Glassford & Henderson: Curating 18th Century History from Store Ledgers

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Glassford & Henderson: Curating 18th Century History from Store Ledgers

Rosalind J. Beiler, Department of History
AMH 4110 – Colonial American History Class Project

- Partnership with History Revealed, Inc.
- John Glassford & Alexander Henderson – proprietors of store in 1750s and 1760s in Colchester, Virginia
AMH 4110 - Colonial American History Class Project

Learning Objectives:

- Gain first-hand experience as historians of early America interpreting primary sources.
- Learn about how historians read and analyze eighteenth-century sources to understand the material world of people living in the period.
- Learn about the issues historians consider when presenting their research to broad audiences.
- Learn about how to present scholarship in a visual exhibit format.
- Make original contributions to scholarly community as well as the broader public.
- Complete a publication that can be listed on student resumes.
Parts of the Project

Transcribe 3 Page Sets

Students learn:

• How trade and the economy worked
• About the consumer world of 18th century Virginia
• Practical paleography skills
• Investigative and research skills
Parts of the Project

- Research a person, place, object, topic of interest and write a blog post

- Students learn:
  - To conduct historical research to contextualize 18th century texts
  - The challenges of working with first-hand historical evidence
  - To create their own interpretation for public audiences
Parts of the Project

- Create a visual interpretation/exhibit of their research

- Students learn:
  - To translate written research into visually appealing exhibits
  - To work with infographic/visual design software
  - About how local consumer goods fit into the Atlantic world
Challenges of class project

- Finding Time - Teaching students how to create visual interpretation of historical research
  - Class focuses on early American history
  - Added component - how to conduct research
  - Now adding another component - how to create visual interpretations

- Finding images
  - Appropriate to the eighteenth century
  - In the public domain
Take-away from Citizen Curator Workshop

- Copyright issues
  - Library resources for teaching students about them
- STARS as a potential repository for class projects
- Where to look for images in the public domain
- Theories of exhibition to build into project
- Ideas for student workshops