg'd it more to the Credit of the Associates to pay the whole Expense necessary, than to be aided by a trifling Contribution."⁴⁷ Waring replied to Hunter later that year approving the increase in budget to thirty pounds as requested, but maintained his optimistic hope that citizens of Williamsburg would aid the charitable cause in time:

They hoped the Same Stipend might be Sufficient with You. However that This Undertaking may meet with no Check or Discouragement in its Infancy on this Account, They have directed me to acquaint You that They chearfully increase their Appointment to 30 pounds Sterling, not doubting but in Time A Proposal for a Subscription towards its Support will be favourably received at Williamsburgh.⁴⁸

Nicholas inherited this financial problem when he served as primary trustee for the school beginning in 1761. For the next several years he continued to draw thirty pounds a year for the school from the Associates without making an attempt at raising additional funds in Williamsburg. When he requested the funds in 1768, however, he was surprised by the frustration Waring evinced about the school budget in his reply. Waring expressed deep personal disappointment with what he perceived as the greed of the slaveowners in Williamsburg. "How can Gentlemen on Your Side the Water" he wrote, "expect that We on this shou'd Subscribe two, three, or four Guineas a Year apiece, as I have done for many Years, to promote the Instruction of the Slaves of those Masters, who themselves will contribute Nothing to it."⁴⁹ Nicholas replied in February 1769, attempting to explain why the costs were high in Williamsburg, and that he had no success in his attempts to raise funds from the local citizenry, particularly the masters of the slave children who attended the school. Nicholas' explanation was to no avail, however. In a very emotional letter on May 1769, Waring expressed the dismay and, perhaps, naiveté of the London benefactors. Without a sense of what life in a slave

⁴⁷Hunter to Waring, 16 February 1761, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 153.

⁴⁸Waring to Hunter, 1 June 1761, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 157.

⁴⁹Waring to Nicholas, 20 April 1768, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 267.

society was like, they could not comprehend the unwillingness of the masters to pay for the schooling of their slaves. Waring bitterly commented “I am sorry, extremely sorry, to hear that your good Endeavours to promote a Subscription have proved fruitless... We don’t wish to force a negroe School upon them against their inclination. If They have no Desire to have their Negroes instructed; why Shou’d we?” He then firmly instructed Nicholas that he could have only twenty-five pounds annually for the school, and that if the citizens of Williamsburg would not make up the rest, he should close the school at the end of the year.⁵⁰

Nicholas had the opportunity at that time to close the school if he wished, but he chose to carry on with its work. However, he placed most of the burden on the elderly schoolmistress, Anne Wager, informing her that she would receive only twenty-five pounds per year from then on, supplemented by whatever he could raise from the masters of the children attending the school. There appears to be a general cooling off of the relationship between Nicholas and the Associates after this exchange of critical letters between Waring and himself. For the remaining five years that the school remained open, Nicholas sent only short, punctual letters annually informing the Associates that he was drawing twenty-five pounds out of their account and he neglected to send them a progress report on the students at the school. In a slightly longer letter in December 1772, he blamed his public commitments for his lack of any report, and notes that he and a very few other citizens are contributing to the budget of the school.⁵¹ In November 1774, Nicholas sent one last letter to the Associates, informing them that he had discontinued the school upon the death of the long-serving Anne Wager. He wrote that “I could wish to have revived the Charity upon such terms as would be agreeable to you & the rest of the worthy Associates of Dr. Bray, but seeing no Prospect of it at present, I

⁵⁰Waring to Nicholas, 25 May 1769, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 284-85.

⁵¹Nicholas to Waring, 1 Jan 1770; Nicholas to Waring, 22 January 1771; Nicholas to Waring, 17 December 1771; Nicholas to Waring, 1 December 1772; Nicholas to Waring, 5 January 1774, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 288-89, 303, 305, 310-11, 316.

have discontinued the school.”⁵² Considering the financial stress the school faced, the unwillingness of the Williamsburg slaveowners to contribute to the project, and the seeming disappointment of the Associates, Nicholas chose to end the school rather than try to find a teacher to replace Wager. The Associates apparently agreed with Nicholas’s decision to close the school; at the next meeting of the Associates in London they entered into their minutes that they were “Agreed that Thanks be returned to Robt. C. N. for his long Series of Charitable Services, that they acquiesce in his Opinion to discontinue the School at present.”⁵³

With all the problems and stresses Nicholas faced in operating the school, little is known about why Nicholas remained with the project for thirteen years, all the way to the school’s demise. His writings indicate a sense of duty and responsibility towards the slaves. He was, of course, nothing like an abolitionist. Like Bray, Nicholas accepted slavery as an ordinary part of life. Nicholas himself was a slave owner and enrolled a couple of the slave children he owned in the school. He mentioned to John Waring in a letter in 1765 that “I have a Negro Girl in my Family, who was taught at this School upwards of three Years & made as good a Progress as most, but she turns out to be a sad Jade, notwithstanding all we can do to reform her.”⁵⁴ Nicholas’s words reveal much about his patriarchal attitude towards his slaves, which he possibly extended towards all of the young slaves and free blacks at the school. He probably tried to be as good a master as possible, as many of his elite contemporaries did. Apparently at least one of Nicholas’s slaves did not see him that way. Twice, Nicholas advertised in the *Virginia Gazette* for a runaway slave named George, first in 1767 and again in 1771.⁵⁵ While Nicholas’ thirteen years of unflinching service to the Bray School made him a leader in the effort to improve the black community in eighteenth-century Williamsburg, he remained

⁵²Nicholas to Waring, 17 November 1774, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 324.

⁵³ Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 324n.

⁵⁴ Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring, 27 December 1765, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 241.

⁵⁵ Purdie and Hunter’s *Virginia Gazette* 15 January 1767; Rind’s *Virginia Gazette*, 7 February 1771.

a slave owner.

If Nicholas was the one man who did the most to make the Bray School a success, Anne Wager, the elderly schoolmistress who was the school's only teacher during its fourteen-year operation, was certainly the *woman* who could rightfully claim that distinction. Unfortunately, somewhat less is known about her life. She appears in York County records after becoming a widow. She was most likely the wife of William Wager, who in 1744 served as an executor of the will of William Gooch in York County.⁵⁶ She probably was widowed in 1748, the year in which she began residing in the household of Carter Burwell at Carter's Grove, where she was paid ten pounds *per annum* for tutoring the Burwell daughters. The Burwell accounts indicate that she probably remained in the employ of the Burwell family through 1754, although there are gaps in the record.⁵⁷

Between 1754 and 1760, when she began to teach at the Bray School, she probably continued to tutor upper-class white children. She had about twelve white pupils when she began teaching at the Bray School. In 1769, Robert Carter Nicholas reflected back that in 1761 he "obliged the mistress that there might be no partiality shewn to white Scholars, of which she then had about a dozen, to discharge them all & this at the Risque of the Displeasure of their parents, with whom she was in high Repute for her care & Method of teaching."⁵⁸ Nicholas' description raises the interesting question of whether these white pupils were taught alongside the black students during the year before they were dismissed. The record is unclear, but Nicholas's and Yates's regulations for the school composed soon afterward insist that the school mistress attend to the students from dawn to dusk every day; was Wager already doing this, and thus meeting with all of the children, white and black, at the same time? Or was the rule

⁵⁶ "Miscellaneous Court Documents," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Richmond: Virginia Historical Society. 17: 271.

⁵⁷ Burwell Accounts, 1738-1755.

⁵⁸ Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring, 16 February 1769, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 275.

written to solve the problem of the teacher abandoning her students at the Bray school for part of the day to attend to the white children separately? Either interpretation is appropriate to Nicholas' phrase; but what is clear is that, when asked to do so, Wager discharged her white pupils to attend to the business of the school.

When Hunter and Dawson first began to search for a teacher for the new school, they were definitely looking for a woman. They were guided by John Waring's instructions to Dawson: "As 'tis probable that some of Each Sex many be sent for Instruction, The Associates are therefore of the opinion that a Mistress will be preferable to a Master, as She may teach the Girls to Sew knit &c. as well as all to read & say Catechism."⁵⁹ Thus, a woman was preferable because while both a man or a woman might be qualified to teach literacy or Christianity, only a woman could successfully teach other young women to sew. Another letter between Hunter and Dawson during the search for a teacher indicated that there was at least one other serious applicant, a Mrs. Thompson, and that they expected to have many more applicants for the position.⁶⁰

These traces of evidence allow some generalizations about the schoolteacher's life. First, she had some degree of education, both formal and practical, which qualified her to teach the children of some of the most elite members of society. She must also have passed the test on her religious beliefs and have been able to teach the Anglican faith adequately. She had a reputation for able teaching and was hired to teach at the Bray School over other applicants. She was employed at the time tutoring a good number of white students, but was willing to give them up to meet the expectation of the administrators of the Bray School. She continued to teach at the school even when her salary was possibly cut in 1770 when the Associates restricted their funding of the school at Williamsburg. Finally, after fourteen years she appeared to be irreplaceable, for when she died, the school was permanently closed. Perhaps Nicholas could not imagine

⁵⁹John Waring to Thomas Dawson, 29 February 1760, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 144-45.

⁶⁰William Hunter to Thomas Dawson, [July 1760], Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 145.

finding another woman of her talents who was willing to take on such an unpopular duty with so little public support.

The most important element of the Bray School was its students. Three lists of the students enrolled in the school in 1762, 1765, and 1769, have survived; Nicholas sent the lists as reports to the Associates on the progress of the School (Appendices A-C).⁶¹ Each list enumerates the name of the child, whether the child was a slave or free, and, if a slave, the name of the master who sent the child. In addition, the 1762 list gives an estimate of the age of each child. These three lists allow a glimpse into the identities of the masters and their motives. The lists also help to connect these children to their later actions and accomplishments as adults. The three lists together show that about thirty children were enrolled in the school at any given time. In 1762, the children ranged in age from three to ten years; the average age was six and the median was seven. Two of the three free black children listed in 1762, Mary and Elisha Jones, are the only children for whom no age was given. The school might be visualized as a large first-grade classroom, with a few younger and a few older children. The large enrollment was eased because not every child attended every day, despite Nicholas's best intentions.⁶² Although the other enrollment lists for 1765 and 1769 do not include ages, the average age probably remained the same or increased slightly.

The school's sex ratio remained fairly even. Of the thirty children enrolled in 1762, ten were boys, fourteen were girls, and six children bore names which made their gender uncertain but were most likely males: London, Shropshire, Aberdeen, Bristol, Rippon, and Locust. In the 1765 list, the gender of all thirty-four students can be identified; there were nineteen boys and fourteen girls. There was a substantial turn over in the group between 1762 and 1765, which surely prompted Nicholas and Yates to try to

⁶¹Nicholas to Waring 30 September 1762, (Enclosure); Nicholas to Waring 27 December 1765, (Enclosure); Nicholas to Waring 16 February 1769, (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 188, 241-242, 277-78.

⁶²Nicholas to Waring 16 February 1769, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 277.

insist upon the owners leaving their children in school long enough for them to make progress in their studies. Only three children who attended in 1762 were still present in 1765: Roger, a slave from the household of the speaker of the House of Burgesses, Peyton Randolph, and two slaves belonging to John Blair - John and Doll(y). All three children were seven years old in 1762.

In the third enrollment list of 1769, thirty students were once again enrolled. Seven students had also been enrolled in 1765. This is a significant accomplishment because both the number of students and the time elapsed increased, probably due to Nicholas' more stringent enforcement of the regulations concerning the school. The children who were still enrolled were Catherine and Johanna, belonging to the household of John Blair; Jerry, belonging to Anthony Hay; Mary, belonging to Mrs. (Christiana) Campbell; Sam, belonging to Mrs. Speaker (Peyton Randolph); and John and Mary Ashby, free blacks. In 1769, twelve of the enrolled students were male and eighteen were female. The large number of continuing students indicates that the average age of the pupils was increasing, although this is impossible to ascertain because ages are not given in the last two lists.

A small number of free black children attended the school throughout its tenure. The free black and mulatto population in Williamsburg, and in Virginia as a whole, was never large in the eighteenth century. Colonial Virginia law greatly restricted the growth of this component of the population. Although manumission was legal during most of the seventeenth century, it was not widely practiced. A 1691 law required newly manumitted slaves to leave the colony within six months, on penalty of their former master paying ten pounds sterling to the churchwardens or his or her parish. One estimate places the remaining number of free blacks and mulattos in the entire colony at about 350 in 1700. To further hinder masters from freeing their slaves, the House of Burgesses removed that privilege from the slave owner's discretion in 1723, decreeing that "no negro, mullato, or indian slaves, shall be set free, upon any pretence whatsoever, except for some

meritorious services, to be adjudged and allowed by the governor and council.”⁶³ This law remained in effect until 1782. Thus, until that year the free black population grew primarily from the natural increase of free black women and from mulatto children born to white women. The total number of free black children who might have attended the school is impossible to ascertain, but the census of 1782, taken only eight years after the close of the school, offers some insight into their numbers. In 1782, only four free black households, all headed by women, were recorded as living in Williamsburg, with a total of eleven free blacks.⁶⁴ Each time Robert Carter Nicholas reported to the Associates on the children in the school, only two or three of the children in attendance are listed as free blacks. However, given the small number of free black families living in the capital at that time, these children probably represent a large percentage of the total number of free black children living in proximity to the school.

In 1762, a seven-year-old named Mary Anne was in attendance. She was listed as “a free Negro” under the column for “owner’s name” but had no surname given. The other two children, Mary and Elisha Jones, are also listed as free, and were most likely siblings. The 1782 census of Williamsburg lists a free black household headed by a Nanny Jones with two other dependents.⁶⁵ It is possible that Mary and Elisha Jones were members of this free black family. In 1765, the enrollment list gave the misleading impression that no one of the children was free, but Mary and John, belonging to Matt. Ashby, were actually in the custody of their father. The important omission of a title (Mr., Mrs., Dr., Esqr.) in the listing “Matt Ashby’s Mary and John” is a plain indication that Matthew Ashby was a free black. Every other owner in all three lists is listed with a respectful title except for Ashby.

⁶³Lou Powers and Linda Rowe to Pam Pettengell et al., *Lydia Broadnax at Wythe House and Free Blacks in Williamsburg*, Colonial Williamsburg Research Query File, 14 September 1993, 2.

⁶⁴Powers, *Lydia Broadnax*, 3.

⁶⁵Powers, *Lydia Broadnax*, 3.

Matthew Ashby, the father of Mary and John, was a free mulatto, born to a black father and a white mother who was an indentured servant. Following the mother's status, Ashby was born free but was forced to work as an indentured servant until his thirty-first year. Although unable to marry a slave, he found a partner in Ann, a slave belonging to a bricklayer named Samuel Spurr. Working as a carter, Ashby eventually saved enough money to purchase his wife and two children from Spurr for 150 pounds. Ashby sent his children to the Bray School, where they were designated as his slaves on the 1765 list. On 27 November 1769, he successfully petitioned the governor's Council for consent to free his family.⁶⁶ A few months before that official sanction, however, John and Mary Ashby were already noted as free in the list of the Bray students.

Fragments of information about the other children who attended the school remain. The saga of Isaac Bee, John Blair's slave, survives in the *Virginia Gazette*. His ability to read, certainly obtained at the Bray School, aided his flight from slavery. The seven-year-old Aggy listed as the slave of Peyton Randolph can be identified as 'Little Aggy' in the records of the Randolph household. There she is described as a mulatto, who later had three surviving children, Kitty, Betsy, and Nathan, and was willed to Benjamin Harrison of Berkeley after the death of Elizabeth Randolph. Another Randolph slave, Sam, who appeared twice on the lists of enrolled students in 1765 and 1769, was one of the eight Randolph slaves who fled to Lord Dunmore in 1776, when the governor offered freedom to any slaves willing to fight for the British.⁶⁷ An entry in the Bruton Parish Church register in 1776 gives Sam's age as fourteen, indicating that he attended the school between the ages of three and seven at the very least, certainly long enough to develop strong literacy skills.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ "Matthew Ashby" *Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Historical Almanack* (cited 7 December 1998); available from www.history.org/people/bios/bioash.htm; INTERNET

⁶⁷ "Aggy" *Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Historical Almanack* (cited 7 December 1998); available from www.history.org/people/bios/bioaggy.htm; INTERNET

⁶⁸ *Enslaving Virginia*, 401.

Also in 1776, an inventory of Peyton Randolph's York County estate assigned values to twenty-seven of his slaves. Aggy, Sam, and Roger, who attended the Bray School in both 1762 and 1765, were all listed. Aggy and Roger, now both in the prime of life, were each valued at sixty pounds, in more valuable fifty percent of all of the Randolph slaves. Sam was only valued at forty pounds, in part because he was a little younger than Aggy or Roger, but also possibly because on the same inventory he was noted as "gone to the enemy."⁶⁹

Gleanings from inventories and other records indicate that education might have made many of the slaves who attended the Bray school more monetarily valuable to their owners. For example, the March 1776 inventory of Alexander Craig, a prominent harness and saddlemaker, listed eight slaves. One of his slaves, Aberdeen who appears in the September 1762 list, is by far Craig's most valuable slave at seventy-five pounds. Estimated as age five on the school enrollment list, he would have been about nineteen years old when Craig died. There is no direct evidence that Aberdeen assisted Craig in making harnesses or saddles, but it is certainly a possibility, especially since Craig determined it would be beneficial to send the young man to the school.⁷⁰

Likewise, some of the children who attended the Bray School from the Anthony Hay household are present in the 2 February 1771 inventory of his estate, which listed twenty slaves. Rippon, who was estimated to be three years old when attending the school in 1762, was one of the most valuable of Hay's slaves, at 60 pounds, even though he was only about twelve years old when the appraisal was made. A slave named Jenny who attended in November 1765 is estimated along with her mother and three young siblings to be worth 125 pounds. Another slave, Jerry, who was in attendance at the school in 1769 was valued highly at fifty pounds; however, his two Hay household schoolmates in 1769, Joseph and Dick, do not appear in the 1771 estate appraisal,

⁶⁹*Enslaving Virginia*, 401.

⁷⁰*Enslaving Virginia*, 361.

apparently victims of either childhood death or sale to another owner.⁷¹

Other scraps of evidence give a tantalizing view into who these children were and what their education meant for them as adults. First, most of the children for whom information about racial make-up remains were of mixed racial heritage. Aggy, Isaac Bee, and John and Mary Ashby were all described thus. There are not enough extant data for a definitive answer, but it is possible that a disproportionate number of the children who attended the Bray School had some European ancestry. If true, it is most likely a factor of two things; first, the students were mainly the children of urban slaves, domestics and skilled workers, who themselves were disproportionately mixed in ancestry; and second, masters, in deciding which of their young slaves to send to the school, may have considered a mulatto child more worthy or able to attend school.

It is telling that Isaac Bee and Sam from the Randolph household both ran away. Their education probably helped them to be more aware of the revolutionary issues around them, and once fugitives, to remain free in a hostile world. A literate slave like Sam could read the published notices passed around by Dunmore, for example, and then pass the word on to other slaves around him. Literacy probably aided his classmates in other, less dramatic, ways. An education may have helped the Ashby siblings make a living as free black adults in post-revolutionary Virginia. It may have helped others simply to communicate with loved ones when separated by the vagaries of slave life. Aggy and her elder daughter, Kitty, were willed to different members of the Harrison family when the Randolph household dissolved.⁷² If Aggy passed her literacy on to her children, letters might have eased the heartache of separation. Although only a relatively small number of black children could attend the Bray School over its fourteen-year history, when the education these children might have shared with others is considered, the impact of the school ripples through the community and through the generations.

⁷¹*Enslaving Virginia*, 393-94.

⁷²*Ibid.*

Literacy is an irrepressible skill - those who have it want to share it with others, especially their own children.

Thad W. Tate, commenting on the achievements of the Bray School from the vantage point of the 1960s, noted that its most important accomplishment was that “some of the scholars were learning to read and write, even under relatively adverse conditions. If nothing else, these young scholars had proved the slave’s capacity for education.”⁷³ The success of the enslaved children helps to dispel the theory espoused by historians such as Stanley Elkins in the mid-twentieth century that slavery crushed the spirit of every slave and transformed him into a mindless ‘Sambo.’⁷⁴

The primary goal of the Associates in providing the funds for this project, of course, was to convert the slaves to Anglican Christianity. The success of the school in meeting this goal cannot be quantified, but true conversion, if it occurred, would have had an important intangible impact on the life of the convert and his or her family. Mrs. Wager probably swayed many of the children, since they were young and Christianity was the creed of the master class. The eighteenth century was a high period of conversion of the slaves to Christianity, especially as the majority became predominantly native born. At this time, though, certainly many of the slaves were still resistant to the religion of their captors, especially those who were born in Africa. Those individuals must also have had an influence on the children attending the Bray school, especially if they were the parents of the students, or influential members of their household. One hint in Robert Carter Nicholas’s letter of 27 December 1765 implied that this might have been happening. He lamented that “most of the good Principles, which they are taught at School, are soon effaced, when they get Home, by the bad Examples set them there.”⁷⁵

⁷³Thad W. Tate, *The Negro in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg* (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1965), 151-52.

⁷⁴Stanley Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in Intellectual and Social History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

⁷⁵Nicholas to Waring, 27 December 1765. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 240-41.

Were these “bad examples” older slaves, perhaps fathers and mothers trying to pass on native traditions and ideas? The feelings of the parents of the children enrolled in the school about their religious education are impossible to know. Nicholas’s comment could have meant older slaves, but he could also have been referring to their masters and other whites in the community, not all of whom led exemplary religious lives.

The three lists of enrolled students also identify some of the masters who sent their young slaves to the schools. What type of people were they? What motivated them to part with the labor of these slaves so that they could be educated and converted to Christianity? The list of masters is a veritable ‘Who’s Who’ of revolutionary leaders and wealthy denizens of Williamsburg. Many, like Peyton Randolph and his brother John “the Loyalist,” were political leaders of the colony. Others, like Carter Burwell, were local planters with homes in town. Quite a few were well-to-do businessmen and women, such as Dr. James Carter, a local apothecary and physician, William Trebell, who owned and operated the Raleigh Tavern, and Hugh Orr, a wealthy blacksmith whose account book shows that the most elite citizens of Williamsburg were among his customers. Still others were associated with William and Mary, like Priscilla Dawson, widow of the late college president and trustee of the school. The college itself was listed as the owner of two slave children who were enrolled in the Bray School in 1769, Adam and Fanny. The number of slaves employed by William and Mary at any given time is unknown, but between 1749 and 1782, it sponsored the baptism at Bruton Parish Church of seventeen slaves, including “Fanny, daughter of Hannah,” in June 1766, who is probably the same Fanny in attendance at the Bray School in 1769.⁷⁶ The college administrators were clearly supporting the school through the end of its existence, possibly prodded by Nicholas; in 1773, the president and masters of the college resolved “That four Loads of Wood be sent to Mrs. Wager, who has the care of some young

⁷⁶*Enslaving Virginia*, 323.

Negroes belonging to the College.”⁷⁷

This was not a cross-section of slave owners but rather an elite group. The greatest percentage of slaves in mid-eighteenth-century Williamsburg did not work as house servants or skilled workers for the upper-class but were employed as menial workers in taverns and ordinaries.⁷⁸ Yet only three of the masters identified - Trebell, Campbell, and Jane Vobe - were involved in this business. It is clear that the masters who sent slave children to the school were of the highest class in society. Competition for space in the classroom did not force elites to exclude middling slave owners who desired to enroll their slaves in the school. If there had been such competition, the free black children could have been the first to be squeezed out, but at least a couple were consistently enrolled in the school. Furthermore, the masters constantly pulled their young slaves out of school periodically, or permanently, when the children were useful in the household. The masters refused to adhere to Nicholas’s three-year rule; “the Masters & Mistresses were so averse to every Thing that look’t like Compulsion.”⁷⁹

What, then, caused the Williamsburg upper class to make use of the school more than others? First, certain elite leaders had a greater sense of patriarchal duty to the slaves in their care. Like Robert Carter Nicholas’s sentiment that the slave girl he owned was “in my Family,” many slave owners felt a need to take care of, uplift, and improve the slaves they controlled. They were more likely to engage in charitable activity, and were more likely to have personal, even familial, relationships with the trustees of the school, which would increase their likelihood of utilizing the school. The elite were also less likely to need child labor in their fine urban homes, and could better afford to part with the labor of the young slaves. In fact, sending the young children out to school freed

⁷⁷ “Journal of the Meetings of the President and Masters of William and Mary College.” *William and Mary College Quarterly*. First Series, 14:27.

⁷⁸ Julie Richter and Linda Sturtz, “Using Probate Inventories to Study the Slave Population of Colonial York County, Virginia.” Paper presented at the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, July, 1987.

⁷⁹ Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring, 27 December 1765, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 240.

up the time of elder slaves who would otherwise be engaged in childcare. If a household had no other purpose for a slave child, the school served as an excellent free nursery. Additionally, the wealthier members of Williamsburg society may have perceived a greater need for educated slaves, either to work in their homes as domestic servants or to hire out in the city. Finally, the luxury of sending slaves to school may have enhanced their upper-class status and accentuated their wealth in the eyes of others in the community.

Less elite slaveholders owned fewer slaves per person and were less economically able to part with slave labor. They probably felt less need for the labor of educated slaves because they employed their slaves in tasks involving more mundane drudgery. They were less swayed by patriarchal sentiments and more driven by day-to-day survival needs. Finally, they may not have received a formal education themselves and were probably not educating their own offspring in any formal way. By one estimate of York County in 1770, only 61% of white women and 87% of white men could sign their names.⁸⁰ This signature rate indicates only the most basic skill in writing, and cannot stand for a true literacy rate, which is impossible to determine. Nevertheless, it attests that not all whites in the community were receiving an education similar to the one being offered to the children at the Bray school, at a time in which literacy was a token of privilege in a hierarchical society. One of the greatest ironies of the existence of the slave school is that there was no free school for white children in Williamsburg at any time before the Civil War.

The close of the Bray School of Williamsburg in 1774 was part of the beginning of a larger change in the early national period that closed opportunities for southern blacks. While the death of schoolmistress Anne Wager officially resulted in the school's end, financial problems stemming from the slaveowner's lack of support for the project,

⁸⁰Kevin Kelly, *How Literate were Colonial Virginians?* (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Research Query File, 12 November 1993), 2-3.

along with the onset of the American Revolution and the social upheaval it left was the true cause of the Bray School's demise. The strained relations between the colonists and the London philanthropists symbolized how ideas about blacks in America and England were diverging and changing. In the age of revolutions, many Europeans and some Americans sought to apply the rhetoric of freedom to liberate the slaves; others in the slave state of Virginia, in reaction, passed laws in the early 1800s forbidding the teaching of blacks to read and write, even exiling free blacks. Isaac Bee is also a tragic symbol of lost opportunities in a changing society. Bee, the educated son of a free black man, was recovered by Lewis Burwell and returned to Mecklenburg County. He appears on Burwell's personal property tax lists there between 1782 and 1785. There, too, an enslaved son was born in 1778 and named John Bee, after his free grandfather.⁸¹ In the early nineteenth century, Virginia sought to tighten the reins on the slaves who now seemed more dangerous because they still believed, like Isaac Bee, that they too had a right to freedom.

⁸¹*Enslaving Virginia*, 605.

CHAPTER 3: THE ATTEMPTED SCHOOLS IN YORKTOWN AND NORFOLK

Buoyed by their early success in establishing schools in Williamsburg, Philadelphia, and Newport, Rhode Island, the Associates immediately attempted to organize schools in other locations in the American colonies. Discouragement was their primary reward in these other ventures, which included three more Virginia locations: Yorktown, Norfolk, and Fredericksburg. The schools in Yorktown and Norfolk never got off the ground; the school in Fredericksburg enrolled students for only five years. An examination of why these efforts failed, and how they compared to the relatively successful school at Williamsburg, highlights the importance of the clergy, town leaders, and local community in allowing schools for slave children to exist.

In March 1762, the Associates met in London and voted to invite six American towns to establish schools for black children modeled on the three schools already in operation. They decided to send letters with a proposal for the school, along with a box of seventy-eight books to clergymen and prominent citizens in Annapolis and Chester, Maryland, York and Norfolk, Virginia, Bath, North Carolina, and St. James' Goose Creek Parish in South Carolina.⁸² Yet, none of these proposed sites ever hosted a school. The examples of Yorktown, and especially Norfolk, represent the problems all these locations encountered in establishing this type of school.

In April 1762, the Associates shipped their case of seventy-eight books to William Nelson with an invitation to establish a Bray school in the small community of Yorktown. Nelson, a merchant and wealthy planter in York County, was a member of the Governor's Council as well as a strong supporter of the Anglican Church.⁸³ He would have had the same political connections and reputation for piety as Robert Carter Nicholas to recommend him as a capable trustee, but sadly, no record of an exchange of

⁸²Minutes of the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray, 4 March 1762. Knight, *A Documentary History*, I:149.

⁸³Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 344.

letters exists to explain why this school never was established. Most likely, Nelson believed that Yorktown did not have a large, concentrated black population who would be able to utilize the school. He may have foreseen trouble finding a suitable schoolmistress, or might simply have doubted the capability of blacks to make good use of such a school. All of these elements may have doomed the Norfolk school before it ever opened its doors.

The Associates likewise shipped seventy-eight books to the Rev. Charles Smith, long-time minister of Elizabeth River Parish, in April 1762. Smith returned a cheerful letter to the Associates, explaining that he was no longer the man they wanted; his parish had been divided into three parts a few months earlier, and he had retired to the more rural new Portsmouth parish, which had been carved out of the old, larger parish. He noted that there were few blacks in his new parish, but that he had passed their letter and what remained of the shipment of books along to the minister of the new Elizabeth River Parish, which still contained the city of Norfolk. Unfortunately, he had already distributed most of the books he had received to his white and black parishioners, because the books arrived a couple of months before the explanatory letter. He assured them the new minister, Alexander Rhonnald, would enthusiastically undertake the business of the Associates.⁸⁴ A postscript to Smith's letter reveals that the city of Norfolk and the Rev. Smith himself were most likely recommended by Philip Ludwell, a prominent Virginia politician and planter who had retired to England and had donated one guinea to the Associates in June 1761.⁸⁵ Smith appended to his already optimistic letter that "Colo. Ludwell's favourable opinion of me ...was pleasing; which proceeded from his own candour & good Nature, & which all Virginians, are remarkable for, towards their Clergy, that it must be our own faults, if we are not, on a good footing here."⁸⁶ Either Smith was

⁸⁴Charles Smith to Waring, 22 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 178-79.

⁸⁵Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 79-80n.

⁸⁶Smith to Waring, 22 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 179.

the type of man who always saw the ‘glass half full,’ or his letter was tinged with irony, because his successor Alexander Rhonnald, from whom the Associates would receive a letter one a week later, was *not* enthusiastic about the potential school in Norfolk and he was certainly *not* “on a good footing” with the Virginians he was assigned to serve.

Rhonnald’s long epistle is complex, reflecting the discouragement of a pessimistic man who could not catch the vision of the more successful American trustees, who doubted that he had the leadership capacity or political capital to establish a such a school, who had little regard for the integrity of his white parishioners or the intelligence of his black parishioners, and who felt sorry for himself because of the way he had been treated in the past by the local gentry. He began by enumerating several reasons why he thought such a school would be a failure, and why he was not the right man to attempt it. He objected that by hiring a school mistress rather than a master, so that girls could learn needlework skills, the school would benefit the girls more than the boys, which he considered an improper use of the charitable funds. He held that the only type of woman who would be skilled in these domestic arts and also possess the necessary piety would certainly be very old, and thus incapable of teaching more than five or six black children at a time, certainly not thirty. Furthermore, he did not believe that a qualified school mistress, if such could be found, would be willing to undertake the task for only a twenty pound salary, which he stated was half of what teachers earned for educating white children, “which is a little more respected Employment.”⁸⁷

The most significant impediment to the establishment of such a school, in Rhonnald’s opinion, was the character of the masters who would send the children. In eighteenth-century Norfolk there was a sizable number of free blacks, whom Rhonnald saw as the most worthy beneficiaries of such a charitable institution. But Rhonnald believed that the local gentry would monopolize the school with the slave children from

⁸⁷Alexander Rhonnald to Waring, 27 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 180.

their own households, particularly those they had chosen to be their future domestic workers or livery men. He asserted that the masters would insist upon training in literacy and domestic skills over religious education for their slaves. He was certain that if he, as the trustee of the school, were to interfere with the curriculum or to hold open positions in the school for free blacks, the local gentry would “endeavour by Insinuations either to ruin a School in the place, or by Misrepresentations to inform the honourable Society of the Minister of the parish” and hence ruin the minister’s reputation.⁸⁸ He wrote that he might be able to administer the school if another person (he suggested the bishop of London’s Commissary, the Rev. William Robinson) would serve as the school’s trustee or visitor, but he did not want the responsibility, contending that it was not wise “to depend on the Minister of the parish as the chief Visitor only, as it would occasion him the Ill will of most of his parish, if he insisted on a charity school for poor Negroes, & not for the Great & powerful of this place.”⁸⁹

The unwanted influence of the town’s wealthy would also work a hardship on any potential school mistress, Rhonnald asserted, because the slaveowners would believe the gossip their slave children would tell about the teacher, “for Negro Children in general are very dull & Stupid, & they will always be for telling Tales to the Prejudice of their Teacher.”⁹⁰ As a result, Rhonnald predicted, the school mistress would be disgraced, and there would be a significant turnover of teachers, “unless Some barefaced Convict, an old undaunted Soldier, or an impudent Sailor who are all void of Shame or Fear, should happen to have the Charge,” not the ideal, he admitted, but then interjected, “None could match the People better.”⁹¹

Rhonnald’s seeming paranoia about the Virginia gentry was perhaps not unwarranted. In the late 1750s, he had served as the master of Eaton’s Charity School for

⁸⁸Rhonnald to Waring, 27 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 181.

⁸⁹Rhonnald to Waring, 27 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 181.

⁹⁰Rhonnald to Waring, 27 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 182.

⁹¹Ibid.

poor white children in neighboring Elizabeth City County. He quit his post after years of frustration because well-to-do local planters were sending their own children to the free school and pushing out those whom he thought more worthy of the charity. He led the local citizenry to submit a petition to the House of Burgesses to rectify the problem; the Assembly did so with a law regulating the school on 14 April 1759.⁹² However, since he had taken this action, and because he also preached freely to local blacks, he had garnered the ill-will of the powerful in the region. After explaining his history to the Associates, he complained that “from that time, they use Me with the most invidious Terms of Ill nature for my pains, & because I baptise more Negroes than other Brethren here ... I am vilified & branded by such as a Negro parson.”⁹³

Given the difficult time he had suffered through over the Eaton Charity School affair, it is understandable that he was loathe to administer a new school for black children so soon after undertaking his new post in the Elizabeth River Parish. But Rhonnald also exhibited a negative attitude that might have engendered the gentry’s dislike in the first place. He lacked the confidence that he would be able find an appropriate school mistress, and choose the students and monitor the curriculum to best serve the goals of the Associates. He had such a low opinion of the local Virginians that he considered convicts and sailors their best match, and generally considered black children “very dull & Stupid.” With this personal history, lack of self-confidence, and obvious disdain for his parishioners, it is no surprise that Rhonnald had been replaced as minister of the Elizabeth River Parish by 1766.

The Associates did not make a further attempt to establish a school in Norfolk. After receiving Rhonnald’s letter, they made little comment about Rhonnald’s complaints except to note that he thought the twenty pounds allowed by the Associates was not enough, and quietly noted in their minutes, “Agreed that the Design of having a Negroe

⁹²Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 183n.

⁹³Rhonnald to Waring, 27 September 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 182.

School at Norfolk be laid aside for the present.”⁹⁴ Rhonnald’s disposition had clearly discouraged the Associates from following up on the matter; in contrast to the situation in Williamsburg, they did not offer to temporarily increase the funding so that the school could establish an initial foundation. The financial issue was clearly not the most important to Rhonnald, despite what the Associates chose to record in the minutes of their meeting.

As the Associates attempted to plant new schools in the American colonies based on their successful schools in Williamsburg, Philadelphia, and Newport, they faced many serious obstacles. They needed locations with a centralized black population; with masters who would support the project, first, by allowing their slaves to attend the school, and then, perhaps, financially; and most importantly, with willing, capable religious and civic leaders to organize the schools and administer it as trustees. As each new venture turned to failure before it even began, it seemed that Associates had quickly exhausted the number of appropriate sites for schools. The Associates successfully established only one other school in Virginia, in Fredericksburg. Eager administrators ran the school for five years before problems, similar to those that plagued the other attempted schools in Yorktown and Norfolk, led to its early demise.

⁹⁴Minutes of the Associates of the Late Reverend Dr. Bray, 7 April 1763. Knight, *A Documentary History*, I:154.

CHAPTER 4: THE SCHOOL IN FREDERICKSBURG

The city of Fredericksburg, lying about 100 miles northwest of Williamsburg, was a commercial center for central Virginia in the second half of the eighteenth century. At the fall line of the Rappahannock River, in 1765 the English traveler Joseph Hadfield described it as “a considerable town of trade, furnishing the country around.”⁹⁵ The town maintained some industry, such as an iron works, and provided services for the piedmont farmers who grew wheat and tobacco in the vicinity. It was at its prime in the years just before the Revolution, when its estimated population reached 5,000. After the war, the westward push of the frontier lessened the town’s significance, and it entered a period of slow decline that would continue through the nineteenth century.⁹⁶ But at the height of Fredericksburg’s importance as an urban center, the Bray Associates briefly were able to establish a school for slaves under the direction of Fielding Lewis and the Rev. James Marye, Sr., and then James Marye, Jr.

Several years of correspondence between the Associates and Anglican ministers in the region led to the creation of a school in this part of colonial Virginia. Mungo Marshall, minister of the parish in neighboring Orange County, first wrote the Bray Associates in September 1756, requesting materials with which to instruct the slaves in his community.⁹⁷ The Associates sent Marshall a parcel of books and continued an exchange of letters with him. After Marshall’s death in 1760, the Rev. James Marye, Jr., who succeeded him as the minister in Orange County, continued the correspondence. In Marye’s first letter, in which he acquainted the Associates with the fact that he had taken over the parish, he reported that in his parish he had “great Quantities of Negroes ... who all bring their Children to be baptised, & many of the Adults likewise are desirous of

⁹⁵Oscar H. Darter, *Colonial Fredericksburg and Neighborhood in Perspective*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1957), 62-63.

⁹⁶Darter, *Colonial Fredericksburg*, 64.

⁹⁷Mungo Marshall to John Waring, c. September 1756. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 120-21.

baptism.”⁹⁸ In this parish, Marye implies, most of the slaves had been successfully instructed in Christianity to the degree that they regularly seek baptism for their children. At the same time, at least some of the adults in the community had not been baptised themselves as children. In this area, perhaps this was the first generation of slaves to be taught the fundamentals of Christianity, or many of the adults could have been newly enslaved Africans.

Before approaching Marye about establishing a new Bray School in central Virginia, the Associates had first appealed to the Rev. Jonathan Boucher, the well-known loyalist, about founding a school in his King George County parish. In December 1762, Boucher wrote the Associates that despite his best efforts and intentions, a school would be impractical there. Boucher noted that the slave owners “started such a Train of Objections” when he proposed the idea that he was discouraged. He also despaired that the slaves were “dispers’d on scatter’d plantations,” making it difficult to assemble the children at a single school.⁹⁹ In a letter sent a year and a half later, Boucher informed the Associates about how he was employing the books they had sent him, and about his attempts to instruct the slaves in his parish. His letter portrays remarkably paradoxical attitudes toward slaves. He wrote in April 1764: “I have employ’d a very sensible, well-disposed Negro ... to endeavour at instructing his poor fellow slaves in Reading & some of the first Principles of Religion.” After explaining how he prepared this trusted slave for teaching 20-30 pupils, he continued

once at least in every month He brings his Scholars before Me that I may examine what Progress They have made; which to Persons who properly know the incorrigible Stupidity of the Majority of these wretched Creatures I must own, I think, is not inconsiderable.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸James Marye, Jr. to John Waring, 2 August 1760. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 149.

⁹⁹Jonathan Boucher to John Waring, 31 December 1762. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 194-95.

¹⁰⁰Boucher to Waring, 28 April 1764. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 205-206.

In the same letter, Boucher described a “sensible” and obviously literate slave to whom he gave a great deal of responsibility, and simultaneously espoused the stereotypical view that most slaves were dull-witted. With the phrase “the wretched Creatures I must own,” Boucher implied that he did not whole-heartedly embrace slavery, but that he owned them, nevertheless, out of necessity. His attitudes were representative of those held by many of the Virginians involved in the Bray School projects. They accepted slavery as a necessary evil in the colonies, and took for granted the common stereotypes of slaves as unintelligent and intractable. They hoped that Christian education would save their souls and make them more content and docile servants.

The following year, Waring wrote again to Marye proposing a school in his Orange County parish. Marye replied in a letter on 24 October 1763 that a school similar to the one just established in Williamsburg would not be appropriate there for two reasons. First, the rural nature of the community prohibited the convocation of children in a regularly meeting school. He believed that he could not gather more than five or six slave children together in any one place. Second, Marye foresaw that on the plantations even the youngest slaves would be put to work, and would not be spared by their masters for an education. Marye did, however, suggest that in nearby Fredericksburg such a school might prosper. He wrote:

there is a Town on the River to which all in these Parts trade, which makes it very flourishing & populous, where a negro-School might be placed (I think) to great Advantage ... as the Town contains a great Number of Negroes & their Owners have not those many Employments for them that they have in the country.”¹⁰¹

Marye’s comments reinforce the theory that the Bray schools could only flourish in an urban setting, and that educated slaves were not considered practical or desirable outside the cities. Although Marye is not sanguine about the possibility of a school in Orange

¹⁰¹Marye to Waring, 24 October 1763. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 202-203.

County, by proposing Fredericksburg as a location he laid the foundation for the school which would be instituted a couple of years later. The Associates in London read his letter in their meeting on 4 February 1764. After a short period of consideration, they agreed to send a parcel of 110 books to Marye for the use of the proposed school in May 1764.¹⁰²

Marye received these books and wrote to the Associates in September 1764 that he had visited the city and presented the idea to some of the inhabitants and to his father, the aged James Marye, Sr., who served as minister of the St. George's parish in town. The response he received was not enthusiastic; he concluded that it would not be easy to gather more than half a dozen students, and that even these might not go regularly.¹⁰³ In the ensuing months, however, some of the town leaders must have decided to give the endeavor a chance, because the following April the Fredericksburg Bray school opened under the direction of the Rev. James Marye, Sr. and Fielding Lewis. The elder Marye was a native of Rouen, France, where he was first a Roman Catholic Priest. After a conversion to the Huguenot faith, he migrated to England and was ordained an Anglican minister. He eventually took the position of minister at St. George's Parish, where he served from 1735 until his death in 1767. During his tenure he ran a small school for the parish children, where, according to unconfirmed tradition, George Washington studied as a child.¹⁰⁴ Marye may have had especially tolerant feelings toward his black parishioners, at least in comparison with his Virginia-born neighbors. In August 1751, the vestry of St. George's found it necessary to prohibit "the minister from baptising Negroes with white children," implying that he was doing so, and that he was, perhaps, viewing the slave children as equal to the free in the eyes of God.¹⁰⁵ Marye must have

¹⁰²Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 238n.

¹⁰³Marye to Waring, 25 September 1764. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 218-219.

¹⁰⁴Darter, *Colonial Fredericksburg*, 123.

¹⁰⁵Carrol H. Quenzel, *The History and Background of St. George's Episcopal Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia*. (Richmond: Saunders and Sons, 1951), 12.

recruited Fielding Lewis to aid him in the project, although the surviving letters do not illuminate exactly how Lewis became involved. Lewis was a prominent, wealthy, resident of the Fredericksburg area. The brother-in-law of George Washington, he served as the Spotsylvania County Burgess in the General Assembly between 1760-68, was a vestryman at St. George's, a justice of the peace, and a colonel in the local militia.¹⁰⁶ As a major area planter, he was also a slave owner. The first evidence of the Fredericksburg school's existence comes from his letter to the Associates dated 14 September 1765. In it, he reported that he and Marye opened the school in April 1765. He noted that Marye was giving him all the help he could, but implied that he himself had taken on the greatest part of the responsibility for the school; this is not surprising since Marye was in his seventies.¹⁰⁷

There are fewer surviving details about the school in Fredericksburg than the one in Williamsburg. Almost all that can be known about the project is drawn from just four letters sent from Lewis to Waring between 1765 and 1772. Not much is known about the teacher of the school, except that Lewis and Marye struggled to hire one, "the allowance being so small, that the greatest part of it will be paid for House rent & Fireing."¹⁰⁸ In a later letter Lewis revealed that the teacher was a woman, but her name and background is unknown.¹⁰⁹ The administrators of the school in Fredericksburg most likely chose a female teacher because they were modeling their school closely on the successful one in Williamsburg. Lewis had obtained a copy of the rules drawn up by Robert Carter Nicholas for the governance of his school, and he and Marye adopted them enthusiastically.¹¹⁰ Since they also had the same instructions and materials as the Williamsburg operation, the students in Fredericksburg probably followed a similar

¹⁰⁶ Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 342.

¹⁰⁷ Fielding Lewis to John Waring, 14 September 1765. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 237.

¹⁰⁸ Lewis to Waring, 14 September 1765. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 237.

¹⁰⁹ Lewis to Waring, 31 October 1768. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 274.

¹¹⁰ Lewis to Waring, 14 September 1765. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 237.

curriculum of reading and writing, and religious instruction for all, and additionally needlework for the girls. The location of the school is likewise unknown, but was most certainly downtown, perhaps near St. George's church, which still stands today on Princess Anne Street. Financially, the school was on a similar footing with Williamsburg, except that they received only twenty pounds sterling, ten pounds less than the Williamsburg school during its initial years of operation.¹¹¹ These funds were barely adequate for the rent of the school building, the heating fuel, and the schoolmistress's salary. Lewis makes no remark in any of his correspondence about supplementing the Associate's gift with local donations, although this is what the Associates expected in time.

The school began with sixteen pupils in regular attendance, far from the thirty scholars for which the Associates asked. Just a few months after the school opened Lewis recorded with satisfaction that "they begin allready to Read prittily ... I propose introducing them into Church as soon as they are capable of joyning in the Service."¹¹² He then promised to include a list of the students' names and ages in his next letter to the Associates. His following letter and the enclosed list have been lost, but from the Associate's minutebook Lewis's comments may be reconstructed. He was discouraged by the slave owners, who sent only the youngest children to the school, and would not keep them there long enough to make a difference in their lives, in his opinion. The Associates note that the list of students records the names of seventeen boys and girls between the ages of five and eight. Unfortunately, the valuable information about which slaves attended and who their masters were is absent. In response to Lewis's recommendation that the school be discontinued after that year because of the lack of cooperation from the slave owners, the Associates, at their meeting in London, resolved "that He be requested to continue the School on the best terms He can, & endeavour that

¹¹¹Lewis to Waring, 31 October 1768. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 274.

¹¹²Lewis to Waring, 14 September 1765. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*. 237.

the Number may be compleated as soon as may be,” and also “that the Associates are desirous of keeping the School on foot Some time longer, in hopes that much good may result from it.”¹¹³

The school did endure to the next year; in June 1767 Jonathan Boucher reported to the Associates in a letter unrelated to the Bray schools that he heard the school did “much Service.”¹¹⁴ The student population continued to suffer, however, and Lewis reported this unhappy information to the Associates in his 31 October 1768 letter. He wrote that only nine students remained in attendance, and that even that small number dropped to four in the summer months. He did not predict that the enrollment would increase, because students were pulled from the school “as soon as they could read tolerably to attend in the Houses of the Proprietors, or to take care of the Younger Negros in the Familys to which they belong.”¹¹⁵ Again, Lewis questioned whether the Associates wished to persevere in such an unrewarding endeavor. In April 1769 the Associates responded that if they could not increase enrollment to at least twenty Lewis should, indeed, close the school at the end of that term.¹¹⁶

Waring’s April 1769 letter to Lewis relayed the Associates’ dismay that the slave owners did not give the school more support. In a lengthy but eloquent epistle Waring castigated the Fredericksburg slave owners for their lack of piety and duty toward their slaves. He wrote, in part:

We were grieved & astonished. Grieved to find our good Endeavours so Unavailing & fruitless & astonished at the amazing inattention of persons who call themselves Christian to the Spiritual Welfare of those of their own household. Do the Masters ever consider that their Slaves have Souls as well as themselves? Pray Do they ever consider that (their) own Souls are immortal & will be happy or Miserable forever according as they treat their poor Slaves? Are They so weak

¹¹³Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 250.

¹¹⁴Boucher to Waring, c. June 1767. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 260.

¹¹⁵Lewis to Waring, 31 October 1768. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 273-74.

¹¹⁶Waring to Lewis, April 1769. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 281-82.

as to imagine divine providence sends the Blacks among them merely to cultivate their Lands & do the severest Drudgery for their Masters worldly profit only without any regard to the Spiritual welfare of the poor Slaves?¹¹⁷

The letter progresses in a similar tone. The Associates also felt that their generosity had been abused and was unappreciated. Waring continued with these strong words:

Let'em consider what Reproach & Infamy must attend'em when it shall (be) said that some pious people in England chearfully at their own Expense woud have Supported a School for the Religious Instruction of young Negroes & the Masters refused to send'em. It may justly be asked where was their wisdom Christianity or even humanity.¹¹⁸

The Associates again here illustrate their lack of comprehension of life in a colonial American slave society. They appear to have based their concept of slavery on a Biblical model, in which patriarchs such as Abraham governed slaves as if they were junior members of a great household. They expected the masters of slaves to look after the spiritual and temporal needs of their slaves in a fatherly way. The Associates had little understanding of the economic, social, and racial forces at work in the slave society of eighteenth-century Virginia. Waring personally appears to have lost his patience with the slave owners; he had to work with them but was too far to influence them. In an attempt to bridge the gap, he authored a pamphlet entitled *A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London*, which was published by the Associates in 1770. The work outlined many of the same arguments and ideas Waring expressed in his letter to Fielding Lewis in a more polished form.¹¹⁹

In response to Waring's letter, the Rev. James Marye, Jr., who had taken over his father's parish two years earlier, preached a special sermon to encourage masters to allow their enslaved children to attend the school, but it met no positive response. After failing

¹¹⁷Waring to Lewis, April 1769. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 281.

¹¹⁸Waring to Lewis, April 1769. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 281-82.

¹¹⁹Waring, *A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London*, 10 October 1770, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 293-302.

to increase enrollment, the Fredericksburg administrators followed the Associates' instructions and closed the school in 1770 after five years.¹²⁰ This school probably had less of an impact on the slave population of Fredericksburg than the one in Williamsburg had on its black community. In Fredericksburg, the students were younger, and most stayed in school only a short time. Low enrollment also meant that the school affected the lives of fewer individuals. However, at least some of the children obtained a basic level of literacy as a result of the efforts of the Bray Associates and their local administrators.

Why could the school not maintain an adequate enrollment? In part, because Fredericksburg did not have the same density of blacks as did Williamsburg and the other large cities, like Philadelphia and New York City, which hosted Bray schools more successfully. But primarily, the local slave owners were simply unwilling to support the school. In Williamsburg, the slave owners who allowed children to attend the school came mainly from the upper class; they were the most elite members of the community: politicians, businessmen, college educators and very wealthy planters. Fredericksburg simply did not maintain the same number of elite citizens, willing to sacrifice the labor of their young slaves, for the sake of their slaves' souls or to enhance their own prestige. Lewis noted several times that the masters withdrew their slave children to do household chores and child care as soon as they were able. Many of the local slave owners were small or middling planters, which is evident in the fact that in the summer, when the plantations were busiest, fewer students were sent to the school.

Not only economics, but attitudes also had a role in the reluctance of the slave owners to admit their children to the Bray school. In Lewis's final letter to the Associates, he confessed that many masters believed that "learning them to read is rather a disadvantage to the owners, we having had some examples of that sort."¹²¹ The slave

¹²⁰Lewis to Waring, 1 February 1772, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 306.

¹²¹Lewis to Waring, 1 February 1772, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 306.

owners in Fredericksburg had little need for educated slaves, resembling economically the Williamsburg middling class which likewise did not support the school. Furthermore, they feared that literacy would lead to the escape or rebellion of their slaves. The problems which plagued the Fredericksburg slave society in the late eighteenth century were reflected in the trials faced by the Bray school there.

CHAPTER 5: THE SCHOOL IN PHILADELPHIA: The Northern Experience as Contrast

The Bray schools and attempted schools in Virginia all faced similar problems related to their existence in an entrenched slave society. In Williamsburg, for example, the majority of the population was black, and the economy and the standard of living depended upon by white society was built upon the institution of slavery. Naturally, the experience of a similar school would be different in a slave owning society, in which there were some slaves, but they were only peripheral to the everyday life of the majority of the inhabitants. Only 350 miles up the Atlantic seaboard from Williamsburg, Philadelphia was as different a place as could be imagined in its slave owning practices. While Williamsburg was a slave society, Philadelphia was a slave owning society, and the contrast between the two schools there illustrates the differences in microcosm.

The Delaware Valley was home to African slaves before the English even arrived; Dutch colonists first brought them to the area in the 1630s.¹²² However, the Quakers began to settle the area in the 1680s, and they opposed slave owning on religious grounds. In 1711, the General Assembly passed a law forbidding the importation of slaves, but it was struck down by the Privy Council. Later, the General Assembly tried to circumvent the Privy Council's verdict by passing a prohibitory import duty of twenty pounds on each slave, which was again declared illegal by the Council. Quaker leaders, unable to make slave holding illegal, instead sought to make it morally wrong. In the 1719 revision of the *Book of Discipline*, Quakers were admonished "that none amongst us be Concerned in the fetching or importing Negro slaves from their Country or elsewhere."¹²³ As a result, the slave population of Philadelphia grew very slowly.

¹²²John L. Cotter, *The Buried Past: An Archaeological History of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 40.

¹²³Russell F. Weigley, *Philadelphia: A Three-Hundred-Year History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992), 45.

However, as the economy of the city grew, some of the wealthier Friends succumbed to the temptation and purchased slaves. Here was where “earnest friends diverged from the practice of the less earnest.”¹²⁴

In the first decades of the eighteenth century, the slave trade to Philadelphia grew from a trickle of three to four servants to frequent cargoes of thirty to forty slaves by the 1750s. By one estimate, there were about 1,000 slaves in Philadelphia in 1750, but this was probably the high point in the number of the enslaved in the city. By the second half of the eighteenth century, the early abolitionist movement, led by Quaker leaders devoted to the cause, had had a significant influence on the slave owners of the city. In 1775, the number of enslaved blacks in Philadelphia was down to 600, and there was a sizable free black population in the city.¹²⁵ Pennsylvania was among the first states to abolish slavery, which they chose to do by gradual emancipation in 1780. Thus, by 1808, when blacks made up eleven percent of the population of the city, only around thirty individuals were still slaves.¹²⁶ Although this statistic postdates the colonial period in which the school was open, 1758-1775, it reveals that around ten percent of the total population of Philadelphia was black in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, and also that almost all of the enslaved children who attended the school ended their lives in freedom.

The Bray school of Philadelphia was operated in a social climate which was less hostile to blacks and less dependent on the labor of slaves, and it was by far the most successful of all the schools supported by the Bray Associates in the colonies. The Rev. William Sturgeon, already working as the S.P.G. catechist to Philadelphia blacks, first suggested the plan for the school, and oversaw all of its operations until ill health and family tragedy forced his retirement in July 1766.¹²⁷ Upon his suggestion, the Associates first agreed at their meeting on 5 April 1758 to a three-year trial of a school in

¹²⁴Weigley, *Philadelphia: A Three-Hundred Year History*, 45.

¹²⁵Cotter, *The Buried Past*, 40.

¹²⁶Cotter, *The Buried Past*, 53.

¹²⁷William Sturgeon to John Waring, 3 August 1769, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 287.

Philadelphia at a cost of no more than twenty pounds per year.¹²⁸ Sturgeon opened the school on 20 November 1758 with thirty students, and it thrived with full enrollment until the Revolutionary War intervened in the work of the Associates.¹²⁹ And unlike any of the other Bray schools in the colonies, the school in Philadelphia maintained an endowment that allowed it to reopen after the war in 1786. Eventually, the Associates even opened two more schools for blacks in Philadelphia in the nineteenth century.¹³⁰ Its success also encouraged the Associates to make attempts at founding schools in other colonies modeled upon it, such as the one in Williamsburg.

The school in Philadelphia, like those in Virginia, had a curriculum based around basic literacy skills, religious education, and needlework for the girls. Because of that last requirement, Sturgeon chose a schoolmistress. In contrast to both the Williamsburg and Fredericksburg schools, Sturgeon and his successors had no problem finding qualified, willing teachers; there were four in all between 1758 and 1775. Sturgeon fired the first teacher in May 1761 after she became an adherent of a controversial clergyman, the Rev. William McClenaghan, and began to be remiss in her responsibilities at the school.¹³¹ Sturgeon certainly would not have dismissed this first teacher, whose name is unknown, if he thought he would not be able to replace her. The second teacher, Elizabeth Harrison, was married to Richard Harrison, who was the master of the charity school of the Academy of Philadelphia.¹³² As the wife of another educator, she had a certain genteel status. A third school mistress, a Mrs. Ayres, took the helm between 20 November 1764 and May 1768.¹³³ She was replaced by a Mrs. Sarah Wilson, who continued to the end of the school's existence in 1775.¹³⁴ With the exception of the first,

¹²⁸Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 124.

¹²⁹Sturgeon to Waring, 12 June 1759, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 136.

¹³⁰Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 24.

¹³¹Sturgeon to Waring, 21 August 1761, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 160-61, 161n.

¹³²Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 162n.

¹³³Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 222n.

¹³⁴Francis Hopkinson and Edward Duffield to John Waring, 28 May 1768, Van Horne, *Religious*

the administrators of the Philadelphia school never expressed any concern over these schoolmistresses. The plentiful supply qualified women school teachers willing to teach black children contrasts greatly with the situation in Virginia, where teachers were difficult to obtain. In Philadelphia, married women of status, such as Elizabeth Harrison, were willing to take on the task; in Williamsburg, only an elderly widow could be found, and when she died, she was considered so irreplaceable that the school closed.

This difference in the ability to attract and keep qualified teacher is more remarkable considering the financial aspects of each school. The Associates donated twenty pounds sterling to the Philadelphia school *per annum*, which the local administrators found a sufficient amount to run the school and pay wages to the mistress each year. The Fredericksburg school also received twenty pounds each year, but Lewis complained that it was hardly enough to cover expenses, and made it difficult to hire a schoolmistress for such a low wage. In Williamsburg, the administrators requested and received thirty pounds annually for the first several years, because they stated that they could pay the mistress and run the school for no less. This extra drain on the finances of the Associates caused them to frequently encourage the Williamsburg Associates to raise some of their own funds. No similar fund raising request was made to the Sturgeon and his successors, because they were succeeding within their budget. The cost of living may have been less expensive in Philadelphia, but the more important reason the school in Philadelphia could operate under that budget is because there were enough teachers willing to work at that price in a school for slaves. Since this profession bore more of a stigma in Virginia, it was harder to find a schoolmistress to do it for any price.

The school in Philadelphia had another economic advantage over the schools in Virginia; in 1766, it was the beneficiary of a 1,000 pound endowment which would allow it to endure even after the Revolutionary War disrupted the work of the Bray Associates.

The Rev. Abbot Upcher, an Anglican clergyman from England, donated the money for the purchase of land in America, the rents from which would be used “for the purposes of educating Negroe Children till Episcopacy is settled in America.”¹³⁵ Benjamin Franklin advised Upcher to allow the purchase of lands in Philadelphia, and after several years of searching, Hopkinson and Duffield found the perfect site on the corner of Market and Ninth Streets. They informed the Associates in their letter of 3 July 1773 of the valuable property, and the Associates voted to buy it in their meeting on 2 September 1773.¹³⁶ When the Revolutionary War ended the formal ties between the Associates and their American stewards, the property remained under the control of Hopkinson and Duffield. In 1786, Hopkinson employed the rents from the property to reopen the Bray school for another generation of black children.¹³⁷ In contrast, the schools in Virginia had no special outside support besides the beneficence of the Bray Associates. Although the Williamsburg school closed because of the death of the schoolmistress Anne Wager, the intervening war also forced an end to the partnership between Robert Carter Nicholas and the Associates in London. Given the very small amount of financial support local Williamsburg slave owners were willing to donate to the school, Nicholas surely knew that the school could never reopen without the grant from the Associates.

The characteristics of the children who attended the Bray schools in Philadelphia and Williamsburg shared some similarities, but were also strikingly different. Sturgeon sent two lists of the children in attendance at the Philadelphia school in 1761 and 1762. The list from September 1761 (Appendix D) lists thirty-six children who attended the school from its beginning up to that date. Of that thirty-six, twenty-two were female, twelve were male, and two had names that make identifying gender uncertain. Fourteen of the students were free and the remaining twenty-two were enslaved.¹³⁸ The ratio of

¹³⁵Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 249.

¹³⁶Hopkinson and Duffield to Waring, 3 July 1773, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 313-14.

¹³⁷Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 24.

¹³⁸Sturgeon to Waring, 21 August 1761 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 162-63.

free to enslaved children is much higher in Philadelphia than in Williamsburg, reflecting the much greater number of free blacks in the city of brotherly love. The second list (Appendix E) of pupils from 20 November 1762 registers thirty-two children in attendance: twenty girls and twelve boys. Ten of the children were free; the remainder, of course, were slaves.¹³⁹ One sad similarity to Williamsburg is that although only one year had elapsed since the first roster of students was made, only three of the children on the first list were still in attendance when the second list was made. Tellingly, two of the three still in the school were free children. Clearly here, as well as in Virginia, masters did not leave individual children in the school for a significant amount of time. The names of some of the slave owners repeat, but they sent different, presumably younger, slaves the second year. In subsequent years the Philadelphia trustees sent reports to the Associates annually which simply stated that the school was at full capacity and was doing good work. In 1768, for example, Hopkinson and Duffield boasted that “the School is at present full, & several applying who cannot be admitted.”¹⁴⁰

Sturgeon and his fellow administrators had very little to report, because they had no complaints, and this is the most striking difference between the Philadelphia and Virginia Bray schools. While the administrators in Virginia struggled with intractable masters, difficult finances, low student enrollment, and finding appropriate teachers, the men who ran the school in Philadelphia had nothing but good news to report. This was the difference between educating slaves in a slave society as opposed to a slave owning society. But although the schools prospered differently, the true measure of the project’s success as a whole lies with the impact these institutions had on the lives of individual slaves and free blacks who attended them. One student of the Associates’ efforts was unimpressed by the small ratio of children who might have been affected by the schools

¹³⁹ Benjamin Franklin to John Waring, 27 June 1763 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 199-200.

¹⁴⁰ Hopkinson and Duffield to Waring, 26 November 1768, Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 274.

in comparison with the 500,000 blacks in America at the beginning of the Revolutionary War.¹⁴¹ But if only one individual enjoyed a lasting benefit in his or her life through the endeavors of the Associates, Thomas Bray would have felt the work was worthwhile.

¹⁴¹Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 38.

Appendix A

Enclosure

List of Negro Children

[Williamsburg, 30 September 1762]

A List of Negro Children at the School established by the Associates of the late Reverend Doctor Bray in the City of Williamsburg, Mrs. Anne Wager, School Mistress.

Names of the Children	their Ages as nearly as can be judged of	Owners Names
1. John	8 Years	Mrs. Davenport
2. Anne	6	Ditto
3. Dick	3	Mr. George Davenport
4. London	7	Mrs. Campbell
5. Aggy	6	Ditto
6. Shropshire	6	Ditto
7. Aberdeen	5	Mr. Alexr. Craig
8. Mary	7	Mr. Thomas Everard
9. Harry	5	Ditto
10. George	8	Mr. Gilmer
11. Bristol	7	Ditto
12. Mary Anne	7	a free Negro
13. Aggy	7	Peyton Randolph Esqr.
14. Roger	7	Ditto
15. Mary	8	Mr. Thomas Hornsby
16. Rippon	3	Mr. Anthony Hay
17. Robert	6	John Randolph Esqr.
18. Lucy	5	Ditto
19. Elizabeth	10	Mrs. Dawson
20. George	6	Dr. James Carter
21. Locust	8	Mrs. Armistead
22. Sarah	7	Mrs. Page
23. Hannah	7	Ro: C: Nicholas
24. Mary Jones		a free Negro
25. John	7	John Blair Esqr.
26. Jane	9	Ditto
27. Doll	7	Ditto
28. Elisha Jones		free
29. John	3	Mr. Hugh Orr
30. Phoebe	3	Mr. Wm. Trebell

Williamsburgh 30th. September 1762¹⁴²

¹⁴²Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring, 30 September 1762 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious*

Appendix B

Enclosure
List of Negro Children

[Williamsburg, November 1765]

A List of Negro Children who are at the Charity School in Williamsburg November 1765

Mrs. Campbell's Young & Mary	2
Mrs. Davenport's William	1
Mr. Hay's Jerry	1
Doctor Carter's Nanny	1
Mr. Blair's John, Dolly, Elizabeth, Catherine, Fanny, Isaac & Johanna	7
Mrs. Burwell's Joseph & Davy	2
Mrs. Prentis's Molly	1
Colo. Johnson's Squire	1
Colo. Chiswell's Edmund & Johnny	2
Mr. Charlton's Nancy & Davy	2
Mrs. Grymes's Phillis	1
Mrs. Orr's Pat & Jack, James & Sal	4
Mr. Thompson's Charles	1
Mr. Brown's Elizabeth	1
Mr. Thompson's Betty	1
Matt. Ashby's Mary & John	2
Mrs. Vobe's Sal	1
Mr. Water's Sylvia	1
Mr. Randolph's Roger & Sam	<u>2</u>
	in all 34 ¹⁴³

Philanthropy, 188.

¹⁴³Robert Carter Nicholas to John Waring, 27 December 1765 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 241-242.

Appendix C

Enclosure **List of Negro Children**

Negroes now at School.

Mrs. Prisca. Dawson's Grace	1
Mr. R.C. Nicholas's Sarah	1
Mr. President Blair's Catherine, Nancy, Johanna, & Clara Bee	4
Mr. Hay's Jerry, Joseph, Dick	3
Mrs. Chiswell's Jack	1
Mrs. Campbell's Mary, Sally, Sukey	3
Mrs. Speaker's Sam	1
Mrs. Vobe's Jack	1
John & Mary Ashby ... free	2
Mr. Ayscough's Sally	1
The College ... Adam, Fanny	2
The Commissary's Charlotte	1
Mrs. Blaikley's Jenny, Jack	2
Hon. Robt. Carter's Dennis	1
Mr. Hornsby's Nancy, Judy, Ratchel	3
Mr. Cocke's Mourning	1
Mr. Davenport's Matt, Harry	2 ¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴Robert Carter Nicholas to Rev. John Waring, 16 February 1769 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 277-78.

Appendix D

Enclosure **List of Negro Children**

Began to Keep School November 20th. 1758

20th.	From Mr. Primer	Ceaser
	ditto Mr. Duff	Jane
	ditto Free Lincoln	John
	ditto Mr. Lyon	Warrick
	ditto Free Emanuel	Mary
23rd.	ditto Peter Turner	James
December		
4th.	ditto Mr. Mifflin	William
	ditto Widow McCall	Peggy
9th.	ditto Mr. Jones	James
	ditto Widow Hoot	Jean
18	ditto Mr. Hockley	Rachel
January		
8th. 1759	ditto Mr. Joseph Turner	Hannah, Rachel, & Caesar
29th.	ditto Spring Garden Free	Joseph
February 5th.	ditto Free John	Caty & Phillis
	ditto Nurse Jones	Rose
March 5th.	ditto Mr. Duche	Silla
April 9	ditto Free Sharper	Mary & Thomas
18	ditto Mr. Bromwich	Phebe
23	ditto Free Benjamin	Sukey
25	ditto Mr. Dupee	Jude
May 7	ditto Mrs. Clifton	Trombo
14	ditto Jeakle	Caty & Becca
	ditto Mr. Plumstead	Slypha & Sister
18	ditto Mr. Ludwick	Quash
21	ditto Free Mary Durham	Mary
	ditto Free Coffee Duglass	Septimus & Sukey
	ditto Capt. Mott	Dinah
June 11	ditto Mrs. Sirls	Sarah & Surprize ¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵Sturgeon to Waring, 21 August 1761 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 162-63.

Appendix E

Enclosure
List of Negro Children

Philadelphia November the 20th. 1762
A List of Schollars belonging to Christ-Church Charity
by Order of the Rev. William Sturgeon Director

Boy's Names &c.		
John Dixon	Reading	Center House
Wm. Dixon		
Thos. Sharper	Ditto	Spring Garden
Jerimiah & Daniel	Ditto	Mrs. Jervise
Tom	Ditto	Mr. Turner
Scires	Ditto	Mrs. Dillworth
Exeter	Ditto	Mr. Reynoalds
Schamony	Ditto	Mr. Turner
Joseph	Ditto	Mr. King
Tom	Ditto	Mr. Jones
Bash	Ditto	Mr. Turner
No. 12		
Girls Names &c.		
Hannah Hellon	Reading & Sewing	from Water Street
Jane Hellon		
Rebecca	Ditto	Mr. Turner Water Street
Rachel	Ditto	Mr. Loyd front Street
Easther	Ditto	Mr. North in Ditto
Dianna	Ditto	Mr. Miffins Market Street
Date		
Mary King	Ditto	in 5th. Street
Malch	Ditto	in Race Street
Mary Sharper		Spring Gardens
Mary Walder		3rd. Street
Pheby		Mrs. Soward Market Street
Pheby		Mr. Bromage 3rd. Street
Lavinia		Mrs. Williams
Naney		Mr. Barns Moravian ally
Susannah		Mr. Kidwallet Church ally
Pegg		Mr. Mackols 3d. Street
Moll		M r. Olfords front Street
Rachell		Mrs. Suky Loyds Water Street
Nancy Grime		Chesnut Street

No. 20

By Richd. & Elizabeth Harrison¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶Franklin to Waring, 24 September 1763 (Enclosure), Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 199-200.

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