

Castle Chronicle



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Portrait, oil on canvas
Miss Elizabeth Simpson (?)
Artist unknown
ca. 1760
Gift of Norman Smith
G-1-1960

Photo: Gay Myers



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55 Richard Smith Dr.
Wickford, RI 02852
E-mail: smithscastle@earthlink.net
Web site: www.smithscastle.org

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Note from the President

Historic New England's (HNE) President and CEO, Carl R. Nold, has written an insightful article, "The Future of the Historic House Museum," in HNE's Summer 2008 membership magazine. It's almost as if Nold had Smith's Castle specifically in mind—so uncannily precise is his description of our present difficulties. It is somewhat comforting that such a large and prominent institution as HNE faces many of the same challenges as smaller organizations such as ours.

"The evidence is mounting and clear: for more than thirty years, most history museums have experienced a steady decline in attendance and public interest," Nold begins. He points to several causes: exotic travel favored over local destinations; reduced history curricula in schools; a shift from collective social activities to individual amusements (video games, web-surfing); and the increasingly hectic lives of American families. Trends that prompt Nold to ask, "Does the nineteenth-century model of an hour-long guided tour through a historic house have a place in twenty-first century life?"

It's as if he were reading my mind after seeing our latest admissions statistics. In the first two months of this season (May–June), more than 20 percent fewer visitors took our regularly scheduled tours than in 2007. Is this a temporary blip due to economic circumstances? Or is it a longer term trend?

On a more positive note, not counted in that data was the May 10 statewide historic site open house. Members of Preserve Rhode Island's Historic Sites Coalition participated in "Thresholds...Step Inside History," opening 24 historic sites around the state to the public free of charge. Most sites reported exceedingly high attendance, and Smith's Castle was deluged with approximately 100 visitors over 3 hours. Was it fantastic public relations that did the trick? Or is "free" the optimum price for a historic house tour?

"Recognizing the different needs of different communities, and that there is no single way in which museums add value, is a key to open thinking about how to use historic sites today," Nold notes. HNE is responding to the challenges by working harder to make its historic sites more relevant to the communities in which its houses are located.

Smith's Castle has endeavored to do the same in the past few years. We've worked on honing our tours and editing our collections to move beyond a generic colonial house experience to presenting a specific site inhabited by specific individuals who made significant contributions to the development of our community. By interpreting actual history, adopting a hands-on approach to artifacts, and urging greater participation, we encourage our visitors to connect the past to their present lives and connect Smith's Castle to the evolution of their community.

The connections are real and significant. Without the Smiths, the history of southern Rhode Island would be vastly different, and King Philip's War might have taken an altered course. Without the Updikes, Wickford village would not exist today and our town would not be named Kingstown. Had there been no Attorney General Daniel Updike, Little Compton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, and Cumberland would be Massachusetts towns today. If Roger Williams hadn't set up a trading house here, it is possible Rhode Island's charter and early colonial development would have been quite different. (By the way, if you don't know about these connections, it's time you took a tour.)

Hands-on is a key concept. "Visitors no longer wish to have a passive role," Nold says, "they want to experience a place hands-on, contribute their own knowledge and insights, and have opportunities that go beyond the usual." An advantage of our small site is the strong interaction between visitor and docent—a dialogue that our docents say makes a Smith's Castle tour as much of a learning experience for them as it is for our visitors. Smith's Castle has made strong headway in developing a participatory approach, but we can do more.

Visitors who take our regular tours and attend our special events are genuinely intrigued and inspired by what we have to offer. The recent statewide tour is an example—many visitors lingered long after closing, and were very reluctant to leave! The problem, it seems, is how to spread the word: How do we entice people to step through the door? How do we differentiate what we have to offer from the dozens of other area historic sites? How do we cooperate with other area sites to promote common interests?

In addition to these larger external "societal" issues, Smith's Castle faces significant internal challenges. At present, the Cocumscussoc Association lacks the human and financial resources necessary to effectively fulfill its mission. A critical challenge is staffing. We need a full-time manager, and funding this position is a tall hurdle.

I am serving my last year of a three-year term as president of Smith's Castle. In my first two years, I concentrated on stabilizing, refocusing, and rebuilding. This year I intend to look to the future. I need your help. What future do you envision for Smith's Castle? How do we build up our financial resources to fund permanent staff? How can we reinvent ourselves for a 21st century audience? And how do we get out the word about all the wonderful things Smith's Castle has to offer? Please email me your ideas and suggestions.

—Neil Dunay, President

Updike Descendants Fund Updike Law Office

In May, descendants of Attorney General Daniel Updike (ca. 1693–1757) made a very generous contribution of \$5,000 to the newly installed Updike law office.

"We loved the [Chronicle] article on Daniel Updike! My sister Anstis Benfield is named after Anstis Jenkins Updike! Our Mother was Margaret Greene. We are happy to make this contribution to a wonderful 'cause!," wrote Sarah Updike Bull on behalf of herself, Anstis Updike Benfield, and Christopher Updike Bull.

We are very grateful to them for this incredible donation. Smith's Castle is now considering how to spend the additional funds. Among the options are a period bookcase, which is mentioned in Updike's 1757 probate inventory but not yet represented in the room, or additional period books, as Updike had a vast library and was a founder of Newport's Redwood Library.

We are also very grateful to local attorneys and Castle members who contributed funding for this room:

Richard B. Carpenter, Esq.
David F. Reilly, Esq.
Jack and Maggie Skenyon
Domenic A. Mosca, Jr., Esq.

Many thanks also to Smith's Castle volunteers Neil Dunay, Darrell McIntire, Louise Duckworth, David Duckworth, and Diane Amaral for contributing time and resources into developing the exhibit.

Visitors so far have expressed keen interest in the new exhibit. They are fascinated with the original Updike items on display (law books, walking stick, and waistcoat), and many are surprised to learn that entire towns were transferred from Massachusetts to Rhode Island, due primarily to Updike's efforts.

Smith's Castle is also currently looking into grants to fund a scholar to further develop the interpretation of the room into a working 18th century office.

The Updike law office is indicative of a new approach at Smith's Castle to interpret the "real history" of the site and its inhabitants. The Castle is currently working on reinterpreting the pantry as a dairy room to show the process of cheese making in the 17th and 18th centuries, as Mrs. Richard Smith is reputed to have been the source of the recipe for the famous Rhode Island cheese, a primary export of the colony in the 18th century. Watch for this exhibit next year. ■



Welcome New Members

Shannon Chandley
G. Timothy Cranston
Fran Julin
Leslie North
Betty West
Janice Whaley

The Order of the First Families of Rhode Island
and Providence Plantations

—as of June 30, 2008

Law Office of Attorney General Daniel Updike circa 1755

Exhibition made possible thanks to the generous contributions of...

Sarah Updike Bull, Christopher Updike Bull, and Anstis Updike Benfield
Richard B. Carpenter, Esq.
David F. Reilly, Esq.
Jack and Maggie Skenyon
Domenic A. Mosca, Jr., Esq.
For Smith's Castle: Neil Dunay, Darrell McIntire, Louise Duckworth,
David Duckworth, Diane Amaral

Above: Neil Dunay in the
Daniel Updike Law Office; and
Apprentice's Desk, Daniel
Updike Law Office.

Left: Contributors' Plaque.

Photos: Trish Harmon

Elizabeth Returns (from page 1)

Miss Elizabeth

Our hopes were high in January 2006 when the portrait of the lovely young lady that graces the front stairway of Smith's Castle was sent to the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London for restoration. Surely, we hoped, removing the accumulation of grime, adjusting the discolorations, and correcting the indignities of earlier restorations would reveal previously obscured details and allow expert eyes to discern clues to the name of the sitter and perhaps even to the identity of her creator—two questions surrounding the painting since its accession by the Cocumscussoc Association in 1960.

To be sure, the restorer's deft hand has given us a renewed painting with brighter colors and crisper details. The folds of her satin gown shimmer and offset the delicate detail of her black lace "mantilla." The pastel tints of her skin glow against the salmon pink, 18th century paneling of the house—almost as if Daniel Updike selected the color with her in mind! But, alas, in spite of its spectacular renewal, the mysteries deepen and the questions multiply.

Because we know so little about the painting, a certain mythology has evolved over the years to fill in the blanks. At first it was said the painting's subject, Miss Elizabeth Singleton, was a fine young lady from Newport who attended many grand balls held by the Updike family at Smith's Castle. Not totally implausible, but as these things tend to snowball, the story was further embellished: At one such party, the poor girl fell down the stairs (or over the balcony) and

her lifeless body came to rest directly below the spot where her portrait now hangs. And, further still, the girl's spirit now haunts the Castle, although no one has ever claimed to have seen her apparition. So goes the legend of the Lady of the Stairs, a story that certainly no current docent permits to pass his or her lips.

Although, we can say little with certainty about the painting, a great deal of work is on going to uncover more information. The portrait was donated to Smith's Castle in 1960 by Norman B. Smith, the first president of the Cocumscussoc Association. The House Furnishings Committee report presented at the Association's annual meeting on October 23, 1960, records: "The beautiful portrait of a young woman, a Rhode Islander of the 18th century, will have greeted you as you entered the house, a contribution from Norman Smith." Smith had inherited Cedarhurst Farm (Updike's Saugo Farm in the 18th and early 19th centuries) from his father, Fred L. Smith, in 1924.¹ Could Norman Smith have inherited the painting as well? The possibility that the painting descended in the Norman B. Smith family either from a related Singleton or Simpson family, has been examined, but to date, no such association has been uncovered. In addition, longtime docents recall that Smith purchased the painting at auction.

There is no indication as to who made the original Blackburn attribution, or why. Maybe it was wishful thinking on someone's part, or was because the painting exhibits characteristics similar to known Blackburn portraits. An appraisal, done by Clifford P. and Eleanore B. Monahan in May 1979, equivocated and attributed the painting to "School of Blackburn,"

Figure 1.
A name handwritten over the folds of the sitter's dress has been interpreted as both Miss Elizabeth Singleton and Miss Elizabeth Simpson.
Photo: Gay Myers





Figure 2.
Jonathan Simpson,
Joseph Blackburn,
ca. 1758. Museum
of Fine Arts, Boston.
24.340

Figure 3.
*Mrs. Jonathan
Simpson (Margaret
Lechmere)*. Joseph
Blackburn, ca. 1758.
Photos courtesy of
Museum of Fine
Arts, Boston. 24.341

but the authors did not explain what they meant by “school of.” The Blackburn attribution, therefore, is suspect, and any progress towards identifying the artist must await an examination of the painting itself by a knowledgeable scholar of 18th century American portraiture.

The identification of the sitter as “Miss Elizabeth Singleton” comes from that name unceremoniously dashed across the folds of the subject’s satin gown in brown ink sometime in the distant past—almost certainly not by the same hand that meticulously crafted those very folds.² Only part of the name is clearly readable: Miss Elizabeth S—. The balance of the last name is illegible, but, as noted, was thought for many years to be “Singleton.” However, where 1960s eyes read “Singleton,” more recent eyes, connecting the same dots, see “Simpson” (fig. 1). About four years ago, Dan Soule, an antiques dealer and appraiser who may be familiar to viewers of the PBS series *Antiques Roadshow*, examined the name on the painting and concluded that it was Simpson and not Singleton.

This raises the question: Did a Miss Elizabeth Singleton or Miss Elizabeth Simpson live in 18th century Rhode Island? A great deal of genealogical research has been done in an attempt to answer this question. While nothing conclusive has yet turned

up, there are several leads: The surname Singleton cannot be found in Newport records of the early-to-mid 18th century. It is also uncommon in New England more generally. There is a Singleton family in Virginia in the first half of the 18th century, but no child named Elizabeth.³

The name Simpson does appear in 18th century Newport. Newport gravestone transcriptions show the following burials of individuals with the Simpson surname: Mary (ca. 1721–1744), Margaret (ca. 1728–1756), Richard (ca. 1733–1810), and Susanna (ca. 1724–1766). Mary’s tombstone indicates she was the daughter of John and Susanna [Rhode Island Vital Records: 366] No gravestone or other genealogical records appear, however, for an Elizabeth Simpson in Rhode Island.

The trail for Elizabeth Simpson is hotter in Massachusetts. Recorded in Boston in 1755 is the marriage intention of John Laughton and Elizabeth Simpson. Two years earlier, the same Boston records show a marriage intention for Jonathan Simpson (1711–1795) and Margaret Lechmere. Interestingly, Jonathan and Margaret Simpson were both painted by Joseph Blackburn about 1758, and these portraits are in the collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (figs. 2 and 3). Also, Blackburn painted a second

Elizabeth Returns (from page 5)

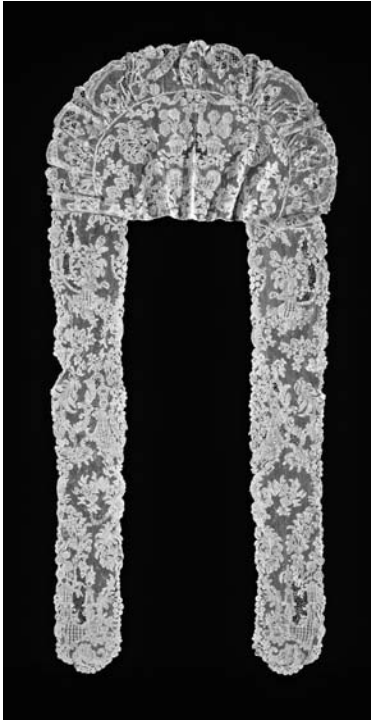


Figure 5. Lace cap and lappets. Elizabeth Simpson wears a cap similar to this example. The lappets on her cap, however, are black and appear to be wider. Image courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, #1953-187. [Baumgarten: 97]

portrait of Mr. Simpson, recently acquired by the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth, as well as a portrait of his father, which is in the collection of the Springfield Museum of Art. It is natural to wonder if the sitter in our portrait was somehow related to Jonathan Simpson.

Dr. Brenda Richardson who is researching Dr. Edward Augustus Holyoke of Salem, the husband of Jonathan Simpson's niece, has been a wealth of information on the Simpson genealogy.⁴ She has identified two individuals named Elizabeth Simpson who would have been of marrying age in the 1750s. If the name is indeed Elizabeth Simpson, one of the strongest possibilities, Dr. Richardson notes, is an Elizabeth Simpson born 1727, the daughter of John Simpson and Mary Randall of Boston. Her

father John was a distant cousin of the Jonathan Simpson painted by Blackburn. Elizabeth's mother, Mary (Randall) Simpson, died sometime before 1745, when her father married Judith Fisher, and the family moved to Dedham, Massachusetts. No further records identify either a marriage for this Elizabeth Simpson or her death. According to Dr. Richardson, the second Elizabeth Simpson married Col. John Laughton in Boston in 1755 and was the sister of Lt. Thomas Simpson.⁵ This Simpson family was not related to the Simpson family painted by Blackburn.

In general, the Simpson families of Massachusetts are very difficult to research. They had a penchant for the names John and Johnathan, assigning each name to brothers in the same family! And apparently every branch of the family did so. Sorting out the tangled web of multiple generations of Jonathans and Johns is a challenge, to say the least. In addition, many of the family were Loyalists, and disappear from colonial records at the time of the Revolution, presumably returning to England or immigrating to Canada.

Since our portrait's attribution in early Castle records is to Joseph Blackburn and because of Black-

burn's documented association with the Simpson family, it seems worthwhile to take a brief look at this artist. In some ways Blackburn is as enigmatic as our Elizabeth. The circumstances of his origins, training, and death remain unknown. It is believed he was born in England in 1700, but his parents have not been identified. Little is known of his life until he arrived in Bermuda in 1752 where he quickly completed more than 30 portraits of the island's social elite in just a year's time. After a brief stay in Newport in 1754, he travelled north to Boston where he was active from 1755 to 1758.⁶ Blackburn left Boston for Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1758 and remained there until 1762. Finally in 1763, he returned to England, and once again fell into relative obscurity. Knowledge of his later years is limited to a few portraits done between 1763 and 1778, when documented examples of his work cease.

Blackburn's portraits from the period of his stay in the American colonies exhibit knowledge of the latest stylistic trends and technical developments in English portraiture. He sometimes clothed his subjects in lavish costumes and jewels that exceeded their actual possessions, likely reflecting their aspirations rather than their actual circumstances. He excelled at executing the shimmer and folds of silk and satin and at painting lace, ribbons, and other details of dress. "Tell Mr. Blackburn that Miss Lucy is in love with his pictures, wonders what business he has to make such extreme fine lace and satin, besides taking so exact a likeness." writes Mary Russell, an enthusiastic patron. [Park: 273] Blackburn's skill at rendering costume, considered his chief strength, suggests he may have been a drapery painter in one of London's leading portrait studios prior to his colonial sojourn.

The folds, textures, and surfaces of the fabrics of Elizabeth's dress as well as the detailed black lace of her cap are executed with considerable skill. Likely, this is the reason Blackburn was suggested as the artist in the first place. Whether or not the level of skill exhibited in our painting rises to the level of Blackburn, however, has never been addressed by a knowledgeable viewer. To the authors' admittedly untrained eyes it does not seem that it does so. Our painting has endured a very difficult life, and how much of this impression is due to ill-conceived efforts by insufficiently skilled individuals to correct past indignities, we can not say. At any rate, it is not on such stylistic issues that the Blackburn provenance has been called into question.

If the portrait of Elizabeth is by Blackburn, it could not have been painted before 1752 or after 1762, the decade Blackburn was active in the colonies. If it is possible to place the painting outside this time period it would rule Blackburn out as its creator.

Dr. Ellen G. Miles, chief curator of the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., writes: "I truly wonder if your picture is by [Blackburn], because of the costume style. In the *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* by C. Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington (Boston, 1972) are images of the type of cap that the sitter wears, called a round-eared cap, and these often had side pieces of fabric called lappets, in a light or white color (fig. 5). However, black lappets like hers were apparently worn when the wearer was in mourning. The black ribbon on her bodice and even the curtain (is it black?) also suggest mourning. Also, the Cunningtons illustrate a dress almost identical to hers, and date it to ca. 1730. So, neither would be appropriate for your purported sitter as by Blackburn during his years in the American colonies."

Linda Baumgarten, curator of textiles and costume at Colonial Williamsburg, places the dress about a decade later than does Miles: "The woman in the portrait is wearing a gown derived from a probably-English print source, adapted for the painting, and not a genuine gown that might have existed in all those details. For that reason, it is difficult to be too precise about its date. However, the use of cuffs rather than sleeve ruffles, the hair style, and the closely [fit] cap all suggest a date in the 1740s." She adds, "If the artist relied on an older print source from a decade earlier, I suppose it is possible the painting goes into the 1750s."

Richard H. Saunders, director of the Middlebury College Museum of Art and Walter Cerf Distinguished College Professor, noted his impression was that the painting was not a Blackburn. "In fact, my first reaction is that it might be a 19th century work, copied from an 18th century model. But it is very hard to say much about that possibility without seeing the work in person."

These scholars viewed a digital image of the restored painting sent to them via e-mail. All agreed that seeing the actual painting was essential in order to make a firm judgment. Until an acknowledged expert in 18th century portraiture is able to examine our painting we are unlikely to learn anything more from the painting itself. Perhaps genealogical research will turn up additional information.

While our investigation of questions surrounding the painting of Miss Elizabeth S— has not produced definitive answers, it has revealed much that we didn't know. Someday the pieces may fall into place and all might be revealed. Until then questions of Elizabeth's identity, her creator, or her worth, as intriguing as they may be, should not lessen our enjoyment or diminish our appreciation of one of our treasures. Smith's Castle is fortunate to possess such a lovely, if mysterious, work of art. ■

Notes

1. Fred L. Smith was born about 1867, probably in Burrillville, Rhode Island, where he was living with his parents, Simon S. and Melissa Smith, in 1870.

2. When Blackburn signed his work he did so with a neatly printed or, occasionally, scripted signature that demonstrated a mastery of penmanship. He often employed Latin terms (*Pinxit* to identify himself as the painter), *Natus* or *Nata* (preceding the birthdate of a sitter), *Aetatis*, (with the age of the sitter), and *Depictus*, (before the date painted). It seems unlikely that he would have written the name of the sitter so offhandedly in such an unusual location. [www.worcesterart.org]

3. It is tantalizing to note that in the Trinity Church Cemetery is a Maj. Anthony Singleton of Richmond, Virginia, buried in 1795 (he died at the age of 47). [Rhode Island Genealogical Register: 175] Maj. Singleton, however, was quite new to Newport. He had arrived with his family in August 1795, and "in eight weeks died of the disease from which he sought relief." [Mason: 320]

4. Dr. Brenda Richardson is a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society and Past President of Essex South District Medical Society. Dr. Holyoke was the first president of both these societies. He was also the husband of Mary Vial. It is in the capacity of enthusiastic researcher on the subject of Dr. Holyoke that Dr. Richardson has unearthed the information on the Simpson families of Massachusetts.

5. It was this Lieutenant Thomas Simpson who was second-in-command to John Paul Jones and petitioned for court-martial by the naval hero in 1778.

6. In Newport Blackburn painted his earliest-known portraits in America: Mrs. David Chesebrough (Margaret Sylvester) (1754, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), her sister Mary Sylvester (1754, The Metropolitan Museum of Art), and her stepdaughter Abigail Chesebrough (1754, Stonington [Connecticut] Historical Society). These sitters were the wife, sister-in-law, and daughter of David Chesebrough, called King David for his eminence in the merchant trade in Newport. Blackburn's initial stay in Newport was brief, although later portraits of subjects from the town suggest that he occasionally returned. [www.worcesterart.org]

—continued on page 8

Elizabeth Returns (from page 7)

Sources

Baumgarten, Linda. *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 2002.

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Mason, George Champlin. *Reminiscences of Newport*. Charles E. Hammett, Jr. Newport, Rhode Island, 1884.

Park, Lawrence. "Joseph Blackburn, Portrait Painter." *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, n.s., 32 (Oct. 1922).

Rhode Island Genealogical Register, Volume 9 No. 2, Inscriptions: Trinity Church Cemetery, Newport.

Rhode Island Vital Records: New Series, Volume 11, Births from Newport Burial Ground Inscriptions, 1590–1930.

Worcester Art Museum. www.worcesterart.org/Collections/Early_American/Artists/blackburn/biography/index.html Accessed July 1, 2008.

Recommended Reading

American Colonial Portraits, 1700–1776. Richard H. Saunders and Ellen G. Miles. Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1987.

"For anyone desiring a better understanding of the place of art in the colonial era or wanting a solid reference work to the latest scholarship on 18th-century American artists, this catalogue is invaluable."

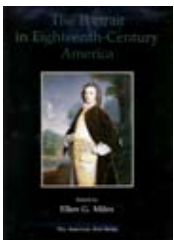
— Karin Calvert
University of Pennsylvania

The Portrait in 18th-Century America. Ellen G. Miles, ed. University of Delaware, 1993.

A volume of ten essays with an introduction by Ellen Miles consisting of papers originally presented at the conference, "The Portrait in 18th Century America," that coincided with the above exhibition, *American Colonial Portraits, 1700–1776*.

What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America. Linda Baumgarten. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 2002.

This stunning book features 18th- and early-19th-century garments from the collection of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation where Linda Baumgarten is curator of textiles and costumes.



Report of Examination

December 28, 2005

Artist: 18th c American artist (Joseph Blackburn?)

Title: Portrait of a Woman (Elizabeth Simpson?)

Size: height 49", width 39"

Distinguishing marks: The painting is unsigned. Written in old script in brown ink (or paint?) in the lower right portion of the sitter's dress is: "Mifs Elizabeth [illegible]." Written on the stretcher in white paint: "1954.6.1." Written on the reverse of the fabric in black felt-tip pen: "2796/190."

Owner: Smith's Castle, The Cocumscussoc Association
55 Richard Smith Drive, Wickford, Rhode Island

Lab no. 05.65

Construction

The painting was painted on a medium-weight, plain-weave linen fabric that has a grey-colored artist-applied ground layer. At some time in the past (approximately 100 year ago?) the painting was lined to a linen fabric, using an aqueous adhesive. The reverse of the lining fabric is coated with an off-white layer that may be a proprietary ground. Paper tape covers the edges but fragments of the original tacking margins remain at the top and bottom edges. The painting is mounted on a five member, mortise-and-tenon stretcher that probably dates from when the painting was lined. The artist used an oil-type paint that he applied in multiple blended layers; there is low texture in the sitter's white bonnet and dress and in her chest. The painting is coated with an overall layer of varnish that fluoresces like an aged natural resin; there are additional layers of natural resin varnish in the background and black veil.

Condition

The fabric appears to be well-attached to the lining fabric. The painting has an uneven, somewhat lumpy surface, including a horizontal line 15 1/2" from the top edge; the deformations were probably caused by the heat and pressure of the lining, plus uneven distribution of the lining adhesive. The fabric is somewhat slack and there is a corner draw in the upper right corner and gentle undulations overall. Old damages to the original fabric include a 3 1/2" vertical tear near the lower left corner, a 7" vertical tear to the left of the sitter's head, a 1 1/2" diagonal tear and a 1" x 1" hole in the upper left quadrant; these damages have been repaired by the lining and are over painted.

The paint is generally stable and secure. It has developed a fine overall crackle and there are a few scattered old flake losses. The painting's appearance is poor. The paint has suffered extensive abrasion from previous cleanings, which has exposed the grey ground and also the thread tops of the fabric support in many areas. The cleanings were so zealous that an artist's design change (*pentimento*) in the sitter's proper right sleeve was exposed by removing the green paint the artist applied to cover it. Extensive passages of over paint, probably the result of several campaigns of restoration, have been applied to disguise the abrasion. The over paint, which appears to have been done in oil paint, has discolored; some parts have darkened, some parts have lightened, which gives the painting a very patchy appearance, especially in the face. Tests indicate a significant portion of the over paint can still be safely removed.

The varnishes have discolored, but the appearance of the painting is most injured by the fact the varnish has lost its transparency, becoming hazy and opaque. This problem is particularly disfiguring in the dark areas, especially in the drapery to the right of the figure, and in the tablecloth in the lower left. Tests indicate this condition can be corrected by removing the varnish coatings, although cleaning will make the damage from abrasion more apparent. The painting is coated with a moderately thick layer of grime.

Summary

The painting's appearance is poor, the result of damage from previous cleaning, from the discoloration of large passages of over paint, and from the deterioration of the varnish coatings. The over paint and opaque varnish are so disfiguring that it is recommended that the painting be cleaned, even though this will reveal the damages that they hide. After cleaning, the painting will be varnished with a new, saturating varnish; the damages and remaining over paint will [be] inpainted and the worst areas of abrasion will be toned, so they are not noticeable from a normal viewing distance. The stretcher will be keyed out and the planar distortions will be reduced.

Gay Myers
Lance Mayer & Gay Myers, Conservators
At the Lyman Allyn Art Museum
625 Williams Street
New London, Connecticut 06320
(860) 443-2618

Report of Treatment

April 22, 2008

Artist: 18th c American artist (Joseph Blackburn?)

Title: Portrait of a Woman (Elizabeth Simpson?)

Owner: Smith's Castle, The Cocumscusoc Association
55 Richard Smith Drive, Wickford, Rhode Island

Lab no. 05.65

The painting was examined and photographed.

The thick grime layer was removed using ammonium citrate, dissolved 5% in distilled water and buffered to pH 7; this was rinsed with distilled water. The hazy and discolored varnishes were removed using mixtures of benzene/2-propanol and benzene/acetone. Some of the retouching came off with the varnish but most required acetone and in a few areas dimethyl formamide, followed by acetone. Cleaning revealed extensive damage—several old tears, many passages of abrasion from previous cleaning, and scattered old flake losses.

A thin spatula was used to remove the debris that had fallen behind the stretcher. The distortions in the fabric were reduced using cycles of damp and dry blotters, under weights. Staples were added along the tacking edges to reinforce the attachment of the painting to the stretcher; the stretcher was keyed out to provide better tension for the fabric.

The painting was brush-coated with *Paraloid B-72*, dissolved 15% in xylene and toluene, 2:1. Some of the old fills were adjusted with a scalpel and the paint losses were filled with a gesso composed of rabbitskin glue, calcium carbonate and kaolin. Because many of the old fills were too smooth, they were textured with *Liquitex* acrylic gel medium. The tears, paint losses and extensive areas of abrasion were inpainted using *Gamblin Conservation Colors* (pigments ground in aldehyde resin). Several additional spray applications of *B-72* were applied as the final varnish.

The frame rabbet was lined with expanded polyethylene foam (*Volara*) and the painting was reframed with brass mending plates and screws. A backing board of corrugated plastic was installed in the reverse for protection.

Gay Myers
Lance Mayer & Gay Myers, Conservators
At the Lyman Allyn Art Museum
625 Williams Street
New London, Connecticut 06320
(860) 443-2618

Photography: 4"x 5" black-and-white negatives and color transparencies, before treatment, before inpainting and after treatment.

Cultural Landscape Report for Cocumscussoc, Part 2

This spring the eagerly anticipated cultural landscape report (CLR) for Smith's Castle, begun in 2006, was completed. Lucinda Brockway of Past Designs, the historic landscape consultant retained by the Cocumscussoc Association to conduct the CLR, has submitted the Executive Summary of her study. The Executive Summary presents a comprehensive overview of the entire report and provides a concise introduction to the intent, method, scope, and result of this two-year endeavor.

The completion of the CLR and the archaeological investigations conducted as part of the study represent a quantum leap forward for the Cocumscussoc Association. For the first time we have a comprehensive, detailed, thoroughly documented examination of the landscape associated with Smith's Castle as it evolved over the more than three and a half centuries of its existence.

The Chronicle is reprinting the *Executive Summary* in four installments. The Spring issue carried the Foreword; Scope of Work; Project Boundaries; Before 1630: The Landscape of the Narragansett Indians; 1630–1692: Richard Smith Sr. and Richard Smith Jr.

This issue includes 1692–1757: Lodowick and Daniel Updike and 1757–1812: Lodowick Updike and His Eleven Children.

this Fall look for—

1812–1870: The Congdon Family; 1870–1879: The Rathbun, Gardiner, and Chapin Families; and 1879–1936: The Babbitt and Fox Families.

and, this Winter—

1936–1949: Subdivision and Change; 1949–Present: The Cocumscussoc Association; Feature Analysis; Names and Dates; Assessment: Significance and Historic Integrity; Conclusion; and Bibliography.

The cultural landscape report and the archaeological investigations conducted in support of the study

were funded by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation through a Transportation Enhancement Grant that was awarded to Smith's Castle in October 2002.

Support from the Johanna Favrot Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation assisted in broadening the research conducted and in developing a site maintenance plan during Phase 2 of the CLR.

The site committee gratefully acknowledges the generous financial support of these organizations and expresses its appreciation for the kind, attentive, and thoroughly professional assistance received from...

Michael Bennett, Stephen Devine, Thomas Queenan, Sharon Stone, and Michael Hébert, Environmental and Intermodal Planning, Rhode Island Department of Transportation.

Wendy Nicholas and Brent Leggs, Northeast Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Paul Robinson and Charlotte Taylor of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission.

Daniel Lynch, Soil Sight LLC, Archaeological Geophysics.

Joyce Clements, Ray Pasquariello, and Richard Petyk, Gray and Pape, Inc. Cultural Resource Consultants.

Patricia Rubertone, Department of Anthropology, Brown University.

The site committee is especially grateful to Cindy Brockway who has exceeded our very high expectations and produced a product that gives an insightful review of our site's past, and also insures a sound basis for organizing and directing the evolution of the Smith's Castle landscape well into the 21st century.

Finally, the work of all of these people, along with the financial resources that supported the work, and, in fact, the very existence of the Smith's Castle site committee would not have occurred without the dedication, foresight, hard work, and leadership of Mary Packard Turkel (1946–2008). The Cultural Landscape Report is dedicated to her memory.



Wickford, ca. 1886

Cultural Landscape Report for Cocumscussoc, Part 2

1692–1812 The Updike Family

Prepared by Lucinda Brockway
Past Designs, Inc. Kennebunk, Maine

1692–1757: Lodowick and Daniel Updike

In the next few years land was shuffled between family members. Daniel Updike emerged as the most enterprising of his siblings, buying and selling parcels of land within and outside the family for the next 50 years. In 1727 his uncle James bequeathed his rights in their shared farm to Daniel. Once again, the 750–800 acre “south farm” tract was held under one owner and continued to be farmed by tenant farmers while Daniel retained his primary residence in Newport. In 1720, Lodowick sold Daniel and a partner a 70 acre parcel in “New Town” (later Wickford). The following year, Daniel bought out his partner, William Coddington, and became sole owner of the Wickford parcel. In 1709, Lodowick had begun to sell small lots of land in Wickford as interest in its potential as a port continued to grow. Fifty years after King Phillips War (1726) Rhode Island’s political boundaries with Connecticut and Massachusetts were finally established, and the burgeoning King’s Province officially became part of the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. The eighteenth century brought with it almost a century of stable, economic boom years to Cocumscussoc. Good soils, an adequate supply of farm labor, active trade networks, and the rise in popularity of the Narragansett Pacer horse bred economic success and a stable social network throughout the region. The Updike siblings linked their vast agricultural interests to those of other wealthy land holders in an active and successful plantation-style economy.

This is perhaps most clearly depicted in a share-lease agreement dated 1731 between Daniel Updike “Gentleman” and Israel Phillips “Husbandman.” Phillips took over the 800 acre “south farm” operation previously run by Jacob and John Pinder, and moved into the farmhouse there. This highly detailed transaction outlines the mutually beneficial responsibilities of both parties in operating Updike’s farm. Updike paid Phillips 40 pounds per year. In exchange, Phillips was to “take care of all the business of the farm.”

Daniel Updike agreed to find two good Negroes who would live and work on the property under Phillips’ direction and Phillips agreed to provide his labor, the labor of his family members, the labor

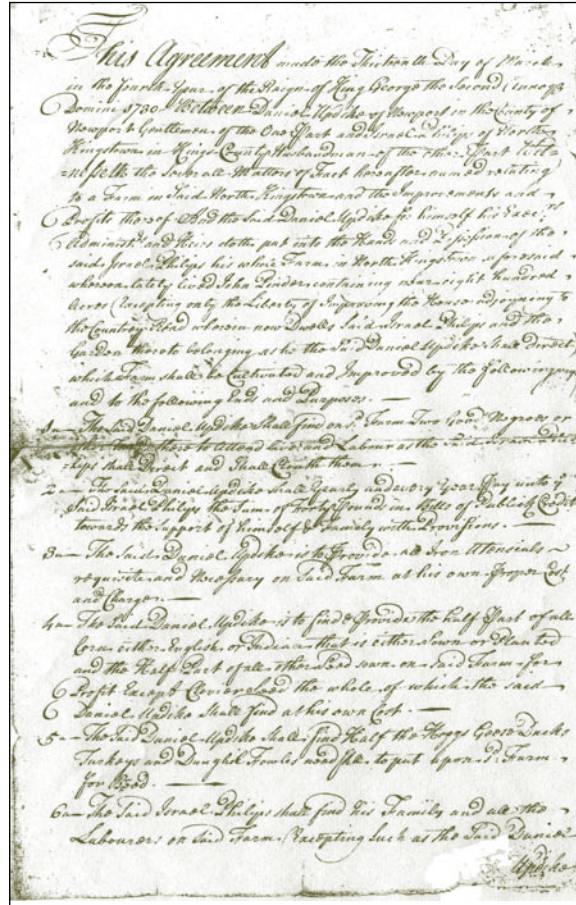


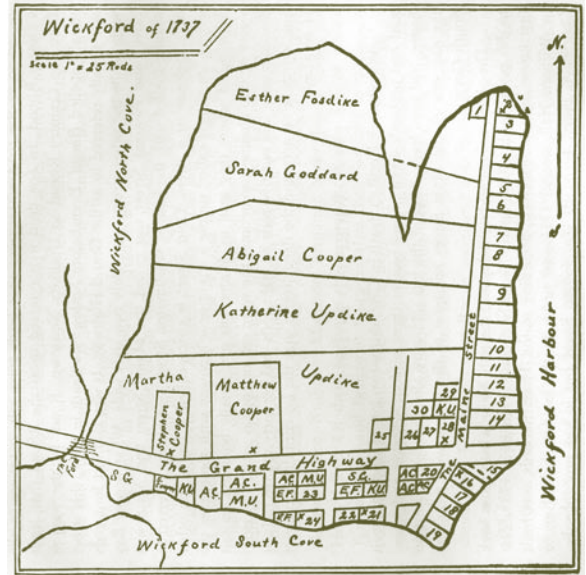
Figure 1.
Daniel Updike
Agreement and
Lease to Israel Phil-
lips, p. 1. Shepley
Papers, Rhode Island
Historical Society,
Case 15, p. 39, 1730.

of his servant Thomas Jones, and would find other laborers as needed, agreeing to feed and clothe them while they were working the farm. Updike provided farming utensils; Phillips provided “utensils of wood.” Updike agreed to furnish six oxen for Phillips’ use.

Each party agreed to keep at least six cows (more if agreed) on the property. The profit of the milk and cheese that were sold, beyond the milk and cheese needed to feed the workers, would be split equally between both parties. Phillips could keep one horse and could winter two calves of his own. Each party supplied half of the hogs, geese, ducks, turkeys and chickens needed for breeding, and then shared equally in the profits. Updike could keep a “reasonable number” of cattle, sheep, and horses for his sole profit.

Each year, Phillips was to plant 30 acres Indian corn, 30 acres English corn (wheat) and would mix clover seed in with the wheat if Daniel Updike

Figure 2.
Map of Wickford,
1737. From *Wickford
and Its Old Houses*,
Main Street Association,
1947.



provided him with the seed. The agreement included assurances of good farming practices. By 1731 the clover was recognized as an important, nutrient-rich element in livestock feed. Phillips agreed to grow corn for two years on any field and then to “sow down the land planted with corn the third year, excepting some strong land by leave planted oftener.” Phillips would ensure that the hay was mown and collected in season, and the clearing of forested land was a major condition of each year’s work. The wood was to be cut for fuel, timber and “fencing stuff.” Profits from the lumbering would be split equally.

As part of the agreement, Israel Phillips agreed to clear a minimum of ten acres each year for meadows (hay fields), and in his spare time to make stone walls. In addition, Daniel Updike retained the right to send his own laborers in to make stone walls or clear ground as he wanted. Any additional labor required for plowing, sowing, planting, and hoeing would be paid for by both parties as each season demanded. The profits from the fruit orchards were to be divided equally. Finally, Phillips was allowed a quarter acre of ground for his own garden. [Updike and Phillips, located in Shepley 15: 39]

Here then was a farm whose major products consisted of pork, poultry, livestock, corn, hay, orchard, and wood products. Rather than farming the land himself, Updike lived in Newport and left management of the farm to his tenant farmer, a practice for this farm, which had been in place since before 1686. This is a significant record for our landscape history, as it can be directly compared to the farm records, diaries, and account books of the next generation which date to the end of the century (1791–1801).

While Israel Phillips was managing the farm south of Wickford, lots continued to sell (albeit slowly) in the village and Lodowick Updike and his wife, Abigail, continued their residence at the homestead farm. Lodowick died in 1737 at the age of 92 and his wife continued in the house until 1745. Daniel moved from Newport to the homestead in 1739 and remained there until his death in 1757, a mere 12 years after his mother. When Daniel Updike inherited Cocumscussoc from his father, the Updike property totaled approximately 1,600 acres, encompassing the land from the Annaquatucket River north to today’s Camp Avenue, and from present-day Route 1 to the Bay, including the islands in Wickford Cove. The agricultural operations were split into two parts: the 800 acres of land managed by Israel Phillips (or other farm managers) south of Wickford Cove, and the 660 acres of land that included both the Saugo and Homestead farms. In between, the town of Wickford was emerging as a shipping point for the agricultural goods flowing from Kingstown to Newport and beyond. By 1737, 32 lots had been sold in Wickford. Seven were

house lots; the rest for wharves and warehouses, or were as yet unoccupied. The family may have held additional lands remaining from the land speculations on Boston Neck and in Quidnesset, but by the end of the century, these lands were no longer part of the Smith/Updike legacy.

Friends and family occupied the neighboring farms, similar in size, production, and labor force to Cocumscussoc. Like the two Richard Smiths who preceded him, Daniel Updike was an active political and community leader. State Attorney General for 26 years, founder of the Newport Philosophical Society, and a candidate for Governor in 1732, his standing in the emerging state government, in Newport society, and in local Kingstown society was important and influential. Cocumscussoc was no longer the center of Kingstown political and economic affairs, but instead was leading Rhode Island in business with the world. Instead of trading furs and pelts, boats left Wickford Harbor, Narragansett, and Newport filled with horses, mules, cattle, sheep, pigs, turkeys, geese, bricks, and lumber, and returned with molasses, sugar, tamarinds, sweetmeats, spices, coffee, cotton, tobacco, indigo and salt. [Woodward: 113]

When Daniel Updike died in 1757, the inventory of farm animals and products on his homestead farm were far smaller in number than those of his contemporaries. Instead, Daniel Updike’s wealth was derived not simply from farming, but from his land speculation, and his legal and political occupations. In addition to his personal and household goods, his “mansion house,” his 18 Negro servants, and his other holdings, his farm operation included 4 mares, 3 colts, 3 other horses, 1 stallion, 6 oxen, 3 steer, 8 cows, 3 heifers, 1 bull, and 270 sheep. [Inventory of Daniel Updike, June 1757]

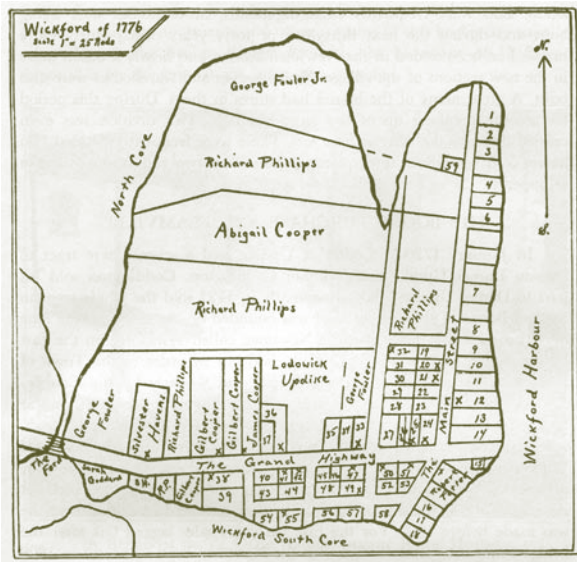


Figure 3.
Map of Wickford, 1776. From *Wickford and Its Old Houses*, Main Street Association, 1947.

Cocumscussoc was a sizable operation, but paled in comparison to some of its neighbors whose dairy and cattle herds ranged from 100 to 170 head. Considering that each farm required an average of 2 acres pasture for each milk cow, their farms totaled between 200 and 350 acres for pasturage alone. One milk cow could produce, on average, 70 to 80 pounds of butter and 130 pounds of cheese each season. Neighboring sheep herds ranged from 200 to almost 600 sheep per farm, and the number of swine averaged 50 hogs per farm. [Woodward: 110–112]

By 1750, the Narragansett Country was a genteel pasture land, littered with wooden fences, stone walls, farmsteads, and fields of corn, oats, barley, hay, and pastures for large herds of cows, horses, and sheep. With few mills to process the raw materials, live animals and farm products were shipped to Newport and other ports as raw goods, to be finished elsewhere. Much of the land had been cleared for farming, and the remaining woodlots offered valuable income from fuel wood, lumber, and fence posts. In addition to the ever-present fishing industry and shipping trade, the economic potential only dreamed of by its early inhabitants was being fully realized.

Daniel Updike is credited with making substantial improvements to the house in the early to mid 18th century. Similarly, some archaeological evidence has shown that he also improved the house grounds. It is possible, though as yet undocumented, that the wharf in front of the house was built at this time. Certainly there is some archaeological evidence for a garden, perhaps with some terracing, in front of the house. A stone-lined drain running from the house toward the cove, which archaeologists uncovered in their 1989–91 digs, may point to water management

for the enhanced house, or as a roadside drain leading from the gate at the roadside down to the wharf at the water's edge. A path crossed in front of the house facade in the 18th century, and it is likely that the entrance road and gate may date to this same era of improvement. Certainly they are documented by the end of the 18th century.

1757–1812: Lodowick Updike and His Eleven Children

Daniel's son, Lodowick, was a relatively young man (age 32) when he inherited Cocumscussoc from his father in 1757. With his new wife (married in 1760) and a new family (son Daniel was born at Cocumscussoc in 1761), Lodowick seemed poised to follow on the successful heels of his father. Over the next 20 years, the Updikes enjoyed an ever-expanding family and intimate relationships with friends and family on nearby farms. Hartford was only a two-day ride by horseback, and offered the opportunity for overnight visits with family and friends along the way. Despite the vagaries of a changing economic climate as war loomed with England, life at Cocumscussoc continued its seasonal rhythms, guided more by the cyclical activities of the farm than the more harried demands of political life. At 17, Daniel was studying for the bar and kept a small diary of his daily activities as British forces occupied nearby Newport and the war visited the shores of Narragansett Bay. Three months of his diary survive, from September to November, 1779. Daniel, however, records little of the political upheaval; instead, his diary simply remarks on his studies and his travels:

"Oct 2nd: Went on Camilla (his horse) to my grandfather's. [probably Abigail Gardiner's father] Carried Miss Betsey Bornton behind me."

"Oct 14th: Went down to Bjn Garnders staid all night."

"Oct 15th: returned. Brought Miss Betsey Bornton to her mama's & come to Mr. Robinsons. Find judge Litefoot here who came last Thursday."

"Oct 20th: lent Camilla to Judge Litefoot to go to Point Judith."

Then, on October 26th: "This Evening the British forces all Evacuated Newport under the command of Gen. Prescott. Many of the inhabitants went with them. Some carried and some left their families. Gen'l Gates has taken possession."

One entry offers a frustratingly enticing glimpse into landscape activities: "Nov. 10th, 1779: Returned from my Fathers. While there I set out a row of 9 pair trees (which I grafted last spring) my brother James came with me and led Camila back." [Updike Diary, 1779]

Figure 4.
Updike Silhouettes
from Wilkins Up-
dike, *History of
the Narragansett
Church*, 1907.

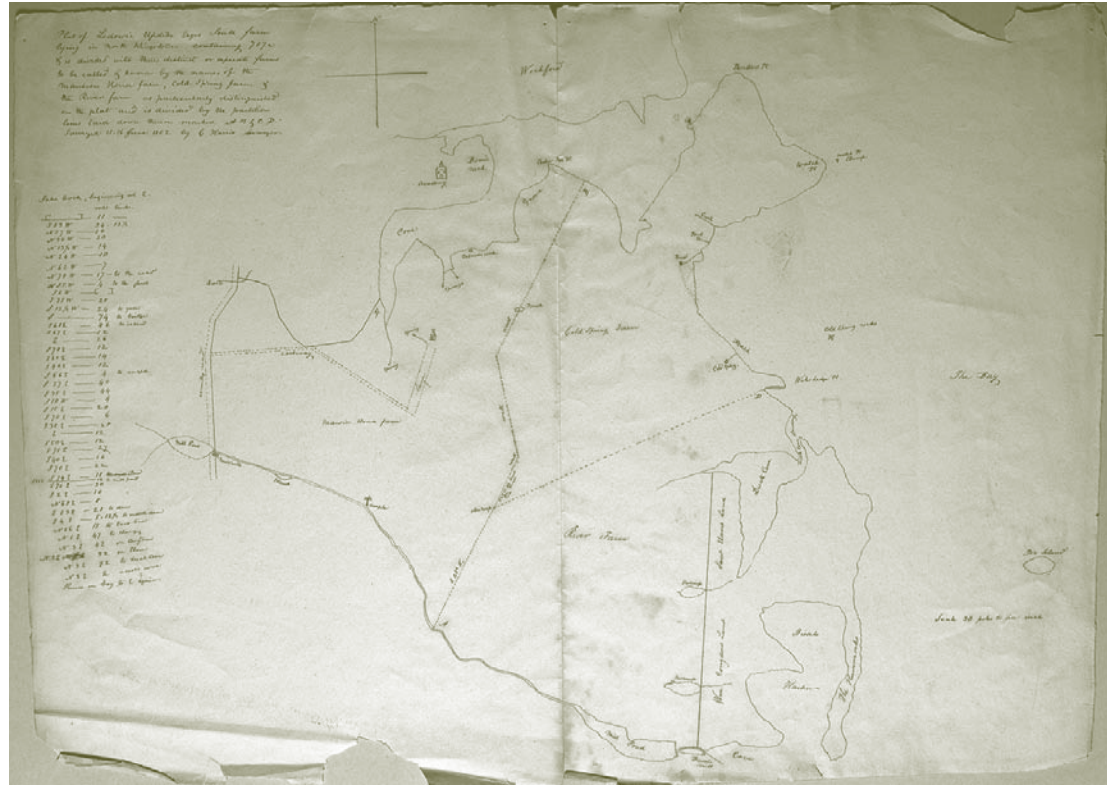


Daniel Updike
(1761–1842)

Figure 5.
Survey of the
South Farm, Caleb
Harris, 1802. Un-
like the other two
surviving plats of
Updike lands Harris
produced in 1802,
this appears to be
a draft. The South
Farm was made up
of Mansion House
Farm, Cold Spring
Farm, and River
Farm. *Image cour-
tesy of the University of
Rhode Island, Special
Collections Division.*



James Updike
(1763–1855)



War crippled agricultural trade from Newport, though the food and fuel required to feed and warm the British forces that occupied Newport between 1778 and 1779 kept the local economy in business for a short time. As economic opportunities declined, Kingstown's farms grew smaller, more efficient, and produced raw materials and goods that served the local and regional market, rather than the world-wide market of the first half of the century. When trade and fishing resumed in the 1790s, Wickford's prosperity returned, and Lodowick Updike platted a new section of lots along the road into Newtown, and another area surrounding the newly relocated St. Paul's Church in the heart of the village. Building and investment in the village remained stagnant, however, and in Lodowick Updike's estate he included a number of village lots with each of his children's bequests, along with the subdivision of the Cocumscussoc farmlands.

While Lodowick remained at the Homestead Farm, his oldest son, Daniel, who had passed the bar and began life on his own, eventually moved into the house formerly occupied by farm managers Jacob and John Pinder, Israel Phillips, and Col. Beriah Waite. Daniel married Ardelissa Arnold in 1799 and remained a resident of North Kingstown, perhaps on his farm, until 1816. Daniel's farmstead included a house, a separate kitchen, a barn, and a corn crib set in the

middle of the farm at the end of a long (3,600 foot) lane off the main country road. Near the house, four springs supplied plenty of fresh water and Wickford village (Updike's Newtown) was only a short row away by boat. By 1790, the farm included 600 acres of land. Between 1757 and the end of the century, 200 acres from the original farm had been sold to Samuel Elam and William Congdon, including the land along Duck Cove and Bissel's Harbor.

At the Homestead Farm, Lodowick Updike's family continued to grow. His youngest child, Wilkins Updike, was born in 1784, the same day that Daniel was admitted to the bar. The Homestead Farm included the main house, barn, an ice house (built in 1791), a corn crib and two small outbuildings, a wharf and freshwater spring. Located at the end of a short lane off the country road (formerly the English Path), the house overlooked Wickford Cove. As in the 17th century, the house was easily accessed by water and by land: the wharf was located almost in line with the front door of the house, and the lane ran only a short distance to the main road. The Homestead Farm included two orchards by the end of the 18th century—one adjacent to the lane and the other immediately across the main road. A secondary lane may have run parallel with the house facade, connecting the main house and barn to the fields and



Anstis Updike
(1765–1864)



Alfred Updike
(1779–1869)



Figure 6.
Survey of Homestead and Saugo Farms, Caleb Harris, 1802, detail. Homestead Farm (containing Smith's Castle) and Saugo Farm were the largest of the five farms that comprised the Updike plantation. Image courtesy of the Rhode Island Historical Society (Rhi x5 308). Photograph: David Shultz

pastures running up and down the shores of the cove. Across the cove, the farm at Saugo included another farmhouse, barn, and crib accessed by another short lane off a much longer access road. This farm was later bequeathed to James Updike in 1804. Two years younger than Daniel, it is likely that he was responsible for this farm's operation long before his father's death.

Fortunately, five volumes of Daniel and Lodowick Updike's account books have survived to tell us the details of the farms' operations at the end of the 18th century. The books cover a ten year period, from 1791 to 1801, and carefully document the debits and credits of farm operations, in both cash and bartered goods, for the entire period. Scattered throughout the ledgers are eclectic notes and recipes that seem curious to today's researcher but were somehow important enough to record into 18th century farm records. Included in these pages are a recipe for making yeast, a recipe for making duck cheese, a cure for a toothache, notes about the best time to pick orchard fruits, a cure for the bite of a mad dog and many other bits of wisdom. Carefully recorded on each page, by name, are listings of transactions with many individuals. On one side of the page are listed the credits for that person, the other side of the sheet lists their debits. In some cases, accounts are cleared and the date and notes about the

account closures are recorded. The books are valuable as study documents. They record not only the daily work and production of the farm, but the names of the individuals that did the work or traded the goods, the amount of each transaction, and the method of payment. Bushels of corn and cords of wood were used for payment more often than cash money, undoubtedly due to the wildly fluctuating values of paper currency in the early years of the new republic.

The account books illustrate the work performed by hired laborers: cutting wood, tailoring, breaking flax, planting peas, weeding corn, cutting stacks [of hay], gathering seaweed, picking apples, picking corn, killing hogs, killing cattle, plowing fields, making tools, harvesting potatoes, making fences, tanning calf skins, etc. On September 9, 1797, four men were paid for six days work each "making a wall at the North end of the farm, beginning at the corner near the road and made 48 rods and a half along the highway southward." It is likely that this wall marked the edges of the Mansion House Farm, whose border runs along the highway for 130 rods.

Rent for workers' housing is bartered for bushels of corn, wood, and other goods. Farm customers order or purchased cheese, wood, bushels of corn, mutton, pork, salt pork, apples, and livestock. Rents are collected for stores and warehouses, wharfage fees are

paid for boats, and rent is charged for keeping cows, horses, and other animals.

The family owned two small boats, the *Rainbow* and the *Humbird*, and some account records, particularly after 1795, pay for sails to be made, new bow sprints, decking, hatches, companionways, and other repairs for the boats, and repairs for the wharf. Work on the farm buildings and dwellings are included as well: on September 25, 1791, John Wilkins is paid for “digging a cellar for the ice house—4 days.” In 1795, another worker is paid for “making oven in the kitchen.” On July 16, 1797, another laborer is paid for “plastering the north half room in the point house; also plastering the entry” (an earlier record the same year records rent collected for this house in Wickford). In 1797, the Updikes trade corn with a cobbler who made shoes for all the children.

These records coupled with the inventories and will of Lodowick Updike and the three surveys of Updike property drawn by Caleb Harris offer an unusual glimpse into the content, condition, and operations of the Updike farm at the end of the family’s ownership. These records also detail the subdivision of the farm and serve as an important point of change in the farm’s history. Collectively they represent the best documentation for Cocumscussoc for any period in the site’s history.

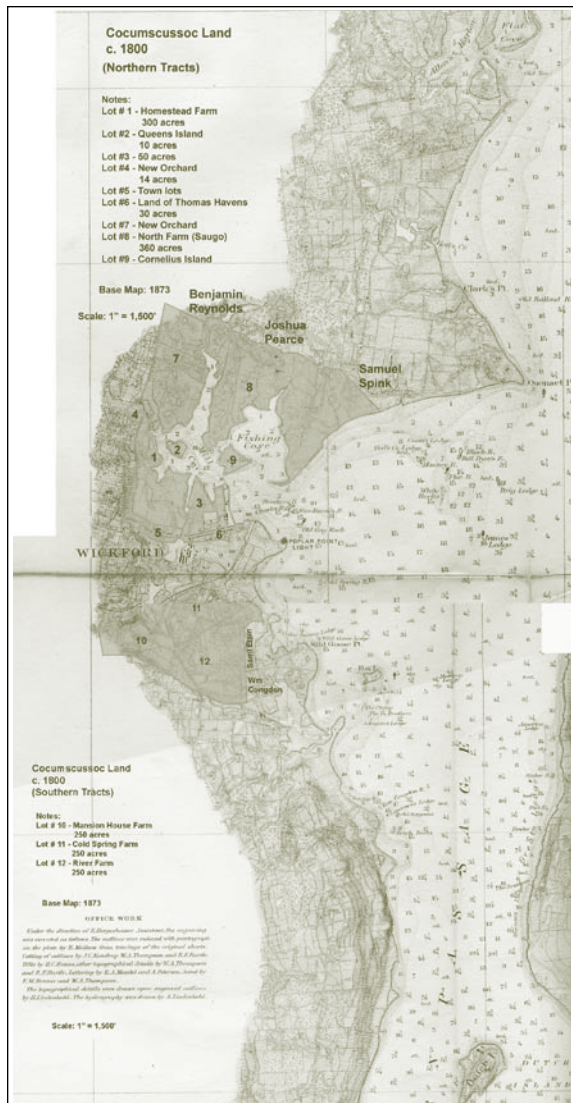
Lodowick Updike died in 1804. Beleaguered by debt, the documentation of assets and the careful inventorying of his real and personal goods required to settle his debts offers us clear details into the Updike properties, including how many panes of glass where in each building. With 11 children to equally share the wealth as their inheritance and the responsibilities of their father’s debt, the documentation was a necessity—fortunately for us. In fact it is with this inventory and will that the specific acreages of each farm are detailed, along with their boundaries, a listing of their buildings, and the terms of each bequest. Figure 7 on page 17 illustrates the land subdivision at this time.

Lodowick’s wife, Abigail, was to retain life tenancy in the Homestead Farm, bequeathed to his youngest son, Wilkins Updike. The Homestead Farm included 300 acres and featured a dwelling house (51' x 34'), a barn (34' x 28'), one crib (23' x 14'), two other out-houses (8' x 8'), a 27-acre lot called the “New Orchard,” one lot of land “above the road,” (this lot is also called the New Orchard in 19th century deeds), one lot (presumably in Newtown) rented by David Bissel, and a 1/2 acre lot on the Point in Newtown with a 30' x 25' dwelling. He also received 30 acres in Newtown with another house, and, like his brothers, three additional platted building lots.

The South Farm was subdivided into three pieces. Daniel Updike, the eldest son, received 250 acres to be known as the Mansion House Farm and included a house, a 16' x 12' kitchen, a one-story barn, and a crib. Nineteen year old Alfred received Cold Spring Farm—another division of the South Farm with no buildings but with three small ponds, a freshwater spring that was so good it was even labeled “Cold Spring” on the Harris map, and with plenty of shoreline and water access to both Narragansett Bay and Wickford Cove. Seventeen year old Gilbert received the third division of South Farm, a parcel to be known as “River Farm” with little Bay shoreline, no known springs, two small swamps, but almost 4,000 feet along the Annaquatucket River, including the large mill pond that had been built by the Bissel family in the 18th century. As Samuel Slater’s Pawtucket mill was launching Rhode Island’s industrial revolution, this farm offered some of the best industrial potential for young Gilbert. James Updike, the second oldest son at the age of 35, inherited Lodowick’s “North Farm called my Saugo Farm,” including Saugo Point, Calves Neck Pasture, Cornelius Island, and existing buildings: a 23' x 22' one-story house, a 28' x 24' barn, and a 16' x 12' crib. At 360 acres, this farm was the largest of all. In addition to the four farms, each of the boys received three lots in the newest subdivision of Newtown, in hopes that eventually the potential of that village settlement, and its speculative real estate opportunities, would provide additional non-agricultural income for them.

Lodowick was the only son not to inherit farmland in the bequest, but he inherited a house and wharves in Newtown where he must have been living, as there is a four-acre lot with a one-story, 24' x 16' house and a Negro female servant listed in the inventory, as well as a small house drawn on the Newtown Harris map labeled “L. Updike’s house.” In addition to this house, Lodowick inherited the stores and wharves which had provided rental income to his father throughout the 1790s, and 50 acres of Newtown land—the entire northern portion of the village area, as yet unplatted for building lots. The five girls each received their own shares of building lots in Newtown.

With the dawn of the new century came an economic upturn, and Lodowick’s children looked to build their own fortunes. Boats laden with farm produce, livestock, and timber headed for the West Indies and returned with molasses, sugar, cotton, and other staples. The Homestead Farm account books for the year 1800 note the sheep herd was turned out on Rabbit and Cornelius islands, and a prolonged drought plagued the crops and limited hay production.



Another inventory of Lodowick's estate, taken in 1804, assesses the value of his livestock, presumably on the Homestead Farm, including 2 pair of oxen, 3 young steer, 1 "old red cow," 1 "red and white 7-year-old cow," 2 "black and white cows," 1 "ring middled cow," 5 heifers, 4 yearlings [calves], and 38 sheep. The value of the livestock totaled \$438.16, term payments due the estate totaled \$963, and the 15-Ton sloop, *Humbird*, was valued at \$110. In total, the remainder of Lodowick's estate was valued at \$1,511.16—still not enough to cover the debts.

Gilbert and Alfred Updike chose to sail for Havana instead of working their inherited farmland. James and Daniel stayed behind. The estate, however, was in substantial debt, and the economic upturn lasted for only a short time before the trade embargoes and the War of 1812 shut the door on the economic potential

of both the farms and the emerging village. In spite of these struggles, the farm might have survived this difficult period, but Wilkins chose to back one of his brother's business ventures—a choice that dealt the final financial blow to the Homestead Farm. In order to discharge the debt, Wilkins sold Cocumscussoc to Benjamin Congdon on December 31, 1812. Cocumscussoc moved out of the Smith/Updike family—a stewardship that had survived more than 150 years. Wilkins Updike moved his family to Kingston, while his mother retained life tenancy in the house until her death in 1824.

For Cocumscussoc today there is more documented evidence surviving for this era than for the earlier periods in the landscape history. When the 1802 Harris map is overlaid on the present site, the relationship of roads, shoreline, and the house site are not an exact match, but it provides evidence for a garden on the water side of the house, a wharf built prior to 1802, and an entry gate at the main road with a lane leading directly toward the house. A large orchard was planted north of the entrance road, and the ice house, constructed in 1791, sat just south of the entrance road and east of the spring. A barn and crib sat between the house and the orchard, though we have found no archaeological evidence to date for their exact location. Two other outbuildings, and the ice house, are documented in these papers.

The ice house is interesting to consider. It would seem that its foundation is the stone foundation that remains sitting at the crest of the hill overlooking Cocumscussoc Brook. But where was the ice hauled from? The configuration of the brook has seen substantial movement in the 19th and 20th centuries when the bridge crossing the brook and the track bed for the Sea View Railroad was installed. Is it possible that the brook was dammed and a bridge installed here in 1791, the year the ice house was built, allowing the brook to back up into a pond for cutting ice? Certainly there was room on the other side of the entry road to build an ice house if the stream was dammed there for a freshwater pond. Here is another area of research still to be done.

Nevertheless, we do have confirmed and documented evidence for the cultural landscape by 1800. For the first time we can identify the remains of some of these features in the landscape and compare the land improvements with the upgrading of the house itself as evidence of property renaissance in the 18th century. ■

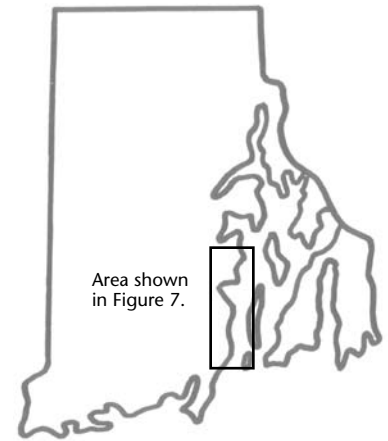


Figure 7. Extent of lands owned by Updike Family, ca. 1780. Compare to Richard Smith's land holdings, 1661–1680 (Castle Chronicle, Spring 2008, p. 11). Graphic: Lucinda Brockway.

Recent Events

Scenes from Bridge to the Past Opening Day 2008

Photos by
Trish Harmon
(2 and 14)
and Kristel Henry
(all others)

1. Larissa Sasgen and Michael MacLeod
2. Dianne McGowan
3. Barbara and Thomas Crudale
4. Steve Salisbury
5. Diane Amaral and Barbara Crudale
6. Louise Barratt (Lady Katherine) and Mathew and Genevieve Crescimano
7. Louise Duckworth and Kristel Henry
8. John McNiff
9. Maypole dancers, clockwise from 12 o'clock :
Virginia Royle
Meghan Logsdon
Dianne McGowan
Mary Nunes
Kat McNiff
Diane Amaral
Kristel Henry
Larissa Sasgen
Barbara Crudale
Louise Duckworth
10. "Barnacle" musicians
11. Jessa Piaia and Gene Pouliot
12. Chris "Francois" Palmieri, and Meghan Logsdon
13. Carol Greenwell and Janice Whaley
14. Al Beaucroft
15. Wilfred and Virginia Royle
16. Grace Palmer, Thomas and Alexander Crudale



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The Castle Chronicle: Summer 2008



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Hearthside Cooking

Beverages for Hot Summer Days

Contributed by Barbara Crudale

Beverages were as important to colonial-era Americans as they are to us today. (Note the mid-18th century painting of a lemonade seller and his customers.) Then, as now, they were offered when guests arrived. Some drinks were believed essential for good health.

At a time when water was often considered unsafe to drink, many beverages were either boiled or contained alcohol. Alcoholic beverages were also often used for medicinal purposes, with brandy and rum used in place of our modern aspirins or anesthetics. A strong alcoholic drink was often considered preventative medicine against flux or fever.

Here are a few beverages that could be offered today at your summer gatherings. The *Chowning's Tavern Wine Cooler* and *Fish House Punch* receipts have been adapted to be made in a modern kitchen.

Raspberry Wine

Take some fine ripe raspberries, bruise them with the back of a spoon, the strain them through a flannel bag into a stone jar. To each quart of juice, put a pound of refined sugar, stir it well together and cover with a cloth. Let it stand three days, then pour it off clear. To a quart of juice, put two quarts of white wine, bottle it off, it will be fit to drink in a week.

Hannah Glasse. *First Catch Your Hare* (Prospect Books, 1995) 149. (First printed in 1747.)

Lemonade

This recipe was contributed by Diane Amaral and is often made during cooking demonstrations at the Castle.

simple syrup (see Fish House Punch receipt)
1/2 cup lemon juice or more, to taste
sugar
pinch of salt
lemon zest or thin lemon slices for garnish

Make a simple syrup with sugar and pour into a large pitcher. Add 1/2 cup lemon juice to the cooled simple



The Lemonade Seller. Lorenzo Tiepolo (1736–1776). Tiepolo is known for paintings of dramatic groups of people. The intense eye contact suggests a backstory about which the viewer can only speculate. www.all-art.org/history (accessed 6/13/08).

syrup. Add additional lemon juice to suit (more lemon juice makes the lemonade tarter). Add a little more sugar to taste and a pinch of salt. Lemon zest or thinly sliced peels are a nice garnish. Chill or drink at room temperature, or use in the following recipe.

Chowning's Tavern Wine Cooler

3/4 glass lemonade
1/4 glass dry red wine
spring of mint
maraschino cherry

This makes a refreshing drink. Pour the lemonade over the crushed ice, then add the red wine. Garnish with a sprig of mint and a cherry.

Letha Booth. *The Williamsburg Cookbook* (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2004) 161.

Switchel

Switchel was often consumed by the farmers during harvest season, as it is unusually thirst quenching and aids in digestion after heavy meals.

3 to 4 quarts water
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1-1/2 cups sugar
1/3 cup light molasses
2 oz. fresh grated ginger root

Combine 1 quart water, the vinegar, sugar, molasses, and ginger root and simmer for 15 minutes uncovered. Remove from heat, cover, and allow to cool for 30 minutes. Pour slowly into a glass jug containing 2-1/2 quarts water. Top off with water to make 1 gallon.

<http://stason.org/TULARC/food/recipes/desserts/Molasses-Switchel.html> (accessed 5/18/08)

Fish House Punch

Punch was also a common drink when company was to arrive. The word punch comes from the English rendering of the Hindustani *pauch*, meaning five, as there are usually five main ingredients: spirits, water, sliced lemons or limes, sugar and spice. The basic recipe for punch came to England from the Far East and was made in both private homes and taverns.

(10–15 servings)
1 cup light brown sugar, packed
9 lemons
2 cups pineapple juice
1 fifth dark rum
1/2 fifth cognac
4 tablespoons peach brandy

Mix the sugar with 4 cups water and boil 5 minutes (simple syrup). Squeeze the juice from the lemons and pour into the hot syrup. Add the lemon rinds. Cool the syrup and chill over night (in refrigerator). Just before serving, remove the lemon rinds. Add the pineapple juice and liquors. Pack a large punch bowl with crushed ice. Pour the punch over the ice and serve.

Letha Booth. *The Williamsburg Cookbook* (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2004) 161.

Wine Punch

1 bottle red wine
1 cup orange juice
1 cup pineapple juice
2 lemons, sliced
3 oranges, sliced

Combine all ingredients over a block of ice.

The Williamsburg Cookbook (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2004) 162.

Cinnamon Water

Like switchel, Cinnamon Water was offered to farmhands who worked under the hot sun of summer. This drink was also used medicinally for patients suffering from a fever.

This receipt will serve four hardworking farmhands.

2–3 cloves
4, 3-inch cinnamon sticks
2 cups white sugar OR 2-1/4 cups brown sugar

Bring 1 quart water to a boil. Add the cinnamon and cloves, and remove from heat. Cover and let cool. It will look like weak tea.

To make up a pail for one farmhand, take a cup of the cinnamon/clove/water mixture and add to 2 quarts cold water. Dissolve 1/2 cup white sugar OR 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon of brown sugar into the mixture.

To make the entire recipe, remove the spices and add 2 gallons of cold water and 2 cups of white sugar OR 2-1/4 cups brown sugar. Stir until sugar is dissolved.

Serve from a wooden pail with a tin dipper.

Mark Zanger. *The American History Cookbook*. (Greenwood Press, 2003) 86.

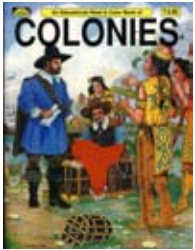


Kids' Corner

Return your finished coloring to:

Smith's Castle
55 Richard Smith Dr.
Wickford, RI 02852

Everyone who sends in their drawing will receive a copy of *Read and Color Book of the Colonies*.

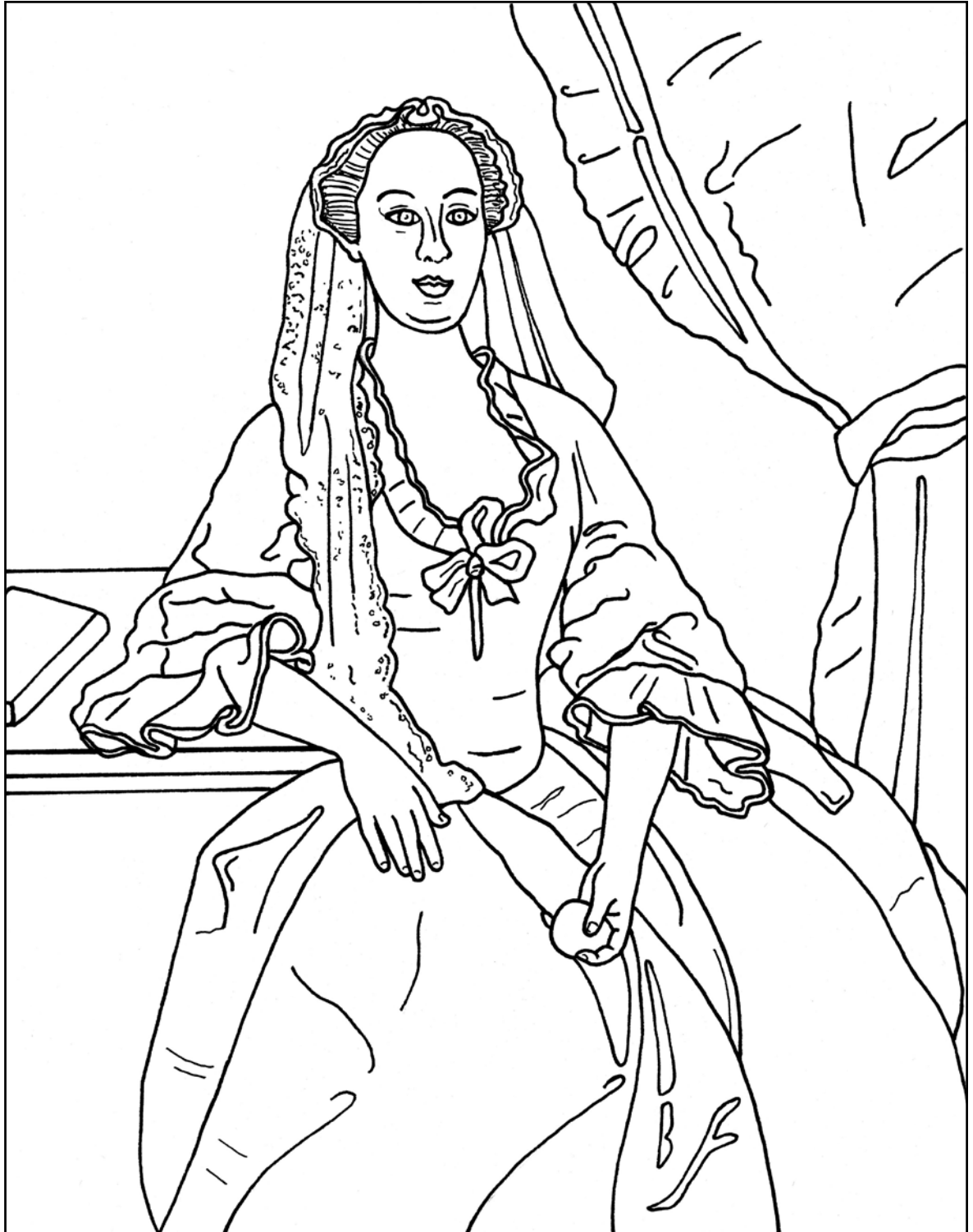


Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Age _____



Drawing by Susan Cole Stone

Recommended Reading

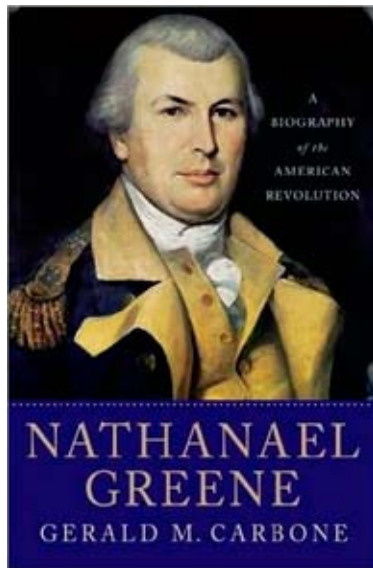
Nathanael Greene: A Biography of the American Revolution

by Gerald M. Carbone
Palgrave Macmillan, June 2008
Hardcover, 288 pages
ISBN -13: 9780230602717

When the Revolutionary War began, Nathanael Greene was a private in the militia—the lowest rank possible—yet he emerged from the war with a reputation as one of George Washington’s most gifted and dependable officers. Upon taking command of America’s Southern Army in 1780, Nathanael Greene was assigned 1,500 starving, nearly naked troops. Gerald M. Carbone explains how, within a year, Greene transformed his army into a fighting force that ran the much more numerous, and better equipped, British troops out of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina and into the final trap at Yorktown, Virginia.

Carbone breathes new life into Nathanael Greene’s story, juxtaposing his military success and tactical genius with the tragedy of his personal life. Returning home after the war, Greene found himself nearly penniless through a combination of his generosity—including using his personal wealth to feed and clothe his soldiers—and the economic hardships of a country struggling to recover from war.

After a slew of bad luck including ill health, the loss of crucial crops from hurricane and fire, and the death of his daughter, Greene died depressed and in debt just three years after the end of his triumphant military career. Despite this sad end, Carbone reminds us that Nathanael Greene’s brilliant military career has justly earned him a place in the pantheon of Revolutionary War heroes.



“To this much-needed new biography of America’s most unjustly neglected Revolutionary War hero, Gerald Carbone brings a journalist’s concision, a storyteller’s eye for illuminating detail, a wry New England sensibility, and a historian’s diligence. The result is a compelling account of how Nathanael Greene, the self-taught former Quaker ironmaster from Rhode Island, made himself over into the Continental Army’s finest strategist and one of the best minds of Enlightenment America. Carbone carries us deftly through the triumphs and tragedies of this remarkable life, offering us a Founder of flesh, blood, acumen and ambition who, had he lived longer and his luck been kinder, might even

have become president.”

—Charles F. Price,
award-winning author of *Freedom’s Altar*
and of *Nor the Battle to the Strong*

Gerald M. Carbone was a journalist for 25 years with the Providence Journal, and has been recognized as an authority on the life of Nathanael Greene by various historical societies. He has won two of America’s most prestigious journalism prizes—The American Society of Newspaper Editors Distinguished Writing Award and a John S. Knight Fellowship at Stanford University. He lives in Warwick, Rhode Island.



Note: Gerald Carbone will speak on Nathanael Green at the North Kingstown Free Library on Saturday, July 26 at 2:00 p.m.

The Cocumscussoc Association



Upcoming at Smith's Castle

July

Day	Time	Event
Wednesday, 16	5:00–7:00 p.m.	NK Chamber of Commerce Business After-Hours
Saturday, 26	2:00 p.m.	Nathanael Greene: A Biography of the American Revolution Lecture by Gerald M. Carbone NK Free Library

August

Day	Time	Event
Friday, 1	7:00 p.m.	"USO Dance" Culture Coalition Event Kinney Bungalow (\$25)

September

No Scheduled Events

October

Day	Time	Event
Saturday, 18	Noon–4:00 p.m.	Harvest Festival (rain date Sunday, October 19)

The Cocumscussoc Association
55 Richard Smith Drive
Wickford, RI 02852-4414

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