



The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR LIBRARY

SUMMER 2021

NEWSLETTER

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NEW EXHIBIT

The John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library is pleased to announce the opening of a new exhibit, *Hollywood Comes to Williamsburg: A Century of Movie and Media Productions*. Curated by library staff Jenna Simpson, Tracey Gulden, Donna Cooke, and Marianne Martin, the exhibit traces the history of both movies and television programs filmed in Williamsburg by outside production companies as well as the in-house films, filmstrips, sound recordings, and Electronic Field Trips created by Colonial Williamsburg's audiovisual staff. Among the interesting objects on display are scripts and flyers, still photographs, Dr. Goodwin's scrapbook, an Arriflex Ila film camera, an Emmy award won by Colonial Williamsburg Productions, a jawbone used as an instrument in the Colonial Williamsburg production *Music of Williamsburg*, and *Williamsburg: The Story of a Patriot* paper dolls. Guests can also view segments from Colonial Williamsburg's Archival Film series, such as *A Glorious System of Things*, *Search for a Century*, and *Williamsburg Restored* via a monitor in the exhibit space.

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Donna Cooke and Tracey Gulden open the exhibit.

Photo by Wayne Reynolds.

NEW EXHIBIT

(continued)



Hollywood Come to Williamsburg exhibit cases.

Photo by Wayne Reynolds.

When the Covid-19 pandemic began in late March 2020, the exhibit committee regrouped to determine how to continue preparing for the exhibition remotely. Committee members planned, researched, wrote text and label content, and worked virtually with a graphic designer from their home offices. As the pandemic safety guidelines relaxed, the team met with the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg staff for installation of a large wall panel featuring a short film chronology highlighting some of the most important milestones in film productions set in Williamsburg and began physical installation of objects in cases. Tracey Gulden oversaw the printing of the many still photos displayed alongside objects. Several staff members from the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg, including Jan Gilliam, David Mellors, Jim Armbruster, and Colleen Kennedy, helped with printing oversize exhibit graphics and title rails, fabricating object mounts, and hanging large wall panels. Judy Marx, a volunteer in Media Collections, contributed her expertise by scanning and color correcting many images used in graphics. Melinda Evans of Designs by Me created the eye-catching movie themed title poster, introductory panel, and film chronology.

The exhibit officially launched on July 27, 2021, via a virtual presentation given by Jenna Simpson and Marianne Martin as a special event in partnership with the Williamsburg Regional Library. At the conclusion of the presentation, Donna Cooke and Tracey Gulden performed a virtual ribbon cutting ceremony to open the exhibit to the public. A recording of the presentation may be viewed online via the [Williamsburg Regional Library's YouTube channel](#).

NEW EXHIBIT

(continued)



Exhibit case and timeline for Hollywood Comes to Williamsburg.

Photo by Wayne Reynolds.

Hollywood Comes to Williamsburg: A Century of Movie and Media Productions is free and open to the public during library hours from Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm, through December 2022. Within the next few months, an online version will be launched that will include a smaller sub-set of items illustrating the span of movie and media production in Williamsburg over the past one hundred years.

CAPTAIN SAMUEL J. E. PEACH JR RECORDS



Winthrop Rockefeller presenting Captain Peach, Head of Security, with his silver bowl in honor of his twenty-five years of service at Colonial Williamsburg, circa 1968

Photo by Jane Isley

On May 25th, the Library received a donation of records related to Captain Samuel J. E. Peach, Jr., first chief of security and safety, who began work at Colonial Williamsburg in 1943. Kept by his wife Nadine in scrapbooks over his thirty-year career, the records contain correspondence, newspaper clippings, and photographs and cover subjects related to Captain Peach's job, including property protection and recovery, security arrangements for film productions, and VIP visitors. Also included are personal tributes from fellow employees on the occasions of his service anniversaries and his retirement in 1973. In a Daily Press newspaper article about him dated September 14, 1958, Captain Peach said that the records of his lost and stolen property cases range from "hubcaps to hams" and that "We are a little proud of the fact that we usually get our man. It's a matter of work and patience usually." When asked in another newspaper interview after he'd been on the job for fourteen years about any interest in retirement, he said "No, sir. I'm not in any hurry to retire. I like this job fine because it gives me a chance to help people instead of get them in trouble." The donation was made by Captain Peach's granddaughter Shannon Davis and his son John Peach, and we are grateful for their generosity in gifting this personal collection to the Library. We were also pleased to meet the family of a long-time employee and hear personal stories about growing up in Williamsburg and about Captain Peach himself. The Peach records will be a permanent part of the Corporate Archives and will be available for research by appointment once they are arranged and processed. (Accession 2021-023)

CAPTAIN SAMUEL J. E. PEACH JR RECORDS

(continued)



Shannon Davis and John Peach with their donation of records of Captain Samuel J. E. Peach, Jr., first chief of safety and security at Colonial Williamsburg, in front of the Robert Brackman portrait of John D. Rockefeller Jr., May 25, 2021.

Photo courtesy of Shannon Davis



Faculty of the Officer's Training School, Camp Peary, 1944.

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The Rockefeller Library is pleased to announce a significant addition to its holdings on World War II era Williamsburg, The James Lee and Ethel M. Fisher Family Archives, a gift of Eric T. and Elizabeth Fisher Davis. Consisting of a scrapbook and fifty-one associated black and white photographs, the archives document the wartime experiences of Dr. James Lee Fisher, who served as a Navy medical doctor during World War II, and his wife, Ethel, who accompanied him to his first post at Camp Peary, where she served in the Red Cross Unit. Mr. and Mrs. Davis also kindly provided a copy of the section of Dr. Fisher's reminiscences which pertains to his wartime service. This narrative helps to bring the events pictured in the scrapbook and associated photos to life and also illuminates the character and personality of Dr. Fisher .

NEW ACQUISITION

(continued)



DAUGHTER, MARGIE
Ethel came down to
Williamsburg, and for
9 months we lived at
The Williamsburg Inn.



Lt. Col. M. Fisher with
daughter, Margaret
E. Fisher

"Ethel came down to Williamsburg, and for 9 months we lived at the Williamsburg Inn,".

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Dr. Fisher departed for active duty as Lt Commander in the Medical Division of the United States Navy on December 18, 1942. His first assignment brought him to the United States Naval Construction Training Center at Camp Peary, home of the "Seabees," and located near Williamsburg, Virginia. Dr. Fisher's wife, Ethel, joined him in Williamsburg in 1943 and they lived for nine months in officer's quarters at the Williamsburg Inn. Photos within the scrapbook of the Fishers interacting with other couples billeted at the Inn illustrate the Inn's important role in bolstering morale by providing a place for a peaceful interlude of rest and relaxation on weekends where the military could gather for refreshments, swimming, and entertainment.

NEW ACQUISITION

(continued)

In September 1943, the Fishers moved to a cabin on the banks of the York River on the Camp Peary base. Ethel Fisher took part in the Red Cross Unit overseen by Mrs. Ware, wife of Captain James G. Ware, the Commanding Officer at Camp Peary. A series of group portraits, along with informal scenes of the Red Cross Unit members cutting and rolling bandages, highlight women's contributions to wartime work in the Williamsburg area. Social life on base at Camp Peary, ranging from picnics, baseball games, parties, and dances, is captured in a series of photos of the officers, soldiers, and families. Mr. and Mrs. Fisher's side trips to Norfolk, Newport News, Yorktown, and Richmond are also represented in the album.



Group portrait of members of the Red Cross Unit at Camp Peary near Williamsburg, Virginia, 1943. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Magee, Mrs. Ware, Mrs. Archambeault, Ethel Fisher. Back row, left to right: Mrs. Long, Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Edgar, Mrs. Mattingly, Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. Sargeant, Mrs. Meadenhall, Mrs. Hoover, and Mrs. Radar.

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In April 1944, Dr. Fisher left Camp Peary for a new assignment at the United States Naval Construction Center at Camp Endicott, Rhode Island. From there he received orders to transfer to Seattle for training to take on the role of Senior Medical Officer of the U.S.S. Gage, a ship that formed part of the Attack Transport of the Amphibious Corps, 5th Fleet. By January 1945, the U.S.S. Gage set sail for the South Pacific, where Dr. Fisher and the crew witnessed the devastation in the Philippines, participated in such maneuvers as the Okinawa landing invasion, and assisted with various efforts in Occupied Japan, whether transporting troops, medical supplies, or medical staff to

different Japanese cities to lend aid. Through photographs and commentary, the second half of Dr. Fisher's scrapbook covers all of the difficult and distressing events he encountered during his tour in the South Pacific at the end of World War II. The album thus offers a complete picture of what many military officials who spent time at training bases near Williamsburg eventually faced as the war progressed and finally came to a close. Dr. Fisher returned home in late 1945 to his medical practice in Youngstown, Ohio, noting at the close of his album "I wouldn't have missed it for anything, but I wouldn't do it again."

The scrapbook may be viewed here: [James Lee and Ethel M. Fisher Family Archives.](#)

NEW ACQUISITION

(continued)



“Social life on the base consisted of picnics, ball games, parties in the houses, and dances at the Officer’s Club.”

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Members of the Red Cross Unit at Camp Peary near Williamsburg, Virginia rolling bandages, 1943. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Fox, Mrs. Mattingly, Mrs. Morrison. Next table, left to right: Mrs. Edgar, Mrs. Rader, and Ethel Fisher, wife of Dr. James Lee Fisher. In corner, Mrs. Long at the sewing machine and Mrs. Magee, and Mrs. Hoover behind her.

ARBORETUM PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT



Botanical detail from a Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*) on South England Street behind the Nicholas-Tyler Office.

Photo courtesy of Jerry McCoy.

Did you know that in addition to being a living history museum, Colonial Williamsburg's 301-acre campus is a Level 2 Arboretum certified by ArbNet's global Arboretum Accreditation Program? The arboretum has over 100 species of trees and woody plants, some of which are classified as Virginia state champion and national champion trees. The Arboretum is cared for and documented by Colonial Williamsburg's landscape department and its dedicated volunteers.

Recently, Media Collections at the Rockefeller Library has begun a project to document these amazing specimens in our own way through the work of library volunteer photographer Jerry McCoy. His work captures the location and appearance of these plants as they currently stand, as well as illustrating botanical details. It is a useful record of this amazing, living Colonial Williamsburg collection – as well as a beautiful set of nature photography. As of late summer, McCoy's lens has captured nearly 60 species in the arboretum, and there's still (literally!) a lot of ground to cover.

If you'd like to explore the Arboretum, you can learn more about it at <https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/.../arboretum-gardens/>. The website even includes an interactive map to help you locate the specimens. If you have a smartphone equipped with Google Maps, you can bring up the arboretum map and let your GPS guide you from tree to tree. When you get to a specimen, use your phone to scan the QR code to learn more about the plant.

ARBORETUM PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

(continued)



Leaf cluster and bud on a Sweetbay Magnolia (Magnolia virginiana) on Nicholson Street in front of the St. George Tucker House.

Photo courtesy of Jerry McCoy.



An Eastern Redbud (Cercis canadensis) at the Magazine guardhouse.

Photo courtesy of Jerry McCoy

ARBORETUM PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

(continued)



Cornelian Cherry Dogwood (Cornus mas) on the west side of the Bryan House.

Photo courtesy of Jerry McCoy.



Paper Mulberry (Broussonetia papyrifera) in the small pasture behind Wetherburn's Tavern.

Photo courtesy of Jerry McCoy

DONOR APPRECIATION WEEKEND



Representatives of the many departments of Colonial Williamsburg met with donors on the grounds of Bassett Hall.

Photo courtesy of Wayne Reynolds.

Donors were welcomed back to Colonial Williamsburg on September 10-11, 2021. Approximately 500 donors from the CW Burgess, CW Associates, Raleigh Tavern and W.A.R. Goodwin societies will be onsite to enjoy a variety of events designed to thank them for their generosity and celebrate how their gifts support Colonial Williamsburg initiatives. As part of the festivities, attendees enjoyed a Garden Party at Bassett Hall, which included lunch, entertainment, and an opportunity to engage with Foundation staff. Rockefeller Library and Historical Research staff were out in force to welcome donors, discuss their important work and how research helps supports the Foundation. We are very grateful for the many generous donors who support our work.



Kelly Brennan and Cathy Hellier representing the Historians at Bassett Hall.

Photo courtesy of Wayne Reynolds.

DONOR APPRECIATION WEEKEND

(continued)



Marianne Martin representing Special Collections at the Bassett Hall event.

Photo courtesy of Wayne Reynolds.



Donna Cooke and Sarah Nerney representing Corporate Archives at the Bassett Hall event.

Photo courtesy of Wayne Reynolds.

DONOR APPRECIATION WEEKEND

(continued)



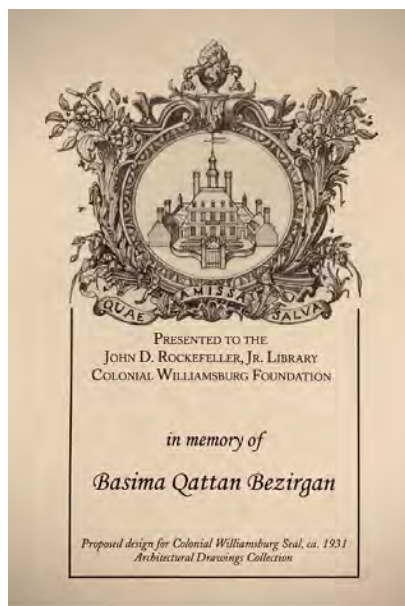
Tracey Gulden and Jenna Simpson representing Media Collections at the Bassett Hall event.

Photo courtesy of Wayne Reynolds.

BASIMA QATTAN BEZIRGAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY ENDOWMENT

In our Spring 2019 issue, we announced a generous gift creating the Basima Qattan Bezirgan Memorial Endowment at Rockefeller Library. Donors Brooke England and Paul Michel knew that establishing a fund to purchase new reference and circulating books would be a fitting tribute to their dear friend, a women's history author and librarian whose career included serving as Middle East Cataloger and Arabic Specialist at the University of Chicago and as Cataloger and Bibliographer at the General Libraries of the University of Texas at Austin.

We are now pleased to share some of the first purchases made with this endowment; these and future acquisitions will deepen our collections and enrich the work of Colonial Williamsburg's community of scholars. Though the fund is unrestricted, many of the titles have a connection to women's history, contributions, and concerns. Each bears a bookplate honoring Basima Qattan Bezirgan's memory.



Basima Qattan Bezirgan memorial bookplate.



Books purchased with funds from the Basima Qattan Bezirgan Memorial Library Endowment.

Ball, Erica L., et al., editors. *As If She Were Free: A Collective Biography of Women and Emancipation in the Americas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Cheek, Pamela. *Heroines and Local Girls: The Transnational Emergence of Women's Writing in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019.

Fairfax, Edmund. *The Styles of Eighteenth-Century Ballet*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2003.

Flanders, Judith. *A Place for Everything: The Curious History of Alphabetical Order*. New York: Basic Books, 2020.

Holden, Vanessa M. *Surviving Southampton: African American Women and Resistance in Nat Turner's Community*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2021.

McEnroe, Sean F. *A Troubled Marriage: Indigenous Elites of the Colonial Americas*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2020.

Ridley, Glynis. *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe*. New York: Broadway Paperbacks, 2011.

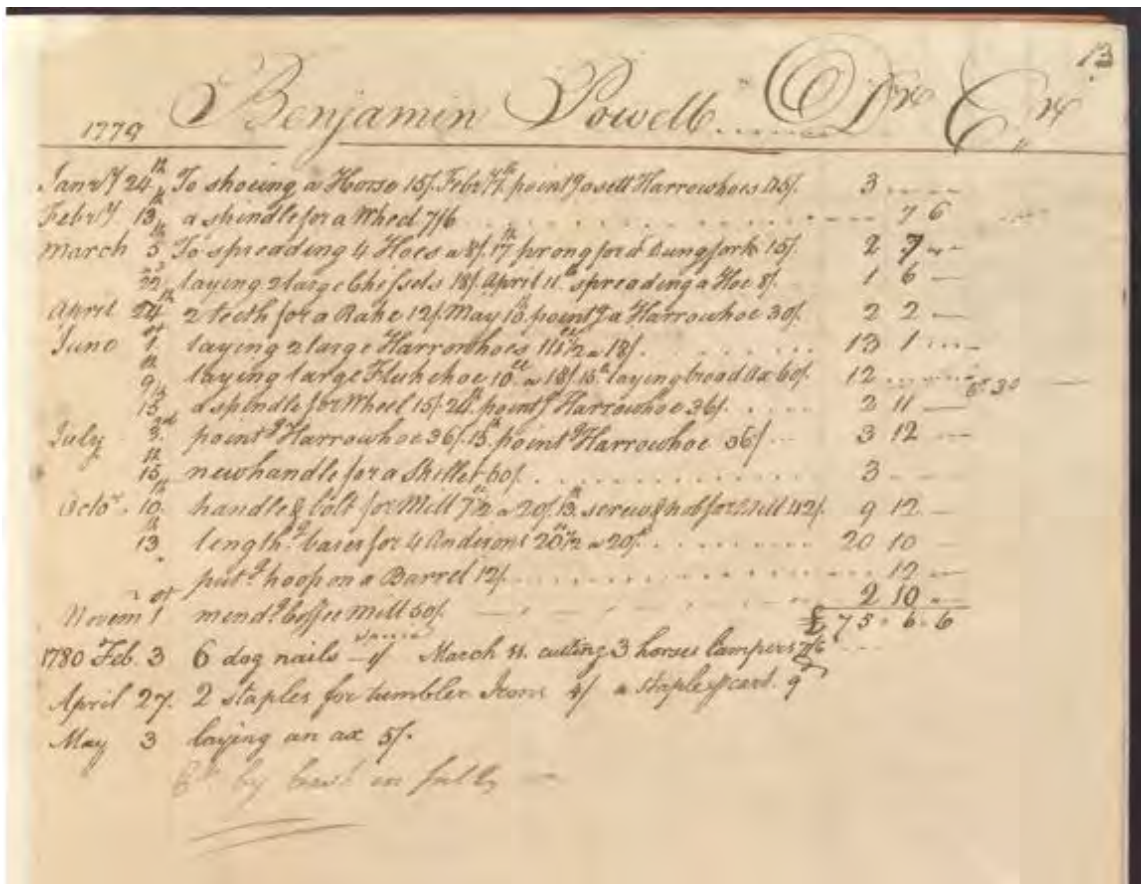
Smith, Bonnie G. *Women in World History: 1450 to the Present*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

When institutions collect rare materials, they incur the twin obligations of caring for those materials and making them accessible to researchers. Both endeavors can be labor intensive and may require more assets to tackle the task than the institution can bring to bear. Due to the nature of the materials housed at the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library our conservation needs far exceed the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's capacity to treat all our endangered materials onsite.

In the past few years, nearly two hundred issues of the Virginia Gazette have been delaminated in our own paper lab within the Museum, Preservation, and Historic Resources division. Unfortunately, many thousands of items are still awaiting delamination including letters, deeds, wills and bound volumes. Some of the bound volumes contain hundreds of sheets of paper making them significant conservation projects.

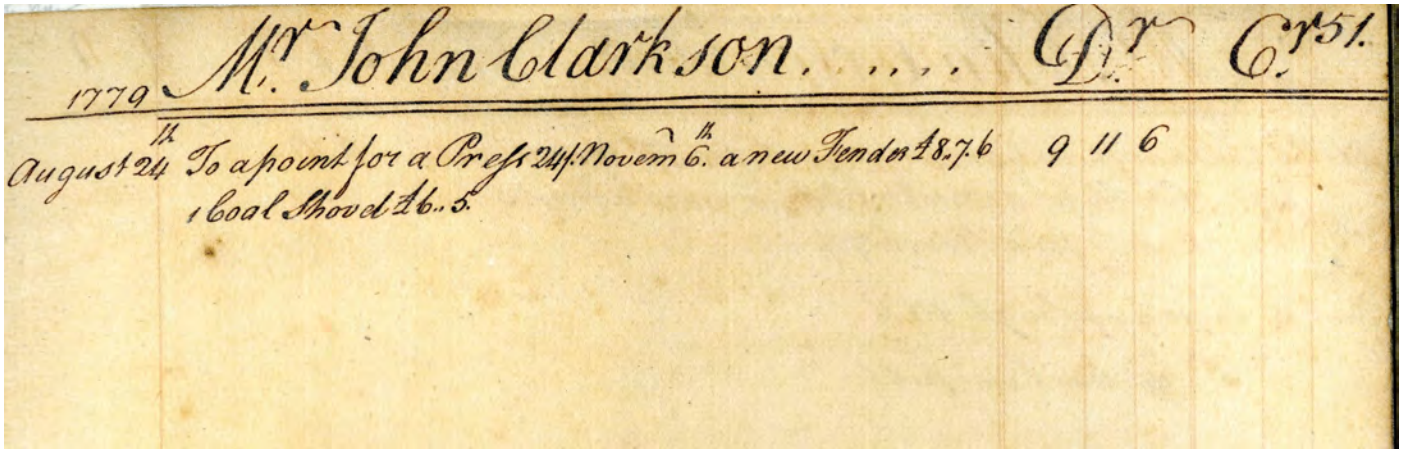
In the past, the library has sent some materials to outside facilities for conservation. One such item is the Humphrey Harwood account book. Harwood was a local builder in 18th-century Williamsburg whose account book documents the work he performed at various Williamsburg sites. Harwood's account book was sent to the Northeast Document Conservation Center for treatment and rebinding insuring its survival and usability far into the future. The account book of James Anderson also documents work done on 18th-century buildings in Williamsburg. Anderson was the local blacksmith, and his volumes also reside in Special Collections. We would like to send Anderson's volumes out for conservation so they will remain here to document his work for generations to come. If you would like to help us fund this and similar conservation projects, please contact our Director, Carl Childs cchilds@cwf.org.



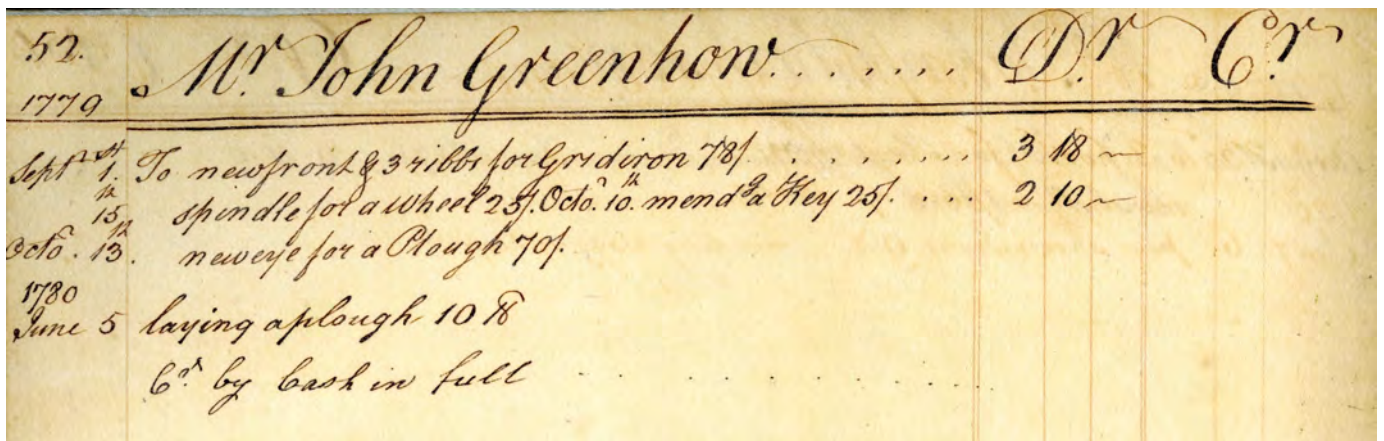
Entry from the James Anderson account book showing work done for Williamsburg builder Benjamin Powell.

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

(continued)



Detail from the James Anderson account book showing work done for Williamsburg printer John Clarkson.



Detail from the James Anderson account book showing work done for Williamsburg store owner John Greenhow.

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