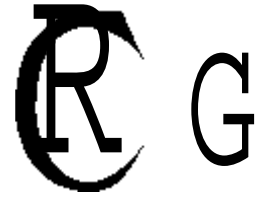




# THE RAPPAHANNOCK GAZETTE



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Newsletter of the Rappahannock Colonial Heritage Society

Volume 3 Number 1

January/February 2000

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## THE FREDERICKSBURG PEACE BALL

By David M. Matteson

*This article was taken from The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, V. 49, pp. 152-156. 1941*

The recent finding in the papers of Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., of a letter to him from General Washington, dated at "Eltham," Virginia, November 6, 1781, makes it possible to write what it is hoped will be the final edition of the story of the Peace Ball at Fredericksburg. The tale is a charming one. According to the accepted account Washington arrived at Fredericksburg after the Yorktown Campaign, on or about November 12, 1781, accompanied by a brilliant staff and officers of the French and American armies. He had stopped on his way to Mount Vernon to pay his respects to his mother; but the rejoicing town and neighboring gentlemen got up a splendid ball, at which the aged lady was especially invited to share the honors with her illustrious son. This she did. "The foreign officers were anxious to see the mother of the chief. They had heard indistinct rumors touching her remarkable life and character, but forming their judgments from European examples, they were prepared to expect in the mother, that glitter and show which would have been attached to the parents of the great, in the countries of the old world. How were they surprised, when leaning on the arm of her son, she entered the room, dressed in the very plain, yet becoming garb, worn by the Virginia lady of the old time. Her address always dignified and imposing, was courteous, though reserved. She received the complimentary attentions which were paid to her without evincing the slightest elevation, and at an early hour, wishing the company much enjoyment of their pleasures, observed that it was high time for old folks to be in bed, and retired leaning as before on the arm of her son.

"The foreign officers were amazed in beholding one whom so many causes conspired to elevate, preserving the even tenor of her life, while such a blaze of glory shone upon her name and offspring. It was a moral spectacle such as the European world had furnished no examples. Names of ancient lore were heard to escape from their lips; and they declared, 'if such are the matrons in America, well may she boast of illustrious sons'."

The purpose of **The Rappahannock Colonial Group** is to promote Colonial history in and around the Rappahannock Valley (from the fork of the Rappahannock & Rapidan rivers down to the Chesapeake Bay), with emphasis on the Fredericksburg area to include Spotsylvania, Stafford, King George, Caroline, and Westmoreland counties. The group is more a historical interest group, and not a re-enactment group per se. Traditional dress, crafts and craftsmanship, and entertainment are but a few of our areas of concentration.

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## RCG OFFICERS

**President:** Diane Nolan  
**Vice-President:** Al Piercey  
**Secretary:** Trip Wiggins  
**Treasurer:** Myra Wiggins

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

There are a number of new and exciting things happening with the Rappahannock Colonial Group.

The RCG is no longer affiliated with the Waterfront Shoppes and has decided to continue on separately. We certainly wish Jim Goetz and the militia unit much success as they move forward with their organization.

The executive board of the RCG held its regular monthly meeting in January. Committee assignments were made and I have full confidence in those who have taken leadership positions with the Group. These are people who have been willing to give countless hours of their time, an abundance of energy, and go the extra mile toward promoting the rich and colorful colonial history of this area.

Many, many thanks to all who worked so hard to make our wreath making fund raiser a huge success. Truck loads of greenery was cut, everyone was dressed in colonial attire, and over fifty beautiful wreaths were made and sold. We had a great time interacting with the public while we worked.

Eleven members of the Group attended the Living History Workshop sponsored by Historic Port Royal and led by members of *The Living Past*, a group of first person interpreters from Westmoreland County. We learned a lot and enjoyed meeting folks from other historic societies. The Colonial dance team will perform at the Historic Dumfries "Cherry Jubilee" on February 12<sup>th</sup>. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to support other societies to promote the Colonial history of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

We look forward to an active and exciting year as we grow and look for new ways to make Colonial come alive.

*Diane*

## THE EDITOR'S PEN

RCG is becoming a very diverse group comprised of the Dancers, Boat Building Committee, etc. In order to assure that each area is represented in the newsletter, please either mail to the PO Box or email me at MyraWig@aol.com. Remember that this is a bi-monthly newsletter and plan your input accordingly. The months it is printed are January, March, May, July, September, and November. I try very hard to have it ready to mail/distribute by the 15<sup>th</sup>. Usually I'm close. In order to make my life not total chaos around that time, please try to have your information in by the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month due to be published. If there is **absolutely no way** for you to do that please call me at 540-371-3906.

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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As you noticed in Diane's message above, RCG is no longer affiliated with the Waterfront Shoppes. I am under the assumption that all the membership received the letter that Jim mailed out in which he stated "...the Waterfront Shoppes will no longer serve as headquarters for the activities of the Rappahannock Colonial Group." This letter was sent without the knowledge of the newly elected board. With that in mind, the The January RCG meeting was held at the home of President Diane Nolan to discuss plans for the coming year. It consisted of the board and committee members. RCG will continue with our monthly meetings, special events, dances and dance team demonstrations.

The purpose of the January meeting was specifically to begin thinking about the direction of the group and to get input and suggestions for places to have our meetings, events, and for suggestions for programs & speakers to better acquaint the membership and the public with Colonial life in the Rappahannock Valley area. If any of you have suggestions for programs or know someone willing to do a program, please let us know.

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The "Guide to Fredericksburg" that is published by the visitor center each year has the dance schedule for the year in it. This schedule lists the dances as being hosted by RCG and being held at the Waterfront Shoppes. As a result of the action taken by Jim Goetz, RCG will not be hosting those dances **as stated in the guide**. We will, however, be hosting dances and other events throughout the year and will publish those in this newsletter. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

## DUES ARE DUE

The dues for the year 2000 are due. The treasurer (me) would really appreciate it if any of you could send them in early and make my task a little easier. Those who have not paid by March will be considered delinquent and will not be sent a newsletter. If you have given your payment to Jim Goetz at the Waterfront Shoppes, **please be aware that you have not paid a membership to Rappahannock Colonial Group and will not receive this newsletter after the current issue.** Please mail your payments to **RCG, PO Box 7823, F'burg. VA 22404-7823** or give to one of the board members. If there are any questions, please feel free to call me at 540-371-3906.

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## COLONIAL FREDERICKSBURG FACTS

**Feb 4, 1728** – Augustine Smith of Caroline Co. Makes first purchase of lots in Fredericksburg—lots 30&32

**Feb 27, 1766** – “Westmoreland Association” meets at Leedstown in current Westmoreland Co. and protests the Stamp Act. Attendees included: Samuel & Charles Washington, Lewis Willis, Francis Thornton, Jr., Dr. Charles Mortimer (all of Fredericksburg) and Richard Henry Lee.

**1734** – Henry Willis operates a ferry across Rappahannock River (at foot of Wolfe St.)

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## AMERICAN HISTORY TIDBITS

**Sep. 20, 1789** – Office of Postmaster General created under Treasury Dept.

**Jan. 1, 1775** – Of 37 newspapers now being published, 23 were of patriot persuasion, 7 were loyalist, & 7 were neutral. One, the New York Weekly Mercury, had something for everyone: a patriot edition in Newark, NJ, and a loyalist version in New York City.

**1779** – American Quarterhorse racing began in Virginia

## RCG DANCE PLANS



*Note: Dances are open invitation but require reservations due to limited capacity. Colonial dress required. Don't forget to bring your flatware, plates, bowls, glasses, etc. These items should match the time period as closely as possible, i.e. pewter or wooden plates; two or three tine forks; pewter, ceramic or brass mugs.*

Cost: Non-members \$8 / Members \$6 for potluck dances; prices for dances with catered food will be announced prior to that particular date.

**RCG is currently working on the 2000 dance schedule which should be ready by the next newsletter.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 19** – African-American Heritage Day at Stratford Hall Plantation Free admission.

**February 3, 10, 17** - English Country Dance Class – Gadsby's Tavern, Alexandria, VA \$

**February 12** – A Tavern Evening – Special concert of 18<sup>th</sup> Century music by David & Ginger Hildebrand- Gadsby's Tavern, Alexandria, VA \$

**February 19** – Swordsman's Rendezvous-Living history re-enactment of 18<sup>th</sup> century swordplay. Gadsby's Tavern, Alexandria, VA \$

**February 19** – Birthnight Banquet and Ball Period attire encouraged. Gadsby's Tavern, Alexandria, VA \$

**March 19** – A Young Ladies 18<sup>th</sup> Century Tea – Costumed hosts instruct in social customs, deportment, clothing, & entertainment. Gadsby's Tavern, Alexandria, VA \$

## RAPPAHANNOCK COLONIAL DANCERS

**We have formed a Colonial Dance demonstration team.** We have been asked by several people and organizations to “perform” for functions, so we have formed a group that will be able to meet those needs. We are looking for people who will be dedicated to coming to rehearsals, getting the proper attire together and be available when we have a commitment to do a demonstration. This will be a team striving to develop a level of expertise in this type of dance over time. For anyone who wants to be on the demo team, contact Elaine Sturgeon, coordinator 540-785-2168 or Diane Nolan 540-373-7651. Our next demonstration will be:

**Dumfries, VA “Cherries Jubilee” Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>**

(Peace Ball con't)

The story has not been traced farther back than the Recollections of George Washington Parke Custis, written about 1856, from which the above quotation is taken. He stole a march on Parson Weems, who certainly would have welcomed the opportunity to embellish his own glamorous book with this delightful incident. For many years Custis's work was accepted as good historical material as it might well be since he had the best of opportunities at first or at least at second hand, to gather information. This account was, of course, second hand since he was six months old when the event was said to happen. After the War between the States, the story, sometimes with further embellishments, found a place in many of the biographies of Washington, especially the popular ones.

With the development of a more critical attitude toward reminiscences, unless backed by contemporary evidence, it was found that many of Custis's statements had to be taken with various grains of salt. There were plenty of questions that required answering: Why was not the ball mentioned in contemporary newspapers or the various correspondence of the period? Who were the French and American generals who were present? Lafayette, Rochambeau, and Grasse are mentioned at times; but the first had left Yorktown before Washington and was then at Philadelphia, Rochambeau was with his army at Yorktown preparing for winter quarters, and Grasse had left with his fleet for the West Indies.

Washington's stepson had died at Eltham on November 5, a few days before the ball, and the General had been present when the young man expired. Would he have been likely to approve of a brilliant social occasion so soon after this bereavement? There was also the possibility that his mother was not even in Fredericksburg then, having gone beyond the Blue Ridge at the time of Cornwallis's foray, and not yet returned; but this last counterstatement was also one that lacked proper documentation.

It is well known that when the advocates of the Betsy Ross flag story were confronted by the fact that the flag was not adopted until a year after the date of her "origin" of it, they changed the date from 1776 to 1777, all unmindful of the fact that Washington was not in Philadelphia at that time in the latter year. Similarly some of the later accounts of the Fredericksburg Ball, unwilling to abandon it, have put it before the death of young Custis, equally unmindful of the chronological confusion thereby; but in one form or another the story has persisted.

The recently noticed letter to Lieut. Col. Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., who was military secretary on the Commander in Chief's staff, was addressed to Trumbull at "Birds Tavern". It is as follows:

"I came here in time to See Mr. Custis breathe his last.—about Eight o'clock yesterday Evening he expired.—The deep and solemn distress of the Mother and affliction of the Wife of this amiable young Man, requires every comfort in my power to afford them—the last rights [sic] of the deceased I must also see performed—these will take me three or four days; when I shall proceed with Mrs. Washington & Mrs. Custis to Mount Vernon.—

"As the dirty tavern you are now at cannot be very comfortable— & in spite of Mr. Sterne's observation the House of Mourning not very agreeable—it is my wish, that all the Gentn. Of my family—except yourself, who I beg may come here & remain with me—may proceed on at their leizure to Mount Vernon, & wait for me there.—Colo. Cobb will join you on the road at the Tavern we breadfasted at (this side Ruffens)—"

Byrds, earlier Doncastles, Tavern was on the road from Williamsburg to Ruffins Ferry, about 16 miles from the town and therefore near the border of James City and New Kent counties, south of Eltham. The ferry was on the Pamunkey, north of Eltham and south of King William Court House, and a part of the usual route north by Bowling Green to Fredericksburg. It seems probable that when Washington heard of the need of his presence at Eltham he left all of the staff, except Lieut. Col. David Cobb, at Byrd's Tavern, and hastened on. From the tavern Trumbull was to come to Eltham, and Cobb was to leave Eltham and join the rest of the staff on their journey near Ruffins Ferry, perhaps at the ordinary also known by that name. The "Tavern we breadfasted at" evidently refers to a meal on the way to Yorktown before the siege.

So the escort by a brilliant staff and the many French and American generals, and with them the ball itself, dwindled down in reality to a journey by General Washington, his military secretary, and two ladies in the deepest mourning. There is no evidence even of any military guard, and no mention of Fredericksburg in Trumbull's expense account of the trip, though it seems most probable that they passed through that town, staying perhaps at the home of Mrs. Lewis, Washington's sister, or that of the General's mother, and not incurring any expense.

Stories like this usually have a start in facts of some sort or other; they are seldom constructed out of whole cloth. Just as Betsy Ross did undoubtedly make flags for the government, so there was actually a ball at Fredericksburg and it could well be termed a Peace Ball

It took place, however, in February 1784, and is thoroughly authenticated.

After Washington surrendered his commission at Annapolis on December 23, 1783, he hastened to Mount Vernon to celebrate his first Christmas at home in nine years. There he was storm-bound for weeks; but as soon as possible he made the journey to Fredericksburg in order, as he wrote Gen. Henry Knox, "to pay my duty to an aged Mother." He left Mount Vernon on February 11 [1784] and returned on the 19<sup>th</sup> [1784]. The town seized the opportunity of his presence to deliver an address to which he replied, and to have a public dinner or reception and a ball. It was in his reply to the address that Washington referred to "the place of my growing Infancy, and...of my revered Mother; by whose Maternal hand (early deprived of a Father) I was led from Childhood." This visit brought him to Fredericksburg just after his birthday in the Old Style, which continued to be used for the event in various places during his lifetime. Alexandria celebrated his last birthday on February 11, 1799. He wrote in his diary: "Went up to Alexandria to the celebration of my birthday. Many manoeuvres were performed by the Uniform Corps, and an elegant Ball and Supper at Night."

## Peace Ball (con't)

The interesting article above is contributed by David M. Matteson, acting historian of the George Washington Bicentennial Commission and historian of United States Constitution Sesquicentennial Commission. He discovered the letter written by General Washington from "Eltham," Nov. 6, 1781, to Lieut. Col. Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., in the Connecticut State Library, Henrietta W. Hubbard collection of Trumbull Papers, Letters of Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Document 113. This letter quoted in the article will also be published in the Appendix to Fitzpatrick's Edition of Washington's Writings, Page 554 of Vol. 37.

The quotation made by Mr. Matteson from the writings of George Washington Parke Custis is from "The Recollections and Private Memoirs of Washington by ...G. W. P. Custis...[Edited] by B. J. Lossing..." page 143. Lossing also gives this exact passage in his "Mary and Martha: the Mother and Wife of George Washington..." page 62-3.

"Eltham" from which General Washington wrote the letter on Nov. 6, 1781, to Lieut. Col. Trumbull, was the home of Burwell Bassett, in New Kent County, Virginia. Burwell Bassett (1734-1793) married Anna Maria Dandridge (1739-1777) sister of Martha Dandridge, who married first Daniel Parke Custis; *second* George Washington. Daniel Parke Custis and Martha, his wife, were parents of John Parke Custis of whose death on the evening of Nov. 5, 1781 General Washington tells Lieut. Col. Trumbull in his letter of Nov. 6.

NOTES ON THE ARTIST: Jennie Brownscombe was born in 1850 near Honesdale, Pennsylvania, and studied art in New York City, Paris and Rome. It was as a genre painter that Jennie Brownscombe became best known. Her paintings can be divided into three broad categories: contemporary genre scenes, colonial costume pieces which may or may not be related to specific historical events, and portraits. In 1897 when she was commissioned by the art dealer C. Klacker to do The Peace Ball painting, scenes from American history, especially the colonial period, had become popular subjects. The Peace Ball was the first of fifteen history paintings done by Brownscombe on scenes of Washington's life.

## HORSES IN WILLIAMSBURG

*By Lauren Bailey*

In mid September, my family and I took a trip to Colonial Williamsburg. My favorite part was the tour of the new horse stables. The tour covered the horses, the carriages, what the horses ate, and how they are cared for. While the care of horses was not immensely different, there were a couple of differences.

The colonial horse stalls were not big comfortable roomy stalls like the ones horses have today. They were simply pieces of wood, stacked up in a row all the way down one side of the barn. They had a reproduction of colonial stalls across from the modern stalls.

The horseshoes were very big and heavy. They had to be that way because the horse usually walked over a very rocky terrain.

Two of the horses are named Jack and Jill. They are brother and sister. Rumor has it that if Jill is put in the field with any horse other than Jack, she will show her temper. You may have seen this pair in the colonial area. They are both brown with a white star on their heads.

Some other items of special interest were the beautiful carriages. One coach had the Lee family crest and its motto in Latin, "Non in Cautus Futuri". That means not unmindful of the future. Another coach in the stables took 6 horses to pull because of the heavy bulletproof siding.

I said things weren't immensely different, but one thing about riding sure was. Young ladies did NOT ride astride! The tour guide told us all about this and pointed out the sidesaddle. He even threw me up in it!

This tour is available to any visitors of Williamsburg that have a Patriots Pass.

## NEWSLETTER GUIDELINES

In order to produce a good newsletter, accurate and in a timely manner, please try to use these guidelines.

1. Our time period and location is 18<sup>th</sup> Century Virginia with our area of concentration Fredericksburg and the Rappahannock River Valley. The Rappahannock River Valley covers from the ford of the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers down to the Chesapeake Bay. Our particular interests lie in the areas of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Stafford, King George, and Caroline counties.
2. Any member may, **and is encouraged to**, submit article(s) for publication. The newsletter is distributed to and read by people with varying degrees of expertise. Some of us are not as well versed in colonial life and times as others, so in order to be as accurate as possible, please check your facts prior to submitting an article.
3. Sources/references must be given for factual information. This enables the reader to go to the original source for more information, gives credit to the source, and also lets the editor of the newsletter off the hook if the information is challenged. This includes information from the internet.
4. Opinions of the writer must be clearly identified as such.
5. The newsletter is published every other month in January, March, May, July, September, and November. My target date to have the newsletter published is the 15<sup>th</sup> of those months. In order to do that I will need any submissions by the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month. You may mail to the PO Box, email me <MyraWig@aol.com>, or leave with Jim at The Waterfront Shoppes.
6. The editor has the final say on content, format and deadlines. I try to keep the newsletter to 12 pages for postage. If I receive several articles and we also have a good bit of news to go into the newsletter, it may be necessary for me to edit, publish as a two part article or use it in the following month's publication.
7. If you have an idea for an article but don't have the time, resources, etc. to write it yourself, we have someone who is willing to do the research and write the article.

## Sugar's Adventures

Written by John Hardia as dictated by Sugar the Parrott.

Sugar is a parrot living with his master John. John and Sugar reside on Water Street in 1790 Virginia. John is a 'factor', an import/export agent that arranges for purchases and sales between the newly independent colonies and England. He visits the waterfront docks daily.

### *Sugar And The Bound Woman*

My master put his hat on to go out and I jumped and jumped hoping he would take me with him. Oh good he is taking me. I really like walking out and meeting people. Zulu never gets to go out because he bit the dickens out of my master. Any way my master likes me best. What a beautiful day it is.

After several blocks we saw a group on the corner with a man ringing a bell and yelling "Hear Ye, Hear Ye" very loud. As we approached the group many people left it and came to talk to my master and me and weren't paying any attention to the man with the bell. The man with the bell looked very sour. I think the man with a bell would do better to get a bird if he wanted to attract people.

After several more blocks we went in a house that was full of young women and a man. It was fun meeting all of those women. Most of them wanted to hold me and some of them had keys and pretty things hanging from they're belts. I wish I could have those things. One of them wanted to kiss me and she giggled a lot. I liked her. My master talked a lot with the man but it finally looked like he was finished. My master got up and I hopped on his hand and we started to go out but one of the women looked like she was coming with us and she had a bundle under her arm. It was the woman who kissed me. She went all the way home with us. She fed me and filled my cup with water and she made supper for my master. She also cleaned my cage. That was good because it wasn't cleaned very often by my master. I hope she stays.

It was very nice that the woman was still at my house after three days. I hope she stays forever. Before she came it was just me and Zulu and Shadow and my master. I don't count the ferry man cause he sleeps outside in the shed. I don't like him anyway cause he looks mean to me ever since I jumped on the horses nose and he jumped off the ferry.

*Sugar*

## *POOR PERSONAL HYGENE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY*

### **A CONTRARY VIEW**

*By Skip Nolan*

While attending a recent seminar about creating a living history persona I heard the oft repeated factoid that since our ancestors in the past did not take a bath except maybe once a year "if they needed it" they were by our present day standards filthy and smelly. The assertion was made that even a gentleman must have had dirt under his fingernails. As a member of probably the last generation to experience living in a middling home without running water, I take issue with this assertion of common grunge.

Here is my own experience. My fathers parents, he was number nine of eleven children, owned a medium sized farm, in South Carolina, which never had running water. There was a well in the side yard which provided all of the household drinking water. This supplied a bucket in the kitchen from which everyone drank with a tin ladle. The stock drank from the farm stream or a trough next to the well. My grandfather and his sons worked the farm with mules, both for plowing and cultivating the crops, a truly filthy job. Everything about dirt farming is by nature a dirty process. However, they cleaned themselves up before coming into the house. There was a metal bowl and bucket of water on the back porch which was used to wash up, after removing their dirty field shoes and over garments, before coming into the house. My grandmother and her lye soap made sure nobody sat at the dinner table with dirty faces or grime under their fingernails, man or child. Bedtime required further washing of the feet and a "toilet" of whatever else was offensive.

Though the house in which I spent my early childhood did have running water and we bathed daily, when I visited the farm I never remember anyone there being smelly or dirty. As a very young child I lived several weeks there and would on occasion sleep in the same bed with my young aunts and they did not smell bad at all. I can't count how many times as a child I was hugged by relatives who lived the same way, but never did I think that they smelled bad. And I can not count the many times I heard "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

Before concluding that my family was an exceptional one, let me share further. My father was killed during World War Two and after eight years of widowhood my mother married a young Baptist minister. We then moved to Kentucky for him to attend seminary, and there he pastored for three years a rural church in the eastern Kentucky hill country. We spent each weekend, usually two days, staying in turn at the home of a church family. None of these families had running water. They had a cistern which collected rain water for drinking water. They made their living just as the early settlers did, by growing tobacco and raising cattle and sheep. In none of my visits did I observe dirty or smelly people, even though they never bathed and worked the ground and livestock daily. One summer we spent over eight weeks in the same manner ourselves, living in a farmhouse behind the church. We bathed only on Saturday night in a galvanized wash tub; ladies first, then children, and then men. Linens and clothes were hand washed weekly. We used a privy out behind the barn. I played in

the dirt and explored the woods and fields every day. But, we came in the house clean and nobody smelled bad.

My own grandparents were raised in the late 1800's to live in this manner by their parents, who were given the same values by their families, who passed it on from their parents, et cetera. In only three or four generations I reach grandparents, raised in the late 1700's. Why then should we believe that the people of the 1700's were not scrupulous of their persons, especially since the basic manner and pattern of rural farm living was essentially unchanged from the colonial times until my own generation.

I leave you with two quotes from a work that George Washington copied in his own hand as a boy,

“Keep your nails clean and short, also your hands and teeth clean.”

“Wear not your clothes foul, ripped, or dusty, but see that they be brushed once every day, at least, and take heed that you approach not to any uncleanness.”

## THIS 'N THAT

In searching the web for various things relating to our hobby, I have run across a few thing of interest which I will share with you from time to time. One particularly interesting web site is Heirloom Pantry Products <[www.heirloompantry.com](http://www.heirloompantry.com)>. they have food products, spices & herbs, historical manuscripts, books, etc. for sale. Just a few things in the powders and thickenings line:

Pearlash – an early leavening from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Sago – a starch made from the pith of the sago palm. Known since the Renaissance.

Arrowroot Powder – a great thickener for sauces and soups as well as desserts.

The RCG Newsletter is published bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September, & November. All members receive a copy. Membership is \$18.00 per year for individuals, \$28.00 per year for families. **RCG does not maintain an office.** All correspondence should be addressed to the RCG at P.O. Box 7823, Fredericksburg, VA 22404-7823. Items for the Newsletter should be addressed to the Editor c/o RCG or e-mailed to [MyraWig@aol.com](mailto:MyraWig@aol.com). Copyright 2000 RCG. The content of the RCG Newsletter is the property of RCG, its members and contributors.