



Hearth at the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House in Newport, including andiron and spit, 17th or 18th century, NHS W 1974.38.1 and W 1974.34.1; three-legged brass posnet pot by Newport brazier Lawrence Langworthy, ca. 1730s, NHS W 1974.16.1; gridiron, 18th or 19th century, gift of Mrs. Powel Cozens, NHS W 1938.1.1; and toaster, 18th or 19th century, NHS W 1974.21.1.

Daily Fare and Exotic Cuisine in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Newport

Marian Mathison Desrosiers

In 1744, when the First Congregational Church on Mill Street in Newport celebrated the good fortune of a new minister, the Reverend Jonathan Helyer, church members prepared a joyful dinner at the Meeting House for the post-ordination celebration.¹ The basic aspects of the menu represent a typical fare for colonists at mid-century:

15 May 1744 The Comity of Mr. Clap's Meten House to Sundry Laid out for ye Ordennation Diner for Mr. Helyer

3 Gams	36 wt at 2/	3.12.0
1 Chese	26 Wt. at 1/6	1.18.6
3 qrts. Cranbeerys at 6d.	6	0.9.6
4 Gallns Wine at 24/ gal		4.16.0
10 pd Buter at 4/6		1.5.0
4 pd. Curents at 4/6		0.18.0

Paid to Elisha Gibbs £ 12.18.6²

Among the foods on the tables, paid for by church members for those present from the Newport community, were at least fifty-four pounds of “Gams,” or ham, and about twenty-six pounds of cheese, enough to feed over two hundred. Someone from the church may have brought bread to accompany the ten pounds of butter. As the dinner took place in May, the cranberries would have been from the previous season, preserved with some form of sugar to counteract the bitter taste of the berry. It is likely that the cranberries were in a sauce cooked to enhance the flavor of the ham. If not, there were cranberries and currants³ to accompany the meal. We might expect also that some of the community would bring their own homemade pies or cakes to the celebration much as parishioners do today. Finally, there was sufficient wine to encourage over a hundred guests to toast the minister’s new position in the church.⁴

By 1748, Newport was a burgeoning seaport town with a population of 6,508, including “1,105 Negroes and 68 Indians.” Newport had twice the population of Providence, but was not as large as Boston which had forty wharfs and 16,000 in population.⁵ The key to Newport’s important role was commerce; in 1741, at least “120 ships left Newport” harbor for the West Indies, Europe and the American coastal ports, bringing home a variety of foods from throughout the North American British colonies.⁶

Ten years later the number of ships increased to 235, clearing out or entering Newport.⁷ By 1764 Governor Stephen Hopkins noted of Newport's commerce, "352 vessels in the coasting trade and 183 ships to foreign ports."⁸ Trade became the engine of Newport life, supplying residents with access to a wide range of choices in food consumption. This article explores the importance of exotic foods in addition to the abundance of regional produce available through Newport's extensive colonial commerce. An examination of the account books of wealthy merchant John Banister's family reveals food consumption patterns influenced by Newport's prodigious overseas trade. Commerce not only brought wealth to Newport, it brought an abundance of foods, drinks, and spices that were found more frequently on the tables of New England families in the mid-eighteenth-century.

For one hundred years of settlement essential components of the daily diet of New England colonials consisted of bread, butter, cheese, meat, cider and beer for daily family meals. Colonial women also accessed vegetables and spices grown in their gardens or nuts and fruits produced from local trees and vines. However, food options expanded by 1730 as captains bought commodities in non-English Caribbean possessions and islands off the coast of Africa.⁹ Return cargos to Newport included diverse drinks and foods whose origins were as distant as South America and Asia. For artisans, captains, and laborers tied to maritime activities, family income increased. At the same time, innovative technology was applied to the creation of glass, ceramic, and wooden containers which made shipping foods and drinks from distant places more convenient and more efficient.¹⁰ By 1750, Newport consumers increasingly had the opportunity to buy exotic goods such as wine, coffee, chocolate, and tea, sugar and molasses, tropical fruits, spices, and nuts, from Thames Street waterfront shops.¹¹ In any given year, a colonial family living in an urban seaport could expect to spend approximately one half of their income on groceries, including food and drinks. The balance of their money went toward clothing and housing, including exterior improvements, maintenance, new furnishings, and/or rent. The high meat consumption of colonists was a notable feature of American life.¹²

Some of the records for understanding the changes in colonial foodways include newspaper advertisements, probate records of households, discoveries made at archaeological digs, and travel diaries. In the first instance, during the 1740s and 1750s, Boston newspapers printed many advertisements by shopkeepers and merchants, reaching out to readers in nearby colonies. The following are from the *Boston Weekly News-Letter*:

Just arrived and to be sold: English Loaf Sugars, Spices, Cheshire-Cheese at Robert Jenkin's on the North side of the Exchange in King-Street, Boston. Choice Almonds, Prunes, preserv'd Ginger, SALT, to be sold reasonably by Obadiah Cookton, at the Cross Pistols in Fish Street.¹³



Benjamin Ellery, Sr. (1669-1746), a successful Newport merchant, is depicted in this portrait with one of his ships in the background. OIL ON CANVAS, CA. 1717 BY NEHEMIAH PARTRIDGE. NHS 50.1.1. GIFT OF MRS. GEORGE A. GROSSMAN.



For *GEORGIA*,
The *BRIGANTINE TRITON*,
Eleazer Trevett, jun.
Master,
Now lying at Col. Joseph Wanton's
Wharf, at the Point,
WILL fail in Ten or Twelve Days ;
for Freight or Passage apply to said Master :
Who has to sell a few *PIPES* of *TENERIF*,
FAYAL, and *LISBON WINES*, that are ge-
nuine of the Vintage of 1764. for which he will take in
Pay, Beef, Pork, Flour, Ship-Bread and Indian Corn.

TO BE SOLD, by
ROBERT and HAMPTON LILLIBRIDGE,
At the Sign of *PITT'S HEAD*, and opposite *Dr. Halli-*
burton's, in *Thames Street*.
CHOICE good *PORK*, *CORN*,
FLOUR, *TAR*, & *TURPENTINE* ; a full Shop
of all Sorts of *STONE WARE*, and *DELFT FISH-*
DISHES ; old *Jamaica SPIRITS*, old *Barbados RUM*,
CHERRY RUM, and *Tenerif Wine*, by Retail, cheap
or *CASH*. [74]

Job Bennet,
Who has for Sale, at his *SHOP*,
A Variety of *English GOODS* ; also *Flax*,
Cotton and *Fleece Wool*, *Redwood* ; the best of *Indigo*,
Copperas, *Sugars*, *Tea*, *Coffee*, *Chocolate* ; *West-India*
and New-England Rum, *Wine*, *Brandy*, and *Molasses*
by the *Gallon*, and many other *Articles* not enu-
merated. Likewise *Molasses* by the *Hogshead* or *Teirce*.

The *Newport Mercury* carried advertisements for imported foodstuffs and beverages. The *Triton* notice appeared on December 4, 1769 (No. 587); the Lillibridge advertisement was published on September 18, 1769 (No. 576); and the Job Bennet item is in the November 13, 1769 issue (No. 584).

To be sold at the Second House on Long Wharfe, formerly the King's Head Tavern, several sorts of Grocery viz Raisons, Curants, Alspice, Cloves, Nutmegs, Cinnamen, Pepper, Indigo, Tea, Muscavado, Powder & Loaf Sugar, also Limejuice and the best Vinegar¹⁴

To be sold by Mordecai Dunbar of New-Port on Rhode Island at his Shop, good Chocolate, by Retail for Eight Shillings a Pound, old Tenor¹⁵

In the 1740s, the *Boston Gazette* published advertisements in bold-letter font headlines such as "Jamaica Loaf Sugar," and "Citrons by the Dozen," or "Best Green Coffee by the Cask," to attract the consuming public.¹⁶ As it was an additional expense to a business, not all shop owners or merchants chose advertising; there were often only a few of these types of advertisements monthly.¹⁷ Although the *Newport Mercury* did not commence until 1758, it carried similar information about new food items for sale, geared toward the consuming public.¹⁸

Historians who study probate records dated between 1730 and 1750 in Newport and other urban seaports note the preponderance of household goods relating to new items of food and drink. Drinking vessels of glass and porcelain ware replaced wood and pewter in noticeable quantities, whether the family was gentry, "middling," or working class.¹⁹ There were sets of matched dishes or cups and place settings of tableware, which



Imported dishes were used at the tables of Newport gentry in the eighteenth century. These ceramics from the Newport Historical Society Collection include (left to right) a Whieldon ware bowl (ca. 1700-1750, NHS 01.43), an eighteenth-century "waste bowl" for a tea service (NHS 01.6) and a tin-glazed earthenware porringer (ca. 1700-1750, NHS 01.38).

included knife, spoon, and fork for each place setting. Probate records listed tablecloths, plates, chairs and tables in numbers that could only be necessary if the owner invited guests for a repast with an array of foods.²⁰ Indeed, Christina J. Hodge, who participated in the archaeological dig at Newport Historical Society's Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House, explained the details of colonial food intake from remains of bones and plant matter in the latrine, as well as from pottery shards, which represent choices for ceramics in the household. For example, imported Chinese Porcelain, a white, translucent ceramic, decorated with fine hand painting, appears from the 1720s.²¹ Dr. Alexander Hamilton's records of his travel and stay in Newport in 1744 add color to our knowledge of local inn fare at Anthony's White Hall "in the country," and the Nichols' White Horse Tavern in the town center.²²

The account books of John Banister (1707-1767), Newport merchant,²³ add a new dimension to our understanding of what colonial consumers purchased and cooked for their families. Recipe books from the period allow us reconstruct how Newport colonials blended their European heritage with native foods of the Americas. The colonial merchant like Banister made his profits from exporting and importing. He loaded his ships with colonial staples, such as fish, timber, horses, agricultural produce, and naval stores (tar, pitch, and turpentine). to sell in the Indies, Surinam, and the Bay of Honduras. Then his captains filled the holds of his ships with sugar, molasses, logwood, mahogany, spices, salt, and tropical fruits bound for Europe. Banister's ships returned to Newport with textiles, tools, ceramics, glass, paint, paper, and wines from England, the Netherlands, and the Bay of Biscay. Alternatively, Banister's ships sold goods in the Caribbean, returning to Newport by way of the Carolinas, carrying tropical commodities for purchase by consumers, shopkeepers, distillers, and furniture makers. Based upon the Newport and colony taxes he paid, Banister was a wealthy merchant in the middle range of income.²⁴

Bread, Butter, and Cheese

An average household of six or seven in Newport, including enslaved people, easily consumed two twelve-ounce loaves of bread daily. To meet the demand from Newport households, merchants imported hundreds of barrels a year of wheat, oat, or rye flour from other colonies, such as Connecticut and New York.²⁵ As in other urban settings, Newport had commercial bakers, such as George Gibbs, who competitively produced loaves of bread for the local market as well as, "ship bread," a long-lasting biscuit made from flour, water, and salt. They baked the hard tack variety of bread for ship captains to feed their crews.²⁶ Within Rhode Island, corn was readily available from the Narragansett plantations where it was the main crop.²⁷ Local millers ground flour

1186 Eggs of Oysters	@ 9/	218. 11.
89 Cheeses weight 1836	@ 3/6	321. 6.
20 Dolphin Ditto	@ 6/	60. "
98 1/2 feet of Cans	@ 2/6	121. 1, 3
2 Saws	@ 11/2	21. "
6 Hatchets		6. "
11 Wheel Barrows	@ 15/	82. 10.
2 Drawing Knives		4. "
2 Barrels for Sale		3. "
13 Hogheads and 11 Barrels Ship Bread w. 113. 3. 23 @ 10/		351. 12. 10
21 Water Hogheads	@ 10/	105. "
2 Loaves Sugar		12. "
a Parcel Garden Seeds		30. "
Ditto of young fruit Trees		20. "
1 Chocolate	@	5. 8.
1 Tea and Canister		4. "
6 Barrels of Apples	@ 9/	27. "
2 Ditto Potatoes	@ 9/	9. "
1 Tun Hay		30. "
3 P. Shoes	@ 6/	9. "
6 Frocks	@ 10/	12. "
2 Swanskin Sackets	@ 5/	5. "
2 Caps	@ 18/	1. 16.
a Silk Handkerchief		2. "
1 Chocolate		1. "

Excerpt from John Banister's Journal of 1746-1749, showing the contents of a "Voyage to Jamaica and the Bay of Honduras in the Honduras Galley." October 9, 1749. PAGE 522. NHS 2003.18.

for women and slaves to cook johnnycakes, a nutritious and easily transported food for traveling. Native people made the flatbread, called *Nokechick*, from cornmeal mixed with hot water. Native people also taught the colonists to make *Nasaump*, boiled corn meal made into a porridge to which the colonists added milk.²⁸ In addition, colonial women baked a brown bread, made from flour mixed with molasses. There were wives who baked their own bread, adding the barm or froth, from the top of warm ale, as it contained active yeast culture, helping the dough to rise.²⁹ Women enjoyed both buttered bread and milk bread (prepared with milk instead of water) with preserved fruit and afternoon tea.³⁰

Butter and cheese often took their place with bread on the colonial table. In the seaport, colonists could buy butter by the firkin, which was a one-quarter barrel with fifty-six pounds of butter.³¹ However, individual pounds of butter went for as little as four pence, equivalent to \$1.50 in today's money.³² Butter predominated in cookbook recipes although households could purchase "olive oyle," whose origins were Spain, France, and Italy. Women living in the urban area of Newport could buy butter and cheese. On the other hand, colonial women on Aquidneck Island often kept a cow for ten years or longer, as long as the cow produced one gallon of milk per day for immediate consumption or for cheese or butter.³³



LEFT: Colonists could purchase butter by the firkin; a firkin measure for butter was fifty-six pounds (the firkin itself weighed eight pounds). Painted green pine firkin with black staves. Nineteenth-century. NHS W 11.1.

RIGHT: This image, produced around the time of the American Centennial in 1876, depicts a New England kitchen in colonial times. H.W. Pearce, artist. RETRIEVED FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, [HTTPS://WWW.LOC.GOV/ITEM/2006691541](https://www.loc.gov/item/2006691541).

Cheese provided a tasty and nutritious supplement to a meal; Cheshire Cheese was readily available from across the Bay in Narragansett County. A variety of Holstein cattle from the Netherlands raised on the large estates of Narragansett produced a semi-hard, Cheshire-style cheese with a crumbly texture and salty taste, a result of the cows grazing on salty marsh grasses.³⁴ The slaves on the Rhode Island plantations near South Kingstown turned out large quantities of both butter and cheese for export and for Newport households. For example, Rhode Island historian William Davis Miller observed of the plantations: "the Robinsons owned 105 cattle that roamed their 460 acres and the Hazards on their 1280 acres had 150 cattle."³⁵ The hundreds of enslaved people on these farms also raised Narragansett Pacers and sheep, as well as tobacco, for export.³⁶ It was common for Hazard's slave women to turn out a dozen or more wheels of cheese in a day. The process was arduous—heating the milk until it curdled, breaking the curds in a basket, shaping the cheese in a press, and turning the cheese on a cheese ladder.³⁷ However, Newport merchants also imported "Gloucester cheese," an unpasteurized semi-hard cheese from the milk of Gloucester cows, from England, and from France, "Dolphin cheese," an unpasteurized goat's milk cheese named for the Dauphin of France.³⁸



H. W. PEARCE, Del. Entered according to the Act of Congress in the year 1876, by H. W. Pearce, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

A NEW ENGLAND KITCHEN.
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Meat and Fish

Other important items in the daily diet of mid-eighteenth-century colonial families were meat, fish, and poultry, which together often represented one-half of the expenditures for a family's food intake in the urban seaport. With improved tools, cooking methods changed, rendering the lives of those who prepared meals at a fireplace more efficient. Brick ovens to one side of a fireplace added iron doors and made more even temperatures possible for breads and pies. There were kettles for baking and Dutch ovens for roasting; skillets, broilers, braziers, waffle irons, toasting forks and gridirons all had legs.³⁹ Eighteenth-century American families consumed large amounts of meat, by some estimates about one hundred and fifty pounds of pork and seventy-six pounds of beef annually. Domesticated animals substantially replaced venison, hare, and squirrel in the meals of urban households.⁴⁰

For meat, Newport colonists consumed pork as ham and “gammon” [bacon], but they also savored pig's cheeks and tongues. Pigs multiplied quickly and did not need grazing land. Colonists preserved the butchered meat by salting, drying, or smoking. As with all meats, colonial cooks fried, roasted, baked, stewed, and boiled their pork. To prepare their food colonial women used cookbooks or took recipes from English publications, such as the one below for preparing ham smoked over a hardwood fire:

How to Make Westphalian Ham

When your leg of Pork is prepared for curing, Rub into the fleshy side a pinch of Salt Petre finely beaten and in that state let it sit for 24 hours. Then take a pinch of Salt beat fine three or four hand fills of common salt, One pound of coarse sugar. Mix these together and make them hot in a Stew pan taking care not to melt them. Rub it in the Ham while it is quite hot. Let it sit three weeks basting it in its own Brine. Then make a pickle of common salt and let lie a week longer entirely covered by the brine. Then dry half as bacon.⁴¹

Newport colonials also ate fresh lamb and mutton (four-year-old), either salted, smoked or stuffed into sausage similar to pork. It is important to note that freshly killed meat did not last long without processing. Sheep were not eaten as often as other animals as their valuable wool was sheared yearly and used for making homespun cloth, socks, and caps. Once sheep became domesticated animals, farmers had to shear their wool every year to ensure the health of the animals.⁴² Although sheep did not have a multitude of offspring at one time, as did pigs, sheep reproduced annually. Farmers kept rams for at least two years to shear their coats for precious wool. Sheep in Rhode Island flourished more than in other parts of New England because seventeenth-century town

fathers set aside pasturage on the islands in Narragansett Bay. Although cattle could get their tongues around tall grasses, sheep required short grass in their pasturage, and the meadowlands around Newport town and in the Narragansett countryside fed large herds. As historian William Davis Miller points out, “Narragansett Planters” had large herds: “Robinson on his 460 acres raised seven hundred sheep, Hazard on his 1,280 acres herded 4,000 Southdown sheep and Gardiner had 644 sheep on his five hundred acres.”⁴³ Early in the town's history, Newport leaders initiated communal wolf hunts, giving bounties of ten or twenty shillings to get rid of the sheep's predator on Aquidneck Island.⁴⁴

If a colonist owned extensive lands, cattle were the easiest meat-producing animal to raise. Historian Brad Wood has concluded that, “Fifteen acres of grazing land per animal was standard, so for a herd of twenty cattle, 300 acres would be ideal.”⁴⁵ Many upper-class Newport merchants such as Banister acquired country estates.⁴⁶ Beginning in 1753, his



This detail of an eighteenth-century map of Aquidneck Island shows the large acreage in Middletown, north of the town of Newport, where Banister and other Newport gentry had farms and country estates. Detail of *A Topographical Chart of the Bay of Narragansett [sic] in the Province of New England*. Charles Blaskowitz. London: Engraved and printed for William Faden, 1777. IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY'S ARADER GALLERIES COLLECTION. [HTTP://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20129082](http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20129082).



The John Banister House in Middletown, ca. 1922. Banister had several farms in Middletown where he grew produce and raised livestock for his family table as well as for sale and barter. Photograph by William King Covell. NHS P2495. GIFT OF THE COVELL ESTATE.

purchase of two farms in Middletown, both of which averaged 140 acres, enabled him to keep oxen and cows.⁴⁷ Banister may have raised a breed from the Netherlands that was imported to Devonshire, England, as he described his five cows as red and white in color.⁴⁸ The first Devon cattle arrived at Plimoth Plantation in 1623; they were a healthy breed, good for milking, meat, and useful at pulling loads.⁴⁹ Especially prized was veal from a three- to eight-month-old calf. Cattle had many purposes beyond the dining table; hides became shoes, harnesses and saddles. Beef tallow or fat provided candles and the cow stomach contained the curdling agent, rennet, used to make cheese.⁵⁰ While roast beef was a favorite, larger quantities of “beef in cags” [barrels] were saved for later use in stews.

Of course, Newport residents ate their share of locally caught native birds and fish. Large indigenous birds were a favorite, served at table for joyful events and November and December feasts; gentry enjoyed roasting turkey, goose, duck, and pigeon. Colonists relished pigeons, as they were the most numerous of indigenous birds in America, due to the vast forests, which provided an abundance of acorns and beechnuts. Often weighing one pound per adult bird, pigeons were a tasty meal in the eighteenth century.⁵¹ Any young man with a birding gun could secure such a succulent bird. At other times, chicken raised for egg production were plucked for a meal.⁵² Among the most prized



Fish was an important food on Newport tables in the eighteenth century. Some seafood was caught in Rhode Island waters; other fish arrived in Newport by coastal traders and merchant ships. *Cod Fishing - Off Newfoundland*. New York: Currier & Ives, 1872. RETRIEVED FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, [HTTPS://WWW.LOC.GOV/ITEM/90716175](https://www.loc.gov/item/90716175).

fish for great taste and few bones were the cod, salmon, and sturgeon. Alewives, bass, haddock, mackerel, and menhaden were also favored fare. Pots of fish chowder and salted cod cakes were among typical New England meals. John Josselyn, who wrote a natural history of New England, indicated that the Atlantic Ocean held over two-hundred species of ocean creatures that made for good eating. Lobsters several feet long often produced sixteen to twenty-five pounds of meat.⁵³ Tuna, a plentiful fish in Atlantic waters, did not appear in Banister’s account books during these years; nor does Banister record the purchase of turtles, which were a delicacy for the wealthiest Newport families.

Crabs, lobsters, and oysters could be purchased on the Newport waterfront; if a person was handy with a rake, he could dig his own clams, oysters, and quahogs on Aquidneck Island shores by Narragansett Bay. As with meats, fish were dried, smoked, salted, and pickled with vinegar from apple cider or wine. Colonists even pickled lobster and oyster meat. On a voyage to Cape Fear, North Carolina, in February 1745, Banister sold “a Cagg [barrel] of Pickled Lobster.”⁵⁴ John Banister wrote an interesting letter to his doctor, describing his appetite for “an immoderate quantity of raw Gold oysters, twenty large ones at a time without either Bread or Drink,” which might have contributed to intestinal illness at the end of his life.⁵⁵ Merchants brought large oysters to Newport from Chesapeake and New York waters; some were a foot long.⁵⁶

The Banister family was one of twenty or so in Newport by mid-century who had the income to make their meals more than simply family gatherings, but rather an opportunity to share the bounty from the merchant's voyages by inviting guests to their dinners. In examining Banister's business accounts, it is possible to have a window into the lives of his family and the foods purchased while they lived in their dwelling home near Trinity Church.⁵⁷ At the same time, it is important to note that John Banister, his wife, Hermione, and his two young sons, as well as a white female servant, and his slaves (whom he identified as "servants") lived in a new Georgian style home on Spring Street by 1751. During that time, he owned at least four male slaves—Cato, Cesar, Mingo, and Anthony — who worked for him at the warehouse on Banister's Wharf or in shipbuilding. Typically, in Newport households, those whom Banister called his "servants," ate in the household and resided on the large third floor in his garret.⁵⁸

In his Account of Family Expenses for just the two years of 1748 and 1749, Banister recorded quantities of foods purchased and their costs to the family (Table 1). While three-hundred pounds of flour seems a large quantity, it is reasonable given the size of his household. The amount of meat listed in the table actually seems not quite adequate for a span of two years, during which he did not yet own his two Middletown farms totaling three hundred acres. It appears that some commodities were missing from Family Expenses. The most likely scenario is that Banister bartered for them in exchange for some goods or services.⁵⁹ In addition, Hermione, Banister's wife, who had her own household allowance of £10 to £20 monthly, may have purchased spices or chocolates, tea bread or cakes. Imported vinegar and cooking oil, listed in the Family Expenses, are not recorded in Table 1; although used for cooking, they are not considered as food. In Table 1, the total for family food is £432.14. 3½ in Old Tenor Rhode Island money, which at that time was worth about half the stated amount. Still, Banister's family spent a large sum on their daily groceries, buying from among the foodstuffs brought to Newport on his ships from various locations in the Atlantic world.

**TABLE 1:
Banister Account of Family Expenses
1748 and 1749 for Foods**

Category of Food	Amount in British Measurement	Cost in Pounds Sterling	Total in Pounds Sterling
Bread	1 cask	9.0	18.0
	1 barrel	9.0	
Flour	1 bushel	16.0	44.14.7 1/2
	2 bushels	28.14.7 1/2	
Butter	2 firkins	45.13.3	60.4.9
	1 firkin	14.11.6	
Cheese	2 wheels	2.8	2.8
Meat	2 Hams	17.18.7	163.19.5
	13 Hams	12.16.4	
	1 Bb Pork	28.0	
	195 Hogs Cheeks Smok'd	34.2.6	
	220 Gammons	41.5	
	Tongues and cheeks	25.4	
	Turkey	1.6	
	1 cagg potted beef	2.0	
Fish	Quarter of Veal	1.9.2	53.15.4
	Salmon	14.15.4	
	Coddfish	39.0	
Vegetables			
Corn	3 bushels	1.16	8.2.0
	2 bushels	2.14	
	12 bushels	3.12	
Onions	12 bunches	3.0	3.0
	Olives	11 Small Jars	
13.15			
Fruit and Nuts			
Lemons	1 box	30.0	30.0
	"Nutts"	8.0	
	Almonds	4 bushels	
4.11	1/2 cask	4.11	4.11
Grass			
Rice	1 bushel	10.13.2	10.13.2
Sugar (cane)	12 lb	13.10	13.10
Molasses	1 gall	1.9	1.9
FOOD TOTAL			432.14.3 1/2

Banister Journal 1746-1749, ACCESSION NO. 2003.18, NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY. Bushel was a dry measure equal to 64 pounds weight. Firkin measure was 56 pounds for butter while the barrel itself weighed eight pounds. A barrel of flour is 196 pounds weight. "Caggs" were in 25 lb. and 50 lb. weights. Boxes had compartments for objects; lemons often packed by the dozen. Jars of olives were ceramic pots not glass.

Vegetables, Fruits, and Spices

Town fathers laid out the city of Newport so that families had some land alongside their homes on which to cultivate gardens.⁶⁰ While the diet of colonial Newport families relied on grain, cheese, and meat, the kitchen garden provided a wide variety of nutritious crops from seeds. Alongside beans, squash, pumpkin, and corn native to America, women and slaves planted seeds from numerous vegetables imported from Europe. The diversity is evident in advertisements:

To be Sold by Richard Francis Gardiner at the Sign of the Black & White Horse. All Sorts of Garden Roots and Seeds, for Windsor Beans, Sandwich and Hotspur [named after Sir Henry Percy] Beans, early hotspur Pease, Marrowfat [large pea], sugar, dwarf, egg, blue rouncival [large pea variety] and grey rose Pease, early Dutch Cabbages, sugarloaf Cabbage, Savoy [densely wrinkled leaves] and large English Cabbage, white rose Lettice, Imperial and brown Dutch Lettice, short top London Reddish [radish], Sandwich Reddish, round Spinnage [spinach], orange and yellow Carrot, white and red Spanish Onion, double Parsley, Sallery [celery], Thyme, Sweet marjoram, Collyflower [cauliflower] Seeds, Asparagrus Roots. All fresh and new Imported from London.⁶¹

Many of the farms owned by Newport gentry grew vegetables in quantity. For example, Brenton, Harrison, Banister, Malbone, Honyman, and Easton grew corn, potatoes, turnips, carrots, and asparagus, which their families consumed; they sold the excess produce in local markets.⁶² “Green Corn,” that is fresh, not dried, was a vegetable enjoyed on the cob or by removing the kernels and mixing with beans in succotash, a Narragansett native dish. Newport’s colonial women planted sorrel, sage, and thyme for use in medicines. They also grew roses, mint, rosemary, thyme, and lavender for the beauty of the flowers and the fragrance from the plants as “perfumes” for their bodies.⁶³ The colonists used onions, derived from English stock, to flavor food. As onions also contained Vitamin C, they became an essential and healthy addition to most stews and soups in homes and on board ships. In fact, the crop designated as onions, might have included garlic, leeks, scallions, chives, and shallots, all of which are found in cooking recipes of the time. Newport soil favored onion growing, which required no rotation of crops, just heavy fertilization. Newport shops sold “bunches” of yellow, red, and white onions from the coastal trade with New York and Connecticut. Newport merchants also brought sweet onions, not feasibly grown in northern climes, from the Southern



Newport cooks and housewives favored mustard as a spice. Botanical print of a mustard plant, entitled *Sinapi Rapi folio* = *Sinapi Siliqua latuscula, glabra, semine rufo, sive vulgare* = *Senepa maggiore* = *Moutarde*. Found in *Hortus Romanus*, Giorgio Bonelli (Niccolò Martelli, Editor), PLATE 36. 1772-1793. RARE BOOK DIVISION, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY. RETRIEVED FROM <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-d4d6-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

colonies.⁶⁴ Some vegetables, including cucumber, artichoke, cauliflower, asparagus, and potato, were more likely to be purchased by those of higher income or they were grown by country gentlemen.⁶⁵

Local cranberries, blueberries, and Concord grapes, as well as wild cherry, crab apple, and wild plum trees were abundant in Rhode Island. Nevertheless, merchants imported peach, plum, apple, cherry, and pear trees. They also shared grafts with each other. Banister's merchant friend in Boston, Ralph Inman (1713-1788), gave him stocks from "English Pare" and a large Rustian, two kinds of pear trees, which he planted near his Newport mansion.⁶⁶ In his Middletown orchards, Banister planted the yellow-green apple, "Newtown Pepine," the large red Spitzenburg, a favorite for eating, and the Rhode Island Greening, which was good for pies. There was a "Sipson apple of North Kingston," the "summer and winter sweets," and the "Taunton Greening." Pear trees produced "Russellong," Kendall Nichols, and Johnson pears. Nearby, Banister planted plum trees to help with pollination. Indeed, he also planted "14 Mazzard Black Cherry," the forerunner of today's Bing cherry.⁶⁷ As fruit trees matured, women could choose from a variety of fruits to add to their pastries, tarts, and jams. Nevertheless, apples were the favorite, whether dried, boiled, baked, or preserved. Prior to the publication of a book by John Randolph in 1788, only volumes written for English gardeners and the British climate were available in the colonies, but the climates of various regions of America made it difficult for the information to be transferrable. Banister pulled his information on cultivation of fruit trees from other merchants and from contemporary and popular *Universal Magazine*, which guided him, for example, with a "Method for Destroying Caterpillars," in its June 1763 issue.⁶⁸ It is interesting to note that Newport residents Abraham and William Redwood, Joseph and Samuel Bailey, and William and Thomas Peckham planted hundreds of fruit and nut trees for personal use and local sales to the Aquidneck Island populace.⁶⁹

Among the many imports the mineral, salt, was an essential nutrient for the human body. In an era without refrigeration, people used salt for pickling meats, vegetables, and even lobster. Salt on butter kept it from going rancid.⁷⁰ When Newport captains traveled to Europe, they purchased salt from the Chester salt works in the Liverpool markets, at Cadiz or Lisbon, or in the Cape Verde Islands. While in the Caribbean, they stopped to load on salt from Salt Cay, near Turks and Caicos Islands, at Anguilla, to the east of Puerto Rico, or Salt Tortuga, near Venezuela.⁷¹ As with many commodities, the price of salt varied; it could be as much as twelve shillings six pence per bushel [sixty-four pounds], equivalent to \$76.⁷²

Merchants secured spices, such as cloves, cinnamon, cumin, anise, ginger, mace, and nutmeg from many tropical islands. In the kitchen, women used mortars and pestles or grinders to prepare the spices for cooking. Mustard came in glass bottles already ground.⁷³ Gilbert Stuart, father of the painter, rented a shop on Banister's



Tamarinds, beans with medicinal benefits grown in India, were used to add spice to food in eighteenth-century Newport. Botanical drawing of tamarind, found in *A Curious Herbal: Containing Five Hundred Cuts, of the most useful Plants, which are now used in the Practice of Physick [sic]*. Copper plate engravings, taken from drawings by Elizabeth Blackwell. London: Published for Samuel Harding, 1737. Volume 1, Number 1010. IMAGE FROM THE BIODIVERSITY HERITAGE LIBRARY. DIGITIZED BY THE MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN (PETER H. RAVEN LIBRARY). www.biodiversitylibrary.org.



Pineapple, grown in tropical climates and in Abraham Redwood's greenhouse, was a treat for eighteenth-century Newport residents. Botanical print of a pineapple, entitled *Ananas fructu ovato, carne albida*. = *Carduus Brasilianus, foliis Aloes*. Found in *Hortus Romanus*, Giorgio Bonelli (Niccolò Martelli, Editor), Plate 72. 1772-1793. RARE BOOK DIVISION, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY. RETRIEVED FROM <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-c3f0-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Wharf where he sold mustard, a “remedy for nervous disorders when mixed with water.” Most householders used the spice for enlivening the taste of meats and fish.⁷⁴ They prized sarsaparilla root, from Honduras, for medicinal purposes, pimento, a sweet red pepper from Jamaica, and cayenne pepper, a hot pepper from the French Guiana town of “Caian.”⁷⁵ Sprinkling pepper on hanging meat also repelled insects.⁷⁶ In addition, colonials appreciated the opportunity to purchase fruits and nuts from Europe and the tropics. Newport merchants off-loaded Lisbon lemons, oranges, limes, currants, raisins, Turkey figs, olives and Jordan almonds. Typically, households of the gentry ate these delectable desserts.⁷⁷ One Newport merchant, Abraham Redwood (1709-1788), had a “Garden of West India Fruit” from which he served delicacies at his dinner parties. In addition to citrus fruits, his slaves tended to “Pine-Apples, Tamarinds, Guava, and West India Flowers.” Tamarinds, originally from India, were beans with medicinal benefits, used to add spice to food. To start the trees Redwood had a “Green House,” for rooting and protection of the seedlings; these tropical plants stayed in specially designed “Hot Houses” in the winter.⁷⁸ Several Newport merchants followed the pattern of creating structured environments to raise tropical plants using Dutch hothouse technology with under-floor ovens, maintained by skilled nurserymen (often paid £15 a year for their skill), using hot beds of composted manure and chipped bark.⁷⁹

Colonial households enjoyed many choices of sweeteners. Colonials could use honey from local beekeepers or maple syrup from northern sugar makers. Alternatively, they could buy imported dark or light molasses syrup, muscovado (brown), or various grades of white sugars all derived from sugar cane cultivation in the Caribbean. The process of creating the by-products commenced with crushing the canes into a sugary mixture, which, after boiling, produced cane syrup and crystals. The syrup or molasses was the first to go into barrels for export. The second by-product was muscovado or unrefined, granulated, brown sugar, somewhat sticky because of the molasses that remained in it. In order to derive white sugar, Caribbean slaves packed the sugar granules in barrels to allow the molasses to drain. The next higher grade of white sugar was created by packing “unrefined white” sugar into inverted cone-shaped molds with a small hole in the tip. Any remaining molasses dripped through the hole, leaving hard, white, refined sugar, which a sugarhouse baked into loaves of different sizes and wrapped in blue paper for export. One common mold size was a fourteen-pound loaf.⁸⁰ Eventually, Newport had its own sugarhouses, which could convert imported molasses to hundreds of pounds of refined sugar.⁸¹



Shelves in the kitchen of the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House, including a French plate (EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FAIENCE, NHS, W. 1974.42.1), two horn cups (UNDATED, NHS, W. 42.1 AND FIG. 2016.12) and a reproduction cone of sugar.

Beverages

In the mid-eighteenth-century, cold and hot drink options were selected by gender, age, and income. In Rhode Island households, women often made a non-alcoholic “small beer” for their families. The beverage, also known as ale, combined imported molasses with pumpkin. Although barley grew well, the hops necessary for bottom fermentation of stronger beer did not grow easily in New England.⁸² In the seaport, there were brewers, like Nathaniel Dyers, who bought the imported hops, and from whom a family could buy beer. Women and children also drank the healthy, unfermented apple juice, called “must.” Because most of the eighteenth-century apple trees produced sour apples, Rhode Island farmers introduced new varieties of apple trees for cider. Many country gentlemen, like Banister, built cider mills to press the apples into a juice to which they added yeast or sugar. When fermented, the alcoholic, “hard” cider that most social classes consumed as a cold beverage, was healthier than water and cheap at just a few shillings a barrel.

Consumers had the choice of many types of wines including those from local plants and even from honey, often known as honey wine:

A Recipe to Make Mead

To 10 Gallons water add 10 lb of Honey which mix well, boiling one half for half an hour first adding 4 oz of Allspice and half an oz of Raw Ginger in a Cloth, observing to crush it while boiling. After which pour it off to the other five gallons in the cask where it is to be fermented. When blood warm add half a spoonful of Yeast which drop lightly on the surface of the Liquor in several places and in 24 hours may take off the yeast and bottle it off for use which it will be fit for in a few days. NB. Mrs. Fly always adds a little Sweet balm, which gives it a fine flavor.⁸³

Wealthy members of Newport society drank Madeira, a sweet wine from the island west of Africa. Adding brandy to remove the acidity fortified the wine and improved its taste, thereby increasing consumer willingness to purchase the drink.⁸⁴ Wine was a choice among the gentry for gatherings after a funeral, which was the case for the funeral of Banister’s uncle, Samuel, for which John Banister provided 15¾ gallons of Madeira wine costing £19.13.9.⁸⁵ High tariffs on French wines led to increased imports from Portuguese-controlled Madeira. Port, a dark red sweet wine from Portugal, also benefitted from English tariffs on French wines during the War of the Spanish Succession. In addition to Madeira, gentry in Newport favored claret, a British term for a dark rosé wine from Bordeaux, and sherry, a Spanish white wine, fortified with brandy. The trade

of Newport merchants made it possible for colonists to buy French wines, despite bans and tariffs.⁸⁶

Locally, distillers along the Newport waterfront converted imported molasses into “New England Rum,” a drink favored by many men in the trades. Historian Richard Pares commented: “Of the products made from sugar cane, only molasses was relatively uninfluenced by English demand, as it was rarely exported to Europe; European markets sought sugar and Jamaica rum.”⁸⁷ The average amount of local rum consumed by colonials increased as the cost was only a shilling per gallon.⁸⁸ Fishermen typically consumed seven gallons of rum each year.⁸⁹ The British government’s 1831 decision to set rum portions for sailors at half a pint per day encouraged the production of rum.⁹⁰ When Newport men raised a church, or built a house or wharf, those paying for the construction served rum along with other victuals to their workers. For example, in the spring of 1729, men took four days to construct the First Congregational Church on Mill Street with 44-129 men working per day, for which each received “sundry liquor, veal and lamb.”⁹¹ For every house that he built, Banister gave his laborers a daily amount of drink. Each day in August 1751 for “House Building on the Upper Field,” he provided along with cheese and bread, “1½ gall Rum [for] Carpenters and 1½ gall Rum [for] Masons.”⁹² At social gatherings, whether weddings or funerals, guests often imbibed a “rum punch” of liquor combined with water, lemons, sugar and cinnamon. Some preferred a tankard of the lighter rum from Jamaica, distilled from cane juice. Others selected the darker rum from Barbados and Antigua. “New England Rum” produced in the local distilleries on Thames Street—at least thirteen by 1740—was always cheaper but merchants imported other kinds of rum to meet consumer choice of quality and price.⁹³ At other times, Newport attorneys and General Assembly representatives might enjoy a mug of rum at the Pitts Head Tavern (ca.1726) or the King’s Arms Tavern (ca.1713) near the Court House end of town.

For hot beverages, colonials had choices of imported Bohea [aromatic black tea] or Hyson [green tea] leaves from China, coffee beans grown in French Guiana and Martinique, and cocoa harvested in Dutch Curacao, French Haiti, or Spanish Cuba. Banister’s captains bought what they could from various islands in the Caribbean in order to meet the demand of colonial tastes and pocketbooks. When tea first was imported in America, advertisements claimed teas could “make the body active and lusty” and “preserve perfect health until extreme old age.” A consumer had to purchase tea at an apothecary shop, as it was considered a stimulant (medicine).⁹⁴ However, tea, purchased by the chest or by the pound, became a universal hot beverage consumed by all classes, and by both men and women. Tea was easy to store as loose leaves in a canister and effortless to prepare by dropping into boiling water, then straining out the leaves. Retail prices on imported Bohea or Pekoe varied from £1 to £9 per pound, while “Fine” and “Superfine Hyson” were between £4 to £10 per pound.⁹⁵

Although coffee as a hot beverage came into favor in Europe in the seventeenth century, hot coffee required a coffee grinder to turn the beans into powder.⁹⁶ Not all eighteenth-century households could afford the luxury of a coffee-bean grinder. Thus, coffee found its customers mainly among males who joined in camaraderie at local Newport coffee houses, such as the Black Horse on Cowley Wharf or the White Horse Tavern on Marlborough Street, where coffee sold for a “few pence a dish.”⁹⁷ These institutions were “satellites of trade” for artisans, laborers, and ship owners, or government officials and lawyers. As a rule, women did not frequent coffeehouses.⁹⁸ As was the case with tea, the price of imported coffee differed by place of origin; plantation coffee beans from the Indies were less expensive than either Turkish or Java coffee.⁹⁹

Chocolate became a favorite of colonials in the upper stations of society; because of the rich taste, it was more expensive than tea or coffee. Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) gave chocolate the scientific name, Theobroma, a Greek word for “food of the gods.” Newport ship captains traveling in the Caribbean purchased cocoa or cacao beans, which plantation slaves had first removed from the pods and dried. Transported to Newport, chocolatiers roasted the beans, crushed, and ground them to create a dark powder. Shops sold the chocolate powder, as did street vendors in urban ports. At home, colonials used a wooden stirrer to froth the chocolate powder with hot milk and sugar, which became a delicious hot chocolate.¹⁰⁰ Banister noted in his records that he bought “chocolate bricks,” which was ground chocolate, pressed into cakes, and



Coffee drinking increased in popularity in mid-eighteenth-century Newport. Rococo-style silver coffee pot with wooden handle, probably made by John Payne, 1752-1753. NHS 01.253. GIFT OF MRS. PRESCOTT LAWRENCE.



Chocolate from the Caribbean became popular in a drink form in mid-eighteenth-century Newport. *A Man Scraping Chocolate.* Anonymous, Spanish, ca. 1680-1780. Oil on canvas. North Carolina Museum of Art, GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. BENJAMIN CONE. G. 69.20.1.

wrapped in paper, then commonly sold in the colonies by the pound.¹⁰¹ By the ounce, chocolate was about £2.6, much more than a sailor or unskilled laborer earned for a day's work.¹⁰²

Imported alcoholic drinks and imported tropical commodities for hot beverages came from plantation complexes of enslaved populations. The consuming public found the cold and hot drinks important to their work and to social gatherings. In addition, tea, coffee, and chocolate contained caffeine, which combined with sugar made them increasingly a necessary part of the daily diet.¹⁰³ Glass molds produced wine glasses, decanters, and ceramics, which made it possible to consume the beverages at home. Indeed, an entire industry developed that created specific implements to use in preparation, display, service and storage, for both hot and cold beverages in the colonial household. For example, in the case of tea drinkers, Newport consumers required not only teacups and saucers, sugar bowl and cream pitcher, but sugar tongs, teaspoons, teakettle, tea strainer, and a tea table, as well. For the preparation of these hot, bitter beverages, colonials followed the English custom of adding milk and sweetener.

The Banister household spending on beverages reveals the amount of entertaining for family, friends, and business associates that Newport society would expect a family of their status to provide.¹⁰⁴ There are over one hundred gallons of alcoholic beer, 1,388 gallons of hard cider, and nearly twenty-two gallons of wines purchased under "Family Expenses" for the years 1748-1749. When the amounts spent on food (Table 1) and beverages (Table 2) are added together as "groceries," the amount spent on beverages alone is almost half the total cost of family groceries for the two years.¹⁰⁵

TABLE 2:
Banister Account of Family Expenses
1748 and 1749 for Drinks

Category of Food	Amount in British Measurement	Cost in Pounds Sterling	Total in Pounds Sterling
Cold Drinks			
Beer	3bbs "Strong Beer"	25.0	43.8
		18.8	
"Cyder"	6 Bb	21.0	161.16
	1 Bb	3.15	
	1 Bb	3.15	
	8 Bb	38.0	
	7 Bb	24.10	
	1 Bb	4.1	
	4 Bb	17.10	
	2 Bb	4.5	
	3 Bb	10.0	
	10 Bb	35.0	
Wine			
Madeira	10 Bottles	6.5	61.5
	2 quarter casks	55.0	
Claret	12 bottles	55.0	
Hot Drinks			
Tea	1 Bohea	3.0	3.0
Coffee	2 lb	18.2.6	18.2.6
Chocolate	6 pieces	3.0	8.0
	22 "	5.0	
DRINK TOTAL			309.1.6

Banister Journal 1746-1749, ACCESSION NO. 2003.18, NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY. Bbs or one Barrel was equal to 34 gallons of beer or cider. Cask of wine had 31 1/2 gallons. Bottles were of glass.



John Banister, Jr. was the son of the Newport merchant who kept careful account of his family expenditures for food and drink. Miniature painting of John Banister, Jr. (1744-1807). Watercolor on ivory, 1767. Unknown artist. NHS 27.2.1. GIFT OF MARY SAYER.

Meals for Exceptional Events

Unusual occasions lent themselves to special meals. Wealthy merchant and owner of four thousand acres of Connecticut land, Godfrey Malbone (1695-1768) was also one of the wealthiest Newport residents of his day. He entertained lavishly. In 1740, one menu for a special dinner in Newport included Turtle Soup, Steamed Potatoes, and “Salmagundy with meat.” Among Newport’s most wealthy residents, turtles, both freshwater and saltwater, were delicacies. The salad dish, “salamagundy,” originally an idea from France, means a hodgepodge of different foods. In this case, Malbone’s cooks prepared a salad of lettuce leaves upon which they mixed cooked meats, vegetables, fruit, and nuts, dressing it with oil, vinegar and spices, such as parsley and tarragon. The meal ended with delightful Plum Pudding and Strawberry Truffles.¹⁰⁶ Plum pudding, an English favorite combined steamed raisins with flour, citron, and spices. Truffles were a candy combination of rum and chocolate. As important as the preparation was the presentation of colorful foods on a table set with imported tableware.

There were also special events in Newport, known as “Turtle Frolics.” The first one apparently took place in December of 1752. Newport merchant Samuel Freebody is said to have received a turtle from the West Indies voyage of George Bressett.¹⁰⁷ Freebody called upon Cuff Brenton, the black male cook of Jaheel Brenton, to prepare turtle soup for a party held near Fort George on Goat Island. The guests sailed from Newport in a large sloop to attend a dinner set for 2 P.M., tea at 5 P.M., and then dancing. Freebody was a member of the Dance Club, which had organized evening get-togethers for young couples since 1747. The male members of the club included Malbone, Whipple, Gardner, Vernon, Wilkinson, and Hazard to name a few.¹⁰⁸ Later, a Newport historian, George Champlin Mason, recounted that the wife of merchant Philip Wilkinson, sat at the head of the table with Deputy Governor Joseph Whipple (1725-1761) by her side. The guests ate their repast on Liverpool ware of novel patterns and mixed colors, such as blue and brown with cream-colored edges. They drank their tea “served in china cups, enameled in unusual colors, which was a very unique occurrence since the colonies had no direct trade with China.” According to Mason, in the evening the guests danced under the moonlight, to a country-dance tune played by fiddlers, which he indicated was “Arcadian Nuptial.”¹⁰⁹ The party later imbibed a punch of Barbados rum, to which the cook added limes, sugar and arrack, an alcoholic drink of coconut milk or molasses.¹¹⁰ Solomon Drowne, a fourteen-year-old visitor to Newport in the summer of 1767, recounted a visit to Captain Lawton’s and told of a Turtle Frolic with “a turtle whose weight [before cooking] was above two hundred pounds.”¹¹¹



Costumed interpreters portraying upper-class Newport women during the Newport Historical Society’s 1765 Stamp Act Protest Reenactment, 2014. PHOTOGRAPH, NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Another occasion when Newport families gathered was at the funeral of a loved one. Banister purchased a variety of foods for his guests after the funeral of his wife Hermione:

Side of Lamb, Butter, Peas, New England Rum	58.19
Limes, Beans, Whiskey	21.17
Veal and a Pig	19.18
Bread and Lobsters	4.9
Fish, Beans, Cherries	15.19
	£120.3 112

A side of lamb might be roasted first and then cut in thin slices. The cook would put the slices into a pan with butter, flour, water and spices to simmer.¹¹³ A recipe for a quarter of veal required the cook to “cut the meat into collops (thin slices), beat them with a Rolling pin and season with mace, Cloves, Pepper, and Lemon,” finishing the veal dish by frying in “Sweet Butter,” to which a brown gravy was added.¹¹⁴ Preparing an entire pig often meant spitting it over a fire, until the pig was thoroughly hot, then “dividing it into twenty pieces and stewing the pork in white Wine with Nutmeg, Pepper and Salt and two Onions.”¹¹⁵ At a table in a wealthy household, guests would not eat lobsters or crabs in the shell. After boiling the animal and removing the shell, the process was to slice the meat from the body, claws, and tail, mixing “the smaller pieces with wine, bread crumbs, salt, and pepper and served hot.” Sometimes colonial cooks fried the lobster or crab meat after dipping it in flour and eggs.¹¹⁶ Noticeably absent from the purchases for the meal were rice, potatoes, or salad, but a special genteel dinner could have these additions.

For one harvest dinner, Banister listed £550.1.7 under his “Account of Family Expenses” for a family gathering. The amount included quantities of oysters, codfish, and lobster, chicken, turkey, and veal, bread, limes, lemons, walnuts, and eggs for their meal.¹¹⁷ Colonists ate oysters by shucking them from the shell, scooping out the tasty meat, and eating. Many cooks put the oysters in a soup with “wine and shalots,” or “fricaseyed oysters,” that is, lightly browning the meat in a wine sauce.¹¹⁸ On three other occasions, Banister’s purchases for his family show the great variety of food choices available. For December 1762, there was lamb and mutton, “mackerel” and potatoes, oranges and walnuts.¹¹⁹ Two favorite ways to cook mackerel were to “boil it with Fennel, Gooseberries, Butter and Sugar,” or to broil with “Crumbs of Bread, Livers, Parsley, Pepper, Salt, Nutmeg, Limmon-peel, Salt, wet with Egg.”¹²⁰ “Gooseberries,” are native fruit growing on bushy plants near the ocean shores of Newport; when ripe, they are about one inch in diameter and red pink to orange in color. There is no mention of custards and puddings but those would be typical for winter family gatherings.

Summer also brought opportunities for family feasts. For example, Banister treated his guests to tautog, smelts, and “Cod’s heads,” watermelons, cherries and figs.¹²¹ One eighteenth-century recipe for cod’s head is to bake with butter, “in a sauce of Oysters, shrimps, or Lobsters. Garnish the Dish with Parsley, Horse-radish and Forc’d meat-Balls, and sliced Lemon.”¹²² Another recipe, “Rost of Cod’s Head,” calls for the cook to place the head in a stew pan, simmer for four hours:

Add to the Gravy that runs out of it a Glass of white Wine, three Shalots, a little Horse-radish, Pepper, Cloves, Mace, Salt and Nutmeg, a good Lump of Butter worked in Flour, the Liver of the Fish Boiled; and chopped with Anchovies very small, some Oysters and Shrimps; thicken it with Yolks of two Eggs.¹²³

In December for “the festival [of the birth] of Christ,” as recorded in his “Family Expenses” for 1766, Banister purchased, “calves head,” black duck, turkey, and geese, bread, cheese, currents, limes, and oranges.¹²⁴ When calves head went into a soup, the cook added sweet herbs, onions, and barley.¹²⁵ Alternatively, calves head could be



Formal dining room at the Hunter House (Nichols-Wanton House). PHOTOGRAPH BY GAVIN ASHWORTH. THE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF NEWPORT COUNTY.

“stuffed with a Ragoo and Forc’d meat, rubbed with Eggs and Crumbs of Bread and Sweet Herbs, seasoned with Pepper, Salt, and Nutmeg, then baked.” Ragout was a very popular seasoned stew, combining fish or meat, “with greens, salt, pepper, cloves, peases, and lettices.” Cooks made the “Forc’d meat-Balls” from finely chopped veal, mutton, and beef seasoned with “Pepper, Salt, Nutmeg, Cloves, and the Grate of Lemon, wet with two Eggs and worked together by hand into small Balls,” which they fried in “Sweet Butter.”¹²⁶ Typically, women made their stews with meat or fish and their broths or soups with peas, onions, turnips, or barley. However, recipes of boiled duck with onion, roast young turkey with “sellery,” and goose with cabbages (some of which are in “pyes”) abound from this era.

Most seventeenth-century colonists in America ate a basic diet of bread, butter, and cheese, along with fish, birds, and beasts of local origin, indigenous vegetables and native fruits, and homemade beer and cider. From a variety of sources, historians have pieced together the revolution in consumer choices of the eighteenth century. Newspaper advertisements, probate records of household utensils, as well as kitchen garden refuse pits and latrines, recipe books, and traveler’s memoirs all give a glimpse of these changes. A review of the account books of one Newport merchant, John Banister, provides additional understanding of the importance of enterprising captains and merchants, who influenced the changes of consumer choice in the eighteenth century. A study of the Banister Day Books, Cash Books and Memorandum Book by mid-century, reveals two decades of imported goods sold by Banister in Newport. A review of his “Account of Family Expenses,” sheds light on the lives of a family seeking acceptance as gentility in the Newport community. Many colonists invited family and friends to a post-funeral meal, to give thanks in the fall, or to celebrate the New Year. The records of those in the gentry, like the Banister family, illustrate the types of foods available especially to those with wealth. For example, along with a main dish of veal, partridge, and goose, a family repast might include imported cherries, figs, and limes.¹²⁷ Other dinners included local foods such as cod, turkey and pumpkin with imported oranges, currents, oysters, walnuts, and almonds.¹²⁸

However, as enterprising men of Newport and other New England ports expanded their trade to coastal American colonies from Newfoundland to the Carolinas, the abundance of food choices increased for colonials of many income levels. Newport colonists could purchase fish products from the shoals off the British and French lands to the north of New England complemented by agricultural products grown in the Middle and Southern Colonies. Banister’s trade with Europe allowed colonists to experience the taste of European vegetables and fruits from seeds or seedlings, or to drink the alcoholic beverages from his trade in the Bay of Biscay and Madeira Island



“Shipping the Sugar,” *Ten Views in the Island of Antigua*. Drawings by William Clarke; Published by Thomas Clay, 1823 FROM HAMILTON COLLEGE LIBRARY, BEINECKE COLLECTION. SB229.A63 C55.

west of Africa. From the British, French, Dutch, and Spanish islands in the Caribbean and Surinam in South America and the Bay of Honduras in Central America, Banister and other merchants imported tropical fruits and nuts for healthy desserts, as well as spices and salt to add flavor to any food. Indeed, tropical drinks entered the daily fare of colonial meals and social occasions. The import of molasses, as well as brown and white sugar helped to increase the consumption of the bitter tropical beverages of tea, coffee, and hot chocolate with the addition of these sweeteners. The imports of Caribbean molasses also led to an expansion of the distillation of local “New England Rum,” a beverage that soon surpassed beer and hard cider as the drink of male labor and those involved in maritime activities. By the mid-eighteenth-century, colonists in rural areas, situated near a river often accessed these food imports through a distribution network that included ferry, sloop, or overland wagon on the post road between Boston, Providence, and New York. Daily fare for colonists at mid-eighteenth-century consisted of comestibles from distant lands that were often unique in taste and color.

ENDNOTES

The seaport of Newport helped to generate change, as described by eighteenth-century commentator J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur:

A maritime people...go to different parts of this continent constantly engaged in external trade by which our internal riches increase... Those who live near the sea...are more bold and enterprising... They see and converse with a variety of people...[which] inspires them with a desire of transporting produce from one place to another and leads them to a variety of resources...¹²⁹

Both exotic food and regional produce arrived on the wharves of Newport. A populace, connected so closely with maritime activities, whether working on the waterfront or producing goods for export, benefitted from the commerce that made Newport at mid-century an important center of colonial trade. Mercantile business provided nutritious, tasty, colorful, and aromatic food and drinks for the residents of the town, altering their lives in positive ways. Although the gentry of Newport were the greatest beneficiaries of variety in foodstuff and beverages, all who lived there, whether artisan, slave, merchant or shopkeeper, reaped the rewards of residing in an international trading center when they sat down to their daily repasts.



Old Stone Mill at Newport, Rhode Island. Gilbert Stuart. REDWOOD LIBRARY AND ATHENAEUM, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND. GIVEN TO THE REDWOOD LIBRARY IN HONOR OF LAWRENCE PHELPS TOWER II AND HELEN TOWER WILSON. PA. 152.

- 1 B. B. Edwards and W. Cogswell, "Notes on the State of Rhode Island—Newport Congregational Churches," in *The American Quarterly Register* (Boston: Perkins & Marvin, 1840), 12: 266-67. Unfortunately, Rev. Helyer died the next year on May 27, 1745, and five months later so did the respected Reverend Nathaniel Clap (1667-1745).
- 2 Charles A. Hammett, *A Sketch of the History of the Congregational Church of Newport, Rhode Island* (Newport: Hammett, 1891). Typescript Ms. 1257, 45, Newport Historical Society [hereafter NHS]. The English monetary system is in pounds, shillings, and pence; twelve pence equals one shilling, and twenty shillings equals one-pound sterling. In addition, the cost of currants at "4/6" means four shillings and six pence per pound of currants.
- 3 In his account books, Banister listed both raisins and currants imported in casks. Raisins are dried grapes. Currants (Corinths) grown in America were so called from a resemblance to a grape from Corinth, Greece. Newport merchants imported red and white types of the species, which grew well in Holland and England. For a discussion of colonial planting and maintenance of currants, see John Randolph (1727-1784), *A Treatise on Gardening by a Citizen of Virginia*. 3rd ed. (1826; repr. Richmond: Appeals Press, Inc., for the William Parks Club, 1924), 20.
- 4 Among the churchgoers were the families of Caleb Arnold, Joseph Bailey, Jeremiah Childs, Thomas Cranston, Nathaniel and Henry Coggeshall, William Ellery, Elnathan Hammond, Joseph Howland, John Lyon, Thomas Melville, Henry Osborn, John Stevens, and Daniel Vernon.
- 5 Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness: The First Century of Urban Life in America 1625-1742* (1938; repr., New York: Capricorn, 1964), 310.
- 6 Edward Field, ed., *State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations at the End of the Century: A History* (Boston: Mason Publishing, 1902), 2: 397. See also Samuel Greene Arnold, *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (New York: Preston & Rounds, 1894), 2: 130. Data is from the Annual Report of Governor Richard Ward to the British Board of Trade, January 9, 1741, originally in John Russell Bartlett, *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England* (Providence: Knowles, Anthony & Co., 1859), 5: 8-14.
- 7 William Douglass, *Summary Historical and Political of the First Planting, Progressive Improvements, and Present State of the British Settlements in North America*, (1751; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1972), 2: 99.
- 8 Elaine Forman Crane, *A Dependent People: Newport, Rhode Island in the Revolutionary Era* (1985; repr., New York: Fordham University Press, 1992), 15. The data is from the Annual Report of Governor Stephen Hopkins to the Lord Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, January 24, 1764, in Arnold, *History of Rhode Island*, 2: 248, and Bartlett, *Rec. Col. R. I.*, 6: 378-383.
- 9 Lynne Withey, *Urban Growth in Colonial Rhode Island: Newport and Providence in the Eighteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 9-13.
- 10 Olive R. Jones, "Commercial Foods, 1740-1820," in *Historical Archaeology* 27 (1993):25-41.
- 11 Proprietors sold retail goods in shops; merchants owned stores, also called warehouses situated on their wharfs where they sold their goods wholesale.
- 12 Edwin J. Perkins, *The Economy of Colonial America*, 2d. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 215. Carole Shammass compared American colonists' household expenses with those of England in the same period and found the English spent seventy percent of their incomes on food.
- 13 *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, May 29, 1740, 2.
- 14 *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Sept. 4, 1740, 2.
- 15 *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Aug. 20, 1744, 2.
- 16 Accessed at American Historical Newspapers online, Salve Regina University, Newport, <http://0-infoweb.newsbank.com.helin.uri.edu/> Accessed March 15, 2016.
- 17 T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 115.

- 18 Ann and James Franklin published the *Rhode-Island Gazette* in Newport, Sept. 27, 1732 — Mar. 24, 1733, until his sudden death. In 1758, Ann Franklin published the *Newport Mercury* with her son.
- 19 Carole Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 186, 192. Shammas explains that gentility involved more than good manners, polite civic behavior, and beautiful clothes. The expectation for those considered gentry included ability to read and cipher, converse on current affairs, understand music, ride a horse, and dance.
- 20 Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage, 1992). Bushman looks at every aspect of what colonial consumers purchased, wore, ate, displayed, and how they lived, suggesting that consumers who aspired to Georgian sensibilities experienced a rise in status.
- 21 Christina J. Hodge, *Consumerism and the Emergence of the Middle Class in Colonial America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Merchants purchased this Chinese-made ceramic in large quantities; Britain did not attain the technology to replicate porcelain until 1750. Data from the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House site is from an archaeological dig sponsored by the Cultural and Historic Preservation Department, Salve Regina University, Newport, in 2003.
- 22 Alexander Hamilton (1712-1756), *Gentleman's Progress: the Itinerary of Dr. Alexander Hamilton 1744*, Carl Bridenbaugh, ed. (1948; repr., Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992).
- 23 John Banister's accounts include waste books or cash books, whose contents were transferred into day books or journals by the day of the transaction, and also transferred into ledgers by the account of the commodity, the ship, and the customers. In addition, there are letterbooks and receipt books. NHS has a large collection of these books as well as those of several contemporary merchants. Rhode Island Historical Society has Banister books, which complement the Newport collection.
- 24 Crane, *Dependent People*, 32, 94. Crane states, "The Newport assessment list of 1760 shows eighty-six merchants paid £10 or more in taxes, contributing fifty percent of the taxes for the town that year out of 962 taxpaying citizens." Banister was not among the top-paying thirty-three merchants, such as the Malbones, Redwood, Scott, and Ellery, paying £20 or more. Hence, Banister was in the middle range of wealth among Newport merchants. See also, Ezra Stiles, *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles, D.D., LL.D., 1755-1794*, Franklin B. Dexter, ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916), 90. Reverend Stiles estimated that there were twenty-two families in Newport in 1760 worth more than £100,000 Old Tenor [hereafter OT; note: this is not annual income]. In the middle range, about twenty families were worth £40,000 OT, with the remaining one thousand families' resources worth £2,000 OT. At the time, the face value of Rhode Island paper money was less than half the value indicated on the paper.
- 25 Bruce Bigelow, "The Commerce of Rhode Island with the West Indies before the American Revolution." Master's thesis, Brown University, 1930, Part I, Section 4:50-60, NHS. See also Judith and Evan Jones, *The Book of Bread* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 23-26.
- 26 *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, August 15, 1746, 2; William Panschar, *Baking in America: Economic Development* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1956), 1: 25-30. Panschar compares colony laws on prices and weights of bread loaves; twelve-ounce loaves cost about two pence. In order to assist in the rising, bakers added potash, a residue from wood ashes, with properties similar to baking soda. See Catherine Adams and Elizabeth H. Pleck, *Love of Freedom: Black Women in Colonial and Revolutionary New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 179. One example of a woman baker in Newport was Charity "Duchess" Quamino (1739-1805), who by 1780 was a free black woman, using her skills to run a catering business out of the house of her former master, William Ellery Channing. The Loeb Center, Newport, R.I., has an interactive exhibit on her life.
- 27 Walter Nebiker, Robert Owen Jones, and Charlene K. Roice, *Historic and Architectural Resources of Narragansett, Rhode Island* (Providence: Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission, 1991), 9-10. The authors derived this statement about corn output from the work of William Davis Miller, "The Narragansett Planters," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 43 (April 1933): 87.
- 28 Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (London: Gregory Dexter, 1643), 11. Accessed at: <https://archive.org/details/keyintolanguageo2will>. Accessed on March 15, 2016. Williams explained how native people used corn flour in food preparation.
- 29 Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England 1650-1750*, 2nd ed. (1982; repr. New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 21.
- 30 Sandra Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2005), 186.
- 31 "Account of Family Expenses," in *Banister Journal* (August 1746- December 1749), No. 2003.18, March 8, 1748: 287, NHS. Journals, or "Day Books," record the daily transactions of the merchant's trade.
- 32 Ed Crews, "How Much is That in Today's Money," *Colonial Williamsburg Journal* (Summer 2002). Accessed at: www.history.org/foundation/journal/Summer02/money2.cfm. March 20, 2016. Price depended on many factors—quality, and distance to transport, packaging, and value of the colony's paper versus hard money. Professor John J. McKusker of Trinity College has a site to determine the value of pounds sterling in the eighteenth century compared to today's money. Access at: www.eh.net/ehresources/howmuch/poundq.php.
- 33 Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 145.
- 34 Daniel McIntyre, "Cheesemaking at Cocumscussoc 1641-92" in *Smith Castle Chronicle* 17 (Winter 2008): 13. Rhode Island cheese was highly valued by the well-traveled Benjamin Franklin. See also William Babcock Weedon, *Early Rhode Island: A Social History of the People* (New York: Grafton Press, 1910), 156. He writes that Joan, wife of settler Richard Smith, brought the recipe to Rhode Island from her Gloucestershire home as a seventeenth-century immigrant.
- 35 W. D. Miller, "Narragansett Planters," 82. Miller used inventories from the estates of numerous families in the South Kingstown, Rhode Island Probate Records, Vol. I-IV.
- 36 Christian McBurney, "South Kingstown Planters: Country Gentry in Colonial Rhode Island," *Rhode Island History* 45 (August 1986): 81-93. Narragansett estate owners held dominant roles in the military, politics, and the courts in eighteenth-century Rhode Island.
- 37 Alice Morse Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1898), 150.
- 38 Banister mentioned these two cheese types as ones he imported for his family.
- 39 Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, 59-67.
- 40 Julianne Treme, "Stature, Nutrition, Health and Economic Growth," doctoral dissertation, North Carolina State University, 2006, 43.
- 41 Banister Memorandum Book (February 1749-November 1767) No. 92, June 1767: 330, NHS. The Memorandum Book is similar to a diary with diverse entries. The *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, published monthly in England by an act of Parliament from 1747 through 1814, was one of a number of periodical publications available to colonists for six pence per issue. Each issue was about fifty pages in length and contained articles on science, inventions, math formulas, navigation, poetry, new compositions with "musick," gardening hints, "cookery," diagrams of forts and battles, travel routes in Europe and the colonies, debates in the press, foreign language lessons, new plays, biographies of famous Englishmen, and architecture. The access to such information expanded the knowledge of every literate person on matters of general interest. The Massachusetts Historical Society has a large collection of 1760s issues.
- 42 Surprise Valley Farm Foundation, Newport, svffoundation.org/animals. Accessed March 20, 2016. This foundation has information on the types of sheep quite likely raised in Rhode Island in the mid-eighteenth century. The Dorset Horn sheep are a breed that developed from some sheep that lived in southwest England. They gave birth to two or three sets of lambs, often with multiple births. See also, Ben Swanson, "Living History—Colonial Williamsburg Marks 30th Anniversary of Rare Breeds Program," *Colonial Williamsburg Journal*, Summer 2015, at www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Summer15. Accessed on March 1, 2016.
- Williamsburg has raised Leicester Longwools, Devon cows, Berkshire hogs, and Nankin Chickens for thirty years. Specific names for breeds rarely existed in the eighteenth century. Instead, in contemporary newspapers, sellers described the animals' colors and physical traits.
- 43 W. D. Miller, "Narragansett Planters," 84.
- 44 Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*, 147-49. Anderson quotes from a Rhode Island General Assembly meeting of December 2, 1740.

- 45 Bradford J. Wood, *This Remote Part of the World: Regional Formation in Lower Cape Fear, North Carolina 1725-1775* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 197. Wood compiled data on number of cattle per acre for numerous estates in North Carolina.
- 46 Sheila Skemp, "A Social and Cultural History of Newport, Rhode Island, 1720-1765," doctoral dissertation, Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1974, 222-223. According to Skemp, country estates became a trend when merchants had cash to invest and an interest in being viewed as a member of the colonial aristocracy. They kept their homes in town, of course, while creating a country place for a retreat. Metcalf Bowler, Godfrey Malbone, and Abraham Redwood were "neighbor squires." The Easton family kept a deer park with geese and ducks.
- 47 Middletown Book of Land Evidence, June 27, 1754: 206-210, Middletown Town Hall. A copy of this land survey is in Box 137, Folder 8, NHS. On his 1777 map of Aquidneck Island Charles Blaskowitz, British surveyor, identified the two farms, which his sons inherited. John Banister II inherited the farm near One Mile Corner with a home designed by Peter Harrison. In his Memorandum Book the colonial merchant called this Edgehill Farm. Another son, Thomas Banister, inherited West Farm on the other side of West Main Road near Miantonomi Hill and Coddington Cove.
- 48 Banister Day Book (March 1749/50-December 1758) No. 366, December 23, 1754: 323, NHS. Banister invested £1000 in livestock including cows, sheep, oxen, and horses for his two farms of about 150 acres each.
- 49 Information on breeds native to the area is at svffoundation.org/animals.
- 50 Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 44-45.
- 51 Joel Greenberg, *A Feathered River Across the Sky* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 3-9.
- 52 Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 50.
- 53 John Josselyn (1630-1675), *New England Rarities Discovered in Birds, Beasts, Fish, Serpents and Plants of That Country* (1672; repr., Boston: William Veazie, 1865), 60-70.
- 54 Banister Cash Book [Waste Book A] (November 1744-November 1746) No. 526, February 19, 1745: 651, NHS. The Cash Books or Waste Books were smaller than the Day Book or Journal and contained the daily accounting for the business, crossed out and then transferred into the large books.
- 55 Correspondence of John Banister, Edgehill, Middletown, to Doctor Nathaniel Perkins, Boston, December 1765 Letter Book No. 546, 40-42, 50, 60, NHS. Letter Books contain copies of letters written by the merchant to business associates and captains. A popular oyster in the period came from Gowanus Creek, a tidal inlet of navigable creeks along saltwater marsh near present-day Brooklyn, New York. Gowanus were extremely large oysters.
- 56 Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, 119. Earle quoted from early memoirs from Virginia and New York.
- 57 "Appendix A: "Printed Will of Edward Pelham, 21 May 1740," in Rev. Charles Timothy Brooks, *The Controversy Touching the Old Stone Mill in the Town of Newport, Rhode Island* (Newport: Charles E. Hammett, 1851), 85-88. Edward Pelham gave his daughter Hermione and John Banister a dwelling house next to his nine-room manse sometime after their marriage in 1737 and before Pelham's death in 1740. Both houses were about one hundred feet set back from the east side of Thames Street. Both parcels of land on which the homes were situated had out-houses, kitchen-yards for refuse, and gardens.
- 58 Banister Journal (1746-1749) 2003.18, NHS. Banister commenced the building of his house on Spring Street in 1748 with completion in 1751, with multiple entries in the Journal and Memorandum Book concerning its construction. There was no Pelham Street to Bellevue until twenty years later.
- 59 *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, October 25, 1744, 2. Some advertisements in the newspapers suggest this type of barter: "A Quantity of Beef, Hogs, Rice, Corn, Wheat and Salt to be Sold very reasonably for ready Money, or *exchang'd* for Rum, Sugar, Molasses. Enquire of Thomas Hubbard, Esq."
- 60 Sheila Skemp, "A Social and Cultural History of Newport, Rhode Island, 1720-1765," doctoral dissertation, University of Iowa, 1974, 10. Skemp references *Newport Historical Magazine*.2 (July 1881).
- 61 *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, April 3, 1746, 2.
- 62 Banister Cash Book (October 1758-October 1767) No. 362, May 1761 and June 1767, NHS. Banister sold these as "Country Produce." For example, Banister sold "100 bushels of Corn from the Farm for £275."
- 63 George F. Dow, *The Arts and Crafts in New England*, 305; John Josselyn, *New England Rarities*, 142.
- 64 Banister Day Book, No. 366, August 31, 1752: 227, NHS.
- 65 Randolph, *A Treatise on Gardening*, i-iv.
- 66 Banister Memorandum Book (February 1749-November 1767) No. 92, October 3, 1764: 309, NHS.
- 67 *Ibid.*, April 19, 1759: 267 and February 22, 1766: 316. According to the Memorandum Book, Benjamin Sherman planted the cherry and Thomas Weaver planted as many as fifty-seven others, including locust and buttonwood. See also Banister Day Book No. 366, May 31, 1757: 422-23 and Banister Receipt Book (June 1748-December 1755), No. 526, April 23, 1754: 23. Receipt Books held records of payments received with the actual signatures or "X" of the sailor, stevedores, shopkeepers, or captains.
- 68 Memorandum Book, January 1764: 305.
- 69 Probate and Wills, 2:1759-1792, Middletown Town Hall. These are some of the men, who owned Middletown farms in the 1760s when Banister owned his farms there.
- 70 Carole Shammas, *Pre-Industrial Consumer*, 55-66.
- 71 Mark Kurlansky, *Salt: A World History* (New York: Walker and Company, 2002), 208-209.
- 72 Banister Journal 1746-1749.
- 73 Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, 157. See also Jones, "Commercial Foods, 1740-1820," 37-38.
- 74 George Francis Dow, *Every Day Life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony* (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1935), 137. This statement was in a *Boston Gazette* advertisement in 1752.
- 75 Banister Cash Book (May 1739-July 1747) No. 365, January 1746: 109, NHS.
- 76 Fred Czarra, *Spices: A Global History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009).
- 77 David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 136. These items were in the cargo of one of John Banister's ships. See also, Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 71. It is curious that Banister did not list the pineapple in his cargo since it grew well in Surinam, Jamaica, and Barbados, islands where his ships often exchanged goods. Perhaps Banister was practical, looking for the best deal to make a profit; pineapples were expensive and rotted quickly. By the second half of the eighteenth century, the pineapple became a feature of Newport architecture and furniture.
- 78 Solomon Drowne, "Journal of 1767," in *Newport Historical Magazine* 1 (October 1880): 65-68. After he became a professor of botany at Brown University, Drowne published the journal entries that he wrote of his visit to Newport as a fourteen-year-old.
- 79 Kaori O'Connor, *The Pineapple: A Global History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 1-88. See also, Francesca Bauman, *The Pineapple: King of Fruits* (London: Vintage, 2005), 138-39. In England, beginning in the 1660s, the name for the court plant and tree nursery was an "orangery."
- 80 Richard Pares, *Yankees and Creoles: The Trade between North America and the West Indies before the American Revolution* (1956; repr., Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1968), 29-33, 93-94. Sugar helped to preserve fruits used for pies, jam, and jellies. Hannah Glasse, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* (1747; repr., London: W. Strahan, J & F. Rivington, 1774), 306.
- 81 Pares, *Yankees and Creoles*, 138.
- 82 Michael Jackson, *The World Guide to Beer* (Philadelphia, Penn.: Running Books, 1986), 14-19. Hops are flowers of the hop vine, a member of the nettle family.
- 83 Banister Memorandum Book, April 1767: 324, NHS. Sweet balm is a mint plant with lemony leaves.
- 84 David Hancock, "A Revolution in the Trade: Wine Distribution and the Development of the Infrastructure of the Atlantic Market Economy, 1703-1807," in John J. McKusker and Kenneth Morgan, eds., *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 137-38, 142-43.
- 85 Banister Day Book No. 366, February 4, 1751: 81, NHS.
- 86 David Hancock, "Markets, Merchants, and the Wider World of Boston Wine, 1700-1775," in Conrad E. Wright and Kathryn P. Viens, eds., *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community 1700-1850* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1997), 65-70. In 1679, Parliament banned imports of French wine and then set tariffs at \$20 per barrel of French-made wine in the 1703 Methuen Treaty.
- 87 Pares, *Yankees and Creoles*, 99, 136.

- 88 Reay Tannahill, *Food in History* (New York: Stein and Day, 1973), 295. See also Alice Morse Earle, *Customs and Fashions in Old New England* (1893; repr., Detroit, Mich.: Singing Tree Press, 1968), 184.
- 89 Christopher P. Magra, *The Fisherman's Cause, Atlantic Commerce and Maritime Dimensions of the American Revolution* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 2012), 91. This figure is determined from amounts documented on board vessels for the five yearly fishing trips, which generally lasted one to two months.
- 90 John J. McKusker, "The Business of Distilling in the Old World and the New World during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: the Rise of a New Enterprise and its Connection with Colonial America," in John J. McKusker and Kenneth Morgan, eds., *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 203. According to McKusker, in 1760, the annual consumption for members of the Royal Navy in the Caribbean was 22.8 gallons, considerably more than the general population.
- 91 Hammett, *A Sketch of the History of the Congregational Church*, 52. The clerk's entry indicated that it cost £52.15.6 (or about \$6,380 in today's money) to raise the structure of the First Congregational Church and feed the workers.
- 92 Banister Memorandum Book, August 1751: 90, NHS. See also the Banister Journal No. 2003.18, November 15, 1749, 531, NHS. Richard B. Morris, *Government and Labor in Early America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 209-211. Morris states, "Liquor was invariably part of wage contracts" with carpenters, coopers, joiners, and shipbuilders.
- 93 Pares, *Yankees and Creoles*, 125; McKusker, "The Business of Distilling," in McKusker and Morgan, eds., *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy*, 188. Caribbean island distillers often added molasses to juniper berry to make gin or brandy.
- 94 Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, 305-306.
- 95 Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days*, 164. F.C. Gedge and Co. advertised tea, coffee, and chocolate from the East India Company Warehouses in *The London Journal* (May 30, 1724).
- 96 Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 71.
- 97 Edith May Tilley, "Historic Spots in Newport," Typescript, 13, NHS.
- 98 David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 59.
- 99 Carole Shammas, "The Revolutionary Impact of European Demand for Tropical Goods," in John J. McKusker and Kenneth Morgan, eds., *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 174.
- 100 Louis Evan Grivetti and Howard-Yana Shapiro, eds., *Chocolate: History, Culture, and Heritage* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2009), 281-96, 497-98, 549-54. French chocolate plantations in West Africa did not commence until the nineteenth century.
- 101 "Account of Family Expenses," Banister Day Book No. 366, Aug. 27, 1750: 29, Jan. 10, 1752: 184, and Jan. 12, 1752: 178, NHS. Banister listed "26 chocolate... £1" and "34 cocoa... £11." Banister did not indicate ounces or pieces.
- 102 Mary Miley Theobald, "A Cup of Hot Chocolate," *Colonial Williamsburg Journal*, Winter 2012. Access at: www.history.org/foundation/journal/Winter12_newformat/chocolate.cfm. Accessed May 7, 2016. Theobald states that one pressed cake of chocolate weighed two to four ounces. She also points out that during the American Revolution soldiers in the Continental Army received a ration of chocolate. By the end of the eighteenth century, increased supply and popular demand led to a decrease in the price, and chocolate became a commodity purchased by all classes.
- 103 Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: the Place of Sugar in Modern Times* (New York: Viking Press, 1985), 154. Mintz connects the importance of sugar and caffeine in tea, coffee, and chocolate that led to their increased consumption.
- 104 John Banister's extended family in Newport included his wife's sisters, their husbands, and children. While Hermione Pelham Banister and John Banister had two sons; Elizabeth Pelham Harrison and Peter Harrison, the colonial architect, had three daughters and a son; and Penelope Pelham Cowley and Captain Joseph Cowley had three daughters. His mother-in-law, Arabella Williams Pelham Holman, married a second time to John Holman, but continued to live in town at the Pelham manse on the east side of Thames Street.
- Living close by were Penelope Goodson Stelle, her husband Captain Isaac Stelle, and a daughter, Christian, who was a "second cousin" to the Banister, Cowley, and Harrison children, as their great-grandparents were Edward Pelham and Freelove Arnold, youngest daughter of Governor Benedict Arnold. John Banister's sister and brother lived in town for some time and each had a daughter who joined family gatherings.
- 105 Inventory of the Personal Estate of Edward Pelham, Town Council Book, Newport, Rhode Island, October 21, 1741, VIII: 1520, NHS. One way to consider the level of entertaining by merchant families is to review the probate of furniture. Since no probate exists for John Banister, a view of the Pelham household where Banister and his family lived for a number of years will provide some clues. The household had "1 dozen Leather chairs in the Great Room, a Dining Table and Tea Table." See also, John Banister Waste Book B 1746-1750 Mss 919, May 20, 1748: 270 and June 20, 1748: 337, Rhode Island Historical Society. While Banister lived with the Pelhams, he entered purchases of a tea table from one of the Newport Goddards and corner and side tables from Boston furniture makers in his account books.
- 106 Cecil Dyer, *The Newport Cookbook* (New York: Weathervane Books, 1972), 70.
- 107 Typically, the large turtle was towed astern the ship to keep it fresh before reaching Newport.
- 108 Sammy Freebody, "A Turtle Feast," (1752) in *The Magazine of American History with Notes and Queries* 4 (January 1880): 455. See also Freebody Papers, Mss 111, 99: 100, RHHS.
- 109 A piece of music by that title written by Thomas Arne in 1764, celebrated the marriage of Princess Augusta and the Prince of Brunswick and can be found in Charles and Samuel Thompson, *200 Country Dances*, vol. 3 (London, 1773):195.
- 110 George Champlin Mason, *Reminiscences of Newport* (Newport: Hammett, 1884), 101-103.
- 111 Drowne, *Newport Historical Magazine* 1 (October 1880): 67.
- 112 Banister Cash Book (October 1758-October 1767) No. 362, July 1765, NHS. Banister does not indicate the name of a cook in his records, and yet from his status in Newport society, it can be assumed that Hermione did not cook the meals for guests. Other than Cuff Brenton, Phyllis Hazard was a well-known black cook for the Hazard family in the early eighteenth century. Her skills at cooking are recounted in Thomas Robinson Hazard (1797-1886), *The Jonny-Cake Papers of "Shepherd Tom" Together with Reminiscences of Narragansett Schools of Former Days* (Boston: Merrymount Press, 1915), 197-199.
- 113 Elizabeth Cleland, *A New and Easy Method of Cookery* (Edinburgh: W. Gordon, C. Wright, S. Williston & J. Bruce, 1755), 60.
- 114 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 58.
- 115 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 65.
- 116 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 36-37.
- 117 Banister Cash Book No. 362, November 1765, NHS.
- 118 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 15, 33.
- 119 Banister Cash Book No. 362, December 1766, NHS.
- 120 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 27, 39.
- 121 Banister Cash Book No. 362, July to September 1766, NHS.
- 122 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 19.
- 123 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 27.
- 124 Banister Cash Book No. 362, December 1766, NHS. Banister listed his monetary gifts "to the poor at Xmas." Anglicans celebrated the twelve days of Christmas and continued their gift giving for New Year's Day.
- 125 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 49, 73.
- 126 Cleland, *New and Easy Method of Cookery*, 73.
- 127 Banister Cash Book (December 1751-September 1758) No. 364, December 1751 and Cash Book No. 362, July 1765.
- 128 Cash Book No. 362, December 1762 and November 1765.
- 129 J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur (1735-1813), "What is an American?" (Letter 3) and "Nantucket" (Letter 7) in *Letters from an American Farmer* (London, Thomas Davies, 1782), 57, 185.