

**PRELIMINARY WILLIAMSBURG BRAY SCHOOL  
HISTORICAL REPORT, BLOCK 14 BUILDING 41.**

**THE COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FOUNDATION**

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I wish to thank my parents for always supporting and loving me, especially when I struggle in doing both things for myself. All my adoration to Chris Brown, my husband, for reminding me to never make myself smaller for others. You are the light of my life.

Lastly, I dedicate this report to all Williamsburg Bray School scholars, named and unnamed in the archive. I also dedicate this report to their teacher, Ann Wager. They are the best teachers I have ever had, as they truly reeducated me in every sense of the word.



# INTRODUCTION: REDISCOVERING THE WILLIAMSBURG BRAY SCHOOL

To say that history is constantly being rediscovered should not be a revolutionary statement. Yet, for many it is. History often feels static, concrete, and unchanging. In some ways, this is true. The past cannot be altered, nor can the events which shape it. However, our understanding of the past is constantly flexing and contracting based on the current social and political moments surrounding us.

Noted historian Michel Rolph-Trouillot is known for saying that there is a difference between “what happened and that which is said to have happened” in history.<sup>1</sup> This is particularly true when looking at histories of the oppressed, the marginalized, or those who challenged the societies in which they lived and labored. It should perhaps not come as a surprise that Black histories of the British Atlantic World fall into this category.

While there are many things which will forever remain unknown about the students who attended the Williamsburg Bray School, to say that we have learned everything there is to know would be a fallacy. Indeed, it would be outright untrue. As The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation continues its restoration on the recently rediscovered Williamsburg Bray School structure (Bray-Digges House), so too must historians begin to restore and repair the legacies of the community that shaped this institution.

This historical research report's intention is to offer some preliminary insight into these individuals, their worlds, and their lives. This report is and will be a continuous work in progress well beyond the reopening of the Bray-Digges house; it should neither be considered all-encompassing nor complete. Rather, the report is a starting point for scholars, the public, and descendants to advance a collective understanding of the individuals who are connected to the enduring legacy of Black education and faith at the Williamsburg Bray School. The following information will be updated as information about the students, teacher, and trustees is studied in partnership with descendants, the William & Mary Bray School Lab, and the Historical Research, Archaeology, and Preservation teams at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

The failings of this research report are entirely mine, its improvements my challenge to continue with. I am honored to be part of such a momentous process.

*Nicole Brown*

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<sup>1</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1995), 3.

# CHAPTER 1: MAPPING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## Key Concepts for Mapping Community Connections

### Overview:

The Bray School engaged with a wide-ranging cross segment of Williamsburg's eighteenth-century community. Free and enslaved Black students and their families utilized the school across its 14-year duration. Enslavers who sent scholars<sup>2</sup> to the school consisted of men and women from varying socio-economic backgrounds. Administration at the school was overseen by individuals who ranged from the Public Printer of Virginia, Treasurer of the Colony of Virginia, a white, female schoolteacher, and a president of The College of William & Mary. In order to understand the Williamsburg Bray School and its complicated legacy, it is key that historians, interpreters, and the public familiarize themselves with the families, households, and community networks that converged within the classroom.

In addition to a demographic overview page, a short biography of households connected to the Williamsburg Bray School is offered in this chapter based on a variety of sources. Particular focus is placed on the Bray School scholars themselves where extant information (i.e. genealogical, biographical, and historical) is available. It is imperative to note that oral history and descendant community engagement is critical to understanding this research report overall. For the best practices and standards affiliated with Bray School research, please see the William & Mary Bray School Lab *Descendant Engagement* web page.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter is also compiled in a GIS digital map of Williamsburg entitled *Williamsburg Bray School Map*, which can be found on The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's webpage. This project was created in collaboration with the [William & Mary Bray School Lab](#), as well as the [Historical Research](#), [Archaeology](#), and [Preservation](#) teams at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

### Methodology:

The intention of this chapter is to provide a brief overview of the households who engaged with the Williamsburg Bray School, including both the free and enslaved peoples within these households. This research is still in the preliminary stages and as such should be considered a

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<sup>2</sup> The term scholar is used here because it is the appellation used by the school trustees at the Williamsburg Bray School Regulations and other primary source records. To see these regulations, along with other primary source correspondence, please refer to William & Mary's Bray School Lab. "Bray School Lab Research Portal." W&M Libraries Digital Collections. Accessed September 18, 2023. <https://digital.libraries.wm.edu/node/92737>.

<sup>3</sup> "Bray School Descendants," William & Mary, accessed May 27, 2022, <https://www.wm.edu/sites/brayschool/research-engagement/descendants/index.php>.

continued arena of research. Further, much of this chapter is based on a collation of sources across archives which will require analysis over many years to truly appreciate and understand the legacy of the Williamsburg Bray School in the historical record. I used the following collections to shape this chapter:

### *Bray Associates Archives*

The archives of the Associates of Dr. Bray are held by the United Society Partners in the Gospel; their collection is maintained by [Weston Library at the University of Oxford](#). There are thousands of records in this collection. Although digital versions of some original images can be found via [British Online Archives](#), I visited the collection in 2019 and photographed over 6,000 pages of records. Since 2020, I have worked with a team of twelve Colonial Williamsburg volunteers and staff, as well as seven William & Mary students to transcribe approximately 1,500 pages in accordance with the best practices of the National Archives<sup>4</sup>. The work is ongoing, and only a small part of my research can be shared within this chapter.<sup>5</sup> William & Mary's Bray School Lab is also working to process records specific to Williamsburg and Virginia, with a digital collection of these [transcriptions and audio recordings publicly accessible](#).

Of the records available on the Williamsburg Bray School, the three extant student lists of Williamsburg Bray School scholars (1762, 1765, 1769) were mined for demographic, genealogical, and historical information. These records were imperative as a starting point for learning biographical and personal information about Bray School scholars, parents, and enslavers. However, this work needed to be paired with other extant collections to begin mapping community connections.

### *Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Research Reports*

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation has a legacy of [research reports](#) being collated, published, and publicly shared with guests and staff alike. Although the research report series has been publicly dormant for approximately a decade, this report will hopefully add to the continued scholarship of subject matter experts and historians employed by The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Many of these reports collate vital information on households and individuals known to reside in eighteenth-century Williamsburg through historic, archaeological, and architectural information. In the case of this research report, previous reports published by the Foundation

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<sup>4</sup> "Transcribing Documents in the National Archives Catalog," The National Archives, 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist/transcribe/tips>.

<sup>5</sup> The research that I, students, and volunteers are currently working on will assist historians and the public in both understanding the Williamsburg Bray School as well as Bray Schools more broadly across Virginia and North America. My intention is to eventually center a doctoral dissertation around this research. This content has never been mined or processed for metadata, meaning that connections between schools, students, and communities in North America has yet to be studied comprehensively.

were mined for names of individuals associated with the Williamsburg Bray School. All reports utilized have been footnoted in this chapter.

It should be noted that some of this scholarship is dated, using either terminology or methodological approaches which are no longer considered best practices by historians. Nonetheless, these records can be mined for primary sources and other material.

### *Bruton & Middleton Parish Register (1662-1797)*

Records from the Bray Associates and Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Research reports were also paired with baptismal and birth records from Bruton & Middleton parishes. These records can be found publicly through the [Heritage Center at Bruton Parish Church](#). While these records are incomplete for the eighteenth century, there is a wealth of information about Black children, their parents, and their communities in Williamsburg between 1662 and 1797. Both transcriptions of these records and the original images can be found online.

Religious records in colonial Virginia are an often overlooked or underutilized source for tracing community connections across time and place. As the Church of England was a state-sanctioned religion in colonial Virginia, the records held by local parishes often supplement governmental records in tracing individuals and families over time. It is for this reason that the baptismal records of Bruton Parish were mined for this chapter, since there are direct connections between Bruton, the Williamsburg Bray School, and Williamsburg's colonial government.<sup>6</sup>

While having digitally accessible collections online is a useful tool for both historians and the public, the search engine utilized by this database does not account for the variety of spellings of last names which are applied to the same individual in the eighteenth century. As uniform spelling of last names was neither expected nor utilized in colonial America, this means that there may be errors in the accounting for every single enslaved individual associated with the household biographies within this chapter. It will be imperative that a research team be devised to review by hand every single page in the 1662-1797 baptismal records to confirm that no names of enslaved or free Black children or their enslavers were missed by this historian.

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<sup>6</sup> Terry L. Meyers, "Benjamin Franklin, the College of William and Mary, and the Williamsburg Bray School," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 79, no. 4 (2010): 368–93; William Archer Rutherford Goodwin, *The Record of Bruton Parish Church*, ed. Mary Frances Goodwin (Richmond, Va.: Dietz Press, 1941); Nicole Brown, "'So Pious an Institution': Religion, Slavery, Education, and the Williamsburg Bray School" (M.A. Thesis, William & Mary, 2022), 51–52.



## Bray School Community: Overview

### Bray School Scholar Demographics

The following demographics are based off the three extant student lists from the Williamsburg Bray School (1762, 1765, 1769).<sup>7</sup>

Year	Free Black	Enslaved Black
1762	3	27
1765	2	32
1769	2	28
Total	7	87

Year	Male-Identified <sup>8</sup>	Female-Identified <sup>9</sup>
1762	16	14
1765	20	14
1769	12	18
Total	48	46

### *Overall Statistics:*

93% enslaved, 7% free

51% male, 49% female

### Bray School Enslaver Demographics

The following demographics are based off the three extant student lists from the Williamsburg Bray School (1762, 1765, 1769).

Year	Male-Identified	Female-Identified
1762	15	5
1765	12	7
1769	11	6
Totals	38	18

<sup>7</sup> These statistics take overall numbers of Bray students into account. However, it should be noted that out of the 94 scholars it appears that 8 students were repeat attendees, bringing the total individual number of scholars to 86 children. For more information, please see the rest of the chapter.

<sup>8</sup> It should be made clear that scholars cannot definitively determine how Bray School students presented or identified themselves, only how they were identified based on typical gender-based naming patterns for eighteenth-century names. The positionality of this researcher creates an assumption about male- and female-identified students. For more information on eighteenth-century research regarding gender, sex, and sexuality, please also see <https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/explore/special-event/gsd/>

<sup>9</sup> See previous note.

### *Overall Statistics:*

68% enslavers male-presenting, 32% female-presenting

### Occupation/Household Demographics

The following demographics are based off the three extant student lists from the Williamsburg Bray School (1762, 1765, 1769). To determine the difference between “gentry” and “middling sort,” the standard definition from Margaret Hunt’s 1996 monograph *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680-1780* was utilized.<sup>10</sup> In this case, I have compiled statistics based on the households where I can definitively identify occupations of individuals, families, or households. The following table only includes households in the ‘biography’ and ‘ongoing research’ sections, but not in the ‘further research questions.’

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gentry</b>	<b>Middling Sort</b>	<b>Free Black</b>
1762-1769	10	12	2

For more information, please see this [Bray School list compilation](#) created by the William & Mary Bray School Lab.

### Review by Historical Research Team:

- The Historical Research team reviewed all corresponding content and felt the argument was substantive and valid.

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<sup>10</sup> Margaret R. Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680-1780*, First Edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 15. Hunt defines the “Middling Sort” as follows: “The terms *middling sort*, *middling classes*, *trading classes*, and *commercial classes* are used in this study- as they were used in the eighteenth century-more or less interchangeably to refer to shopkeepers, manufacturers, better-off independent artisans, Civil servants, professionals, lesser merchants, and the like. These people were beneath the gentry but above the level or the laboring classes.”

## Ongoing Research Question:

### Question A: Interdisciplinary Methods

What interdisciplinary methods are required to interpret and understand the entire Bray School community (both visible and invisible in historical archives) at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in a way that centers the humanity of the scholars?

### Question B: Demographics

More analysis needs to be done on household sizes and demographics in addition to this research report. What did these households look like between 1760-1774? What did they look like year-specific to Bray School student lists? How do these statistics compare to the overall Williamsburg population in the late eighteenth-century? What research is already extant to support this research?

### Question C: Enslaved and Enslaver Household Biographies

There are several households' biographies that are not yet part of this report due to ongoing research about both enslavers and enslaved children. How can the partnership between The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and the William & Mary Bray School Lab support research into these individuals? Households which need more analysis and are not included in this report are:

- Elizabeth (Brown household)
- John, Anne, William (female Davenport household)<sup>11</sup>
- Dick, Matt, Harry (male Davenport household)<sup>12</sup>
- Sarah (Sarah Page household)
- Charles and Betty (Thompson Households)
- Elizabeth, Grace (Priscilla Bassett Dawson household)
- Locust (Jane Frances Armistead household)<sup>13</sup>
- Joseph, Davy (Christian Burwell Household)<sup>14</sup>
- Elisha, Mary (Jones Household)
- Mary, Harry, John (Ashby Household)

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<sup>11</sup> The research of Patricia Gibbs at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation may support in additional research on the Davenport households and their enslaved laborers.

<sup>12</sup> See the previous footnote.

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that there are descendants from a genealogical collateral line of the Armistead household who Nicole Brown is working with at William & Mary's Bray School Lab to learn more about the legacy of Locust and other enslaved individuals connected to this household. These individuals have not been named in this report because they have not given Mrs. Brown permission to do so.

<sup>14</sup> There is more information on both Joseph and Davy in the Ann Powell Burwell Commonplace book which requires further review. It can be found at Burwell, Ann Powell. *Mss5:5B9585:1, Ann (Powell) Burwell Commonplace Book, 1746-1839, Goochland County, Virginia*. Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War. Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1996. Julie Richter wrote a research paper on this Commonplace book as well.

- (John and Peyton Randolph Households)<sup>15</sup>

#### **Question D: Free Black Household Biographies**

In the case of the free Black Jones and Ashby households, there is a significant amount of information that also necessitates additional time to complete these biographies. How can students at William & Mary, descendants of these households, or other individuals support in a collaborative creation and review of this content? It should also be noted that various resources from The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and self-published descendant monographs are currently available on both families.<sup>16</sup>

#### **Question E: Review of Bruton Parish Baptismal Records**

The Baptismal Records at Bruton Parish need continued and extensive review to ensure that all enslaved individuals identified within the household biographies are truly a comprehensive list of the Black communities' associates with Bray School scholars. How can partnerships between The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, the William & Mary Bray School Lab, and William & Mary's National Institute of American History and Democracy student internship program support this research? Are there other stakeholders who can support this research?

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<sup>15</sup> There is a significant amount of scholarship on John and Peyton Randolph and the households associated with these individuals. For some preliminary information please see "Williamsburg Lodge Tazewell Wing Historical Report, Block 44-1 Building 3K," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1300, accessed November 14, 2022,

<https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1300.xml&highlight=john%20randolph>; "Peyton Randolph House Historical Report Block 28 Building 6 Lots 207 & 237," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1534, accessed March 16, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1534.xml&highlight=>

<sup>16</sup> "Freedom Park Near Williamsburg, VA: Manumission from Slavery in 1804," *Ludwell.Org* (blog), March 17, 2017, <https://www.ludwell.org/freedom-park-williamsburg/>; The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, "Matthew Ashby Biography Bag," Teacher's Institute Biography Bags, 2016; Col. Lafayette Jones Jr, *My Great, Great, Grandfather's Journey to an Island of Freedom in the Middle of Slavery*, 1st edition (Williamsburg, Va: Jenlaf Pub., 2008); Martha W. McCartney, *Twin Paths to Freedom: The History and Archaeology of James City County's Free Black Communities* (Independently published, 2020); William M. Ashby, *Tales Without Hate*. 2nd edition. Upland Press, 1996.

## Household Biographies (In Alphabetical Order)

### Ayscough Household

**Scholars:** Sally (1769)

**Family Members:** Unknown

**Enslavers:** Christopher and Anne Ayscough

**Residence:** Ayscough House

**Household Occupation:** Tavern-Keeping

*This report has excerpted from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Research Report entitled 'Ayscough House and Lot Historical Report Block 8 Building 5' for the biography on this household and its connection to the Williamsburg Bray School. Some additional information on Sally has also been added. Since no footnotes are found within this section of the report for primary sources, this report has reinserted citations where possible:*

Christopher and Anne Ayscough served Governor Fauquier as gardener and cook, respectively. In 1768, Fauquier bequeathed to "my cook Ann Ayscough to (whom I give) one hundred and fifty Pounds sterling in recompence of her great fidelity and attention to me in all my Illnesses, and of the great Oeconomy with which she conducted the Expenses of my kitchen during my residence at Williamsburg as his Majesty's Lieutenant Governor, when it was in her power to have defrauded me of several Hundred Pound".<sup>17</sup> At the sale of Fauquier's personal property, July 1768, Ayscough bought "2 stalled steers, 12 sheep, 9 hogs, 7 bushels wheat, 12 barrels corn, sundry garden tools., 1823 pounds bacon, Negro Lancaster".<sup>18</sup> From these items it looks as though Ayscough was preparing to set up his tavern, or at least carry on his accommodations as advertised.<sup>19</sup>

It is unknown whether Sally was enslaved by the Ayscough family during their residence at the Governor's mansion. Likewise, it is currently unknown if Sally had familial connections to Lancaster, who had previously been enslaved by Governor Fauquier. Regardless, Sally certainly knew Lancaster and likely worked in the tavern that was set up near the Capitol building by the Ayscoughs'. Additionally, there were two other enslaved persons connected with Sally, the Ayscoughs', and the Church of England. Although crossed out, 'Hannah Daughter of Lucy Belonging to Christoper Ayscough' were both referenced in relation to a January 1, 1769 baptismal recording.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "Last Will and Testament of Francis Fauquier" transcribed in "Francis Fauquier's Will," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (1900): 171–77, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1920201>.

<sup>18</sup> Will, estate inventory, and accounts for Francis Fauquier are located in York Co. Wills and Inventories, Book 21:396–404, Book 22:83–103, Library of Virginia.

<sup>19</sup> "Ayscough House and Lot Historical Report Block 8 Building 5," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1113, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1113.xml&highlight=ayscough>

<sup>20</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 66. For digital images of the parish book as well as detailed transcriptions, see also Linda Rowe et. al., "Bruton & Middleton Parish Register

Research has failed to disclose the owner or owners of the Ayscough House before 1768. However, sources point to the fact that Christopher Ayscough, who had served as a gardener at the Palace under Fauquier, later acquired a location for his tavern somewhere in this area.<sup>21</sup> From what we know, the structure currently on the property served both as the tavern and the household residence.

### **Blaikley Household**

**Scholars: Jenny (1769), Jack (1769)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslaver: Catherine Blaikley**

**Residence: Blaikley-Durfey House**

**Household Occupation: Midwifery**

Catherine Blaikley lived and worked in Williamsburg as a midwife between approximately 1736 to 1771.<sup>22</sup> Several references have been found in extant records connecting Blaikley within the Williamsburg area:

1. On December 1, 1738 a plantation was advertised for sale in Brunswick County. Those interested should "Enquire of Mrs. Blaikley, in Williamsburg."<sup>23</sup>
2. In February 1743 Blaikley received a bequest from her brother, John Kaidyce of York County.<sup>24</sup>
3. In 1748 Blaikley is listed as having an enslaved child named Lucy baptized in Bruton Parish on August 7, 1748.<sup>25</sup>
4. On June 7, 1767, Bruton Parish lists 'Anthony Gabril Son Salley Belonging Catharine Blakely' in its baptismal register.<sup>26</sup>
5. Between 1765-67 Blaikley is listed as owner of enslaved individuals, including Bray School scholars Jenny and Jack.<sup>27</sup>

1662-1797," March 7, 2017, <http://heritagecenter.brutonparish.org/book/bruton-middleton-parish-register-1662-1797>

<sup>21</sup> "Ayscough House and Lot Historical Report Block 8 Building 5," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1113, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1113.xml&highlight=ayscough>

<sup>22</sup> "Blaikley-Durfey House Historical Report Block 14 Building 16C Lot 350," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1299, 3-4, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1299.xml&highlight=blaikley>

<sup>23</sup> William Parks, *The Virginia Gazette*, December 1, 1734, page 4, column 2.

<sup>24</sup> Will, estate inventory, and accounts for John Kaydice are located in York Co. Wills and Inventories, Book 19:168, Library of Virginia.

<sup>25</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1797 1662), 40. For digital images of the parish book as well as detailed transcriptions, see also Linda Rowe et. al., "Bruton & Middleton Parish Register 1662-1797," March 7, 2017, <http://heritagecenter.brutonparish.org/book/bruton-middleton-parish-register-1662-1797>

<sup>26</sup> Bruton Parish, 64.

<sup>27</sup> William Archer Rutherford Goodwin, *The Record of Bruton Parish Church*, ed. Mary Frances Goodwin (Richmond, Va: Dietz Press, 1941), 154.

In addition to these sources, Blaikley also appears in *The Virginia Gazette*. In 1769, she lost a pocketbook and reported its loss:

WILLIAMSBURG, August 8, 1769.

LOST

A RED Morocco POCKET BOOK, containing about seven or eight pounds in paper money, chiefly in 40 and 20 s. bills some small silver, and sundry receipts, and other papers and memorandums. The book has a common clasp, and was tied round with a piece of narrow red tape. The paper money was folded up in a piece of paper, on which was a memorandum about some drugs; and in the book there was a minute made of some pork, viz: three hogs and a half, that I lent some years ago. Whoever brings the book and its contents to me, shall have TEN SHILLINGS reward.<sup>28</sup>

Blaikley's obituary was also recorded after her death in Purdie & Dixon's *Virginia Gazette*:

October 24, 1771

DEATHS

Mrs. CATHARINE BLAIKLEY, of this City, in the seventy sixth Year of her Age; an eminent Midwife, and who, in-the course of her Practice, brought upwards of three Thousand Children into the World.<sup>29</sup>

The best option for where Catharine Blaikley and her household lived appears to be at what we now know as the Blaikley-Durfey House. The two enslaved students who attended the Bray School – Jenny and Jack – likely lived on the property. It is unknown whether or not they supported Blaikley in her midwifery business, although many Black women and girls actively participated in midwifery during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> William Rind, *The Virginia Gazette*, August 10, 1769, page 3, column 2.

<sup>29</sup> "Blaikley-Durfey House Historical Report Block 14 Building 16C Lot 350," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Research Report 1303 (Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1940), <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1303.xml&highlight=>

<sup>30</sup> "A Brief History of Midwifery in America," Oregon Health & State University, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://www.ohsu.edu/womens-health/brief-history-midwifery-america>; "The Historical Significance of Doulas and Midwives," National Museum of African American History and Culture, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/historical-significance-doulas-and-midwives>; Sara Collini, "George Washington's Midwives," *Roundtable* (blog), June 19, 2019, <https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/roundtable/george-washingtons-midwives>. For more information on Black midwives, please also see Julie Richter and Jody L. Allen, "Historical Overview of Africans and African Americans in Yorktown, at the Moore House, and on Battlefield Property, 1635-1867 Colonial National Historical Park (Vol. 1)" (2012). National Park Services / Eastern National. <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/asbook/42> and Lorena S Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community*, (Charlottesville, VA: UVA Press, 1997).

### **Blair Household**

**Scholars:** Jane (1762), John (1762), Dolly/Doll (1762, 1765), Elizabeth (1765), Fanny (1765), Isaac Bee (1765) Catherine (1765), Johanna Bee (1765, 1769), Nancy (1769), Clara Bee (1769)

**Family Members:** Rachel (likely mother of Nancy), John Insko Bee (father of Isaac, Clara, and Johanna Bee), Lucy (likely mother of John)

**Enslaver:** John Blair Sr. and Mary Blair (née Munro)

**Residence:** Blair House

**Occupation:** Gentry

According to *The Encyclopedia Virginia*:

John Blair sat on the governor's Council (1745–1770), becoming its president in 1757 and serving as acting governor on four occasions. Born in Scotland, he came to Virginia as a child, living in Williamsburg and earning a degree there at the College of William and Mary, founded by his uncle, James Blair. John Blair served as deputy auditor general from 1728 until 1771, reforming and improving the procedures by which the government collected revenue. In addition, he served as York County justice of the peace (1724–1745) and as a naval officer on the James River (1727–1728). Upon the death of his father, Archibald Blair, he joined the House of Burgesses representing Jamestown (1724–1736). In 1736, he was elected as a burgess from Williamsburg, serving until 1740. He is probably the same John Blair who also served as mayor of Williamsburg in 1751. After the governor's death and in ill health himself, Blair resigned from the Council in 1770 rather than serve as acting governor a fifth time. He died in 1771.<sup>31</sup>

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Research Report entitled “John Blair House Historical Report Block 22 Building 5 Lot” goes into further detail about the likely residence of John Blair Sr. and the enslaved, men, women, and children who lived in late eighteenth-century Williamsburg:

Whether John Blair Sr. ever used the Blair house as his dwelling is still a question open to interpretation. It is entirely possible that his son, John Blair Jr., accepted as his residence the houses and lots which his father was occupying at the time of his death and devised to him by his father's will. In the will of the father, John Blair Jr. was bequeathed "all those lots and houses where I now live, and also the four lots whereon my store-house stands with all Their appurtenances to him and his heirs forever."

The phrase, "where I now live", is open to two interpretations: first, it may mean that the senior Blair had lived elsewhere in Williamsburg but was living on this

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<sup>31</sup> John Van Horne and Dictionary of Virginia Biography, “John Blair (ca. 1687–1771) ,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*, accessed September 19, 2023, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/blair-john-ca-1687-1771/>



property at the time of making his will in October 1771; second, it may mean that the elder Blair was living on other lots held by him in Williamsburg.<sup>32</sup>

Regardless, it appears likely that John Blair Sr. was living on this property based on research conducted by Julie Richter.<sup>33</sup> This fact is salient because it solidifies the residence of many Bray School scholars during the operation of the Williamsburg Bray School.

The Blair household had several enslaved men, women, and children recorded as baptized in Bruton Parish's records. Unless otherwise noted, it should be assumed that the majority of the individuals mentioned here are infants or children.<sup>34</sup> Although more research needs to be conducted to determine if these enslaved individuals were all owned by John Blair Sr., they were certainly connected to Blair households living in Williamsburg. They are:

Feby and Betty, September 6, 1747<sup>35</sup>

Anne Williams and an unnamed child, November 6, 1748<sup>36</sup>

Richard, May 7, 1749<sup>37</sup>

Chloe, September 3, 1749<sup>38</sup>

Chloe, March 4, 1750<sup>39</sup>

Mary, October 6, 1751<sup>40</sup>

Norfolk, October 6, 1751<sup>41</sup>

Anthony Jasper, June 1, 1752<sup>42</sup>

Ephraim Williams, March 7, 1753<sup>43</sup>

Agar, June 3, 1754<sup>44</sup>

Lucy, daughter of Dinah (born May 1761), September 6, 1761<sup>45</sup>

Ann, daughter of Barbara, June [5, 1762]<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> "John Blair House Historical Report Block 22 Building 5 Lot 36," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Research Report Series, Report 1493, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1493.xml&highlight=blair>

<sup>33</sup> Julie Richter, "Education and the Bee Family of Williamsburg" (Lecture, Annual Lemon Project Symposium, The College of William & Mary, March 2019).

<sup>34</sup> For more information on baptismal rates within the first 12 months of an enslaved child's life, see also Antonio T. Bly, "'Reed through the Bybell': Slave Education in Early Virginia," *Book History* 16 (2013): 1–33.

<sup>35</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662–1769), 39.

<sup>36</sup> Bruton Parish, 40. This is an adult baptism.

<sup>37</sup> Bruton Parish, 41. This is an adult baptism.

<sup>38</sup> Bruton Parish, 42.

<sup>39</sup> Bruton Parish, 45. It is possible that the previous Chloe is the same Chloe baptized in 1750, which would make the previous date likely a birth date. However, more research should be conducted.

<sup>40</sup> Bruton Parish, 47.

<sup>41</sup> Bruton Parish, 47.

<sup>42</sup> Bruton Parish, 48.

<sup>43</sup> Bruton Parish, 49.

<sup>44</sup> Bruton Parish, 51. This is an adult baptism.

<sup>45</sup> Bruton parish, 22.

<sup>46</sup> Bruton Parish, 53.

John, son of Lucy, April 13, 1766<sup>47</sup>

"A Negro Infant" and Emanul, son of Sarrah, June 29, 1766<sup>48</sup>

Unnamed child of Grace, September 7, 1766<sup>49</sup>

Nancy, daughter of Rachel, March 1, 1767<sup>50</sup>

John Milener, son of Rachel, October 26, 1767<sup>51</sup>

Jane Herriot Pow, daughter of Barbara (born July 24, 1768), October 2, 1768<sup>52</sup>

Another important household connected to John Blair Sr. is that of the Bee family.<sup>53</sup> Isaac was the son of John Insko Bee, a free Black man. His mother was possibly Fanny, an enslaved domestic of John Blair. Inheriting the status of his mother, Isaac was also born enslaved. We know that Isaac was either nine or had just turned ten when Ann Wager began teaching him in 1765. His sisters, Clara and Johanna, also attended the school four years later.<sup>54</sup>

After the death of John Blair in 1771, Isaac was passed on as human property to Lewis Burwell. Burwell was a grandson of John Blair and a resident of Mecklenburg County. This move ripped Isaac from everything he had ever known. This disruption to his life, familial ties, and community eventually contributed to his escape from Virginia's Southside region during the summer of 1774.<sup>55</sup> Burwell placed an advertisement in the *Virginia Gazette* that fall to reclaim Isaac:

RUN away from the Subscriber, about two Month ago, a likely Mulatto Lad named ISAAC BEE, ... is well known around Williamsburg, where I am informed he has been several TIMES seen since his Elopement. He is between eighteen and nineteen Years of Age, low of Stature, and thinks he has a Right to his Freedom, because his Father was a Freeman,

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<sup>47</sup> Bruton Parish, 60.

<sup>48</sup> Bruton Parish, 61.

<sup>49</sup> Bruton Parish, 62.

<sup>50</sup> Bruton Parish, 63.

<sup>51</sup> Bruton Parish, 85. Since the page number is torn out in the manuscript, I have noted the digital page number on the Bruton Heritage database. For more information, visit Linda Rowe et. al., "Bruton & Middleton Parish Register 1662-1797," Text, March 7, 2017, <http://heritagecenter.brutonparish.org/book/bruton-middleton-parish-register-1662-1797>

<sup>52</sup> Bruton Parish, 65.

<sup>53</sup> "The Geography of Slavery," accessed November 3, 2021,

[http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos/search/search\\_ads.php?page=0&enslaved\\_name=bel&enslaved\\_sex=all&enslaved\\_age\\_ops=%253D&enslaved\\_age=&enslaved\\_skills=all&subscriber=&pub\\_year\\_ops=%253D&pub\\_year=all&pub\\_location=all&ad\\_type=all&intent=all&state=&locale=all&geog\\_type=all&rows=10](http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos/search/search_ads.php?page=0&enslaved_name=bel&enslaved_sex=all&enslaved_age_ops=%253D&enslaved_age=&enslaved_skills=all&subscriber=&pub_year_ops=%253D&pub_year=all&pub_location=all&ad_type=all&intent=all&state=&locale=all&geog_type=all&rows=10); Antonio T. Bly, "In Pursuit of Letters: A History of the Bray Schools for Enslaved Children in Colonial Virginia," *History of Education Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (2011): 429–59; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, *Enslaving Virginia* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1998). Further research on the Bee household be found in the writing of Antonio T. Bly as well as the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Training Manual, *Enslaving Virginia*.

<sup>54</sup> Julie Richter, "Education and the Bee Family of Williamsburg." Lecture presented at the Annual Lemon Project Symposium, Williamsburg, VA, March 2019; [Enclosure: List of Negro Children], November 1765; in Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 240; [Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 16 February 1769, in Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 277-278.

<sup>55</sup> *Enslaving Virginia*, 605.

and I suppose he will endeavour to pass for one. He can read, but I do not know that he can write; however, he may easily get some one to forge a Pass for him...<sup>56</sup>

Isaac may have used his skills acquired from the Bray School to escape from bondage, either forging freedom papers or trying to pass as a free man. In this case, the application of those skills would have directly contradicted whatever he was taught at the Williamsburg Bray School.

Isaac was eventually recaptured by Lewis Burwell, based on the 1782 to 1785 property tax records for Mecklenburg County. Regardless of how the law and his master saw him, Isaac knew his personhood was worth recognizing. He may have instilled these beliefs into John Bee, another enslaved individual on Burwell's property. It is possible that John Bee was his son, named "after Bee's father, if not the apostle John."<sup>57</sup>

Isaac appears a few more times in the historical record after his recapture and enslavement in Mecklenburg.<sup>58</sup> His final mention is in a second runaway ad. Misspelled as "Isaac Bel," he is described as being "between thirty and forty years of age...he can both read and write, and in all probability he may write him a fee pass, or endeavour to pass for a freeman."<sup>59</sup>

### **Campbell Household**

**Scholars:** London (1762), Aggy (1762), Shropshire (1762), Young (1765), Mary. (1765, 1769), Sally (1769), Sukey (1769)

**Family Members:** Sally/Salley and Sukey (likely siblings), Sarah (likely mother of Sally and Sukey), Frances (likely sibling of Sally and Sukey)

**Enslaver:** Christiana Campbell (née Burdett)

**Residence:** The Anderson House

**Household Occupation:** Tavern Keeping

Christiana Campbell became a tavern-keeper in Williamsburg after the death of her husband. The widowed Campbell kept a tavern in Williamsburg for many years at what is now known as the Anderson House, most notably between 1760 and 1771. Apparently, Campbell did not own property in the city until ca. 1771, or more probably 1774. All of her Bray School students would have lived on this property prior to her move to what we now know as Campbell's Tavern.<sup>60</sup> It should be noted that London, Aggy, and Shropshire were approximately

<sup>56</sup> *Enslaving Virginia*, 605.

<sup>57</sup> Bly, "In Pursuit of Letters," 458-459.

<sup>58</sup> Both Tonia Merideth and Elizabeth Drembus of William & Mary's Bray School Lab are currently conducting more research on the entire Bee family. Their research is ongoing, but portions of it have been shared and can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhBysMdlfYg>

<sup>59</sup> "Thirty Dollars Reward," *The Virginia Gazette* (Davis), 13 March 1793.

<sup>60</sup> Mary A. Stephenson, "James Anderson House Historical Report, Block 10 Building 22 Lot 18," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Research Report series 1224, accessed January 11, 2024, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1224.xml&highlight=>

7-years-old, 6-years-old, and 6-years-old, respectively, when they attended the Bray School.<sup>61</sup> They likely labored in the tavern performing domestic, household, and business-related activities

Campbell and several enslaved people from her tavern appear multiple times in the Bruton Parish church records. Indeed, the first reference to Campbell living in Williamsburg after the death of her husband is when London (likely the same Bray School student referenced in the 1762 student list) is baptized on October 7, 1753. In this case, Campbell's name is misspelled 'Campell'.<sup>62</sup>

It appears that the trend of misspelling Christiana Campbell's name is frequent and varied in the Bruton Parish church records. Via these records, enslaved people such as Joseph Fleming and his mother Nelly, Sukey, Sally/Salley (both of which appear to be Bray School students), Frances, and their mother Sarah also clearly into view.<sup>63</sup> Through a careful and close analysis of these records and variety a ways names may be spelled (itself a standard genealogical practice), historians can learn much about the network of Bray school students and their community associates with Campbell's tavern.<sup>64</sup>

### **James Carter Household**

**Scholars: George (1762), Nanny (1765)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslavers: Enslaver: Dr. James Carter and Sarah Carter (née Saunders)**

**Residence: The Unicorn's Horn**

**Household Occupation: Doctor, Surgeon, and Apothecary; attending physician to William & Mary**

Although there were two Dr. Carters in this period (both brothers), it is Dr. James Carter who enslaved George and Nanny. Information on Carter can be found in the Colonial Williamsburg research report entitled "Brush-Everard House Historical Report Block 29 Building 10 Lots 165 & 166":

James Carter first advertised drugs and medicines for sale in May 1751. The following year his shop, the "Unicorn's Horn", was "next Door to the Printing Office." In 1755 the "Unicorn's Horn" was described as near the Raleigh Tavern. In 1768 James Carter and Andrew Anderson purchased the druggist shop of William Biers. This partnership lasted for three years. In 1773 Carter formed a partnership with his brother William "purely that I may have an opportunity to collect my Debts, and to settle all my accounts with my customers to this time." An account of "The Country for the Prisoners to James &

<sup>61</sup> "[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 30 September 1762," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 188.

<sup>62</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 49. Julie Richter also cites this reference as being related to Christiana Campbell in Julie Richter, "Christiana Campbell (ca. 1723–1792)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://encyclopediaofvirginia.org/entries/campbell-christiana-ca-1723-1792/>

<sup>63</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 53, 55, 57, 63.

<sup>64</sup> *Different Name, Same Person* (Ancestry Shorts, 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQgMFN7OfPQ>.

William Carter" between May 19, 1773, and October 23, 1774, records visits and charges for drugs. The partnership with his brother was dissolved on June 1, 1779, when William purchased James' share in the apothecary shop.<sup>65</sup>

We know from medical records in Williamsburg that Dr. James Carter treated Indigenous peoples, Anglo-Virginian students, and those of African descent for William & Mary, in addition to furnishing provisions between 1764 and 1777.<sup>66</sup>

Very little is known currently about Nanny and George, although it is likely that they later worked in Carter's household, and possibly his apothecary shop or surgical business. When George attended the Bray School in 1762 he was six-years-old.<sup>67</sup> Nanny's age when she attended the Bray School is unknown; however, there is a reference to a young child named Nanny being baptized at Bruton Parish on May 6, 1762 with an enslaver named 'Mr. Carter'; this would possibly make her three- or four-years-old at the time of her attendance.<sup>68</sup> Two other enslaved peoples were referenced in a child baptismal record in the home of James Carter on July 7, 1765: Salley and her mother Bridget.<sup>69</sup>

### **Charlton Household<sup>70</sup>**

**Scholars:** Davy (1765), Nancy (1765)

**Family Members:** Unknown

**Enslavers:** Edward Charlton and Jane Charlton (née Hunter)

**Residence:** Charlton House

**Household Occupation:** Wig Making (Edward Charlton) and Millinery (Jane Hunter Charlton)

Edward Charlton originally came to Virginia in 1752, and shortly thereafter entered a partnership with Richard Gamble, an established wigmaker in Williamsburg. The Charltons and their enslaved laborers were occupants of the Charlton House (as defined today) or the outbuildings on that property by 1772, and possibly as early as 1769, as suggested by the evidence from John Carter's advertisements. Charlton's partnership as a wigmaker with Gamble ended after his death in 1755. Whether or not Charlton continued to work as a wigmaker in

<sup>65</sup> "Brush-Everard House Historical Report Block 29 Building 10 Lots 165 & 166," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library," Report Series 1572, 87-92, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1572.xml&highlight=dr.%20carter>. There is a thorough biography of Dr. James Carter between pages 87 and 92, part of which have been excerpted for this biography.

<sup>66</sup> College of William and Mary Office of the Bursar, "Office of the Bursar Records: Account Books 1745-1875," January 1, 1745, <https://digitalarchive.wm.edu/xmlui/handle/10288/13360>. All of the original bursar records have been digitally scanned and can be found online. The previously mentioned Brush-Everard House Historical Report also has transcriptions of some of these records.

<sup>67</sup> "[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 30 September 1762," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 188.

<sup>68</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 51.

<sup>69</sup> Bruton Parish, 58.

<sup>70</sup> More research should be conducted on the last will and testament of Jane Hunter Charlton to help trace the legacy of Davy and Nancy. For more information on this account book, please consult with Julie Richter at [cjrich@wm.edu](mailto:cjrich@wm.edu)

Williamsburg, after his partner's death, is unknown. By 1769, however, Charlton was making wigs in Williamsburg according to entries in his account book.<sup>71</sup>

Not much is known about Nanny or Davy. However, Edward Charlton did enslave at least four other people outside of Nanny and Davy who are connected to the Anglican Church. 'Joseph Son of Betty' are names both recorded in the baptismal records of Bruton Parish on September 1, 1765.<sup>72</sup> 'Francis son of Elizabeth' are enslaved names also recorded with a January 10, 1768 baptismal date.<sup>73</sup> We also know that a high concentration of students lived on the same corridor as the Charlton House. It is very likely that Nancy and Davy were familiar with several other Bray School students outside of the classroom.<sup>74</sup>

### **Carter Nicholas Household**

**Scholar: Hannah (1762), Sarah (1769)**

**Family Members: Lucy/Lucey (mother of Sarah); Caesar (brother of Sarah)**

**Enslaver: Robert Carter Nicholas and Ann Cary Nicholas**

**Household Occupation: Gentry**

Unfortunately, between Robert Carter Nicholas selling the Carter House in 1761 and the reference to his living on lot 4 in 1770, no information exists to where his home was. The most substantial evidence we have in our research reports indicates that he was on Lot 4 at some point while the Bray School was operating with his entire household. This places his house somewhere near the intersection of modern-day W. Francis Street and S. England Street.<sup>75</sup>

When the courthouse was sold with surrounding lots, apparently, Robert Carter Nicholas was the buyer, and lived thereon from 1770 until the latter part of 1777. On October 17, 1777, Nicholas advertised in the *Virginia Gazette* that his property was for sale. Nicholas does write about the Bray School and Hannah, albeit obliquely:

<sup>71</sup> "Archaeological Excavations at the Charlton House Site, Williamsburg, Virginia," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library," Report Series 1717, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1717.xml&highlight=coffeehouse>

<sup>72</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 58.

<sup>73</sup> Bruton Parish, 66.

<sup>74</sup> The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Aaron Lovejoy, and Nicole Brown, "Williamsburg Bray School: Digital Map," non-profit, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, February 3, 2023, <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=9e40957d575841f78abf8c7454bb556a>.

<sup>75</sup> "Robert Carter House Historical Report Block 30-2 Building 13 Lots 333-336," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1605, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1605.xml&highlight=robert%20carter%20nicholas>; "James City Court House Site (Francis Street) Historical Report Block 4 Building 4," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1073, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1073.xml&highlight=robert%20carter%20nicholas>

I fear that most of the good Principles, which they are taught at School, are soon effaced, when they get Home...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 turn out a sad Jade, notwithstanding all we can do to reform her.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to Hannah, and young girl named Sarah also attended the Bray School from the Nicholas household in 1769.<sup>77</sup> There are also several other enslaved peoples affiliated with the Nicholas household in Bruton's parish records. They are:

"A Negroe child", April 19, 1761<sup>78</sup>

Diana, daughter of Betty, March 4, 176[3]<sup>79</sup>

Sarah, daughter to Lucey, September 2, 1764<sup>80</sup>

Ceasar, son of Lucy, August 2, 1767<sup>81</sup>

It appears likely that Bray School scholar Sarah's mother was Lucy/Lucey. This would also mean her brother's name was Caesar. Sarah would have been at least four years old at the time of her attendance at the Bray School.

### **Carter Household**

**Scholar: Dennis (1769)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslaver: Robert Carter III and Frances Tasker Carter**

**Household Occupation: Gentry**

In 1761, Robert Carter Nicholas conveyed what we know as the Carter House to Robert Carter of "Nomini Hall," President of the Governor's Council. Carter lived here for nearly eleven

<sup>76</sup> "Robert Carter Nicholas to Rev. John Waring, 13 September 1765," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 236. While Hannah's name is not mentioned in this letter, the only enslaved individual we currently know Robert Carter Nicholas sent to the Bray School prior to 1769 was a young girl named Hannah. Hannah appears in the 1762 student list exactly three years prior to this letter. To see the student list which mentions Hannah, please refer to "[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 30 September 1762," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 188.

<sup>77</sup> "[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 16 February 1769," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 277–78.

<sup>78</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 23.

<sup>79</sup> Bruton Parish, 55.

<sup>80</sup> Bruton Parish, 56. Noted as a child baptism.

<sup>81</sup> Bruton Parish, 64. Noted as an infant baptism.

years with his large family. He then removed to "Nomini Hall," but he continued to own the property until 1801 when it came into the possession of Robert Saunders, Sr.<sup>82</sup>

Dennis's baptism is recorded in Bruton Parish on August 30, 1761, making him approximately eight years old when he attended the Bray School in 1769.<sup>83</sup> There are several enslaved men, women, and children in the household of Robert Carter III listed in the baptismal and birth records for Bruton Parish. They are:

Milly, daughter of Dorcas (March the 5, 17[62])<sup>84</sup>

Olive, son Sarah (July 7, 1765)<sup>85</sup>

Mary Jones, daughter of Martha (July 6, 1766)<sup>86</sup>

Sarah, a "Negro Woman" (April 5, 1767)<sup>87</sup>

James, an "Old Negro Man" (August 2, 1767)<sup>88</sup>

Catheren, daughter of Lucy (October 4, 1767)<sup>89</sup>

References to Dennis in the diary of Philip Vickers Fithian indicate that he left the city with the Carter Household in 1772. I have excerpted from his diary below:

***Saturday – October 9, 1773.***

Rode to the *Bridge*, & bought a Saddle, Bridle, Spurrs, &c. for my intended Journey—  
Returned before Evening, & of Saml Dennis bought a Pr of Saddle-Bags.—<sup>90</sup>

***Saturday- December 25, 1773***

I gave to *Dennis* the Boy who waits at Table half a *Bit*—So that the sum of my Donations to the Servants, for this Christmas appears to be five Bits, a Bit is a pisterene bisected; or an English sixpence, & passes here for seven pence Halfpenny, the whole is *3s 1½d.*<sup>91</sup>

***Friday- January 7, 1774***

This afternoon *Dennis*, a Boy of about twelve Years old, one of the Waiters at Table, as he was standing in the front Door which is vastly huge & heavy; the Door flew up, and

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<sup>82</sup> "Robert Carter House Historical Report Block 30-2 Building 13 Lots 333-336," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1607, accessed November 22, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1607.xml&highlight=>.

<sup>83</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 23.

<sup>84</sup> Bruton Parish, 53. The year of the baptism was cut off, but based on other dates on the page it seems most likely that it occurred in 1762.

<sup>85</sup> Bruton Parish, 58.

<sup>86</sup> Bruton Parish, 61.

<sup>87</sup> Bruton Parish, 63.

<sup>88</sup> Bruton Parish, 64.

<sup>89</sup> Bruton Parish, 65.

<sup>90</sup> Philip Vickers Fithian, *Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774; a Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion.*, ed. Hunter Dickinson Farish (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg, 1957), 16. Accessed online January 11, 2024, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/40044/40044-h/40044-h.htm>

<sup>91</sup> Philip Vickers Fithian, *Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774*, 40.



drew off the Skin & Flesh from his middle Finger caught between, took off the first Joint, and left the Bone of the greater part of the Rest of the Finger naked.<sup>92</sup>

**Monday- January 17, 1774**

I gave Dennis the Waiter half a Bit a Present<sup>93</sup>

**Friday- July 8, 1774**

We stood chattering with the old African [Dadda Gumby], or rather he stood chattering with us, relating one story after another, leaving some of his Narrations half untold, beginning others in the middle having entered into the true Spirit of Loquacity—Dennis, in the Height of a Story about his Grandfathers Uncle's harpooning a *Porpoise* summoned me to Coffee.<sup>94</sup>

**Monday- August 8, 1774**

All once more in School—Dined with us *George Lee* & Mr *Grubb*—They spent the afternoon at the great House—After Coffee Lee rode Home—Mr *Grubb* staid with us all night—Dennis came into our Room to bring us a Bowl of Punch; Grubb shut the Door, and accused him of having been caught with Bett, the Dairy Girl, in the Stable last Saturday Night—Dennis seem'd in great distress, he denied the Fact tho' with great steadiness—Nelson our Boy came in with a candle—Dennis here, says *Grubb* to *Nelson*, has been accusing you, Sir, of several crimes; he says you gave him half a *Bitt* last Saturday Night, to stand at the Stable-Door while he with Bett—Nelson star'd—Grubb opened a huge *Molls Atlas* that lay in the Room; & read off their Case & indictment—The Boys seem'd crazy—We dismiss'd them when all the novelty was over, but they darted like Indians so soon as they were at liberty.<sup>95</sup>

**Saturday – September 3, 1774**

*Dennis* the Lad who waits at Table, I took into the School to day at his Fathers request, He can spell words of one syllable pretty readily. He is to come as he finds opportunity.<sup>96</sup>

**Thursday-- October 20, 1774.**

I rose by three, & left Home by half after four—Gave Nelson & Dennis half a Bit a piece—<sup>97</sup>

**Chiswell Household**

**Scholars:** Edmund (1765), Johnny (1765), Jack (1769)

**Family Members:** Unknown

**Enslavers:** Col. John Chiswell and Elizabeth Chiswell (née Randolph)

**Residence:** Chiswell-Bucktrout House

<sup>92</sup> Philip Vickers Fithian, 51.

<sup>93</sup> Fithian, 56.

<sup>94</sup> Fithian, 134-135.

<sup>95</sup> Fithian, 157.

<sup>96</sup> Fithian, 182.

<sup>97</sup> Fithian, 208

## Household Occupation: Gentry

Edmund and Johnny, two Williamsburg Bray school students and enslaved household domestics, both attended the Bray school in 1765.<sup>98</sup> Their enslaver, Col. John Chiswell, was a noted planter and Williamsburg community member who found himself embroiled in a notorious murder case less than one year after the boys attended the Bray School. Just as other enslavers, it was likely that Chiswell was expecting Wager's instruction to prepare Edmund and Johnny to be footmen or manservants; given that enslaved students were often only permitted "six months to two or two & an half Years" of formal instruction at the Bray School, it is possible that either one of them had left the school and were waiting upon Col. Chiswell when he found himself at Mosby Tavern in Cumberland County, Virginia, during the summer of 1766.<sup>99</sup> Whether one of Wager's students was there the night of Routledge's murder or not, they certainly were familiar with the incident.

Entering into a violent argument with a man called Robert Routledge, Chiswell eventually stabbed the man with a sword while swearing "he is dead, and I killed him."<sup>100</sup> Taken from Cumberland County to Williamsburg to await trial, Chiswell eventually died of "nervous fits" just days prior to his trial in October 1766.<sup>101</sup> While the murder has been well-researched, often overlooked is the "servant" also unwillingly involved in the murder. In eighteenth century, Virginia, the term servant often described an enslaved person.<sup>102</sup> According to one account of the incident, the enslaved individual was ordered "to bring [Chiswell's] sword; but as that was in another house, no one suspected it being brought; however, on threatening to kill his servant if he did not comply, the lad went for the sword."<sup>103</sup> In the deposition taken upon Chiswell's arrest, it was stated that "Col. Chiswell ordered his servant to bring his sword, and threatened to kill him if he disobeyed."<sup>104</sup> In both statements, the enslaved person either refused or was reluctant to retrieve an object that may be used to commit murder. And in both instances, they were told that it would be his life first if the weapon was not brought forward. It should be noted that there were no legal protections for enslaved boys (or girls) trapped in such a situation. According to Virginia's 1669 legislation on "the casual killing of slaves," if a slave was

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<sup>98</sup> "[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], November 1765," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 241–42.

<sup>99</sup> [Enclosure: List of Negro Children], November 1765; in Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy*, 241.; *Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>100</sup> "Dikephilos", *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie & Dixon), 18 July 1766, 2.

<sup>101</sup> "Williamsburg, October 17", *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie & Dixon), 17 October 1766, 2. Purdie & Dixon, *The Virginia Gazette*, October 17, 1766 page 2.

<sup>102</sup> "Dikephilos," *The Virginia Gazette*, 2.

<sup>103</sup> "'To Mess. Purdie & Dixon, Printers in Wmsburg", *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie & Dixon), 18 July 1766, 2.

<sup>104</sup> "The Deposition of John Wayles, taken before the Honourable John Blair, William Byrd, and Presley Thornton, Esquires, three of the Judges of the Honourable the General Court", *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie & Dixon), 12 September 1766, 2.

killed while resisting their master, the act was presumed not to have occurred with “premeditated [sic] malice.”<sup>105</sup>

The home currently known as the Chiswell-Bucktrout house lies in that part of Williamsburg which was in James City County; it is difficult if not impossible to get clear titles as court records were largely destroyed by fire during the Civil War. However, the first known owner and occupant was Colonel John Chiswell who was on the location prior to 1766 at the time of his death. Following his death, there was a sale of Chiswell's property though Elizabeth Randolph Chiswell the widow may have continued to live at the property until the sale in 1770. Sometime prior to 1779 Benjamin Bucktrout, a carpenter and cabinetmaker, apparently had acquired the property. Considering that Elizabeth Chiswell continued to send scholars to the Bray School after the demise of her husband, it seems likely that Edmund, Johnny, and Jack continued to live at this residence until at least 1770.<sup>106</sup>

In addition to Edmund and Johnny, another enslaved child named Jack also attended the Bray School in 1769.<sup>107</sup> There were also several other enslaved people connected to the Chiswell household who are recorded in Bruton Parish's baptismal and birth records. They are:

Jane, July 1, 1753<sup>108</sup>

Enslaved daughter of Eve, September 4, 1763<sup>109</sup>

[illegible] Wallas, son of Sarah, January 6, 1765<sup>110</sup>

Jemmy, son of Lidia, March 17, 1765<sup>111</sup>

Bella, daughter of Eve, March 2, 1766<sup>112</sup>

Elizabeth, daughter of Lucy, July 6, 1766<sup>113</sup>

Robert, son of Lucy, October 4, 1767<sup>114</sup>

Gregory, son of Eve, October 9, 1768<sup>115</sup>

<sup>105</sup> William Waller Hening, *The statutes at large; being a collection of all the laws of Virginia, from the first session of the Legislature in the year 1619*, Vol. 2 (Charlottesville: Published for the Jamestown Foundation of the Commonwealth of Virginia by the University Press of Virginia, 1969), 270-271.

<sup>106</sup> “Chiswell-Bucktrout House Historical Report, Block 2 Building 17 Lot 253-254,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, accessed April 29, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1018.xml&highlight=>

<sup>107</sup> “[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 16 February 1769,” in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 277–78.

<sup>108</sup> Bruton Parish, “Bruton & Middleton Parish Register 1662-1797,” 49.

<sup>109</sup> Bruton Parish, 54.

<sup>110</sup> Bruton Parish, 56.

<sup>111</sup> Bruton Parish, 57.

<sup>112</sup> Bruton Parish, 60.

<sup>113</sup> Bruton Parish, 61.

<sup>114</sup> Bruton Parish, 86. Since the page number is torn out in the manuscript, I have noted the digital page number on the Bruton Heritage database. For more information, visit admin, “Bruton & Middleton Parish Register 1662-1797.”

<sup>115</sup> Bruton Parish, 65.

**Cocke Household****Scholar: Mourning (1769)****Family Members: Easter (mother)****Enslaver: James Cocke****Residence: No longer extant, near current location of Bruton Parish Heritage Center & Gift Shop)****Household Occupation: Clerk and Merchant**

James Cocke was a merchant and clerk to Treasurer & Speaker John Robinson for many years. In 1762 he purchased Lot 35 (near what is now the Bruton Parish [Heritage Center](#)) and erected a building on his property to house the Treasurer's files. It was used as an office for four years. In 1769 Cocke seems to have formed a partnership with James Wray in the mercantile business. The Frenchman's Map of Williamsburg (1782) shows a small house corner of the lot west with two other small houses eastward.<sup>116</sup>

Mourning first appears in the written record with her mother, Easter. Both Mourning and Easter are recorded in the Bruton Parish register on February 16, 1763. This baptism record likely ties the date in some way close to that day of her birth.<sup>117</sup> Between the age of six and twenty-five, Mourning was gifted or sold to three different people across two households. Eventually in the house of Sarah Lister, Mourning was rented out to Humphry Harwood for the sum of £4. Enslaved rental was extremely common in colonial Virginia, and likely impacted several different Bray School students during their lifetimes.<sup>118</sup>

There are other connections between enslaved peoples in the Cocke household to the Anglican Church. According to Bruton Parish records, 'William Pare Son of Bello' appears on November 1, 1767, appears in a baptismal record.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, 'Tom Son of Betty' is recorded in a baptism on August 17, 1768.<sup>120</sup> Tom, Mourning, William Pare, Easter, Bello, and Betty would certainly have known one another and built community both living and working together under the enslavement of James Cocke.

<sup>116</sup> "Block 22 Lot 35 Historical Report," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1499, accessed November 14, 2022,

<https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1499.xml&highlight=james%20cocke>

<sup>117</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record", 53. Again, transcriptions can be found in Linda Rowe et. al, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Register 1662-1797," March 7, 2017,

<http://heritagecenter.bruntonparish.org/book/bruton-middleton-parish-register-1662-1797>

<sup>118</sup> "Sarah Lister," York County Records Project, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Julie Richter, "Notes on Mourning at the Bray School" (Williamsburg, VA, 2000-2022). These are the personal notes that Julie Richter processed for enslaved students and their enslavers. Ms. Richter very generously shared her research with me, which I proceeded to transcribe for our use as we continue our joint scholarship. For more on enslaved rental, please also see John J. Zaborney, *Slaves for Hire: Renting Enslaved Laborers in Antebellum Virginia*, 1st edition (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2012); Jennifer Oast, *Institutional Slavery: Slaveholding Churches, Schools, Colleges, and Businesses in Virginia, 1680-1860* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>119</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 63.

<sup>120</sup> Bruton Parish, 65.

## Craig Household

**Scholar: Aberdeen (1762)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslaver: Alexander Craig**

**Residence: Alexander Craig House**

**Household Occupation: Saddle Making**

Alexander Craig had a saddlery and harness making business for many years. Following the death of Mark Cosby, his executor, Alexander Craig, rented out the house for several years that is now known as the Alexander Craig House. In 1771, Gabriel Maupin sold to lot Craig. From 1771 the entire lot was owned by Craig until his death in 1776.<sup>121</sup>

Aberdeen was five years old when he attended the Williamsburg Bray School in 1762.<sup>122</sup> Although no record of Aberdeen survives in the Bruton Parish records, there are several other enslaved people who appear from the Craig Household. They are:

Henry, son of Nanny (April 7, 1765)<sup>123</sup>

Judith Belonging to Alexander Craige (June 1, 1766)<sup>124</sup>

P[illegible] of Sarah Belonging to Alexander Craige (January 1, 1769)<sup>125</sup>

Essex- Seth; & William two Negro men Belonging to Alexander Craig (November 3, 1765)<sup>126</sup>

James Son of Ell'se Belonging to Alixander Craige (June 5, 1768)<sup>127</sup>

The estate inventory of Alexander Craig does note that Aberdeen is still part of the Craig household upon Craig's death in 1776. According to Jennifer Oast:

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,

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<sup>121</sup> "Alexander Craig House Historical Report Block 17 Building 5 Lot 55," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, March 16, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1342.xml&highlight=>

<sup>122</sup> "[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], 30 September 1762," in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 188.

<sup>123</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 57.

<sup>124</sup> Bruton, 61. Judith is listed as an adult baptism. This should be noted since the majority of enslaved baptisms are either for children or infants in the latter quarter of the eighteenth century.

<sup>125</sup> Bruton, 66. It should be noted that these names are crossed out in the Baptismal records.

<sup>126</sup> Bruton, 59. Essex Seth and William are listed as adult baptisms. This should be noted since the majority of enslaved baptisms are either for children or infants in the latter quarter of the eighteenth century.

<sup>127</sup> Bruton, 64.

but it is certainly a possibility, especially since Craig determined it would be beneficial to send the young man to the school.<sup>128</sup>

#### **Everard Household<sup>129</sup>**

**Scholars: Mary (1762), Harry (1762)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslavers: Thomas Everard and Diana Everard (née Robinson)**

**Residence: Brush-Everard House**

**Household Occupation: Clerk/Gentry**

Thomas Everard was a court clerk for Elizabeth City County (1742-1754), York County (1745-1781), mayor of Williamsburg (1766, 1771), and vestry member of Bruton Parish (1769-1781), among other numerous political and legal positions. His eldest daughter, Frances Everard, married Rev. James Horrocks.<sup>130</sup> Given the physical and familial proximity of these two households, it is almost certain that Charlotte (a Bray School student enslaved by Rev. Horrocks) knew Mary and Harry. At the time of their attendance in the Williamsburg Bray School, Mary and Harry were seven- and five-years-old, respectively.<sup>131</sup>

References have been located to land owned by Thomas Everard in York, James City, and Brunswick counties. Although previous information in our research reports implies that we are unsure of where the Everard household lived exactly between 1756 and 1770, archaeological excavation of vessels on the property seem to indicate that the Brush-Everard House was where the household lived in the time of the Bray School's operation.<sup>132</sup>

Thomas Everard enslaved many men, women, and children who were baptized at Bruton Parish. Mary and Harry likely encountered all these enslaved individuals and may have been related to some of them. They include:

<sup>128</sup> Jennifer Oast, "Educating Eighteenth-Century Black Children: The Bray Schools" (M.A. Thesis, The College of William & Mary, December 2000), 25-26. All of Oast's research comes directly from primary sources referenced in The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's training manual, *Enslaving Virginia*. A digital copy of this manual can be found here: <https://cwfpublishings.omeka.net/items/show/170>

<sup>129</sup> "Brush-Everard House Historical Report Block 29 Building 10 Lots 165 & 166," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series, 1572, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1572.xml&highlight=dr.%20carter>

<sup>130</sup> "Brush-Everard House Historical Report Block 29 Building 10 Lots 165 & 166," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series, 1572, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1572.xml&highlight=dr.%20carter>

<sup>131</sup> "Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery."

<sup>132</sup> "Archaeological Investigations at the Brush-Everard Site, Williamsburg, Virginia," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1669, 27, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1669.xml&highlight=everard#p13>

Phillis (May 7, 1749)<sup>133</sup>  
 Venus (September 3, 1749)<sup>134</sup>  
 Venus (1750)<sup>135</sup>  
 Beck (May 6, 1751)<sup>136</sup>  
 Scipio (July 1, 1751)<sup>137</sup>  
 Charles (June 1, 1752)<sup>138</sup>  
 Richard (December 3, 1752)<sup>139</sup>  
 Nero, son of Beck (June 5, 1762)<sup>140</sup>  
 Elizabeth, dau of Kate (June 5, [1763])<sup>141</sup>  
 Ceasar, son of Myrtilla (June 3, 17[63])<sup>142</sup>  
 Slave belong to Thos. Everard (June the 3d. 17[64])<sup>143</sup>  
 Peter Son of Cate (March 3, 1765)<sup>144</sup>  
 William Son of Veanus [December 1, 1765]<sup>145</sup>  
 Tom son of Tilla (October 5, 1766)<sup>146</sup>  
 Daniel, son of Cate (June 7, 1767)<sup>147</sup>  
 Watt, son of Cate (July 3, 1768)<sup>148</sup>

### **Gilmer Household**

**Scholars: George (1762), Bristol (1762)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslaver: George Gilmer Jr.**

**Residence: Russell House**

**Household Occupation: Medicine and Midwifery**

Dr. George Gilmer was a physician and son of former mayor of Williamsburg, George Gilmer Sr. After studying at the University of Edinburgh, Gilmer announced that he planned to

<sup>133</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 41.

<sup>134</sup> Bruton Parish, 42.

<sup>135</sup> Bruton Parish, 45.

<sup>136</sup> Bruton Parish, 45. Beck is listed as an adult.

<sup>137</sup> Bruton Parish, 47.

<sup>138</sup> Bruton Parish, 48.

<sup>139</sup> Bruton Parish, 48.

<sup>140</sup> Bruton Parish, 53.

<sup>141</sup> Bruton Parish, 53.

<sup>142</sup> Bruton Parish, 55.

<sup>143</sup> Bruton Parish, 55.

<sup>144</sup> Bruton Parish, 57.

<sup>145</sup> Bruton Parish, 59.

<sup>146</sup> Bruton Parish, 62.

<sup>147</sup> Bruton Parish, 64.

<sup>148</sup> Bruton Parish, 65.

pursue "the practice of medicine and the art of midwifery" in 1766.<sup>149</sup> Starting in the 1770s, Dr. Gilmer was attending physician to Jefferson and his family.

Although possibly rented to Jane Hunter c. 1767, Dr. Gilmer lived in what is currently known as the Russell House around the time George and Bristol were sent to the Bray School. However, more research should be done to see if Jane Hunter did indeed live in this house prior to her marriage to Edward Charlton.<sup>150</sup>

No references to enslaved peoples in Bruton's Parish's records appear for the George Gilmer Jr. household, but George Gilmer Sr. references the baptisms of enslaved individuals in 1749, 1752, and 1753.<sup>151</sup> This is likely because George Gilmer Jr. moved to Albemarle County circa 1771.<sup>152</sup>

George and Bristol were eight and seven years old, respectively, when they attended the Bray School in 1762, making them approximately 17 and 16 at the time of Gilmer's move to Albemarle. in 1771. More analysis should be done of baptismal records, account books, and other items connected to the Gilmer family in the greater Albemarle area to determine where George and Bristol may have ended up later in life.

### **Grymes Household<sup>153</sup>**

**Scholar: Phillis (1765)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslaver: Mary Randolph Grymes**

**Residence: No longer extant, likely near current location of Tavern Parking lot**

**Household Occupation: Gentry Household**

Mary Randolph Grymes was the sister of John and Peyton Randolph and a member of Virginia's gentry. She and her husband do not appear to own any property in Williamsburg, although they must have had a residence if they sent Phillis to the Bray School. Even after she was widowed in 1762, Mary Randolph Grymes nor Phillis appears in the records of her brothers as living with them.<sup>154</sup>

The only property with definitive connections to the Grymes family within the time period of Phillis's attendance at the Bray School is through Grymes's son, Philip Ludwell Grymes. He appears to own some lots on Block 2 (near what is now the Tavern Parking Lot) that

<sup>149</sup> Purdie & Dixon, *The Virginia Gazette*, December 4, 1766, page 3, column 2.

<sup>150</sup> "Russell House Architectural Report Block 17 Building 31," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1369, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1369.xml&highlight=>

<sup>151</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 41, 48, 49.

<sup>152</sup> Gilmer-Skipwith Papers, 1767-1925, Accession #6145, 6145-a, 6145-b, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

<sup>153</sup> More research should be conducted on the Philip and Mary Grymes account books to understand the lived experience of enslaved people in this household. For more information on this account book, please consult with Julie Richter at [cjrich@wm.edu](mailto:cjrich@wm.edu).

<sup>154</sup> "The Grymes Family (Continued)," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 28, no. 1 (1920): 90–96.



may have been where a dwelling was located. Phillis and the Grymes family could have lived at while in Williamsburg. Research is ongoing on Phillis, who likely lived at this residence.<sup>155</sup>

The Baptismal records of Bruton Parish further illuminate enslaved individuals who Phillis likely would have known in her childhood, as well as potentially her own age. Circa 1763, a 'Slave belonging to Mary Grymes was baptized April the 1th'. This may or may not have been Phillis.<sup>156</sup> Additionally, there are two other enslaved baptisms recorded in the household of Mary Randolph Grymes. A girl named Criss was recorded as baptized on September 2, 1764; her mother's name was Bekey.<sup>157</sup> 'Sarah Daughter of Prue' and 'Jack wiltshire [sic] Son of Betty' were recorded in baptismal records on May 4, 1766, and November 4, 1766, respectively.<sup>158</sup>

### Hay Household

**Scholars:** Rippon (1762), Jenny (1765), Jerry (1769), Joseph (1769), Dick (1769)

**Family Members:** Nanny (likely mother of Dick); Pegg or Peg (likely mother of Jenny); Ben and James (likely siblings of Jenny)

**Enslavers:** Anthony Hay and Elizabeth Hay (née Penman)

**Household Occupation:** Cabinet Making and Tavern Keeping

Although Anthony Hay's cabinet making shop is well known amongst interpreters at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Anthony Hay did own the Raleigh Tavern between 1767 and 1770, living there during the time he owned it. Considering this, two different locations of the Hay Household must be identified as residences for Bray School students.<sup>159</sup>

Anthony Hay has a long list of enslaved men, women, and children who were baptized at Bruton Parish. The names of these individuals and the dates of their baptisms are as follows:

#### Baptism (unspecified):

Jeremiah, January 7, 1759<sup>160</sup>

<sup>155</sup> "4th Generation: Mary Randolph," accessed November 14, 2022,

<http://www.grymes.org/4MaryRandolph.html>; "Lots 253-254 Francis Street Block 2 Historical Report," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1052, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1052.xml&highlight=%20grymes>; "5th Generation: Philip Ludwell Grymes," accessed November 14, 2022, <http://www.grymes.org/5PhilipLudwellGrymes.html>.

<sup>156</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 55.

<sup>157</sup> Bruton Parish, 56.

<sup>158</sup> Bruton Parish, 60, 62.

<sup>159</sup> "Anthony Hay House Historical Report Block 28 Building 71 Lots 263, 264, & 265," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1549, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1549.xml&highlight=anthony%20hay>; "Raleigh Tavern Historical Report Block 17 Building 6A," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1637, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1637.xml&highlight=>

<sup>160</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 20.

### Infant and/or Child Baptisms:

Tom, June 7, 1761<sup>161</sup>

Ben (son of Peg), February 6, 1762<sup>162</sup>

Richard (son of Nanny), April 7, 1765<sup>163</sup>

Unnamed girl (daughter of Pegg), June 2, 1765<sup>164</sup>

James (son of Peg), March 1, 1767<sup>165</sup>

Henry (son of Elizabeth), April 10, 1768<sup>166</sup>

The ages of the enslaved children Anthony Hay sent to the Bray School have previously been difficult to pin down, other than Rippon who was three years old in 1762.<sup>167</sup> However, in light of the detail in Bruton's baptismal records it seems possible that Richard may be referencing 'Dick'; Jeremiah may perhaps be referencing 'Jerry'. This would potentially make Dick four-years-old and Jeremiah ten-years-old when they attended the Bray School, respectively. Jenny may perhaps be the unnamed daughter of Pegg (or Pegg), making James and Ben her siblings. This potentially aligns with the estate inventory of Anthony Hay in 1771. According to Jennifer Oast's detailed thesis on the Williamsburg Bray School:

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, apparently victims of either childhood death or sale to another owner.<sup>168</sup>

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### **Horrocks Household**

**Scholar: Charlotte (1769)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

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<sup>161</sup> Bruton Parish, 23.

<sup>162</sup> Bruton, 53

<sup>163</sup> Bruton, 57.

<sup>164</sup> Bruton, 57.

<sup>165</sup> Bruton, 63.

<sup>166</sup> Bruton, 64. It should be noted here that Henry and Elizabeth are both referenced as the enslaved property of Thomas Hay, the son of Anthony Hay. However, Thomas Hay had not yet reached the age of his majority at the time of this recording; this makes it possible that Henry may have been intended to serve as an enslaved manservant for Thomas Hay.

<sup>167</sup> "Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery", 188.

<sup>168</sup> Jennifer Oast, "Educating Eighteenth-Century Black Children: The Bray Schools" (M.A. Thesis, The College of William & Mary, December 2000), 25-26. All of Oast's research comes directly from primary sources referenced in The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's training manual, *Enslaving Virginia*. A digital copy of this manual can be found here: <https://cwfpublishings.omeka.net/items/show/170>

**Enslavers: Reverend James Horrocks and Frances Horrocks (née Everard)**  
**Household Occupation: Record of Bruton Parish/Commissary of Virginia/Gentry**

Rev. James Horrocks was the sixth president of William and Mary; Horrocks simultaneously served as the rector of Bruton Parish and the commissary (i.e. ecclesiastical administrator) for the Bishop of London. This pluralism of power by a single individual was very common for the president of William & Mary prior to the American Revolution.<sup>169</sup>

The Rev. James Blair, founder and first President of the College, lived in the President's House from its completion until his death in 1743; except for intervals during the Revolution and the War Between the States, it has continued to house the presidents of the College up to the present time. Rev. Horrocks was certainly living on this property when Charlotte attended the Bray School in 1769, as he was the President of William and Mary between late 1764 and 1771. It is therefore almost certain that this was Charlotte's residence as well.<sup>170</sup>

In 1771, Rev. Horrocks visited England to advocate for an official position as the first Anglican Bishop of Virginia. He died suddenly in route to England in Oporto, Portugal on March 20, 1772; his wife, Frances Everard Horrocks, returned to Williamsburg after his death and lived in the home of her father, Thomas Everard.<sup>171</sup>

It is unknown if Charlotte lived in the Everard house upon the return of Frances Horrocks. However, there is no historical record of Charlotte visiting England with the Horrockses. Just after Frances Everard Horrocks returned to Virginia, the Somerset Case and ensuing global news attention were reported in *The Virginia Gazette*. It is very likely that Charlotte knew about this case, as did many Black men, women, and children living in Williamsburg, Virginia and beyond.<sup>172</sup>

**Johnson Household**

**Scholar: Squire (1765)**

**Family Members: Unknown**

**Enslavers: Col. Philip Johnson and Elizabeth Johnson (née Bray)**

<sup>169</sup> "James Horrocks (1734-1772)," Special Collections Knowledgebase, September 9, 2019, <https://scrc-kb.libraries.wm.edu/james-horrocks-1734-1772>. To learn more about the Anglican commissaries in the British Atlantic World, see also Andrew M. Koke, "Communication in an Anglican Empire: Edmund Gibson and His Commissaries, 1723-1748," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 84, no. 2 (2015): 166–202.

<sup>170</sup> "President's House Historical Report Block 16 Building 2," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1318, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1318.xml&highlight=james%20horrocks>

<sup>171</sup> "James Horrocks (1734-1772)"; "Today in the 1770s: July 23," Slavery and Remembrance, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, accessed September 19, 2023, <https://www.slaveryandremembrance.org/History/todayin1770s/index.cfm?SelectedMonth=07&SelectedDay=23>

<sup>172</sup> For more information on the James Somerset case, please also see Paul Aron, "What Is Your Verdict?," The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, January 17, 2020, <https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/trend-tradition-magazine/winter-2020/what-your-verdict/>. Patricia Bradley, "Slavery in Colonial Newspapers: The Somerset Case" 12, no. 1 (n.d.): 2–7; George van Cleve, "'Somerset's Case' and Its Antecedents in Imperial Perspective," *Law and History Review* 24, no. 3 (2006): 601–45.

## Household Occupation: Gentry Household

Colonel Philip Johnson married Elizabeth Bray, daughter of Thomas Bray of "Littleton," James City County, and his wife Elizabeth Meriwether Bray; there is no known familial connection between these Brays and Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray of the Williamsburg Bray School. Col. Johnson and his household lived at Basset Hall between 1751 and 1789.<sup>173</sup>

Not much is known about Squire, who attended the Williamsburg Bray School in 1765. However, a list of textiles meant for enslaved men, women, and children is listed in the accounts of John Hatley Norton for Col. Philip Johnson on March 13, 1769, three year after Squire attended the Bray School. It is possible he wore some of these textiles in his lifetime. A Transcription can be found below:

300 Ells german Oznabrig  
 6 p<sup>s</sup>. hempen Rolls  
 235 y<sup>ds</sup>. Welch Cotton  
 6 p<sup>s</sup>. Kendall - d<sup>o</sup>.  
 45 p<sup>r</sup>. Irish Hose  
 45 N<sup>o</sup>. 4 broad Hoes  
 2 Broad Axes  
 10 <sup>lb</sup>. Oznabrig Thread  
 3 p<sup>s</sup>. Dutch Blankets

The goods to be insured & sent to  
 R[obert].C[arter].N[icholas].<sup>174</sup>

A significant number of enslaved people connected to Col. Johnson's household show up in the baptismal records of Bruton Parish. Sarah, Richard, and Molly are all recorded as being baptized in 1753.<sup>175</sup> Pat is recorded as being baptized in 1763, as well as an unnamed enslaved individual.<sup>176</sup> Francis, the son of Milley, is baptized on September 2, 1764;<sup>177</sup> 'Dinah Daughter of Hannah' is baptized the day before Francis. Doll, the daughter of Patty is recorded on October 6, 1765 in an infant baptism,<sup>178</sup> while 'Jenny Daughter of Cate', 'John Son of Sarah' and

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<sup>173</sup> "Bassett Hall Block 1 Lot 22 Historical Report," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1005, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1005.xml&highlight=col.%20philip%20johnson#s21>

<sup>174</sup> 1769 Invoice for Enslaved Textiles and Other Goods. John Hatley Norton Papers, John D. Rockefeller Jr Library, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. A copy of this item can also be found in William & Mary's Bray School Lab, "'Neat in Their Cloaths': Nancy, Squire, and the 1765 Bray School Student List," *A Reasonable Progress* Blog, September 9, 2022, <https://brayschool.pages.wm.edu/2022/09/09/neat-in-their-cloaths-nancy-squire-and-the-1765-bray-school-student-list/>

<sup>175</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," 49.

<sup>176</sup> Bruton Parish, 54-55.

<sup>177</sup> Bruton Parish, 56.

<sup>178</sup> Bruton Parish, 58. Both Dina and Doll are recorded are on the same page.

‘[Sam]uel Son of Belonging’ all have either infant or childhood baptisms recorded in 1765.<sup>179</sup> ‘James Carter Son of Mary Carter belonging to Coll Phillip Johnson’ and Charles ‘A Negro Man’ were both recorded on December 1, 1765.<sup>180</sup> Lastly, Matthew, the son of Nanny is baptized on July 3, 1768.<sup>181</sup> It is interesting to note that none of these recorded baptism mention Squire, although many other enslaved children named Squire are referenced in the records.

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## **Orr Household**

**Scholars:** Pat, Jack, James, Sal

**Family Members:** Sarah (likely mother of James and Sal), Flora (likely mother of Pat and Jack)

**Enslavers:** Hugh and Catherine Orr (née Crease)

**Residence:** Catherine Orr House (previously the George Reid House)

**Household Occupation:** Blacksmithing/Ship’s Captain (Hugh Orr); Residential boarding (Catherine Orr)

The Orr household lived on the property previously known as the George Reid House between the early eighteenth century; Catherine Orr continued to live on this property after the death of her husband in 1764;<sup>182</sup> there is ongoing research about what the state of the household looked like between 1764 and 1788.<sup>183</sup>

Looking at county court records, estate inventories, and Bray School student lists, it is possible to determine the likely parents of Pat, Jack, James, and Sal. According to a will recorded by Catherine Orr’s father Thomas Crease, a woman named Sarah and her child named ‘Sal’ were given as a bequest to Orr in 1757. Seven years later, an adult enslaved woman named Sarah and a young girl named Sarah are both listed on the estate inventory of Hugh Orr in 1764; there is also a young child named ‘Sal’ in the 1765 Bray School student lists. It appears likely that the girl named Sal/Sall is the same child listed as Sarah in Hugh Orr’s estate inventory; it is also likely that Sal’s mother is the adult Sarah in the same estate inventory.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Bruton Parish, 57.

<sup>180</sup> Bruton Parish, 59.

<sup>181</sup> Bruton Parish, 65.

<sup>182</sup> “George Reid House Historical Report Block 11 Building 11,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1238, accessed March 16, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1238.xml&highlight=>

<sup>183</sup> “Catherine Orr House Historical Marker,” accessed September 17, 2023,

<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=227044>

<sup>184</sup> Will for Thomas Crease is located in York Co. Wills and Inventories, Book 20:414–415, Library of Virginia; “Inventory of Estate of Hugh Orr 1764, March 19,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, accessed September 17, 2023, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=Probates%5CPB00188.xml&highlight=>; “[Enclosure: List of Negro Children], November 1765,” in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 241–42.

The Bray School student lists from 1765 and 1769 written by Robert Carter Nicholas also demonstrate a unique but noticeable pattern; when discussing children who are related or share kinship, Nicholas links names together by use of an ampersand.<sup>185</sup> Nicholas notes the Ashby and the Bee children as being related in 1765 and 1769, which are two traceable examples of this pattern.

If Nicholas's use of ampersands to distinguish familial and sibling connections is to be believed, it appears that James and Sal are related siblings, with Patt and Jack being siblings as well; since it is likely that Sarah is the mother of Sal, James would appear to then be Sarah's son and Sal's brother. Since only one other adult enslaved woman is listed in the home at the same time as James, Patt, Jack, Sal, and Sarah attendance at the Williamsburg Bray School is a woman named Flora, the most likely candidate for Patt and Jack's mother is Flora.<sup>186</sup>

### **Prentis Household**

**Scholar: Molly (1765)**

**Family Members: Judith (Mother); Effy, Jemmy/Jimmy, Pompey, Nancy Lewis (Siblings); Kate (Niece)**

**Enslavers: William Prentis and Elizabeth Prentis**

**Household Occupation: Merchant and Gentry**

*As The Colonial Williamsburg publication entitled *The Network's* explanation of Molly's family and their lives within the Prentis House perfectly supports the intention of this research report, this report has excerpted from Issue 9 of *The Network*, published in 1999 based on the research of Dr. Julie Richter:*

Judith was a young woman when her master, the merchant William Prentis, bequeathed her and her children to his daughter Elizabeth after his death in August 1765. Judith and

<sup>185</sup> "North American Correspondence from the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1785-1906" (n.d.), USPG Catalogue of Bray Associates Files (1699-1979), Canada File, Vol. 1, f2, University of Oxford. The Virginia correspondence to the Associates of Dr. Bray can be found in the vol. 1, folder 2 manuscript collection housed at the University of Oxford's Weston Library. Because the transcriptions in John Van Horne's *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery* are not diplomatic transcriptions, noting particular details from the original lists is imperative in order to trace the small but noticeable grammatical nuances of Robert Carter Nicholas linking children in the Williamsburg Bray School. For diplomatic transcriptions of this correspondence, see also William & Mary's Bray School Lab, "Bray School Lab Research Portal," W&M Libraries Digital Collections, accessed September 18, 2023, <https://digital.libraries.wm.edu/node/92737>. To learn more about diplomatic transcriptions, please see also University of Cambridge, "English Handwriting 1500-1700: An Online Course," The Faculty of English and the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, accessed September 18, 2023, <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/ceres/ehoc/conventions.html>

<sup>186</sup> "Inventory of Estate of Hugh Orr 1764, March 19 | Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library." It should be noted that in this transcription it appears that particular children are linked with adults in ways that may also imply a familial connection. In addition to looking at the original document to verify that this is a diplomatic transcription, more analysis and research need to be done on the genealogy of Patt, Jack, James, Sal, and John. It is recommended that this work be done in partnership with researchers at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and the staff genealogist at William & Mary's Bray School Lab.

Her children Effy, Molly, and Jimmy<sup>187</sup> were valued at £115 in the October 1765 inventory of William Prentis' s estate. This slave family continued to live at the Prentis House on

Lot 51 on Duke of Gloucester Street as did Elizabeth Prentis who was thirteen years old when her father died. Her mother, Mary Prentis, sent Molly to the Bray School for enslaved and free black children in Williamsburg in November 1765. Molly learned about the Anglican faith, obedience to her master, [spelling, reading], enunciation, and reading. Ann Wager, the teacher at the Bray School, also taught Molly and other girls how to knit and sew.

Judith' s family grew in the 1760s: her children Pompey and Nancy Lewis were baptized in February 1766 and November 1768 and recorded in Bruton Parish register, respectively. The short intervals between the births of three children (Jimmy in 1763, Pompey in 1766, and Nancy Lewis in 1768) suggest that Judith was able to form a long-term relationship with a man who lived in or near Williamsburg, although we do not know who that was or if they were also the father of Molly.

Elizabeth Prentis died on October 5, 1770, and her brother John gained possession of Judith and her children Effy, Molly, Jimmy, Pompey, and Nancy Lewis. John Prentis kept Judith' s family together during his lifetime. However, his death in late 1775 brought a number of changes to Judith and her family. John Prentis left Effy, Pompey, and Nancy Lewis to his younger brother, Joseph. He left the remainder of his enslaved peoples to be equally divided among his brothers Daniel and Joseph and his cousin, Robert Prentis. Judith was one of" several valuable SLAVES, chiefly House Servants, among which isa very good Cook" who were sold by Prentis's executors at the January 3, 1776 sale of his estate. Her young sons Tom and Lewis were sold with her.

Molly was one of the four dower slaves assigned to Prentis' s widow, also named Elizabeth. It is likely that Molly served as Elizabeth Prentis' s maid. Judith' s daughter Effy had at least one daughter Kate who received her baptism in November 1782. Effy and Pompey lived in Williamsburg until the death of Joseph Prentis Senior in 1809. Effy, Pompey, and the other eight enslaved people owned by Prentis at his death became the property of his son and namesake, a lawyer who lived in Suffolk.<sup>188</sup>

Since this report was written, Elizabeth Drembus has continued research on Pompey, Effy, and Molly.<sup>189</sup> According to her research, the Inventory of the Estate of Joseph Prentis who died in 1809, includes Pompey and Effy, siblings of Molly.<sup>190</sup> On 1 May 1809, Joseph Prentis recorded

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<sup>187</sup> In the Prentis estate inventory, Jimmy is listed as Jemmy. See also "Prentis House Historical Report Block 17 Building 11A Lot 51," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1365, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1365.xml&highlight=prentis>

<sup>188</sup> Julie Richter et. al., "The Network: An Enslaving Virginia Publication," Research Report (Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, August 5, 1999), 6-7.

<sup>189</sup> I am deeply indebted and appreciative to Mrs. Drembus for reviewing this report and sharing her research, which was presented to the entire Bray School research team.

<sup>190</sup> Prentis Family Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Swem Library, College of William and Mary. Entry for Pompey and Effy, digital image, 9.



the sale of Pompey and Effy. Pompey was sold to Benjamin C. Waller for \$250 and Effy was sold to John Taliaferro for \$80.<sup>191</sup>

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### **Trebell Household**

**Scholars: Phoebe (1762)**

**Family Members: Violet (likely mother)**

**Enslavers: William Trebell and Sarah Trebell (née Galt)**

**Household Occupation: Tavern Keeper**

William Trebell and Sarah Galt Trebell served as the owners of the Raleigh Tavern between 1763 and 1767, when they sold the property to Anthony Hay. It appears the entire household lived on the property between that time before the sale to Hay.<sup>192</sup>

We do not know much about Phoebe other than her age when she attended the Williamsburg Bray School (approximately 3-years-old). However, in August, October and November, 1766, sales and property rentals were announced to take place before "Mr. William Trebell's door" or "Mr. Trebell's door." Several of these sales and rentals included enslaved peoples described as "house servants".<sup>193</sup> There can be little doubt, though the Raleigh was never mentioned explicitly, that the sales and rentals of enslaved people also took place at the Raleigh and that Phoebe likely would have seen them occur.

William Trebell did own three (possibly four) enslaved people outside of Phoebe who are connected to the Anglican Church. The baptism of a 'Daughter of Violet a Slave belonging to Wm. Trebell baptizd. Decber. the 4th 1763' is recorded in the Bruton Parish register; given the baptism date and the fact that this baptism likely occurred in infancy, it is highly plausible that Violet was the mother of Phoebe.<sup>194</sup> Around the same time, 'George Son of Lydda a Slave belonging to William Trebell' was also baptized. 'Henry, son of Lidia' was baptized on October 2, 1768; it is likely that Lydda and Lidia were the same woman.<sup>195</sup> Because we know that a high concentration of students lived on the same corridor as the Raleigh Tavern when it was owned

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<sup>191</sup> Prentis Family Papers, digital image, 37.

<sup>192</sup> "Raleigh Tavern Historical Report Block 17 Building 6A Lot 54, Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, research report series 1349, 8-9, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1349.xml&highlight=trebell>

<sup>193</sup> *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie), August 1, 1766, page 3, column 1; *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie), October 17, 1766, page 3, column 1; *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Purdie), November 6, 1766; page 3, column 2; *The Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Rind), December 4, 1766, page 3; column 3.

<sup>194</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middle Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 54. For more information on enslaved baptism and birth recordings in colonial Virginia, please see also Antonio T. Bly, "'Reed through the Bybell': Slave Education in Early Virginia," *Book History* 16 (2013): 1-33.

<sup>195</sup> Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record," (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 55; Bruton Parish, "Bruton & Middleton Parish Record" (Williamsburg, VA, 1662-1797), 65.



by both William Trebell and Anthony Hay, it is also highly probable that Phoebe was familiar with several other Bray School students outside of her classroom experience.<sup>196</sup>

### **Vobe Household**

**Scholars:** Sal (1765), Jack (1769)

**Family Members:** Unknown

**Enslaver:** Jane Vobe

**Residence:** Vobe's Tavern (today known as Christiana Campbell's Tavern)

**Household Occupation:** Tavern Keeper

Jane Vobe operated what we now know as Christiana Campbell's Tavern until 1772 when she purchased the King's Arms Tavern. This may be confusing to guests due to the retrospective significance placed on the Block 7, Lot 21-22 (current site of Campbell's Tavern). However, Jack and Sal would have lived on this lot as opposed to the post-1772 King's Arms Tavern location.<sup>197</sup>

Not much is currently known about Jack and Sal. However, according to Linda Rowe, "Bibles and prayer books owned by Vobe and the enslaved children she enrolled in a school in Williamsburg were likely a familiar sight...literate members of Pamphlet's Baptist church at Williamsburg kept a church book (now lost)."<sup>198</sup> Gowan Pamphlet, the first ordained Black minister in colonial America, was also enslaved and lived alongside Jack and Sal in the 1760s and 1770s.

### **Waters Household**

**Scholar:** Sylvia (1765)

**Family Members:** Marcia (mother); Fancy (sibling)

**Enslaver:** William Waters and Sarah Waters

**Residence:** William Waters House

**Household Occupation:** Merchant and Gentry Household

<sup>196</sup> The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Aaron Lovejoy, and Nicole Brown, "Williamsburg Bray School: Digital Map," non-profit, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, February 3, 2023, <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=9e40957d575841f78abf8c7454bb556a>

<sup>197</sup> "Landmarks and Neighborhoods in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg: A Feasibility Study," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 0405, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR0405.xml&highlight=campbell%20tavern>; "York Road Area Historical Report Block 7," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1105, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1105.xml&highlight=>; "Block 7 Lots 20-23 Historical Report," Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1109, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR1109.xml&highlight=>

<sup>198</sup> Linda Rowe, "Gowan Pamphlet: Baptist Preacher in Slavery and Freedom," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 120, no. 1 (2012): 2–31.

William Waters was described as a gentleman and a merchant in eighteenth-century Williamsburg. His household (enslaved and free) lived in what is now known as the William Waters House. It was recognized, prior to the reconstruction of the house, that this building, which two inventories from 1739 and 1768 revealed it as “richly furnished [and] of some considerable size and architectural pretension”.<sup>199</sup> After Water’s death in 1768, his widow Sarah Waters continued to own the property into the nineteenth century.<sup>200</sup>

Sylvia was a Bray School student who attended Ann Wager’s classroom in 1765. Sylvia likely lived in the house or one of the existing outbuildings and would have been familiar with the residence, its furnishings, and her own status as human chattel coming into sharp conflict with her religious instruction at the Williamsburg Bray School. The 1769 probated will of William Waters mentions a Silvia, which is likely the same Bray School student. Her Mother’s name was Marcia and she also had a sibling named Fancy.<sup>201</sup>

Several other enslaved peoples in the same household as Sylvia are mentioned in Bruton Parish baptismal records, either recorded under the name Water or Warters. ‘Squire Son of Leah’ is an infant baptized on May 5, 1765.<sup>202</sup> Mary and George, the son and daughter of Nanny, were baptized on July 4, 1762 and December 7, 1766, respectively.<sup>203</sup> Aberdeen is also born to a ‘Nanney’ who may be the same parent as Mary and George; Aberdeen is baptized on August 5, 1764.<sup>204</sup> Nanny, Marcia, Fancy, Mary, George, Aberdeen, Squire, and Sylvia would all have known one another and built community during Sylvia’s time at the Bray School.

<sup>199</sup> “William Waters House Architectural Report, Block 18-2 Building 2A Lot 50,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1385, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1385.xml&highlight=william%20waters>

<sup>200</sup> “William Waters House Historical Report, 12,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series 1383, accessed November 14, 2022, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR1383.xml&highlight=william%20waters>

<sup>201</sup> “Inventory of Estate of William Waters 1769, August 21,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=Probates%5CPB00258.xml&highlight=>

<sup>202</sup> Bruton Parish, “Bruton & Middleton Parish Record,” 57.

<sup>203</sup> Bruton Parish, 21; 62.

<sup>204</sup> Bruton Parish, 55.

## CHAPTER 2: EXPLORING EDUCATIONAL VALUE

### Key Concepts for Exploring Educational Value

#### **Overview:**

To properly contextualize how the Associates of Dr. Bray, their trustees, instructors, and students understood value conflated with Black literacy and education at the Bray School, we must address the varying colonial positionalities behind ideas on value. This is critical, as the Bray School site will be a location where facilitated dialogue will occur between interpreters and guests in order to support “audience-centered conversation about a challenging or controversial topic”.<sup>205</sup> Further, best-practices for descendant engagement necessitate that

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<sup>205</sup> “Toolkit: Facilitated Dialogue and Controversial Issues,” *National Parks Service*, accessed August 17, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/toolkit-controversy.htm>. Although the NPS has focused on facilitated dialogue as it relates to climate change, our Manager of Training at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation intends to expand this work to topics within our historic-area campus. For more information on facilitated dialogue, see also Foteini Venieri, “Facilitated Dialogue: An Emerging Field of Museum Practice,” *EXARC*

discussing enslaved narratives and experiences requires historical space where “points of view, which until very recently have been marginalized from the dominant historical narratives” can be explored respectfully.<sup>206</sup>

While ideas on education were widely discussed and explored in the British Atlantic World, we should not assume that Ann Wager, Black students, the Williamsburg Bray School Trustees, or the Associates of Dr. Bray defined educational value at their schools in the same way. Through the following primary sources and scholarly secondary sources, my intention to contextualize the charged ideas about educational value at the Williamsburg Bray School. Defining, understanding, and comparing ideas on value is critical in order to ensure that Bray School students, teachers, trustees, and their descendants can be spoken of with respect and dignity in public history and academic settings by both the Foundation’s scholars and interpreters.

The following chapter breaks down broad ideas for competing ideas on educational value at the Williamsburg Bray School into three categories: Religious, Economic, and Individual.

### **Methodology:**

I have pulled directly from primary sources relating to the Williamsburg Bray school, Virginia Bray Schools, and Atlantic World Bray Schools to unpack competing ideas on economic, religious, and individual educative value. There are also scholarly secondary source works that are included in corresponding sections and the bibliography.

## **Educational Value at the Bray Schools: Overview**

### **Overall Williamsburg Bray School — Religious Value (Section 1):**

- The Associates of Dr. Bray founded their Bray Schools to expand religious literacy and Anglican spiritual indoctrination throughout the British Empire.
  - This instruction was pro-slavery in ideology as reflected by primary sources and textbooks at the Williamsburg Bray School

### **Overall Williamsburg Bray School — Economic Value (Section 2):**

- Some of instruction offered at the Williamsburg Bray School was meant for an enslaver to derive use of the enslaved child. According to the rules: *The Associates of the late Reverend Doctor Bray ... having established Schools in several of the Northern Colonies for the Education of Negroes in the Principles of the Christian Religion teaching them to*

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*Journal*, no. EXARC Journal Issue 2022/1 (February 25, 2022), <https://exarc.net/issue-2022-1/aoam/facilitated-dialogue-emerging-field-museum-practice>

<sup>206</sup> National Summit on Teaching Slavery, “Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites,” *History News* 74, no. 1 (2019): 16.

*read & at the same Time rendering the Females more **useful** to their Owners by instructing them in sewing knitting...*<sup>207</sup>

- Education associated with the Williamsburg Bray School cannot be separated from the role that the institution of slavery plays in monetizing Black peoples' bodies and minds.
- The urban nature of Bray Schools across the Atlantic World represents a desire to have specific educative skillsets within urban environments for enslaved peoples, equating ideas of literacy to ideas of economic value.
  - The key Bray Schools in British North America prior to the American Revolution were in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; New York City, New York; Newport, Rhode Island; Williamsburg, Virginia; Fredericksburg, Virginia.<sup>208</sup>

#### Overall Williamsburg Bray School — Individual Value (Section 3):

- Interdisciplinary approaches are required to help highlight the individual and spiritual value of the enslaved and free Black boys and girls who attended the Bray School
  - The theoretical work of economic historian Diana Ramey Berry on “soul value” paired with primary sources written by or about enslaved peoples highlights how our interpreters can discuss the students and broader Black community as historical actors and agents rather than financial assets within the institution of slavery.<sup>209</sup>

#### Review by Historical Research Team:

- The Historical Research team reviewed all corresponding content and felt the argument was substantive and valid.

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<sup>207</sup> “[Enclosure: Regulations], 30 September 1762,” Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 189–92.

<sup>208</sup> John C. Van Horne and Associates of Dr. Bray (Organization), *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 20-38.

<sup>209</sup> Diana Ramey Berry, *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh: The Value of the Enslaved, from Womb to Grave, in the Building of a Nation*, Reprint edition (United States: Beacon Press, 2017), 40-62. Although Diana Ramey Berry focuses on the role of capitalism, slavery, and individuality in the antebellum period, her definition of “soul value” neatly dovetails and applies to primary sources included in Section 3 of this chapter. Through various primary sources, Berry demonstrates that between infancy to age ten (the exact age range for most Bray School students), ideas on value merged with both childhood and the open wound of slavery for enslaved peoples, coagulating in deeply painful ways. However, ideas of self-worth first experienced in childhood and eventually fully formed in adolescence (also known as “soul value”) was also simultaneously part of enslaved children’s experiences.

## Further Research Questions:

### Question A: Application of Oral Histories

How can oral histories from the descendants of Bray School students help clarify and illuminate how Bray scholars perceived their value as it relates to the Bray School? Oral histories conducted by our partners at William & Mary's Bray School Lab are located here:

### Question B: Application of Estate Inventories

How can the estate inventories of enslavers help clarify and illuminate the human cost of Black education at the Bray School through the economic system of slavery? Particular estate inventories which should be rereviewed include:

- Peyton Randolph<sup>210</sup>
- Alexander Craig

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<sup>210</sup> The estate papers of Peyton Randolph may also be helpful here. For more information, please consult Julie Richter at [cjrich@wm.edu](mailto:cjrich@wm.edu).

- Anthony Hay
- William Prentis
- James Wray
- Lydia Charlton
- Hugh Orr
- William Hunter
- William Davenport
- William Waters
- William Wager, Jr.

### **Question C: Interdisciplinary Methods**

What interdisciplinary methods are required to interpret the idea of value with guests, community, and descendants at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in a way that centers the humanity of the scholars?

## **Section 1: Religious Ideologies of Value at the Williamsburg Bray School**

### Pre-Revolutionary Primary Sources from Virginia

#### **Rev. John Waring to Rev. Thomas Dawson, 1760 (Williamsburg, Virginia)<sup>211</sup>**

I am desired by a Society who call themselves the Associates of the Late Dr. Bray (the Objects of whose Attention are the Conversion of the Negroes in the British Plantations, founding Parochial Libraries & other good purposes) to acquaint You that they lately agreed to open a School at Williamsburgh in Virginia for the Instruction of Negro Children in the Principles of the Christian Religion.

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<sup>211</sup> "Rev. John Waring to Rev. Thomas Dawson, 29 February 1760," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 144-146.

### **School Regulations [Enclosure] to Bray Associates, 1762 (Williamsburg, Virginia)<sup>212</sup>**

The Associates of the late Reverend Doctor Bray, residing in England, having established Schools in several of the Northern Colonies for the Education of Negroes in the Principals of the Christian Religion teaching them to read & at the same Time rendering the Females more useful to their Owners by instructing them in sewing knitting & encouraged by the Success of these their pious Endeavours & being solicitous to make this Kind of Charity as extensive as possible, they some Time ago came to a Resolution of establishing a School in the City of Williamsburg for the same Purpose...

Rules to be observed by the Teacher or Mistress, who is preferred to a Master as the Scholars will consist of Children of both Sexes.

She shall take no Scholars but what are approved of by the Trustees & She shall attend the School at seven O'Clock in the Winter half year & at six in the Summer half year in the Morning, & keep her Scholars diligently to their Business during the Hours of Schooling suffering none to be absent at any Time, but when they are sick or have some other reasonable Excuse.

2d. She shall teach her Scholars the true spelling of Words, make them mind their Stops & endeavour to bring them to pronounce & read distinctly.

3. She shall make it her principal Care to teach them to read the Bible, to instruct them in the Principles of the Christian Religion according to the Doctrines of the Church of England; shall explain the Church Catechism to them by some good Exposition, which, together with the Catechism, they shall publicly repeat in Church or else where, so often as the Trustees shall require & shall be frequently examined in School, as to their Improvements of every Sort.

4. She shall teach them those Doctrines & Principles of Religion which are in their Nature most useful in the Course of private Life, especially such as concern Faith & good Manners.

5. She shall conduct them from her School House, where they are all to be first assembled, in a decent & orderly Manner, so often as divine Service is there performed, & before it begins & instruct & oblige them to behave in a proper Manner, kneeling or standing as the rubrick directs & to join in the public Service with & regularly to repeat after the Minister in all Places where the People are so directed & in such a manner as not to disturb the rest of the Congregation. She shall take Care that the Scholars, so soon as they are able to use them, do carry their Bibles & Prayer Books to Church with them; & that they

may be prevented from spending the Lord's Day profanely or idly she shall give her Scholars some Task out of the most useful Parts of Scripture, to be learnt on each Lord's

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<sup>212</sup> "[Enclosure: Regulations], 30 September 1762," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 189–92.



Day, according is their Capacities & shall require a strict Performance of it every Monday Morning.

6. She shall use proper Prayers in her School every morning & Evening & teach the Scholars to do the same at Home, devoutly on their Knees; and also teach them to say Grace before & after eating their Victuals, explaining to them the Design & Meaning of it.

7. She shall take particular Care of the Manners & Behaviour of her Scholars & by all proper Methods discourage I idleness & suppress the Beginnings of Vice; such as lying, cursing swearing, profaning the Lord's Day, obscene Discourse, stealing & putting them often in mind & 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.

8. She shall teach the Female Scholars knitting, sewing & such other Things as may be useful to their Owners & she shall be particularly watchful that her Scholars between the School hours do not commit any Irregularities nor fall into any indecent Diversions Lastly. She shall take Care that her Scholars keep themselves clean & neat in their Cloaths & that they in all Things set a good Example to other Negroes.

***A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London, 1770 [Williamsburg Bray School Textbook ca. 1771]***<sup>213</sup>

I proposed to you to endeavour to mitigate the Rigour of their Situation, by introducing them to the Knowledge of the Gospel of CHRIST, and of those Rewards, which our Religion promiseth to ALL...I proposed that you should have your Slaves instructed in the Christian Religion, as the best Mean to reconcile them to their state of Servitude, and support them under it...That some baptized Negroes have misbehaved, I will not deny; but this is not to be charged to the Account of Baptism, but to the bad Policy, Imprudence, perhaps Irreligion, of their Masters. The Unwillingness of the Planters in general to permit their Negroes to be baptized, hath led these poor ignorant Creates to imagine that some very great civil Privileges or Immunities are annexed to Baptism...If you rightly consider Things, you will be so far from looking upon the religious Instruction of your Negroes as a burdensome Task, that you will acknowledge it as a great and happy Opportunity put into your Hands by Almighty GOD, for promoting and advancing his Glory.

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## Scholarly Publications and Peer-Reviewed Secondary Sources

### **From John Van Horne's *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery*:**

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<sup>213</sup> "[Rev. John Waring], *A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London*," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 293-302.

“Yet it was to the administration of the D’Allone bequest and other contributions for the conversion and education of colonial blacks that the Associates devoted themselves. During the more than fifty years between their founding by Bray and the cessation of their activities in the American colonies because of the disruptions cause by the Revolution, the Associates utilized several methods to instruct blacks in Christianity. We have seen that Bray himself initiated two of these methods – sending catechists or missionaries to the colonies providing books to colonial clergymen who had agreed to undertake the instruction of blacks. After Bray’s death, the Associates continued to employ these two methods and supplemented them with another that was truer to the letter of D’Allone’s will – supporting formally established Negro schools in the American colonies”.<sup>214</sup>

**From Katherine Gerbner’s *Christian Slavery*:**

Despite the planter’s protestations, Christian slaves were easy to find in the Atlantic world. From Algiers to Mexico City, enslaved Christians labored on plantations, in workshops and in households, in cities and on rural plantations. In the Americas, Christian slaves were of African or Native American descent, while in North Africa, Europeans were regularly captured and enslaved on the Barbary Coast, where they encountered strong pressures to embrace Islam. Christianity – and specifically, Protestantism – would eventually come to play a central role in the lives of enslaved men and women in North America and the Caribbean.<sup>215</sup>

**From Jennifer E. Monaghan *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America*:**

“[Robert Carter] Nicholas never detailed the reasons for the general indifference of Virginia gentlemen to the education of enslaved children.... The only real impetus, therefore, to sending the enslaved to school was the Christianity of the slaveholder. But a great many slaveholders were either not Christians themselves or were Christians unconvinced of the need to offer much in the way of instruction to their slaves. Only men like Robert Carter Nicholas or John Blair [Sr.], deeply committed to their faith and determined to propagate it, undertook to support education in reading with any seriousness”.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> John C. Van Horne, *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 17.

<sup>215</sup> Katharine Gerbner, *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World*, Early American Studies (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 15.

<sup>216</sup> E. Jennifer Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 270.

## Section 2: Economic Ideologies of Value at the Williamsburg Bray School

### Pre-Revolutionary Primary Sources from Virginia

**Rev. William Yates and Robert Carter Nicholas to Bray Associates, September 30, 1762**<sup>217</sup>

We fear that many People who have sent or would send their little Negroes to School, would not do it upon the principles which they out; we mean purely with a View to have them instructed in the Principles of Religion, & enabled to instruct their Fellow Slaves at Home. Some People we fear send their Children more to keep them out of Mischief, other to improve them, in Hope by their being made a little more sensible, that they may be more handy & useful in their Families; we form this Opinion from observing that several, who put their Negroes to School, have taken them Home again so soon as they began to read, but before they had received any real Benefit or it could be supposed that they were made acquainted with the Principles of Christianity.

**Rev. Alexander Rhonnald to Bray Associates, September 27, 1762 (Norfolk, Virginia)**<sup>218</sup>

There are many poor Free Negroes & Mulattoes in this Borough & Parish, who could not be the better of this school, by reason of the Gentlemen insisting that their small Negro Boys, whom they perhaps design for Domesticks or Livery Men, shall be preferred before them, & So of the Girls who are brought up in Needlework or Knitting, fitting them for the House, when at the same time, I can plainly discern, That these Girls will be more instructed for the latter Employment, than in that which may conduce the Saving of the Soul...

**A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London, 1770 [Williamsburg Bray School Textbook ca. 1771]**<sup>219</sup>

An is it not very probably that the Slaves would abundantly repay your Christian Compassion and Kindness to them, by a greater degree of Honesty, Fidelity, and

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<sup>217</sup> "Rev. William Yates and Robert Carter Nicholas to Rev. John Waring, 30 September 1762," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 184-187.

<sup>218</sup> "Rev. Alexander Rhonnald to Rev. John Waring, 27 September 1762," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 180-84.

<sup>219</sup> "[Rev. John Waring], A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 293-302.

Diligence in your Service? Not to mention that GOD may then, in an especial manner “bless your Basket and your Store, the Increase of your Kine, and of your Flocks, and prosper you in all that you set your Hands unto.”

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## Scholarly Publications and Peer-Reviewed Secondary Sources

### **From Jennifer Oast’s *Educating Eighteenth Century Black Children*:**

“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 [the] 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 [British]”

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 examples, 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.

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, apparently victims of either childhood death or sale to another owner”.<sup>220</sup>

### **From Antonio T. Bly’s *Slave Literacy and Education in Virginia*:**

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<sup>220</sup> Jennifer Oast, “Educating Eighteenth-Century Black Children: The Bray Schools” (M.A. Thesis, The College of William & Mary, December 2000), 25-26. All of Oast’s research comes directly from primary sources referenced in The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation’s training manual, *Enslaving Virginia*. A digital copy of this manual can be found here: <https://cwfpublishings.omeka.net/items/show/170>

“The education of slaves, however, was not expressly prohibited. In 1805, the General Assembly updated its earlier law prohibiting the gathering of enslaved people to clarify that it was not intended to prevent enslavers from taking their enslaved people to church. In 1819, the assembly further clarified the law, banning enslaved people from “any school or schools for teaching them reading or writing, either in the day or night.” It continued to be legal for enslavers to instruct enslaved people outside of schools, churches, and meetinghouses, and some enslavers believed that literacy increased an enslaved person’s value. Most enslavers, however, resisted the impulse to educate. Still, many of their enslaved people often took great risks to educate themselves.”<sup>221</sup>

**From Michael Anesko’s *So Discreet a Zeal*:**

From his experience in Virginia and the West Indies, [Morgan] Godwyn realized that the most difficult obstacle to slave Christianization was the stubborn resistance of slaveholders, who "continually belch [ed] forth" the argument that conversion would impair both a slave's economic value and the physical security of the colony. His answer to these charges was repeated again and again over the next fifty years, because its appeal presumably was irresistible. The slaveholder’s duty and interest were happily coincidental: Christian slaves, by definition, would be "truer Servants", more loyal and diligent than their heathen counterpart<sup>222</sup> ... [For the Anglican Church] to become an effective mediator between master and slave, the church would first require a more substantial social foundation. To acquire that foundation... [Virginia’s Anglican] church would need either to own slaves itself or deal intimately with people who did”.<sup>223</sup>

**From Thad Tate’s *The Negro in Williamsburg*:**

“While the school had in part a religious purpose and therefore some of the instruction may have resembled the simple catechizing [sic] conducted by the parish clergy, it is still clear that the Bray Associates intended to provide more than this. Both the three year minimum attendance that Nicholas would [have] liked to have enforced and the interest in teaching reading and writing suggest that the Associates intended to provide a reasonable amount of formal academic training”.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Antonio T. Bly, “Slave Literacy and Education in Virginia,” Encyclopedia Virginia, June 24, 2019, [https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Slave\\_Literacy\\_and\\_Education\\_in\\_Virginia#start\\_entry](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Slave_Literacy_and_Education_in_Virginia#start_entry).

<sup>222</sup> Michael Anesko, “So Discreet a Zeal: Slavery and the Anglican Church in Virginia, 1680-1730,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 93, no. 3 (1985): 253.

<sup>223</sup> Anesko, 264.

<sup>224</sup> Thad W. Tate Jr., “The Negro in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg,” Colonial Williamsburg Digital Library, Report Series Research 0121, 109-110, <https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports\RR0121.xml&highlight=negro>

## Section 3: Individual Ideologies of Value at the Williamsburg Bray School

### Pre-Revolutionary Primary Sources from Virginia

#### **Unknown Group of Enslaved Men and Women to the Bishop of London, Tidewater Virginia, 1723<sup>225</sup>**

your humble perticners do humbllly beg the favour of your Lord Ship that your honor will grant and Settell one thing upon us which is that our ~~eh~~ children may be broatt up in the way of the Christtian faith and our desire is that they may be Larnd the Lords prayer the creed and the ten commandements and that they may appeare Every Lord's day att Church before the € Curat to bee Exammond for our desire is that godllines Should abbound among us and wee desire that our Childarn be putt to Scool and and Larnd to Reed through the Bybell.

#### **Governor Gooch to the Bishop of London, May 28, 1731<sup>226</sup>**

Numbers of these poor Creatures were taken up in all parts of the Country for their unlawful Meetings and Examined, but no discovery could be made of any formed Design of their Rising, only loose Discourses that an order from His Majesty was brought in by M<sup>r</sup> Spotswood to sett all those slaves free that were Christians, and that the order was Suppressed.

#### **Robert Carter Nicholas to Bray Associates, December 27, 1765<sup>227</sup>**

I fear 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 & for want of the Instruction necessary to confirm them in those Principles. 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 a sad Jade, notwithstanding all we can do to reform her.

#### **Runaway Ad, Isaac Bee, September 1774<sup>228</sup>**

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<sup>225</sup> Thomas N. Ingersoll, "'Releese us out of this Cruell Bondegg': An Appeal from Virginia in 1723," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1994), 778.

<sup>226</sup> Brydon, G. McLaren, Rev., ed., "Letter of Governor Gooch, May 28 1731." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 32 (1924): 321-25.

<sup>227</sup> "Robert Carter Nicholas to Rev. John Waring, 27 December 1765," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 180-84.

<sup>228</sup> The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, *Enslaving Virginia* (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation: 1999), 605.

RUN away from the Subscriber, about two Month ago, a likely Mulatto Lad named ISAAC BEE, ... is well known around Williamsburg, where I am informed he has been several TIMES seen since his Elopement. He is between eighteen and nineteen Years of Age, low of Stature, and thinks he has a Right to his Freedom, because his Father was a Freeman, and I suppose he will endeavour to pass for one. He can read, but I do not know that he can write; however, he may easily get some one to forge a Pass for him...

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## Scholarly Publications and Peer-Reviewed Secondary Sources

### **From Travis Glasson's *Mastering Christianity*:**

"Try as they might, [Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts] supporters could not stop enslaved people from interpreting the meaning and implications of conversion for themselves... Even when enslaved people did not overtly use their Christian status to claim freedom, baptism or participation in Christian education and ritual could enable the exercise of new forms of autonomy and authority within their communities".<sup>229</sup>

### **From Jennifer L. Morgan's *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*:**

"How does the concept of value, or currency, or marketing, connect with the experience of being enslaved? How did enslaved - people interpret the illusory claims of rationality when such claims laid a price on both their heads and those of their unborn children? As early as 1971, the scholar and activist Angela Davis asked historians to consider the trauma that enslaved women experienced when they "had to surrender childbearing to alien and predatory economic interests." Answering such questions calls for a reading and a research strategy that takes as its starting point the assumption that both enslaved Africans and their captors simultaneously enacted meanings as they navigated the very new terrain of hereditary racial slavery and its consequences. By examining the moments when ideas about rationality and race appear to cohere, we can unearth the lived experiences and analytic responses to enslavement of -those whose lives have most regularly and consistently fallen outside the purview of the archive".<sup>230</sup>

### **From Antonio T. Bly's *"Pretends he can read": Runaways and Literacy in Colonial America, 1730-1776*:**

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<sup>229</sup> Travis Glasson, *Mastering Christianity: Missionary Anglicanism and Slavery in the Atlantic World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 107.

<sup>230</sup> Jennifer L. Morgan, *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 7.

“While many scholars have made extensive use of runaway notices to illustrate instances of slaves' discontent...none has used them to explore slaves achieving literacy and how that achievement changed over time and space during the eighteenth century. Instead, historians have presumed (misrepresenting, unwittingly or not, temporal and spatial specificity) that most, if not all, slaves of that period were denied access to books and literacy<sup>231</sup>... Skilled slaves made up a little over one-fourth of those who ran away in the 1750s, and 11 percent of them could read and write. In the ensuing decade, 8 of the 64 skilled runaways reported (one-eighth) were literate. In the 1770s, when Virginia declared independence, 123 of 648 runaways were noted as being smiths and carpenters, waiters and coachmen, boatmen, farmers, and other such skilled hands. Almost one-tenth of those 123 could read and/or write”.<sup>232</sup>

## CHAPTER 3: CURRICULUM

### Key Concepts for Exploring Bray Curriculum

#### Overview:

To understand how the Associates of Dr. Bray, their trustees, instructors, and students understood education at the Bray School, we must broadly look to terms which were synonymous with ideas on education used in the colonial era. While ideas on education are universal, we should not assume that how we define spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, or sewing aligns with ways in which Ann Wager, Black students, the Williamsburg Bray School Trustees, or the Associates of Dr. Bray defined them. The following chapter connects correspondence from the Williamsburg Bray School, Virginia Bray Schools, or Atlantic World

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<sup>231</sup> Antonio T. Bly, “‘Pretends He Can Read’: Runaways and Literacy in Colonial America, 1730—1776,” *Early American Studies* 6, no. 2 (2008): 265.

<sup>232</sup> Bly, 280.



schools affiliated with the Associates of Dr. Bray to explore Bray School curriculum. I also included a section for standard educational definitions used in the seventeenth- and eighteenth- century British Atlantic World to contextualize primary sources.

### **Methodology:**

I have pulled directly from the *Oxford English Dictionary* when compiling these definitions. I tried to pull the definition(s) that made the most sense in relation to the pre-colonial or colonial British Atlantic World. I have further pulled from Samuel Johnson's 1755 *English Dictionary* to support or corroborate the *Oxford English Dictionary's* definitions.<sup>233</sup>

In the case of needlework, I have looked to Amelia Peck, Curator of the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art for her work on samplers in colonial and early America. I have also referenced the work of Kimberly Ivey in The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's publication, *In The Neatest Manner: The Making of the Virginia Sampler Tradition*.

### Category 1- Education

#### *Oxford English Dictionary*

**Education:** The process of 'bringing up' (young persons); the manner in which a person has been 'brought up'; with reference to social station, kind of manners and habits acquired, calling or employment prepared for. [earliest reference 1533]<sup>234</sup>

#### *Johnson's 1755 Dictionary*

**Education:** *n.s.* [from *educate*.] Formation of manners in youth; the manner of breeding youth; nurture. *Education* and instruction are the means, the one by use, the other by precept, to make our natural faculty of reason both the better and the sooner to judge rightly between truth and error, good and evil. *Hooker*, *b. i. s. 6*. All nations have agreed in the necessity of a strict *education*, which consisted in the observance of moral duties. *Swift*.<sup>235</sup>

### Category 2- Spelling, Orthography, Reading, Stops, Points, and Writing

#### *Oxford English Dictionary*

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<sup>233</sup> "About Johnson's Dictionary," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/blog/about-johnsons-dictionary/>

<sup>234</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, second edition, vol. V, 20 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 74.

<sup>235</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Education, *n.s.* (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=education>. Here Johnson is supporting the modern OED description. It is really interesting to see neither of these speak about learning information, and are more focused on good manners and habits.

**Spelling:** practice of naming letters of words; manner of expressing or writing words; see the following:

- a. The action, practice, or art of naming the letters of words, of reading letter by letter, or of expressing words by letters. [earliest reference 1440]
- b. Manner of expressing or writing words with letters; orthography [earliest reference 1661]<sup>236</sup>

*Johnson's 1755 Dictionary*

**To Spell:** *v.a.* [*spellen*, Dutch.]

1. To write with the proper letters.
2. *To read by naming letters singly.*

**To Spell:** *v.n.*

1. To form words of letters.
2. *To read.*
3. *To read unskillfully.*<sup>237</sup>

*Oxford English Dictionary*

**Orthography:** Correct or proper spelling; the way in which words are conventionally written; see the following:

- a. Correct or proper spelling; spelling according to accepted usage; the way in which words are conventionally written. (By extension) Any mode or system of spelling. [earliest reference 1450]
- b. That part of grammar which treats of the nature and values of letters and of their combination to express sounds and words; the subject of spelling. [earliest reference 1588, exclusively used in this definition until 1824]<sup>238</sup>

*Johnson's 1755 Dictionary*

**Orthography:** *n.s.* [ὀρθος and γράφω; *orthographie*, Fr.]\_\_

1. The part of grammar which teaches how words should be spelled. This would render languages much more easy to be learned, as to reading and pronouncing, and especially as to the writing them, which now as they stand we find to be

<sup>236</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XVI, 190.

<sup>237</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Spell, n.s. (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=spell>. Johnson's definitions include "to read unskillfully". The term therefore includes not only the skill of spelling, but also the lack of spelling skills. This again expands the definition to include lesser skills, that are not normally included in the notion of spelling - which has an implied high skill level.

<sup>238</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. X, 954.

troublesome, and it is no small part of grammar which treats of *orthography* and right pronunciation. *Holder*.

2. The art or practice of spelling.<sup>239</sup>

*Oxford English Dictionary*

**Reading:**

- a. The action or practice of perusing written or printed matter; the practice of occupying oneself in this way. [earliest reference 897]
- b. The extent to which one reads or has read; literary knowledge, scholarship. [earliest reference 1593]
- c. Ability to read; the art of reading. [earliest reference 1599]
- d. A single or separate act or course of perusal. [earliest reference 1757]<sup>240</sup>

*Johnson's 1755 Dictionary*

**Reading:** *n.s.* [from read]

1. Study in books; perusal of books. Though *reading* and conversation may furnish us with many ideas of men and things, yet it is our own meditation must form our judgment.
2. A lecture; a prelection.
3. Publick recital.
4. Variation of copies.<sup>241</sup>

*Oxford English Dictionary*

**Stops:** A mark or point of punctuation [earliest reference 1590]; see also b. *mind your stops*: said to a child reading aloud [earliest reference 1830].<sup>242</sup>

*Johnson's 1755 Dictionary*

<sup>239</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Orthography, n.s. (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=orthography>. It is interesting to note that Johnson focuses on the teaching and practice of spelling with this definition. The focus is on standardization, which is the core of the Bray experience - standardization of people through indoctrination and submission.

<sup>240</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XIII, 265.

<sup>241</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Reading, n.s. (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=reading>

<sup>242</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XVI, 776.

**Stop:** *n.s.* [from the verb]

11. A point in writing, by which sentences are distinguished.<sup>243</sup>

*Oxford English Dictionary*

**Points:** A dot or other small mark used in writing and printing.

- a. A punctuation mark; esp. the *full point* or full stop; also extended to the marks of exclamation (!) and interrogation (?); and sometimes to reference marks, as the asterisk, obelisk, etc. [earliest reference 1386]
- a. See also – A dot used in writing numbers. (*a*) In decimals, separating the integral form from a fractional part; also, placed over a repeating decimal, or over the first and last figures of the period in a circulating decimal. [earliest reference 1704]<sup>244</sup>

*Johnsons 1755 Dictionary*

**Points:** *n.s.*

- 2. To distinguish words or sentences by points. 6. To distinguish by stops or points.
- 11. Note of distinction in writing; a stop.<sup>245</sup>

*Oxford English Dictionary*

**Write:** Signification

- a. to score, outline, or draw the figure of (something); to incise. [earliest reference 1688]
- b. To form (letters, symbols, words, etc.). by carving, engraving, or incision; to trace in or on a hard or plastic surface, esp. with a sharp instrument; to record in this way. [earliest reference 1000]
- c. To write in the dust, in or on sand, water, the wind, etc. with reference to absence of abiding record [earliest reference 1513, no longer in use after 1847]<sup>246</sup>

<sup>243</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Stop, *n.s.* (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=stop>. While there are many different definitions for stop(s), this particular definition emphasizes the use of stops as distinguishing marks in sentences. In this case punctuation, indicating the very notions of a sentence and the beginnings of grammar, are linked to spelling.

<sup>244</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XI, 1125.

<sup>245</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Point, *n.s.* (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=point>. In this case, Johnson seems to use the term stop and point interchangeably.

<sup>246</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XX, 639.

*Johnson's 1755 Dictionary*

**To Write:** *v.a.* preterite *writ* or *wrote*; part. pass. *written*, *writ*, or *wrote*. [*writan*, *awritan*, Saxon; *ad rita*, Islandick; *wreta*, a letter, Gothick.]

1. To express by means of letters.
2. *To engrave; to impress.*
3. *To produce as an author.*
4. *To tell by letter.*<sup>247</sup>

Category 3- Sewing, Sampler, Marking, Needlework

**Sewing:** To work with a needle and thread. [earliest reference 1450]<sup>248</sup>

**Sampler:**

As part of her preparation for the responsibility of sewing clothes and linens for her future family, most girls completed at least two samplers. The first, which might be undertaken when a girl was *as young as five or six*, was called a marking sampler. Marking samplers served a dual purpose: they taught a child basic embroidery techniques and the *alphabet and numbers*. The letters and numbers learned while embroidering a marking sampler were especially useful, since it was important that any homemaker keep track of her linens, some of her most valuable household goods. This was accomplished by *marking them*, usually in a cross stitch, with her initials and a number.<sup>249</sup>

**Marking Stitch:**

Of particular relevance to our discussion of Virginia samplers is the marking stitch. The marking cross stitch, or reversible cross stitch, is created with six passes of the needled, beginning with a diagonal stitch...What was the need for these reversible stitches? Valuable household linens including tablecloths and napkins, and even clothing such as shifts and shirts, were embroidered with

<sup>247</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Write, v.a. (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=education>. Both the OED and Johnson's Dictionary focus on the use of letters, something that reinforces the use of sewing and needlework - the production of letters - as a form of, and a precursor to, writing. This definition may hint at need to include people with "lesser" ability, rather than the modern idea of writing which implies fully skilled usage. The Bray School students were in their initial stages of learning at the Bray school; it also speaks to the notion of enslavers wanting to maintain or establish control over enslaved peoples more broadly.

<sup>248</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XV, 104. It is interesting to note with sewing in particular that this word can mean many different things depending on the cultural and linguistic context in which it is used. There are over 24 definitions for the meaning of the word sew.

<sup>249</sup> Amelia Peck, "American Needlework in the Eighteenth Century". *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, April 12, 2021, [https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd\\_need.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd_need.htm).

*numbers and initials* in order to keep sets together and to ensure that items sent out to be laundered or mended were returned to their proper owner...the marking stitch was all but obsolete by the mid-eighteenth century – except in Virginia where it appears on samples from several different regional groups as late as the 1810s.<sup>250</sup>

**Needlework:** Work done with the needle; sewing, embroidery, or fancy work. [earliest reference 1382]<sup>251</sup>

## Category 4 – Math

### *Oxford English Dictionary*

**Arithmetic:** The science of numbers; the art of computation by figures. [earliest reference 1250]<sup>252</sup>

**Mathematics:** Originally, the collective name for geometry, arithmetic, and certain physical sciences (as astronomy and optics) involving geometrical reasoning.<sup>253</sup>

**Cyphering:** To use Arabic numerals in the process of arithmetic; to work the elementary rules of arithmetic; now chiefly a term of elementary education. [earliest reference 1530]<sup>254</sup>

## Curriculum of Bray Schools: Overview

### Overall Williamsburg Bray School Curriculum:

- Based on the Williamsburg Bray School regulations, reading, spelling, linguistic grammar skills, sewing, knitting, religious indoctrination, and racial submission were explicitly taught at the Bray School. (see ‘Section 1’ of sources)
  - Some of this instruction was meant for an enslaver to derive use of the enslaved child. According to the rules: *The Associates of the late Reverend Doctor Bray ... having established Schools in several of the Northern Colonies for the Education of Negroes in the Principles of the Christian Religion teaching them to read & at the same Time rendering*

<sup>250</sup> Kimberly Smith Ivey, *In the Neatest Manner: The Making of the Virginia Sampler Tradition*, Williamsburg Decorative Arts Series (Curious Works Press: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1997), 28-29.

<sup>251</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. X, 294.

<sup>252</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. I, 631.

<sup>253</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. IX, 470.

<sup>254</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. III, 225.

*the Females more **useful** to their Owners by instructing them in sewing knitting...*<sup>255</sup>

#### Comparative Bray School Curricula:

- Comparative pre-Revolutionary Bray School correspondence and minute meetings show that a variety of other educative skills are taught, such as spelling, marking, samplers, testament, alphabet, fables, or primer instruction. (see 'Section 2' and 'Section 3' of sources). This instruction is in addition to teaching reading and religious indoctrination. The locations of these schools are:
  - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
  - New York City, New York
  - Newport, Rhode Island
  - Wilmington, North Carolina
  - Brunswick, North Carolina

#### Orthography as a method of 'writing':

- The use of writing, orthography, points, and stops are emphasized in the Williamsburg Bray School textbook *Dixon's English Instructor*. This textbook was sent by the Bray Associates in 1760 to be specifically used in Ann Wager's classroom. (see 'Section 4' of sources)
- Spelling and Orthography are synonymous terms in eighteenth-century education (see section entitled 'Key Definitions'). These terms are more like how we define writing in a modern-day context. The idea behind spelling and orthography at the Bray School was to bring a child into social and religious conformity.

#### Sampler work, orthography, and arithmetic (see 'Section 5' of sources):

- Based on traditional ways of educating young girls across colonial America, the Bray School likely incorporated the use of marking samplers which emphasized the use of initials (i.e., application of spelling & orthography) and numbers (i.e., arithmetic or cyphering).
- It is possible to learn lettering or spelling from marking samplers.
- It is possible to learn basic arithmetic or cyphering from marking samplers or knitting.
- Both sewing and knitting as skills require a basic understanding of counting, which is a form of rudimentary arithmetic.

#### Review by Historical Research Team:

- The Historical Research team reviewed all corresponding content and felt the argument was substantive and valid.

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<sup>255</sup> "[Enclosure: Regulations], 30 September 1762," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 189–92.

## Further research questions:

### Question A: Educational Application

What did the students do with their instruction as opposed to what the Associates of Dr. Bray or Williamsburg trustees *thought* they would accomplish with their education?

- Application of interdisciplinary methodologies to answer this question should be addressed in answering this research question.
- This work is the continuation of my doctoral research at the College of William & Mary.



### Question B: Contextualization of Sources

How do we contextualize research on the Bray School and Black education more broadly to our guests who likely have a different understanding of Black education and colonial literacy in the Atlantic World? What combination of interpretive techniques are required to reach our target audiences?

- Historical Imagination is a methodological component of answering these questions. Historical Imagination is defined as “the threshold between what historians consider to be proper, imagination-free history and the malpractice of excessive imagination, asking where the boundary between the two sits and the limits of permitted imagination for the historian.”<sup>256</sup>
  - Although there are well-defined methodological approaches to this technique, it’s execution in reality versus in theory is nuanced and complex. How do both 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person interpretation work together to address this institutionally at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation?

## Curriculum of Bray Schools: Pre-Revolutionary Primary Sources and Peer-Reviewed Secondary Sources

### Section 1: Williamsburg and Virginia Bray School Correspondence (1762):

**Robert Carter Nicholas and Rev. William Yates to Bray Associates, September 30, 1762 (Williamsburg, Virginia)<sup>257</sup>**

We can only say in general that at a late Visitation of the School we were pretty much pleased with the Scholars' Performances, as they rather exceeded our Expectations.... We probably shall have Occasion for a few for a few Testaments Psalters & spelling Books and perhaps a Number of Bacon's Sermons, recommending the instruction of the Negroes in the Christian Faith, properly dispersed over the Country might have a good Influence.

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<sup>256</sup> David J. Staley, “Historical Imagination,” Ohio State University Department of History, accessed July 24, 2023, <https://history.osu.edu/publications/historical-imagination>.

<sup>257</sup> “Rev. William Yates and Robert Carter Nicholas to [Rev. John Waring], 30 September 1762,” Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 188.

### **School Regulations [Enclosure] to Bray Associates, 1762 (Williamsburg, Virginia)<sup>258</sup>**

The Associates of the late Reverend Doctor Bray, residing in England, having established Schools in several of the Northern Colonies for the Education of Negroes in the Principles of the Christian Religion teaching them to read & at the same Time rendering the Females more useful to their Owners by instructing them in sewing knitting & encouraged by the Success of these their pious Endeavours & being solicitous to make this Kind of Charity as extensive as possible, they some Time ago came to a Resolution of establishing a School in the City of Williamsburg for the same Purpose...

Rules to be observed by the Teacher or Mistress, who is preferred to a Master as the Scholars will consist of Children of both Sexes.

She shall take no Scholars but what are approved of by the Trustees & She shall attend the School at seven O'Clock in the Winter half year & at six in the Summer half year in the Morning, & keep her Scholars diligently to their Business during the Hours of Schooling suffering none to be absent at any Time, but when they are sick or have some other reasonable Excuse.

2d. She shall teach her Scholars the true spelling of Words<sup>259</sup>, make them mind their Stops & endeavour to bring them to pronounce & read distinctly.

3. She shall make it her principal Care to teach them to read the Bible, to instruct them in the Principles of the Christian Religion according to the Doctrines of the Church of England; shall explain the Church Catechism to them by some good Exposition, which, together with the Catechism, they shall publicly repeat in Church or else where, so often as the Trustees shall require & shall be frequently examined in School, as to their Improvements of every Sort.

4. She shall teach them those Doctrines & Principles of Religion which are in their Nature most useful in the Course of private Life, especially such as concern Faith & good Manners.

5. She shall conduct them from her School House, where they are all to be first assembled, in a decent & orderly Manner, so often as divine Service is there performed, & before it begins & instruct & oblige them to behave in a proper Manner, kneeling or standing as the rubrick directs & to join in the public Service with & regularly to repeat after the Minister in all Places where the People are so directed & in such a manner as not to disturb the rest of the Congregation. She shall take Care that the Scholars, so soon as they are able to use them, do carry their Bibles & Prayer Books to Church with them; & that they

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<sup>258</sup> "[Enclosure: Regulations], 30 September 1762," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 189–92.

<sup>259</sup> Samuel Johnson, "Spell, n.s. (1755)," Johnson's Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023, <https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=spell>. Please refer to the 1755 definition of spelling for the connection to ideas on writing or orthography. Please also see the section entitled 'Key Definitions'.

may be prevented from spending the Lord's Day profanely or idly she shall give her Scholars some Task out of the most useful Parts of Scripture, to be learnt on each Lord's Day, according is their Capacities & shall require a strict Performance of it every Monday Morning.

6. She shall use proper Prayers in her School every morning & Evening & teach the Scholars to do the same at Home, devoutly on their Knees; and also teach them to say Grace before & after eating their Victuals, explaining to them the Design & Meaning of it.

7. She shall take particular Care of the Manners & Behaviour of her Scholars & by all proper Methods discourage idleness & suppress the Beginnings of Vice; such as lying, cursing swearing, profaning the Lord's Day, obscene Discourse, stealing & putting them often in mind & 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.

8. She shall teach the Female Scholars knitting, sewing & such other Things as may be useful to their Owners & she shall be particularly watchful that her Scholars between the School hours do not commit any Irregularities nor fall into any indecent Diversions Lastly. She shall take Care that her Scholars keep themselves clean & neat in their Cloaths & that they in all Things set a good Example to other Negroes.

**Rev. Alexander Rhonnald to Bray Associates, September 27, 1762 (Norfolk, Virginia)<sup>260</sup>**

There are many poor Free Negroes & Mulattoes in this Borough & Parish, who could not be the better of this school, by reason of the Gentlemen insisting that their small Negro Boys, whom they perhaps design for Domesticks or Livery Men, shall be preferred before them, & So of the Girls who are brought up in Needlework or Knitting, fitting them for the House, when at the same time, I can plainly discern, That these Girls will be more instructed for the latter Employment, than in that which may conduce the Saving of the Soul...

**Section 2: Comparative Bray Schools – Minute Meetings (1735-1768)<sup>261</sup>**

**Page 120:**

<sup>260</sup> "Rev. Alexander Rhonnald to Rev. John Waring, 27 September 1762," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 180–84.

<sup>261</sup> "Minutes of the Meetings of the 'Associates of Dr. Bray'" (London, 1735-1768), *USPG Catalogue of Bray Associates Files* (1699-1979), f2a, University of Oxford. The following transcriptions were done by Nicole Brown and a team of volunteer transcribers associated with the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library. Best practices in accordance with the National Archives were done to complete these transcriptions.

SouthSea CoffeeHouse Feb. 7: 1759

Present      Peter LeKeux  
Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Skinner  
Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Dixon  
Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Waring  
M<sup>r</sup>. J<sup>n</sup> Spiller  
Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Berriman

J Waring reported that he had received a Letter  
from the Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Sturgeon at Philadelphia who  
writed [sic] as followeth Philadelphia Nov. 9  
1758

\_\_\_\_\_ As Soon as received from Your Directions I acquainted [sic] our Vestry with the Design which Seem'd to give them Pleasure. I agreed with a woman used many Years to teach a School to undertake the <sup>Charge of the</sup> Blacks & the School wou'd have been opend some Time ago but the Books did not to hand till October last.

Every Thing is now ready & the Mistress will begin in a few Days, & You may depend on my Care that She Shall execute the Trust with Fidelity

The Terms are that the Mistress is to teach 30 Children, the Boys to read, the Girls to Sew, knit read & Mark, and to attend at Church with them every Wednesday & Friday & that all her Endeavours are to be directed towards making them Christians. The lowest Salary She will accept is 20£ Sterling to be drawn for half Yearly from the Time she opens the School.

**Page 168-169:**

Extract of a Letter from the Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Auchmuty to  
The Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Waring. New York. Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>.. 1761  
\_\_\_\_\_ I take Care that few weeks <sup>^</sup>pass without my going to  
the School, & examining the Scholars --- And, I have upon  
a very Late Visit, can with pleasure inform You, that  
the School is quite full ---- that several have been deferr=  
=ed for want of Room --- that the Mistress appears to be  
very diligent and Industrious --- that the Children are.  
clean and orderly --- and begin to read, sew, say their

Catechism and Prayers as well as I could expect for the Time  
 \_\_\_\_\_. There are very few Negroe Children born here but  
 what are baptized, and out of the thirty now in the School  
 Only Three are unbaptized, and the owners of these three  
 have requested me to baptize them, which I shall soon do  
 For some Years past I have not baptized less than 80 or  
 90 Negroe Children, and often upwards of 100. besides  
 several Adults. D<sup>r</sup>. Barclay has also baptized many  
 & the Dutch ministers and the Dissenters daily do the Same  
 and yet they continue peaceable Slaves.

**Page 179-180:<sup>262</sup>**

Letter from  
 M<sup>r</sup>. Auchmuty

\_\_\_\_\_ Since my last, Oct.<sup>br</sup>. The School has been Completely  
 full, & so continues. Two or Three of the old ones being  
 grown up, & well instructed have left the School, &  
 others have Supplied their place. Such is the Repute  
 the School is now in that no Sooner is there a Vacancy  
 but immediately Several Candidates offer

As to the Improvement of the Children in  
 reading Spelling learning their Catechism, Sewing &c  
 It is as great as can be expected. They all attend.  
 =ed me last Sunday (as indeed They do almost every  
 Sunday) & were, before a considerable number of  
 Adults, examined & catechised [sic], & performed extreme.  
 =ly well. They constantly attend divine Service  
 on the Lords Day, & are a very pretty little decent  
 Flock, which in time I flatter myself will be  
 exemplary & an Ornament to our most holy  
 Religion. \_\_\_\_\_

**Page 220:**

Read a Letter from the Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Brown of Newport  
 Rhode Island Nov<sup>r</sup>. 6. 1764. Who Says. He delayed  
 writing because He cou'd not transmit so favourable  
 an Account of the School as upon its first opening He  
 had sanguinely promised himself. He is sorry to Say

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<sup>262</sup> Repeated similar references to the New York City School can be found on pages 184, 214, 230, 247 of the 1735-1768 Minute Meetings.

the Church wardens Vestry have not fulfilled their Engagements upon opening the School, which hath never been full, the Some of them had Children which they might have sent had they been disposed. He is sensible there are Complaints made of the negligence of the School mistress, which are not ill-founded, who was chose by the Vestry. He therefore recommends that a Smart Letter of Complaint be sent over. ---- That the School does by no means answer the Expectations of the Founders - -- That it appears never to have been full, which must be the Fault of the Minister, Church wardens and Vestry. That it doth not appear that the Children make any Proficiency which must be the Fault of the Mistress, & consequently that there must be a Reform in both these Respects, or the School must be removed. --- This He hopes will cause an Altercat<sup>ion</sup> rouse the Mistress & put the Vestry on filing the School & if it doth not He promises to give speedy Information

He Says however the School hath Done some good, There have generally been in it from twenty to five & twenty Children, Eight or Ten of which sayd the Ch. Catechism last Lent without missing a word, & Several of Them have made Some proficiency in Reading & the Girls in Sewing. He is not without hopes much good may be done.

#### **Pages 228-229:**

N. Carolina M<sup>r</sup>. Lewis De Rossett of Wilmington N. Carolina in a Lett dated Ap. 22: 1765 ...  
They seem to have a entire Dislike to their Children associating with Slave, which he thinks is a trifling Reason but their prejudices are deeply rooted. He thinks the only effectual Method the Associates can take is to send over a proper person for that Purpose, who perhaps with the Library and taking in Sewing may make a [Shift] to get a Living. He assures He will do every Thing in his Power to promote the good Designs of the Associates. & for whatever black Children of his own He Shall send to the School He will give a reasonable Allowance to the Mistress.

**Page 248:**<sup>263</sup>

Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Browne Min<sup>t</sup>. of Newport Rhode Island in a Lett<sup>r</sup>. dated July .1:1766 says he hath at length the Satisfaction to inform us that He ~~Schoe~~ hath completed the numbers required to fill the School, & that the affairs of it are in general much more agreeably circumstanced, than hath hitherto been the Case. The Mistress He thinks is more diligent and industrious, & notwithstanding the Difficulty that attends the Instruction of Blacks, Several of Them read tolerably well, & the Girls have made proficiency in knitting & Sewing, & many of Both Sexes answered in the Church the last Lent to general Satisfaction none have as yet been presented for Baptism, the Reason of which he apprehends is that as not one Third part of the Inhabitants of the Island (computed at 40,000) have been themselves baptized It is not to be wondered if they are not very Solicitous to have others baptized more especially the Blacks, whom they are disposed to consider as an inferior or rather despicable Race.

**Page 267:**

Associates Office. Nov<sup>r</sup>. 5.<sup>th</sup>. 1767

Present

Rev<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup>. Waring

The Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>r</sup>. Barrett of Brunswick N. Carolina says in a Letter dated Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1767 "I fear I shall be no more Successful in my Endeavours for the Establishment of a Negroe School than M<sup>r</sup>. Lewis De Rosset.

Allow me to Say no one is more earnestly desirous of such an Institution than Myself nor has any struggled with more Difficulties solely arising from the unhappy prejudices of the people. I had agreed with a widow Woman here of good Character, some months since, & had proposed opening School with so small a number as fifteen, but I cannot make up more than eight or nine. therefore must for a time drop the Design.

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<sup>263</sup> Similar comments on the Newport, Rhode Island Bray School are repeated on page 265 of the 1735-1768 Minute Meetings.

I had agreed with the Mistress to teach the Girls to sew, knit,  
& mark, thinking that wou'd induce people to send young  
Negroe Girls, but I find they wou'd rather their Slaves [redacted]  
remain ignorant as Brutes. In a place thirty miles  
from Town where I officiate, nine times in the Year a  
great number of Negroes always attend with great seeming  
Devotion. of Them I have baptized twelve Adults &  
Seventeen Children.

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### Section 3: Comparative Bray Schools – Pre-Revolutionary Student Lists (1774)

**Edward Duffield to Rev. John Waring, May 20, 1774 (Philadelphia)<sup>264</sup>**

N.B. It appears by the Account of the Negroe Charity School rendered this day by the Mistress thereof, that there are at present

2 at their Needles & Spelling  
1 at Knitting, Needle, & Testament  
7 at Spelling  
3 in the Testament  
1 at Needle & Testament  
1 in the Psalter  
10 in the Alphabet  
1 in Fables  
1 at Sampler & Testament  
3 in the Primer

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30

Three of the above Children are free & the rest of them are slaves.

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### Section 4: Williamsburg Bray School Textbooks: Exploring Orthography, Points, and Stops in Henry Dixon's 'English Instructor'

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<sup>264</sup> "Rev. Edward Duffield to Rev. John Waring, May 20, 1774," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 318.



**Rev. John Waring (and Bray Associates) to Rev. Dawson, February 29, 1760<sup>265</sup>**

Books in the Box  
 50 Childs first Book  
 40 English Instructor  
 25 Catechism broke &c  
 10 Easy method of instructing Youth  
 3 Indian instructed  
 2 Preliminary Essays  
 5 Bacons 4 Sermons  
 5 Bacons 2 Sermons to Negroes  
 10 Christians Guide  
 3 Church Catechism with text of Scrip. 12 friendly admonitions  
 70 sermons before Trustees & Associates

**From Antonio T. Bly's *In Pursuit of Letters (History of Education Quarterly)*:**

The Associates were elated. Presuming a favorable response, they sent the trustees a parcel of books for school purposes. The parcel included five copies of Reverend Thomas Bacon's *Four Sermons, upon the Great and Indispensable Duty of All Christian Masters to Bring Up Their Negro Slaves in the Knowledge of Fear and of God* (1750) and five copies of Bacon's *Two Sermons, Preached to a Congregation of Black Slaves* (1749). The box also included fifty copies of "Childs first Book," an ABC primer, forty copies of Henry Dixon's *The English Instructor* (1728), a colonial spelling book, and twenty copies of the *Book of Common Prayer* that contained the church's catechism.<sup>266</sup>

**From Jennifer E. Monaghan's *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America*:**

A central feature of the true spelling book was a lengthy discussion of letter-sound correspondences, often in the second part of the text, which offered a variety of rules on how to pronounce words...Many of these characteristic features appear in three spelling books that were, among them, to blanket the American colonies in imported and local imprints until after the American Revolution. Works by Thomas Dyche, Henry

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<sup>265</sup> "Rev. John Waring to Rev. Thomas Dawson, 29 February 1760," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 144–46. It should be noted here that Dr. Antonio T. Bly asserts that the English Instructor being referenced here is Henry Dixon's English Instructor. For more information, see Antonio T. Bly, "In Pursuit of Letters: A History of the Bray Schools for Enslaved Children in Colonial Virginia," *History of Education Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (2011): 429–59.

<sup>266</sup> Bly, "In Pursuit of Letters", 435.

Dixon (as part of a compendium), and Thomas Dilworth were a significant presence in eighteenth-century America after 1730.<sup>267</sup>

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Dixon was the master of a charity school named St. Albans in Holborn, London. His was the earliest of all the spelling books discussed so far to state forthrightly it was designed to be used by young children. The English Instructor was, its title page proclaimed, “a more plain, easy, and regular METHOD of Teaching young Children, than any Extant.” Dixon also asserted that it was designed to instruct children in “the Duties of Religion”. It was an almost immediate success in England. It reached its twenty-third edition in 1760 and would be reprinted on that side of the Atlantic at least sixty-nine times up to 1823.<sup>268</sup>

There are direct references in this textbook to the role of points, stops, writing, spelling, and orthography in Anglican education. Students at the Williamsburg Bray School would have had direct contact with this textbook as early as 1760.<sup>269</sup>

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## Section 5: Sewing, Sampler Work, and Literacy; Peer-Reviewed Secondary Source Scholarship

### **From Amelia Peck’s *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (Metropolitan Museum of Art):**

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<sup>267</sup> E. Jennifer Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 218. Since Monaghan and I have some different approaches to source material and understanding it within colonial context, please also see the annotation of her work in the bibliography.

<sup>268</sup> Monaghan, 220.

<sup>269</sup> Henry Dixon, *The English Instructor or, the Art of Spelling Improved. Being a More Plain, Easy, and Regular Method of Teaching Young Children, than Any Extant. In Two Parts. The First, - Containing Monosyllables, Expressing the Most Natural and Easy Things to the Apprehensions of Children; with Common Words, and Scripture Proper Names, Alphabetically Ranged, with Their Proper Accent, and Divided According to the Rules of Orthography. The Second, - Being an Instruction More Particularly Designed for Children of an Higher Class, Such as Have Not Only Made Some Advances in Their Reading, but Are Capable of Understanding and Applying the Rules There given; and Contains Observations on the Sound of Letters, with the Use of True Pointing, and Other Things Necessary for an English Scholar. To Which Is Added, A Method of Instruction, Out of the Sacred Writings and the Catechism of Our Church. The Whole Being Intermixed with Variety of Exercises in Prose and Verse, Adapted to the Capacities of Children, and Designed as Well to Instruct Them in the Duties of Religion, as to Render the Initiatory Part of Education Easy, Profitable, and Delightful. The Twenty-Third Edition, with Great Improvements, Including the Supplement, Being Precepts for Children, in Initiation of Lily’s Qui Mihi. For the Use of Schools. By Henry Dixon, School-Master, in Bath. (London: printed for C. Hitch, S. Crowder and Co., B. Dod, J. Fuller, C. and R. Ware, T. Caslon; J. Leake at Bath; and R. Raikes at Gloucester, 1760), [http://proxy.wm.edu/login?url=http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?contentSet=ECCOArticles&docType=ECCOArticles&bookId=0516800900&type=getFullCitation&tabID=T001&prodId=ECCO&docLevel=TEXT\\_GRAPHICS&version=1.0&source=library&userGroupName=viva\\_wm](http://proxy.wm.edu/login?url=http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?contentSet=ECCOArticles&docType=ECCOArticles&bookId=0516800900&type=getFullCitation&tabID=T001&prodId=ECCO&docLevel=TEXT_GRAPHICS&version=1.0&source=library&userGroupName=viva_wm).*

As part of her preparation for the responsibility of sewing clothes and linens for her future family, most girls completed at least two samplers. The first, which might be undertaken when a girl was as young as five or six, was called a marking sampler. Marking samplers served a dual purpose: they taught a child basic embroidery techniques and the alphabet and numbers. The letters and numbers learned while embroidering a marking sampler were especially useful, since it was important that any homemaker keep track of her linens, some of her most valuable household goods. This was accomplished by marking them, usually in a cross stitch, with her initials and a number.<sup>270</sup>

**From Kim Ivey's "Schoolgirl Samplers and Embroidered Pictures" (*The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*):**

No known Virginia needlework made by African American schoolgirls survives. However, written evidence suggests that these girls may have worked samplers. On the other hand, much is known of the surviving African American needlework from Baltimore...<sup>271</sup>

**From *In the Neatest Manner* (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Publication):**

Of particular relevance to our discussion of Virginia samplers is the marking stitch. The marking cross stitch, or reversible cross stitch, is created with six passes of the needle, beginning with a diagonal stitch...What was the need for these reversible stitches? Valuable household linens including tablecloths and napkins, and even clothing such as shifts and shirts, were embroidered with numbers and initials in order to keep sets together and to ensure that items sent out to be laundered or mended were returned to their proper owner...the making stitch was all but obsolete by the mid-eighteenth century – except in Virginia where it appears on samples from several different regional groups as late as the 1810s.<sup>272</sup>

In Contrast to the Williamsburg Female Academy, the Bray School, a charity school for black children, operated in Williamsburg from 1760 until the death of its mistress, Mrs. Ann Wager, in 1774. Funded by a British society called the "Associates of the late Dr. Bray," its main objective was to instruct "Negro

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<sup>270</sup> Amelia Peck, "American Needlework in the Eighteenth Century". *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, April 12, 2021, [https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd\\_need.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd_need.htm).

<sup>271</sup> Kim Ivey, "Schoolgirl Samplers and Embroidered Pictures," in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, ed. Carol Crown and Cheryl Rivers, Volume 23: Folk Art (University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 184–87, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469607993\\_crown.49](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469607993_crown.49).

<sup>272</sup> Kimberly Smith Ivey, *In the Neatest Manner: The Making of the Virginia Sampler Tradition*, Williamsburg Decorative Arts Series (Curious Works Press: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1997), 28-29.

Children in the principles of the Christian Religion.” The regulation to be observed by the “tutoress or mistress” stipulated that “she shall teach her female Scholars kitting sewing & such other Things as may be useful to their Owners...” No known needlework survives from this school. Indeed, no known Virginia sampler made by an African-American girl survives. However, one 1807 advertisement from a Norfolk newspaper illuminates the needlework skills of a runaway slave girl. Such proficiency was probably learned at the side of her mistress.

RUNAWAY from the subscriber...living near the City of Richmond...a mulatto girl by the name of Nancy between 17 and 18...has been brought up to the house business, is a good sempstress, can knit, and understanding the marking very well by a sampler...<sup>273</sup>

**From *Exploring and Expanding Literacy Histories* (Routledge University Press, forthcoming):**

As a young, enslaved Black girl moved from childhood to adulthood, the labor of her needle would transition with her. Sewing was not merely a way to pass the time; enslaved women toiled in plantation and urban colonial households to produce and maintain household textiles. Marking stitches were often applied to items such as tablecloths, undergarments, napkins, and other valuable household linens by those who labored on domestic household tasks (Peck, 2021). Such items would be “embroidered with numbers and initials in order to keep sets together and ensure that items sent out to be laundered or mended were returned to their proper owner” (Ivey, 1997, p. 29). Although marking stitches had fallen out of fashion in many other regions in Colonial America, they remained popular in Virginia as late as the 1810s (Ivey, p. 29). This requirement to practice sewing letters and numbers for domestic work meant that female students would have learned basic writing through the medium of household domestic tasks. While the ultimate result was literacy skills which included writing, writing via sewing was also a manifestation of the hold that the institution of slavery had even on potentially agentive skills.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Ivey, *In the Neatest Manner*, 65.

<sup>274</sup> Nicole Brown, Antonio T. Bly, and Julie Richter, “‘Reading, and, Possibly, Writing’: Revisiting the History of the Williamsburg Bray Schools in Eighteenth-Century Virginia,” in *Exploring and Expanding Literacy Histories of the United States: A Spotlight on Under-Recognized Histories*, 1st ed. (Routledge, forthcoming). This book chapter will be coming out either in August or September of this year. I have excerpted a brief piece of it for you here.

## **Curriculum of Bray Schools: Post-Revolutionary Atlantic World Instruction**

### Atlantic World Bray School Curricula

- Schools across the Atlantic World use a variety of terms to emphasize their curriculum. Over 100 lists of Bray School students and their curricula exist between 1787 and 1845. These sources can be found on [British Online Archives](#).

### Black Loyalist Educators and Bray Schools<sup>275</sup>

- Many Bray Schools post-American revolution operated via self-emancipated Black loyalists with no known “formal” teaching. Despite this, they acquired enough education to teach reading, writing, sewing, and other skills. These teachers include:
  - Joseph Leonard
  - Catherine Abernathy
  - Isaac Limerick
  - Joseph Paul Sr

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

While not every source cited in this report is included in the bibliography, most sources are incorporated. The intention of this bibliography is to support scholars, interpreters, descendants, and the public in a deeper exploration of concepts and topics discussed within this preliminary research report.

### Archives and Primary Sources

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<sup>275</sup> “Canadian Correspondence from the Associates of Dr. Bray (1785-1906),” USPG Bray Associates Collection, Canada File, Vol. 1, f1-f5, University of Oxford; “Bahamian Correspondence from the Associates of Dr. Bray,” (1788-1836), USPG Bray Associates Collection, Bahama File, vol. 1, f1-f10, University of Oxford.

Associates of Dr. Bray. "Minutes of the Meetings of the 'Associates of Dr. Bray'," 1729-1735, in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), F1a. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

The minute meetings of the Bray Associates offer a variety of financial and educative information on the Associates of Dr. Bray. Through their personal correspondence and detailed accounts, the intersections amongst Protestantism, slavery, literacy, and agency are clearly manifested. Nicole Brown has a transcription of these minute meetings in her personal collection, but the originals can also be found on British Online Archives.

Associates of Dr. Bray. "Minutes of the Meetings of the 'Associates of Dr. Bray'," 1736-1768, in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), F2a. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

These minute meetings are a continuation of the previously mentioned source. Nicole Brown has a transcription of these minute meetings in her personal collection, but the originals can also be found on British Online Archives.

Associates of Dr. Bray. "Correspondence Concerning Negro School at Halifax, Nova Scotia," 1784-1836, in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), Canada File, Volume 1, F3. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Correspondence throughout this entire volume includes student lists and written accounts from Black and white teachers who wrote to the Associates of Dr. Bray. Other Canada files in the 'Dr Bray's Associates' USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel) collection include detailed information on Digby, Preston, and Birchtown, Nova Scotia Bray Schools between 1785 and 1833.

Duffield, Edward. "Edward Duffield to Rev. John Waring, May 20, 1774." in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), North American File, Volume 3, F3. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Duffield's account includes a list of students who are predominately enslaved at the Philadelphia Bray School and their corresponding coursework, although no names are referenced. Other correspondence from Pennsylvania during the colonial era can be found in this file.

Hunter, William, Dawson, Thomas, Yates, William, and Carter Nicholas, Robert.

“Correspondence from Virginia to Bray Associates,” 1761-1774, in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), North America Files, Vol. 1, F2. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

This collection includes correspondence from Williamsburg, Virginia to the Bray Associates in London. Transcriptions of this correspondence can also be found in John Van Horne’s edited volume entitled *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray*. Many documents referenced in this research report written by Rev. William Yates, Rev. Thomas Dawson, Robert Carter Nicholas, and William Hunter are found in this collection.

Jefferson, Thomas and Jefferson-Randolph Family Papers, 1747-1827, in the Tracy W. McGregor Library, Accession #564, 6746, Albert H. and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA.

This collection includes correspondence John Waring, secretary of the Bray Associates in London, to their trustees in Williamsburg, Virginia. Additional content private papers and drafts of documents from certain Williamsburg Bray School Trustees is also in this collection.

Johnson’s Dictionary Online, accessed July 20, 2023,

<https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/blog/about-johnsons-dictionary/>.

This dictionary continues to be a key source in understanding English vocabulary. Published in 1755, this work is a very useful tool when reviewing how eighteenth-century British Imperial ideas on words and definitions plays out (either in tandem or in contrast) with our own modern-day definitions and notions.

Leech, Sarah Ann. “Lists of Children taught by Sarah Ann Leech,” 1830-1845, in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), North American File, Volume 3, F11. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Correspondence in this folder includes student lists from Sarah Ann Leech at one of the Philadelphia Bray Schools circa 1830-1845. This Bray School typically had students in attendance under the age of ten.

Malcolm, John. “Return of the Nassau Public School & List of Scholars in the School,” 1819, in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), Bahama File, Volume 1, F10. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.



Correspondence in this folder includes student lists from John Malcolm at the Nassau, Bahamas Bray School circa 1819.

Paul Sr., Joseph. "Return of the Nassau Bray School", 1794-197. in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), Bahama File, Volume 1, F3. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Correspondence in this folder includes student lists from Joseph Paul Sr. circa 1794 to 1797 and other documents written by the author. It should be noted that Joseph Paul Sr. was a self-emancipated Black Loyalist who helped promote Methodism in the Caribbean. For more information please also see the book entitled XXX.

Rhonnald, Alexander. "Rev. Alexander Rhonnald to Rev. John Waring, 27 September 1762." in the Papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Bray Associates Collection (1699-1979), North America Files, Vol. 1, F3. Weston Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Rhonnald's letter specifically addresses the Bray Associates' proposal for a Bray School in Norfolk, Virginia during the early 1760s. Other correspondence from Virginia during the colonial era can be found in this file as well.

### Bray School Textbooks<sup>276</sup>

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Bacon, Rev. Thomas. *Two sermons, preached to a congregation of black slaves, at the parish church of S.P. in the province of Maryland. By an American pastor.* London: J. Oliver, 1749.

Published by Anglican clergyman Thomas Bacon, this text highlights the relationship between imperial ideas about religion and role of colonial slavery in shaping these ideas. These sermons were directed to enslaved individuals on their religious, moral, and social obligations to enslavers and God as perceived by Bacon. This textbook was provided in the Williamsburg Bray School to students in 1760.

Bacon, Rev. Thomas. *Four sermons, Upon the great and indispensible duty of all Christian masters and mistresses to bring up their Negro slaves in the knowledge and fear of God. Preached at the Parish Church of St Peter in Talbot County, in the Province of Maryland. By the Rev. Thomas Bacon, rector of the said Parish.* London: J. Oliver, 1750.

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<sup>276</sup> There are considerably more textbooks than the ones listed above which were sent to the Williamsburg Bray School. For a list of every Williamsburg Bray School textbook sent in 1760, please refer to this transcription: <https://digital.libraries.wm.edu/reverend-john-waring-reverend-thomas-dawson-february-29-1760>

Published by Anglican clergyman Thomas Bacon, this text highlights the relationship between imperial ideas about religion and role of colonial slavery in shaping these ideas. These sermons were directed to enslavers on their religious, moral, and social obligations to enslaved individuals as perceived by Bacon. This textbook was provided in the Williamsburg Bray School to students in 1760.

*The Child's First Book*, 1774. <http://digital.francke-halle.de/fsaad/1270571>.

It should be noted that this text was rediscovered by Katie McKinney, Margaret Beck Pritchard Associate Curator of Maps & Prints at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. At least 140 copies of this book were sent for the use of students between 1760 and 1763 at the Williamsburg Bray school. This book is important because it would have been, as its name implies, the first book given to a student as they began instruction.

Dixon, Thomas. *The English Instructor or, the art of spelling improved. Being a more Plain, Easy, and Regular Method of Teaching Young Children, than any extant. In two parts...* London: C. Hitch, S. Crowder, et. al., 1760. 23rd edition.

It is worth noting that the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) also listed the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of Dixon's English Instructor in their annual report of recommended books to be shipped across the Atlantic World. This annual report can be found on Eighteenth Century Collections Online. The SPCK was also founded by Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray.

Thomas, Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man. *An Essay Towards an Instruction for the Indians; Explaining the Most Essential Doctrines of Christianity*. London: J. Osborn and W. Thorn, 1740.

This textbook was provided to Bray schools students in 1760. It is also referenced in the ex-slave narrative of Olaudah Equiano. This work was likely selected for the school both for its insistence on Anglican religious principles and the connection of the author to the Trustees of Georgia and the Associates of Dr. Bray.

"[Rev. John Waring], *A Letter to an American Planter from his Friend in London*," Transcription located in *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777*, 293-302. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

Drafts of the original document can be found in the files of the Bray Associates, North American files, Vol. 1, folder 2, USPG archives, at the University of Oxford. These drafts definitively prove that it was John Waring, Secretary of the Bray Associates, who wrote this textbook. The highest concentration of these textbooks sent to British North America was Williamsburg circa 1771. A draft of this text can be found in the archival collections of the Associates of Dr. Bray at the University of Oxford.

## Scholarly Secondary Sources

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Anesko, Michael. "So Discreet a Zeal: Slavery and the Anglican Church in Virginia, 1680-1730." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 93, no. 3 (1985): 247–78.

Anesko's article analyses the formation of the Church of England in Virginia. Specifically, the author focuses on and Rev. James Blair's involvement with the formation of both the College of William & Mary and slavery in eighteenth-century Virginia.

Bly, Antonio T. "In Pursuit of Letters: A History of the Bray Schools for Enslaved Children in Colonial Virginia." *History of Education Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (2011): 429–59.

Provides a broad but succinct overview of the Williamsburg Bray School. Some information on Ann Wager and Isaac Bee has been updated since this article.

Bly, Antonio T. (2008). "Pretends he can read": Runaways and Literacy in Colonial America, 1730—1776. *Early American Studies*, 6(2), 261–294.

This article focuses on the central topic of literacy and perspectives on literacy in the history of African Americans. Bly's methodology includes statistical analysis of runaway ads, providing percentages of literate enslaved individuals in Colonial Virginia.

Bly, Antonio T. "'Reed through the Bybell': Slave Education in Early Virginia." *Book History* 16 (2013): 1–33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42705779>.

This article explores ideas of Black literacy in Colonial Virginia, looking at both perspectives of the dominant white society and African and African Americans in eighteenth-century Virginia. The article includes useful information on Bishop Edmund Gibson and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), as well as a discussion of the normalcy of "missionary zeal" in the Anglican Church.

Bly, Antonio T. "Slave Literacy and Education in Virginia." *Encyclopedia Virginia*, June 24, 2019. [https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Slave\\_Literacy\\_and\\_Education\\_in\\_Virginia#start\\_entry](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Slave_Literacy_and_Education_in_Virginia#start_entry).

Similar materials to Bly's work "In Pursuit of Letters." Good gateway to other articles on African Americans history written for *Encyclopedia Virginia* that is also publicly accessible.

Brown, Nicole, Bly, Antonio T., and Richter, Julie. "'Reading, and, Possibly, Writing': Revisiting the History of the Williamsburg Bray Schools in Eighteenth-Century Virginia." In

*Exploring and Expanding Literacy Histories of the United States: A Spotlight on Under-Recognized Histories*, 1st ed. Routledge, (forthcoming).

This work defines (and redefines) how education and literacy were understood at the Williamsburg Bray School. Utilizing research on textbooks, material culture, social history, and historical theory, the authors expand upon how instruction at the Williamsburg Bray School both manifested and was applied.

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. *Enslaving Virginia*. Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1998. <https://cwfpublishations.omeka.net/items/show/170>

This work offers a comprehensive overview to understanding enslavement in eighteenth-century Williamsburg. Taking a local, regional, and global approach, historians and experts from The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation published this manual to support staff in providing comprehensive interpretation about enslavement and enslaved individuals who labored and lived in Virginia's colonial capital.

Gerbner, Katharine. *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World*. Early American Studies. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018.

Comprehensive work which focuses on how protestant Christians perpetuated the institution of slavery. Focuses on Moravians, Quakers, and Anglicans. There is also interesting information on Afro-Caribbean slave narratives and perspectives as it pertains to the Moravians.

Glasson, Travis. *Mastering Christianity: Missionary Anglicanism and Slavery in the Atlantic World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

This monograph offers an overview of how Christian Anglican thought progressed over the eighteenth century to and for a slave-owning society. This is a useful work if one wishes to get different perspectives and biases (from ministers, slave owners, and the enslaved themselves) on the relationship between the Church of England, Christianity, and slavery.

Gundaker, Grey. "Hidden Education Among African Americans during Slavery." *Teachers College Record* 109, no. 7 (July 1, 2007): 1591–1612.

In this work, Gundaker concludes that "Hidden education" in the colonial era involved a double language that addressed both the world as it "is" and the world as it could or should be; the world that outsider's control and the one that insiders are continually educating each other to make. Thus, it seems the enslaved have contributed a more complex theory of education than that which informs much of today's schooling. Similarly, they have left a legacy of valuable educational skills that schools today often undervalue.

Ingersoll, Thomas N. "'Releese Us out of This Cruell Bondegg': An Appeal from Virginia in 1723." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1994): 777–82.

Ingersoll transcribes and analyses the anonymous letter from enslaved Virginians sent to the Bishop of London in 1723. Consider this work within the global context of the Anglican Church.

Ivey, Kimberly Smith. *In the Neatest Manner: The Making of the Virginia Sampler Tradition*. Williamsburg Decorative Arts Series. Williamsburg, VA: Curious Works Press; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1997.

Ivey is the Senior Curator of Textiles and Historic Interiors for The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Her groundbreaking research on colonial Virginian samplers offers invaluable insight into the intersection of gender, education, and labor in eighteenth-century Virginia. This text is also an excellent companion to Colonial Williamsburg's Art Museums exhibit entitled [Stitched in Time: American Needlework](#)

Ivey, Kim. "Schoolgirl Samplers and Embroidered Pictures." In *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture: Volume 23: Folk Art*, edited by Carol Crown and Cheryl Rivers, 184–87. University of North Carolina Press, 2013.  
[http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469607993\\_crown.49](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469607993_crown.49).

Ivey's entry in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* expands upon her research presented in the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Publication *In The Neatest Manner*.

McLaren, Rev. Brydon G., ed. "Letter of Governor Gooch, May 28, 1731." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 32 (1924): 321–25.

Gooch's letter is transcribed by McLaren; this letter focuses on enslaved uprisings and the intersection between enslavement and Christianity during a very specific political moment in colonial Virginia.

Miles, Tiya. *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, a Black Family Keepsake*. New York: Random House, 2021.

While this may seem surprising to this bibliography, the theoretical frameworks Miles uses to analyze objects connected to Black identity and family are salient to my work. Miles uses inventive archival and historiographic strategies to tell the stories of Black women and girls.

Monaghan, E. Jennifer. *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America*. Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007.

Monaghan writes extensively about Dixon's *English Instructor* as well as other colonial textbooks in this monograph. As it relates to our work, the *English Instructor* was an immensely popular textbook throughout Colonial America, first being published in 1728. When the Williamsburg Bray School opened its doors in 1760, this text was already in its 23rd edition. Although this textbook was readily accessible in colonial America, its relationship to the Williamsburg Bray School has been under-researched. In recent years, there has been significant scholarly debate about what was taught at the Williamsburg Bray School. This debate has included a specific focus on whether writing was part of the school's curriculum. To fully understand what literacy looked like at the Williamsburg Bray School, it is important to explore the numerous ways that writing was defined in the textbooks used in the classroom.

Morgan, Jennifer L. *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2021.

This monograph highlights how economic worth of enslaved Black women in the Colonial and Antebellum South impacts our understanding of freedom, kinship, and capitalism. Utilizing economically based primary sources to explore enslaved Black women's subjugation within early American capitalism, Morgan also unpacks women's resistance to such forms of labor production.

Oast, Jennifer. "Educating Eighteenth-Century Black Children: The Bray Schools." M.A. Thesis, The College of William & Mary, 2000.

Much of Oast's research comes directly from the vetted primary and secondary sources from The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's *Enslaving Virginia* training manual.

Peck, Amelia. "American Needlework in the Eighteenth Century." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000—. [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd\\_need.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/need/hd_need.htm) (October 2003)

Peck's research offers a comprehensive overview of colonial American needlework. This article centers gender, education, and labor in ways which are imperative for understanding female students at The Williamsburg Bray School. There are direct links to examples of colonial American needlework also in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art included in this article.

Strickrodt, Silke. "African Girls' Samplers from Mission Schools in Sierra Leone (1820 to 1840s)." *History in Africa* 37 (2010): 189–245. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40864625>.

Although not immediately applicable to southern colonial sampler work, this article does highlight the role that Black girls in the Atlantic world have to materiality of sampler making. Equally important, the work emphasizes the direct "material traces of the activity of the girls who made them."

Tate Jr., Thad W. *The Negro in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg*. Research Report: Foundation Library Research Report Series. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1957.  
<https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/view/index.cfm?doc=ResearchReports%5CRR0121.xml&highlight=negro>

Although several CWF research reports were utilized for this document, Thad Tate's should be of particular interest to any scholar, descendant, or interpreter wishing to learn more about eighteenth-century Williamsburg history. It is still the seminal text available on Black history for the colonial community who lived, labored, and loved in Virginia's colonial capital.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1995.

This monograph specifically looks at the interplay between vectors of power and the way in which history is collected, curated, and disseminated. In particular, he articulates how silence is indeed inevitable when creating documents that will later inform archives. It is impossible that every perspective will be captured proportionately within the production of history. Simultaneously, he asserts that "not all silences are equal and...they cannot be addressed—or redressed—in the same manner." Trouillot focuses on the distinction and overlap between historical production and history with clear and well-cited examples (Columbus Day, the Haitian Revolution, etc.), while also unpacking the ways silences manifest in narrative and archive.

Van Horne, John C. "The Education of African Americans in Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia." In *The Good Education of Youth: World of Learning in the Age of Franklin*, edited by John H. Pollack. Oak Knoll Press: University of Pennsylvania Libraries, 2009.

This article compares Bray Schools across colonies, and the influence of the Philadelphia Bray School on post-Revolution literacy and education for African Americans. Van Horne has since updated his research on the Philadelphia Bray School since this chapter was published.

Van Horne, John C. *Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

This edited volume includes all colonial correspondence to and from the Bray Associates in colonial America between 1723 and 1777. Van Horne's introduction also offers a broad overview of the history of the Associates of Dr. Bray.

Woodson, Carter G. *The Education Of The Negro Prior To 1861: A History Of The Education Of*



*The Colored People Of The United States From The Beginning Of Slavery To Civil War.* Washington, D.C, 1915.

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on colonial Black education, and the antithesis between education as a religious responsibility versus education as a human right which supports democratic and civic principles. These chapters are likely the two most useful to scholars who wish to explore the legacy of Black education, slavery, and religion in colonial America.

### Digital Databases and Reports

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The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. "Research Reports." The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1930-2023.  
<https://research.colonialwilliamsburg.org/DigitalLibrary/research-reports/>.

This online collection of research from The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation includes archaeological, architectural, historical, interpretive, and topical reports ranging from 1930 to 2023. Physical copies of these reports can be found at the Foundation's John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library.

William & Mary's Bray School Lab. "Bray School Lab Research Portal." W&M Libraries Digital Collections. <https://digital.libraries.wm.edu/node/92737>.

The William & Mary Bray School Lab "aspires to transform traditional accounts of America's history into a multi-layered story that centers Black legacy at the heart of U.S. democracy." In collaboration with The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, the Bray School Lab is uncovering, documenting, preserving, and disseminating the history and legacy of the Williamsburg Bray School, which educated enslaved and free Black children from 1760 to 1774. This collection is collated and curated by William & Mary's Bray School Lab and includes oral histories and photographs, as well as audio recordings and transcriptions created from reviewing original records.

### Descendant Monographs and Additional Resources

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Ashby, William M. *Tales Without Hate*. 2nd edition. Upland Press, 1996.

Self-published descendant monograph. William Mobile Ashby was also New Jersey's first African American social worker.

Bridgeforth-Williams, Jacqueline. "The Village: The Initiative for Equity in Education." The Village (WJCC). Accessed November 25, 2023. <https://www.villagewjcc.org>.

The Village Initiative is comprised of "educators, concerned residents, retirees, students and professionals from a range of diverse backgrounds and life experiences—united by a



common commitment to educational equity, justice, and inclusion at WJCC Schools and in the Williamsburg community.”

Jones, Col. Lafayette, Jr. *My Great, Great, Grandfather's Journey To An Island of Freedom In The Middle Of Slavery*. Williamsburg, Va: Jenlaf Pub., 2008.

Self-published descendant monograph. Jones was instrumental in preserving one of the earliest free Black settlements in the United States.