

Surviving in the New World:

Planting Tobacco and Other Necessary Foods

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Roger Rowe School**

Carolyn Jensen's Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Teacher Institute Lesson Plan for

PLANTING TOBACCO AND OTHER NECESSARY FOODS

GRADE LEVEL: 5th grade

**BACKGROUND
INFORMATION:**

In order to survive and eventually thrive, Colonists had to be independent of England for food sources. Gathering, hunting, trapping and trading provided only a limited and inconsistent source of food. Early colonists planned to grow their own food, and they brought European seed and hand tools to do so. Quickly, they discovered that clearing the land, planting the seed, and growing the food were not the only factors for assuring a successful food supply. Weather, soil and animals also affected their gardens and crops. As the Colonists progressed, they used climate-adapted seed (often garnered from Native Americans or locally gathered), and they discovered other reasonable solutions (such as hedges and fences, changing crops) to protect and grow their food. Tobacco, though not a food source, was an important crop to the southern farmer. The introduction of this crop by John Rolfe and the immediate success of tobacco influenced the agricultural economy of the South for many years. Producing fresh vegetables and herbs was a necessity for every home.

Planting, growing and harvesting a garden is a challenging task in any environment. But, while duplicating the Williamsburg climate and soil is not possible, growing tobacco and other garden foods in a local area is possible.

This is a shared gardening experience.

TIME REQUIRED:

Introduction lesson and later follow-up lesson on Tobacco
Cultivation and Marketing

2-3 30-minute small group discussion/planning sessions

Several 30-minute sessions for actual gardening throughout growing season

Ongoing for several months (growing time)

Group I: with daily watering, weekly weeding, harvesting

Group II: with daily, weekly, monthly updating records

Group III: with daily watering, weekly weeding, harvesting

MATERIALS: Clear garden plot area 2 ft x 6 ft
Various vegetable/herb seeds, tobacco seed
Various garden tools: shovels, rakes, hose, watering can,
Wide selection of books and copied primary source materials
Drawings of gardens
Crop Note
Transfer Note

Ledger Page from Edward Pate
Excerpts from Research Report on Tobacco Marketing
Graph paper and drawing materials (pencils, etc)
Writing journal for each student
Video camera, digital camera
Computers and access to Internet

OBJECTIVES:

CALIFORNIA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS:

5.2 Students describe the cooperation and conflict that existed among the Indians and between the Indian nations and the new settlers.

...

2. Describe the cooperation that existed between the colonists and Indians during the 1600's and 1700's (e.g. in agriculture...)

5.4 Students understand the ...economic institutions that evolved in the colonial era.

1. Understand the influence of location and physical setting on the founding of the original 13 colonies, and identify on a map the locations of the colonies and of the American Indian nations already inhabiting these areas.

...

5. Understand how the British colonial period created the basis for the development of political self-government and a free-market economic system and the differences between the British, Spanish, and French colonial systems.

CALIFORNIA READING STANDARDS:

2.1 Understand how text features (e.g. format, graphics, sequence, diagrams, charts, illustrations, maps) make information accessible and usable.

2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.

2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

- discuss the labor-intensive nature of tobacco cultivation
- discuss the labor-intensive nature of herb/vegetable cultivation
- compare and contrast the two crops: herb/vegetable and tobacco
- read, investigate and learn about the Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730 and its effect on Virginia's tobacco production

SETTING STAGE:

- In small groups, circulate selected readings, drawings, maps, and pictures of Colonial villages, plantations, and farms to get a "feel" for the lay of the land.
- Serve a snack to students of locally grown foods (vegetables).
- Display a sample plate of foods from afar (traded for) and/or a display of local herbs.
- Inspire curiosity of what would the colonists have been eating?
- Where did their food come from?

PROCEDURES:

- Introduce/review the colonists' dietary/medical needs and how they were supplied. Use KWL chart. Emphasize relationship with local Native Americans.
- Introduce the crop of tobacco showing photos and samples of leaf tobacco (Obtain samples from cigar shops). Using maps discuss climate and geography of southern colonies and suitability of tobacco.
- Small groups discuss the reasons for Colonial gardens/farming and why we have gardens today. Each group makes a list of reasons; join the listings to make a "parallel" chart to identify why we are pursuing a garden. Compare today's reasons to the Colonists.
- Introduce the class gardening project. (Use school gardening procedures.)
- Define class/individual tasks and determine responsibilities: gardening, record-keeping, researching. Discuss rotation of tasks within the group and rotation of three major responsibilities. Each student works in each of the three responsibility areas; share the tasks of that group.
- Investigate gardening locale and plan for implementation with tools, water. Discuss safety issues with tools; emphasize responsibilities of individual to the group project.
- Develop instruction sheet of group tasks and responsibilities. Assign students to groups and first rotation.
- Set schedule for germinating seed, transplanting, tending tobacco and vegetables, harvesting.

Group I: Maintain schedule and perform labor for gardening efforts:

- purchasing/ordering seed (if necessary)
- planting seeds in classroom, germination success
- transplanting seedlings to prepared garden plot
- daily inspection/maintenance for frost, insects
- daily watering, weeding, thinning
- harvesting, drying/storing

Group II: Maintain record-keeping of entire project:

- group video and camera work schedule includes printing off pictures and updating class website
- individual journals with daily/weekly entries of tasks completed, to do
- class chart with problems/solutions
- class schedule of assigned work
- class timeline of plant/crop cultivation

- responsibilities rotations' schedule

Group III: Researching and providing support information:

- read "Excerpts...Marketing" page to learn about tobacco market and its effect on local economy in the south
- use information from class library and CW website to understand agrarian economy of the colonies compared to today's service oriented economy
- investigate current tobacco crop impact on economy in southern states
- collect and study prints, pictures, maps, drawings to understand the how and where tobacco growing took place

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

- Class video and photos of steps and progress in Vegetable/herb and tobacco cultivation.
- Teacher's website maintained/supported with ongoing gardening progress from shared written personal experiences and pictures.
- Individual written journals of steps, progress, and reflection in gardening.
- Class schedule compiled of assigned gardening work.
- Class visual timeline of plant/crop cultivation.
- Class chart of problems/solutions in our garden.
- Vegetables and/or tobacco crop displayed at community's annual garden show and school's Colonial Fair.

APPENDIX

Books:

Barrett, Tracy. Growing Up in Colonial America. Millbrook, 1995. ISBN: 1562945785.
Historical fiction student novel.

Brenner, Barbara. ...If You Lived in Williamsburg in Colonial Days. Scholastic 2000. ISBN: 0590929224. Non-fiction source for gardening, tobacco.

Bradford, William and Brown, Margaret Wise. Homes in the Wilderness: A Pilgrim's Journal of Plymouth Plantation in 1620. Linnet Books. Reprint edition November 1, 1989. ISBN: 0208022694.

Byers, Dorie. Growing Herbs for Cold & Flu Relief. Storey Communications, Inc. 1999. ISBN: 1580172660.

Carson, Cary. Becoming Americans: Our Struggle To Be Both Free and Equal. Colonial Williamsburg. 1998. ISBN: 0879351675. Source for drawings, photos.

Colonial Dames of America. Herbs and Herb lore of Colonial America. Dover Publications, Inc. 1995. ISBN: 0486285294. Non fiction descriptive listing of colonial herbs.

Franklin, Benjamin. Poor Richard's Almanack. Peter Pauper, 1983. ISBN: 0880889187.
Source for weather and farming tips.

Gross, Ruth Belov. ...If You Grew Up With George Washington. Scholastic. 1982. ISBN: 0590451553. Non-fiction source for diet and medicine.

Hermes, Patricia. Our Strange New Land: Elizabeth's Jamestown Colony Diary (My America). Scholastic. ISBN: 0439368987. Historical fiction student novel.

Kalman, Bobbie & Brown, Ellen. The Colonial Cook. Crabtree Publishing. 2002. ISBN: 0778707482. Non-fiction source for diet, gardens and food.

Kamma, Anne. ...If You Lived When There Was Slavery In America. Scholastic 2004. ISBN: 0439567068. Source for children's work in fields.

Knight, James E. The Farm Life in Colonial Pennsylvania. Troll 1982. ISBN: 0816748012. Non-fiction source for drawings, descriptions of planting, tending.

McGovern, Ann. ...If You Lived in Colonial Times. Scholastic. 1964. ISBN: 059045160X. Non-fiction source for drawings, descriptions of herbal medicines.

Moore, Kay. ...If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution. Scholastic. 1982. ISBN: 0590674447. Non-fiction source for diagram, description.

Penner, Lucille Recht. Eating the Plates: A Pilgrim Book of Food and Manners. Simon & Schuster, 1991. ISBN: 0027709019. Non-fiction source for eating and dietary needs.

Randolf, John. A Treatise on Gardening. Printing Office of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Virginia. Non-fiction source for vegetable/herb gardening tips.

Research report on Tobacco Marketing by Harold B. Gill, Jr., the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Websites:

Redwood City Seeds Company to order tobacco seed:

<http://www.batnet.com/rwc-seed/tobacco.html>

Burpee Seed Company for herb catalogue:

<http://www.burpee.com/jump.jsp?itemType=GATEWAY&itemID=8>

Burpee Seed Company for vegetable catalogue:

<http://www.burpee.com/jump.jsp?itemType=GATEWAY&itemID=13>

Ferry-Morris for herb information online:

http://www.ferry-morse.com/product_results.asp?TYPE=Herbs

Ferry-Morris for vegetable information online:

http://www.ferry-morse.com/product_results.asp?TYPE=Vegetables

Gardening information for this southern California region:

<http://www.sunset.com/sunset/Premium/gardengateway.html>

Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730:

http://www.vahistorical.org/publications/Abstract_1084_Lorenz.htm

Tobacco growing general information from Colonial Williamsburg:

<http://www.history.org/history/teaching/tradsamp.cfm>

Powell Family slave gardening/general information from Colonial Williamsburg:

<http://www.history.org/history/teaching/slaves.cfm>

Western Indian tribes, especially in California, considered a milder smoke than the Common tobacco. Because this is a wild plant, seeds take at least a month to germinate. Extremely rare. **PKT. \$2.50**



—Common (*Tabacum*) Annual herb 3-6 ft., with leaves to one to two feet long and rose-colored flowers. Leaves and flowering tops contain nicotine. Before 1492, tobacco was known only in the Americas. Since that time, its use has spread to all peoples of the world and is now the most widely-grown non-food plant. Our seedstock is Tobacco-virus-free. **PKT. \$2, One Ounce \$54, One Pound \$540.**

—Sacred (*N. rustica*) Annual to 2 ft. with yellow flowers, native to North America where it has been widely used by the Native peoples. The most powerful form of tobacco with a harsh flavor until the leaves are fermented, a process of curing and aging taking 6 months to 4 years that gives it a more pleasant taste. **PKT. \$2.50**

BOOKLETS

All books and pamphlets offered are paperback and the prices include postage to customers in the USA, Canada and Mexico.

TOBACCO: Instructions for its cultivation and curing. USDA FB#6. 1892. Basic information on preparing the seedbed, planting and transplanting seedlings, cultivation, and the cutting and curing of tobacco. 6 pages. **\$2.50 postpaid**

TOBACCO, Methods of Curing. USDA FB#60. 1898. Pamphlet mainly written for the tobacco grower, but contains good information for the home gardener who is interested in producing a quality smokable product for home use. 14 pages. **\$3 postpaid**

<http://www.ecoseeds.com/tobob.html> - Tobacco page Order blank

Note: Print out this form and fill out in pen & send with payment.

NOTICE! - Check with your local USDA and US Treasury Dept. (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) so you can comply with any rules or regulations regarding the cultivation, production, or manufacture of tobacco or tobacco products before planting any tobacco seeds you purchase from us. Your seed order constitutes that you have read this notice and understand that you are responsible for any rules or regulations regarding tobacco cultivation, production or manufacture.

CANCER & HEALTH EFFECTS NOTICE - By purchasing any of these seeds, the buyer knows that tobacco causes cancer and other health problems, and that the buyer will be entirely responsible when ingesting any of this product, or offering this product to others, and the seed seller will not be liable for any cancer or other health problems resulting from the use of this product. Your seed order constitutes that you have read this notice and understand that you are responsible for any cancer or other health problems resulting from the use of this product.

REDWOOD CITY SEED COMPANY P.O. Box 361, Redwood City, Cal. 94064

Name:

Address:

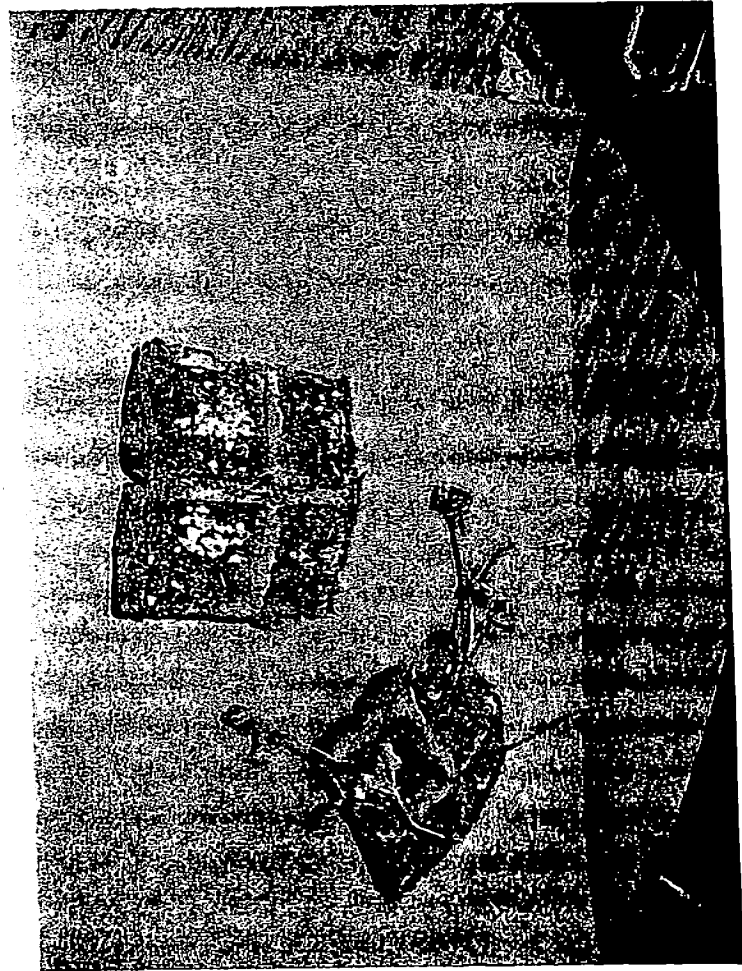
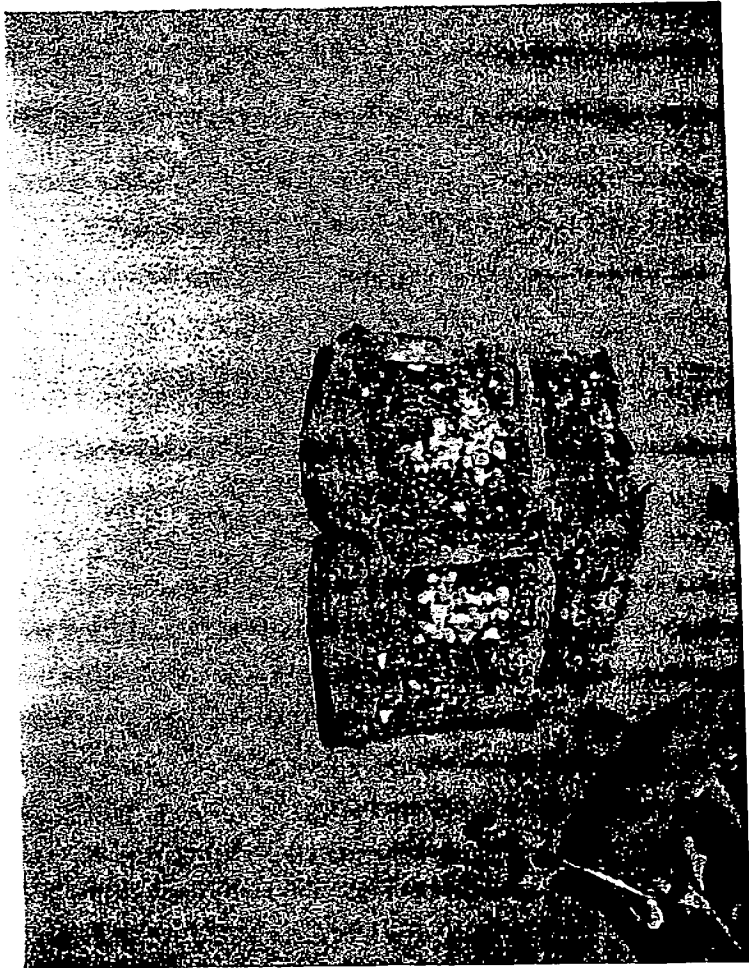
Town, Phone (day)
state, zip

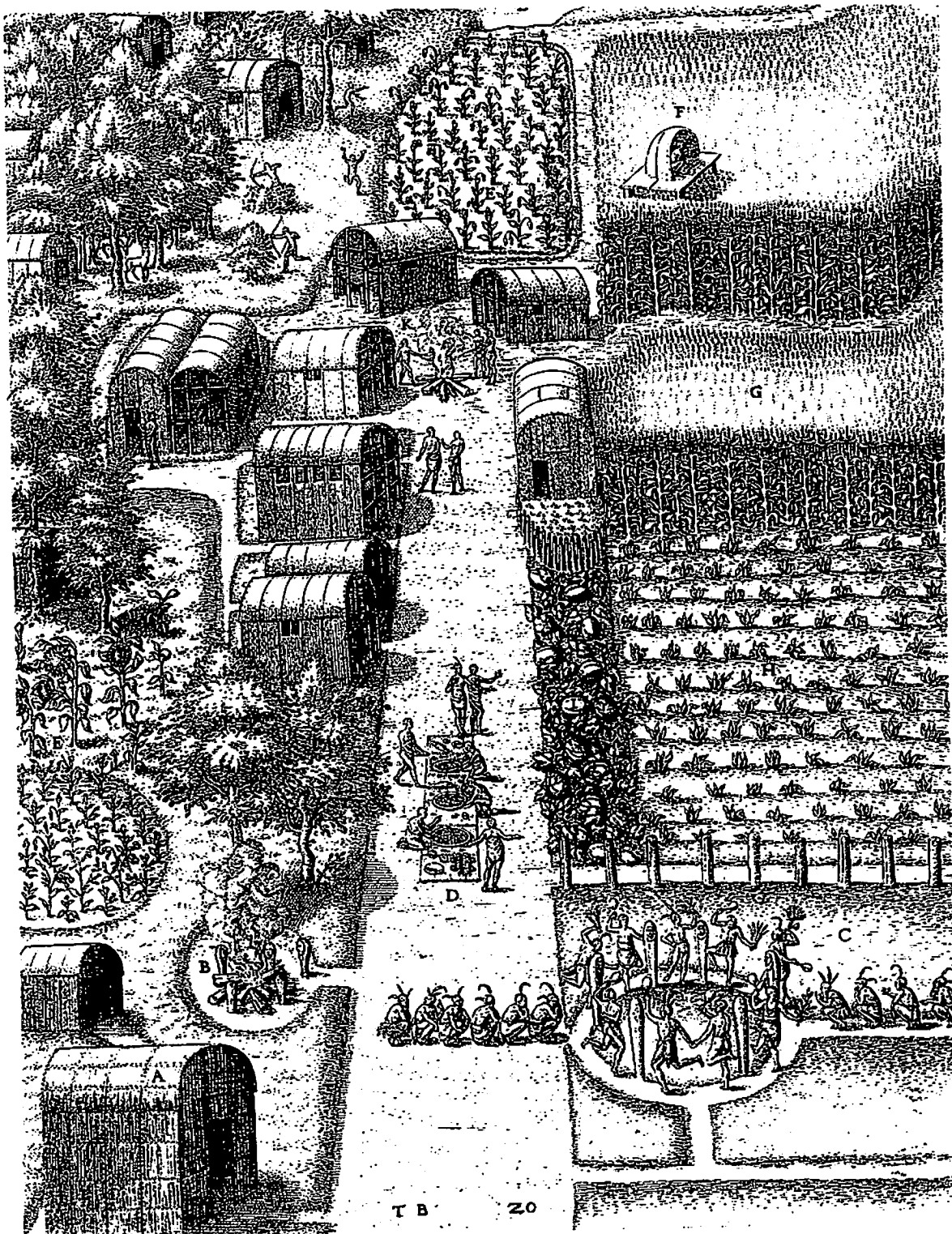
Please keep a copy of your order to check against goods received

Quantity	Name of Variety	Amount
... ()	Tobacco alata seed packet(s) @\$2.50 ea	
... ()	Tobacco Cal. Native seed packet(s) @\$2.50 ea	
... ()	Tobacco common (tabacum) seed pkt(s) @\$2.00 ea	
... ()	Tobacco common (tabacum) Ounces(s) @ \$54.00 ea.	
... ()	Tobacco common (tabacum) Pounds(s) @ \$540 each	
... ()	Tobacco Sacred (rustica) seed pkt(s) @\$2.50 ea	
... ()	"Tobacco:Instructions." (FB#6) booklet @\$2.50 ppd	
... ()	"Tobacco:Methods of Curing" (FB#60) @\$3.00 ppd	

.....SUBTOTAL \$ _____

.....*CALIFORNIA CUSTOMERS ADD SALES TAX \$ _____





The Town of Secota. by Theodore de Bry, engraving, 1590. Europeans did not always agree that the Indians' managed landscape was the proper way to use the environment.

Crop Note

R I V E R.
Warehouse, the Day of

Sweet Scented.							Aronoko.			
Leaf.			Stemm'd.				Leaf.			
Marks.	No.	Gros.	Tare	Nett.	Gros.	Tare	Nett.	Gros.	Tare	Nett.

Received of 17

R Hogheads of Crop-Tobacco, Marks, Numbers, Weights, and Species, as per Margin; to be delivered by us, to the said or his Order, for Exportation, when demanded. Witness our Hands,

R I V E R.
York Warehouse, the *15* Day of *May*

Sweet Scented.							Aronoko.			
Leaf.			Stemm'd.				Leaf.			
Marks.	No.	Gros.	Tare	Nett.	Gros.	Tare	Nett.	Gros.	Tare	Nett.
<i>EP</i>	<i>1</i>							<i>910</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>800</i>

Received of *Ms. Edmund Pate* *1790*

R *one* Hogheads of Crop-Tobacco, Marks, Numbers, Weights, and Species, as per Margin; to be delivered by us, to the said *Pate* or his Order, for Exportation, when demanded. Witness our Hands,

John Martin
Jos Digham

Transfer Note

James
Shocco's R I V E R. No.
Warehouse, the *28th* Day of *May* 1777
R E C E I V E D of *James Allen* Transfer *five hundred sixty-one*
Pounds of *Arro* *Toba.* Tobacco,

to be delivered on Demand to him or his Order, according to the Directions of the Act of Assembly " For amending the Staple of Tobacco, and preventing Frauds in his Majesty's Customs." Witness our Hands,

567

Robt. Burton
James Page

R I V E R. No.
Warchouse, the Day of 1777
R E C E I V E D of Transfer Tobacco,
Pounds of

to be delivered on Demand to him or his Order, according to the Directions of the Act of Assembly " For amending the Staple of Tobacco, and preventing Frauds in his Majesty's Customs." Witness our Hands,

Ledger Page — Edward Pate

1740
Deb. to Mr. Edward

July 17 To Cash 2
 To Subby Goods as per Day book . . . 6
 Tho. 2 £ 8 . . .

Pate £

July 1st By Trade Tobacco

EP 1..910-110-800.....at 20/1#6.18

Excerpts from Research Report on Tobacco Marketing

In 1730, Governor William Gooch managed to convince the Virginia legislature to pass a law entitled: *An Act for Amending the Staple of Tobacco and for preventing Frauds in his Majesty's Custom*. This important piece of legislation set up a tobacco inspection system that transformed the local methods of marketing tobacco.

There were two primary methods of disposing of tobacco crops. The first was through the consignment system which was most commonly employed by large tobacco producers. People who engaged in this method collected a shipload of tobacco—if they themselves did not produce enough they might join with others to fill a ship, or purchase from smaller producers. On its arrival in England, the tobacco was sold by an English merchant who received a commission for his trouble. The proceeds had to be returned to the planters in the form of merchandise because cash could not be exported from England. A planter who sold by consignment assumed the risks of shipping, the cost of storage in England, and customs fees, but he usually could acquire his goods more cheaply this way than if he purchased from a local Virginia merchant. After costs were paid, the planter usually cleared between £10 and £12 sterling per hogshead. If the planter's tobacco sold for more than his order for goods—which usually went along with his shipment of tobacco—amounted to, the merchant credited his account with the balance.

The production of a large plantation, when sold in Britain, could amount to a sizeable sum. For instance, in 1775, John Hyndman & Company of London, sold sixty-one hogsheads of tobacco belonging to Robert Carter which produced net proceeds of over £715 to Carter's credit. Sometimes the planters' orders for goods exceeded the net proceeds of the tobacco sales. The merchants filled the orders anyway in the expectation of being paid with the next crop. Some planters were constantly in debt to British merchants as a result. However, not all Virginia planters were indebted to British merchants—many were not. The Carter's Grove estate usually maintained credit balances with British merchants. In 1769, for example, Samuel Athawes of London, was indebted to that estate for over £660 sterling.

The planter could use his credit with the English merchant to purchase goods or he could transfer it to someone else. If, for example, Carter Burwell had £100 credit with an English merchant and owed another English merchant £100, he would send a bill [bill of exchange] drawn on the first to pay the second. There were other ways he could use his credit. He could pay local merchants or others to whom he owed money with a bill on his English credit. Another example might be if someone in Virginia owned an English merchant money, Burwell might sell him all or part of his credit at the going rate of exchange. Burwell might sell the person a bill for £50 sterling for £62 and 10 shillings Virginia currency if the rate of exchange between sterling and Virginia currency was 125%. Virginia currency consisted of gold and silver coins (mostly foreign—French, Spanish, and German) that passed at fixed rates; after 1755 there was also paper money in the colony. . . .

The consignment system was little affected by the Tobacco Act of 1730 but the act had important effects on the direct sale of tobacco to merchants in Virginia.

The second method of selling tobacco (and the one that was most changed by the Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730) was direct sale to local merchant or, most likely, to merchants who arrived in the colony about once a year with a shipload of manufactured goods that they exchanged for the planters' crops. Before 1730, there were few merchants permanently established in Virginia; most goods were available from those itinerant merchants who operated from their ships. They went from creek to creek and wharf to wharf selling their goods to the planters in return for tobacco. This

method meant that the ships stayed in the colony a long time, which increased freight rates. Ships' turn-around time was a factor in fixing the cost of freight—the shorter the turn-around time, the lower the freight rates because sailors had to be paid while the ship lay at anchor. Freight rates were determined by volume—100 cubic feet equaled one tun. Four hogsheads were reckoned to be one tun or 100 cubic feet. After 1705, the size of hogsheads was standardized at forty-eight inches long, thirty inches in diameter at the head, with a proportional bulge. A hogshead of this size was slightly more than twenty cubic feet.

Because freight was charged by volume rather than weight it was to the shipper's advantage to pack as much in a hogshead as possible. The weight of tobacco packed in a hogshead tended to increase over the years. The Virginia legislature established minimum weights that should be packed in each hogshead. In 1727, the legal net weight was at least 700 pounds, increased to 800 pounds in 1730, to 850 pounds in 1738, 950 pounds in 1745, and 1000 pounds in 1778. The weights of hogsheads varied but most weighed about 1000 pounds net after 1745. . . .

[A tobacco inspection program] would increase royal revenues as well as guarantee the quality of exported tobacco and would improve and maintain the reputation for quality of Virginia tobacco which would, of course, increase its value.

The legislature aimed to accomplish these goals by requiring inspection of all tobacco intended for export and allowing exportation of only that of a minimum quality. The rest was destroyed. At his own expense, a planter took his tobacco to the inspection warehouse where it was inspected by qualified inspectors. If it passed, the planter received a receipt—called a crop note for a hogshead and a transfer note for quantities less than a hogshead. The planter could then use the notes to pay public taxes and levies within a specified area or he could sell the notes to merchants or anyone anywhere who wanted to buy tobacco. Inspected tobacco was stored in warehouses, at inspection stations, and the owners of notes could ship tobacco directly from the warehouses all of which were on navigable water. Initially, thirty-one inspection points were established.

Planters could no longer ship tobacco directly from their own wharves—it could be shipped only from the inspection warehouses. This reduced the ships' turn-around time and merchants no longer had to arrange for the transportation of tobacco from scattered locations to their ships' anchorage.

It may have been an unforeseen benefit, but the Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730 provided the means to carry on the retail distribution of goods easily and efficiently for the first time. The act provided the incentive needed for traders to establish permanent retail establishments in the colony because planters now did not have to sell their tobacco when the annual fleet arrived but could sell their notes anytime. Now merchants did not need the warehouse facilities and manpower to physically handle tobacco nor did they need to be expert in judging quality. Even though planters now bore the cost of getting their crops to the inspection stations, they too benefited from the act. The notes were easy to negotiate and planters could bargain with several merchants at different locations. For example, a planter living in a distant part of the colony could sell his tobacco notes to a merchant in Williamsburg and the merchant was taking no chances with buying inferior quality tobacco. Usually merchants never saw the tobacco they purchased and exported after the passage of the Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730. Small planters now had the opportunity of buying goods year round instead of being forced to buy a year's supply at one time from itinerant merchants.

The Tobacco Inspection Act of 1730 made the direct sale of tobacco much safer and cheaper for the merchant and provided small producers with convenient means of selling their crops and buying manufactured goods.

From Research Report on Tobacco Marketing by Harold B. Gill, Jr., The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

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