

'Economy' in *Georgia's Frontier Women: Female Fortunes in a Southern Colony* by Ben Marsh. Published by The University of Georgia Press, © 2007 by the University of Georgia Press.

Available from: <http://hdl.handle.net/1893/2543>

Publisher web site:

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<CN>Chapter 2

<CT>Economy

<TXT>The economic fortunes of the women of early Georgia, as the trustees expected, more often than not were closely intertwined with those of their husbands and fathers. As in England, Europe, and colonial America, for the most part women's conventional responsibilities as workers within the household dictated their everyday employment. But although domesticity was the nucleus of their work, the unfamiliar circumstances gave rise to new permutations of women's work within and outside the household. The frontier required a range of tasks and occupations that made the activities of early Georgia women literally groundbreaking. In addition to bringing unforeseen encumbrances, the scarcity of labor and the absence of a functional market economy offered favorable opportunities to women.. This was a miniature golden age, when institutions were in their infancy and women could expect greater power in the public sphere and more direct control of economic resources than was usual in Britain or America. An English farmer's wife could become "Conqueror Over the whole place"; a half-breed Creek woman could claim that "she could command every Man" and become the largest landholder in the colony; and an Italian mother--despite many children--could "domineer over all."<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, the colony's institutional infancy created conditions liable to constrain female economic agency and restrict activities and opportunities that were uncontested in the Old World. For many Georgia resembled something more akin to a dark age--a step back into a bygone, barbarous era. Elizabeth Bland declared in an abjectly miserable letter to Oglethorpe in June 1735 that "I have lost my liberty," describing the colony as a veritable hell on Earth and conjecturing (rather prophetically) that King George could never get away with treating his people in a like manner in Britain.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of a caste of slaves, female indentured servants were

particularly vulnerable to exploitation of their labor and of their bodies-- as one woman learned in the summer of 1739 when she broke into a property to find that her indentured granddaughter had scars across her body "from her Neck down to her Heels."<sup>3</sup> Similar atrocities were reported across the province. Women were theoretically prohibited from landholding and inheritance, denied an economic identity within marriage, and exploited outside it as vulnerable orphans and needy widows. They were commodified and on at least one occasion actually bought and sold, which would be more startling were it not that the institution of slavery was only just around the corner.

In short, the complexities associated with the settlement of a colony extended both ends of the spectrum of female economic experiences--offering both greater latitude and greater menace than were to be expected elsewhere. Of course, the economic behavior and labor patterns of early Georgia women were not metaphorically groundbreaking--the continent's colonial past was littered with antecedents in the Chesapeake, New England, the Carolinas, and the Middle Colonies. These were echoes of older patterns of colonial female employment that were now softened by the onset of normalization, maturity, and, in some places, gentility. In her study of the colonial courtrooms of Connecticut, for instance, Cornelia Dayton Hughes found that women became less and less conspicuous as the organizing principles of society changed and the economy commercialized.<sup>4</sup>

As had occurred fitfully in other colonies, the economic lifestyles of Georgia's frontierswomen would change significantly as the province aged, a process that I describe more fully in chapter 5. But the initial conditions of their existence remind us that the evolution of colonial female experience--even among white women--evinced no national trends. Simply put, to view colonial female experiences through a national chronology is to overlook the crucial importance of regional age (that is, the length of time

that a colonial population occupied an area). Focusing on regional age allows a more sensitive accommodation of the local influences that affected colonial evolution. It also mitigates the historiographical dominance of colonies established in the early seventeenth century--when Filmerian political theory and formative race relations were more resonant influences than they were one hundred years later. Though these influences ultimately seemed to collect like migrating birds, it is vital to appreciate that the evolution of gender relations in each colony started from a different point and at a different time.

Georgia provided a distinctive human environment. The scarcity of labor, demographic imbalance, and absence of a functional market economy were fairly unusual for their time, although parts of the backcountry, the Ohio Valley, and New Hampshire were similarly configured. But Georgia was made more distinctive by its location in a South increasingly dominated by slavery. The labor scarcity and economic disability were made more noticeable, felt more acutely, because of the colony's proximity to lowcountry South Carolina, the most lucrative location in mainland America at the time.

The prosperity of Georgia's nearest neighbors in the British Atlantic world, both on the mainland (the Carolinas and Virginia) and offshore (the Caribbean islands of Jamaica, Leeward Islands, and Barbados) was overwhelmingly based upon their exploitation of slave labor. By the early eighteenth century British traders and New World planters had established a highly profitable symbiosis in which Africans were transported across the Atlantic and forced to work, typically in appalling conditions, on plantations that generated staple crops (such as tobacco, sugar, and rice) for sale in Europe. Economic forces had intertwined with cultural practices over time. The voracious New World demand for field laborers, who were needed to satisfy the expanding tastes of Europeans, meshed with a growing British capacity to

supply European planters with West Africans. Typically taken captive by other Africans in the course of internecine warfare, they were shipped across the Atlantic initially through the Royal African Company and subsequently through separate traders. Long-standing suppositions and beliefs about the inferiority of Africans were revitalized and creatively expanded upon in order to justify the treatment meted out to them: they were variously held to be a people bearing a divine curse, morally and culturally perverse, physiologically suited to tropical soil and toil. Such cultural stigmatizing helped to allay any lingering guilt about the exploitation of slaves, and before the close of the eighteenth century white expressions of opposition to slavery tended to be few and far between. The Georgia trustees had not prohibited slavery as a matter of principle but because it was inconsistent with their social and economic intentions for the colony.

The Georgia records illuminate a wide variety of economic roles fulfilled by women during the trusteeship, but the overwhelming majority of these roles can be described in two ways. First, "domestic employment" preoccupied the vast majority of females for the vast majority of their working lives. In "domestic employment" I include all specialist housekeeping skills that pertained to the household domain. These skills were remarkably diverse and wide ranging and have been comprehensively expounded and explicated by historians, from the classic "pots and pans" of Julia Cherry Spruill to the excellent recent scholarship of Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Carol Berkin, and Cynthia Kierner.

The second category of "extradomestic employment" that I would like to apply incorporates female activity that fell appreciably outside the boundaries of typical household maintenance. In fact, for the most part it incorporated activities that were specialized or hybrid extensions of unpaid domestic or familial responsibilities, including making millinery, providing lodging, engaging in midwifery, dressmaking, and retailing foodstuffs and dry

goods. Nursing the sick for a fee or teaching children for money were no great distance from family health-care duties or the imparting of critical skills to sons and daughters. Running a large tavern demanded the focused application of cooking, occasional cleaning, and--most important--shrewd accounting techniques. Full-time agricultural labor was literally a few steps down the road from garden upkeep and cultivation. Even prostitution can be viewed as a debased extension of more conventional domestic pursuits. In short, female economic behavior outside the official homestead was overwhelmingly based on tasks within it.

In fact, inconsiderate Georgia settlers (presumably occupied with other, more pressing concerns) defined no such thing as an "official" homestead--and would have looked confusedly and disdainfully upon the artificial categories that I have just mentioned. Individuals frequently undertook both kinds of labor or switched between one and the other, configuring their economic activity to best meet their personal and family needs. Besides, it rarely mattered where a daughter or female servant worked, for their labor was directed by a higher authority: a mother or father, a master or mistress. Equally, in the eyes of the law it did not matter where a wife worked, for all the proceeds of her labor notionally devolved to her husband. The ends not only justified the means but made quibbling about their exact nature rather pointless. Given these limitations, the historical value of differentiating between female domestic and extradomestic economic activity relates not to the purpose of the work but rather its nature. Where the first category of "domestic employment" entailed tasks that were short, varied, numerous, and unpaid, the second tended to be more specialized, more time consuming, and much more likely to be remunerated.

As I have noted, the trustees' promotional literature heavily emphasized the importance of women's work in the domestic environment. In Georgia as well as in London the idealized woman was rooted in familial

domesticity. Lady Frances Bathurst, arguably the most highborn female settler in the colony, was remembered in 1736 as "a loving Wife, an affectionate Mother, and a true Housekeeper"--not quite as verbose, perhaps, as Anne Bradstreet's famous fifteen-line eulogy for her mother in 1643 Massachusetts but embracing similar principles. Such acclamations were more remarkable when recorded about the living rather than the dead, who were prone to be shrouded in respectful mumblings. John Wesley was sufficiently impressed by the hospitality shown him by two ministers' wives that he made a note in his journal, wondering that "it appeared to be their delight as well as their custom to be the servants" of all visitors. It was one thing to do one's duty but quite another to enjoy it. Given the nature of much of the work--an interminable sequence of arduous, unsociable, and fatiguing chores, punctuated only by less mundane tasks--it is fair to say that the ratio of enjoyment to fulfillment for domestic employment was quite low, and the arrival of special visitors might well provide welcome diversions. It is also worth noting that John Wesley's track record in Georgia--as Carol Ebel has demonstrated--does not suggest he was a particularly shrewd judge of female appearances.<sup>5</sup>

Nonetheless, the centrality of females in the context of the household was axiomatic to the eighteenth-century colonists of Georgia. Thomas Causton took great pains to describe the houses of the fledgling colony in a letter to his wife in England, on the implicit understanding that this area, along with the garden (whose dimensions he recorded), would fall within her domain; this was the information that pertained to her interests. Causton concluded, "We shall have a fine prospect," and urged his wife to bring furniture, thread, and linen. Even before their arrival in the colony, wives were fulfilling expectations in caring for their families. Francis Moore reported the activities of those awaiting departure from the English Channel as they prepared for life in the New World. He records that while the men practiced

using small arms, "there were also thread, worsted, and knitting needles given to the women, who employed their leisure time in making stockings and caps for their family, or in mending their clothes and linen." Upon arrival on the coastline of Georgia, the women washed their linen and dressed their meat on shore with fires made of cedar and bay trees, an extraordinary luxury for Englishwomen used to scrounging or gleaning for furzewood and unused to the teeming oyster banks that were accessible at low tide.<sup>6</sup>

Moore's casual observation reminds us that settling the New World required a reconfiguration of domestic tasks as well as better-documented adjustments in husbandry practices and commercial enterprises. The first dwellings of Georgia--and indeed the vast majority of houses during the trusteeship--probably were crude log cabins consisting of one multifunctional room that served as kitchen, dining room, and bedroom. The fireplace was the most important feature with a variety of cooking utensils hung around it. Archaeological excavation of the lot of a family that lived in Frederica between 1736 **and** 1748 recovered several items relating to the construction and maintenance of clothing, including brass thimbles, sewing pins, and buttons. The actual tasks of cleaning, mending, and cooking probably differed little from what might be expected in England--or, for that matter, in other colonies. But the sparseness of materials meant that women were more often obliged to produce the ingredients they needed for preparing foodstuffs, medication, and other household products. Admittedly, Georgia settlers had some advantages over some of their forebears--not least the accessible goods and services in nearby Charlestown, and the trustees' stores, which initially provided basic supplies and equipment. But the majority of wives--and especially the inhabitants of more remote settlements--remained heavily dependent upon their own labor and ingenuity for securing subsistence provisions.<sup>7</sup>



At first glance such domestic responsibilities do not appear to have held much worth in the eyes of colonial women's contemporaries. Their activities are submerged, even in the relatively barren historical record of female economic activity, beneath a pool of other, more exceptional and notable occupations that only a minority of women were willing or able to follow. Anne Ewing has rightly identified early Georgia women's domestic activity as a salient contribution to settlement, stating that their importance "can best be seen through their accomplishments within household boundaries." But although the women's importance in this sphere is undeniable, their visibility is more questionable. As Anne Frazer Rogers has remarked of the Fort Frederica settlement, female cooking, cleaning, and nursing tasks tended to leave little archaeological evidence. Equally, contemporary writers rarely felt the need to describe any kind of domestic activity in a direct or complete manner. William Stephens described the buildings at the Bethesda orphanage as including a workhouse for women and children, an infirmary, and two large kitchens facing one another "for Washing, Brewing, &c." This "&c" is a reflection of the quotidian character of the feminine tasks that Stephens did not even bother to describe to his readers. It may even be suggestive of a contemporary undervaluing of the female labor patterns associated with domesticity.<sup>8</sup>

In fact, regardless of what they chose to record in official and personal accounts, contemporaries were keenly aware of the fundamental contribution made by female domestic labor to the maintenance and advancement of colonial society. Women's work, paradoxically, was at its most obvious when it was absent. In a sense, a refreshing feature of writing in the twenty-first century is to have to emphasize that most male contemporaries were confounded by and many incapable of undertaking domestic responsibilities in the absence of an adult female--regardless of whether they held women in disdain or not. Settlers reported in 1738 that bachelors

lacked the necessary domestic skills; that they "endured much disorder in their dwellings"; that they needed women in order to "establish an orderly household." Bolzius expressed considerable admiration for two sons who were notable because they managed to operate their household during their mother's illness. The struggle of neighbors who had lost spouses or could not find one were obvious for all to see, atomically unstable. Widowers consciously and subconsciously reminded their married brethren of the usefulness of a wife--how many "could not keep house without her." Without women's performance of their functions within the homestead, men could not perform theirs outside or achieve self-sufficiency, let alone increase their assets. The recurring obsession with attracting large numbers of young women to become wives in the colony, then, was to satisfy an economic thirst as much as a demographic one.<sup>9</sup>

If available, female relatives were expected to fill in domestic duties in place of wives, though less reliance could be placed on adult daughters who swiftly married and moved off. In the absence of wives or relatives, female servants--indentured to the trust or individuals, or paid independently--fulfilled many vital domestic needs of the young colony. Women in service, although occasionally employed in the fields and gardens (see discussion later in this chapter), were most often used as housekeepers and maids. It was reported in October 1743, following the expiration of a number of indentures, that the colony was suffering desperately from a shortage of servants--both male and female, either for agricultural labor or "the most necessary Domestick Uses." Samuel Hill requested information about maidservants before even crossing the Atlantic, realizing that he was "too unskill'd in the making a Bed or boiling the Pot."<sup>10</sup> The eagerness with which female servants were sought in the absence of wives, mothers, and other relations demonstrates first and foremost that this kind of labor was fundamental to the welfare of every inhabitant of the colony. Second, it demonstrates that this kind of labor was intensely gender specific.

Europeans made thousands of adjustments in the process of acclimating to the New World environment. But the inability of the vast majority of men, when faced with a crisis, to improvise domestic duties that they were physically capable of (though admittedly unfamiliar with) underlined the depth of psychological commitment to gendered place. Female inheritance patterns and testamentary activity could bend and flex over time, relations with other races and ethnicities could fade in and out of fashion, religious piety and slanderous tongue wagging could be interpreted in manifold ways, but female domestic work patterns were one gender parameter that was not to be tampered with. In Georgia, away from the stability of kinship and communal links in the Old World, these traditional patterns took on added import. The value accorded women's work--though invisible to economists, concealed from archaeologists, and neglected in the historical record--was still determined by its demographic and geographic context, by supply and demand. Given the later involvement of bondswomen within Georgia households, the trusteeship period established the high-water mark of white female domestic labor for centuries to come. In July 1750 just six months before slavery was officially legalized in the colony, a Salzburger announced that because he could not find a white servant-girl to help run his household and deal with his three children during his wife's prolonged illness, "necessity had forced him to buy a black female servant." Nine years later significant numbers of Salzburgers regularly trekked to Savannah to inspect the newly arrived cargoes of slaves.<sup>11</sup>

The second category of "extradomestic employment" is considerably more noticeable in the colonial records, which document women who were active across a wide range of vocational pursuits, from agricultural labor and sericulture to tavern keeping, manufacturing, interpreting for Indians, and retail. In particular, the trustees' obsession with careful land layout and distribution, and their insistence on nearby gardens for town lots, extended

the compass of the household to incorporate agricultural work and work with livestock. Female household work had never been restricted to four walls in the way it would be in later centuries, but the frontier insisted upon an even larger sphere of activity. At one time or another in trusteeship Georgia, women cultivated Indian corn, asparagus, vines, European wheat, peas, beans, potatoes, barley, turnips, rice, rye, oats, peaches, nectarines, limes, oranges and apples, and fish and shellfish--a good deal more than the gathering of wild fruits and roots that Oglethorpe hypothesized. The independent reports of two officers recently returned from Georgia--Lt. Col. Alexander Heron and Capt. George Dunbar--both commented on the remarkable plantations of a number of widows on St. Simons Island, with Heron stating not only that they raised enough for their own support but that "he has often bought of them Pease, Sallading, Fowls & Other Things." The plantations of these widows and their families were evidently exemplary to the lackluster soldiers and idle settlers of Frederica.<sup>12</sup>

Of course, capabilities varied enormously depending upon the origin of settlers. It is no coincidence that the majority of women found to be active in agriculture or animal husbandry were not from London but from the peasant societies of Germany and the Low Countries. Milton Ready noted that many Londoners, and particularly the "unfortunate city-folk . . . lacked the special skills of the farmer and backwoodsman"; equally, their wives and daughters often lacked the skills required to cultivate and process garden produce, to thresh or winnow grain, to tend to livestock, "&c." The notion of preadaptation, that some ethnic communities were more successful in the New World because of an ecological or at least occupational similarity to the culture of their homelands, appears particularly applicable to the advances made by the Salzburgers, who were mainly farmers and craftspeople. Indeed, the records show a heterogeneity of agricultural responsibilities falling to women, which dispels the illusion of the trustees' expectations. Conditions

on the frontier of colonization--land rich and labor scarce--were such that wives were often forced or allowed to fill a wide variety of occupational loopholes.<sup>13</sup>

Most of those extradomestic responsibilities taken on by women (and children under their direction) did not require a strong labor force. Still, the clearing of land--the first step before farming could be attempted--was by no means an exclusively male preserve. John Vat commented that several female Salzburger resolved to clear some ground, in the process motivating a number of single men to do likewise. Bolzius similarly noticed in 1736 that "some people have very good assistance by their strong Wives" in clearing land and laboring, and later he stated with pride that in the Salzburger congregation, neither the men nor the women were "afraid of work."<sup>14</sup> Although women rarely worked on their husbands' allocated forty-five-acre plantation, many examples demonstrate that the five-acre gardens laid out on the fringes of towns and settlements were exclusively managed by wives and widows. One woman was so pleased with her experimentation with rye in the summer of 1741 that she resolved to send some of the product back to a benefactor in Europe--a gesture not only of gratitude but also of triumph.<sup>15</sup>

English immigrants were generally less successful than their continental European counterparts in the pursuit of agricultural self-sufficiency (let alone profit), a disparity that many historians have attributed to the makeup of the colonists. Of 827 listed settlers who were sent over "on the charity" before 1742, only 97 had occupations related to husbandry. Despite a lack of husbandry experience (particularly among the urban settlers), many tried their hand at farming, only to drift into shopkeeping, coastal trade, day laboring, or simply abandoning the colony. In the early years even the highest social classes within the colony were not exempt from engaging in agricultural labor, however distasteful. Samuel Eveleigh visited the plantation of Sir Francis Bathurst in May 1735 and

remarked that the baronet needed two more servants because his wife and son were working in the fields themselves. There were few exceptions to the general deficiency in English husbandry, and most colonists found themselves relying heavily on the trustees' stores in Savannah, Frederica, and Darien, where they could purchase provisions on credit if need be. The widow Ann Harris's clearing and planting of her own five-acre plot, and her supplying of milk to several families, earned her an award as "one of the most valuable Inhabitants amongst us, remarkable for Industry."<sup>16</sup>

Small-scale animal husbandry was a responsibility that often fell to wives and was less exclusively the domain of continental European settlers than arable farming. The feeding and killing of chickens, geese, goats, sheep, and hogs, and the tending of both trust and private cattle herds demonstrate that women played an active role in generating as well as processing the products of livestock. Women even practiced beekeeping at both the northern and southern boundaries of trusteeship Georgia--at Ebenezer by the Salzburgers, whose hives were allegedly damaged in May 1734 by "malicious Negroes," and at Frederica.<sup>17</sup>

Some aspects of work with livestock, most notably milking, held traditional associations with female labor; pragmatic philanthropists in South Carolina sent the Georgians a gift of one hundred cattle, which Oglethorpe distributed among the settlers so that every family that included a woman received a milk cow. However, where in England the work of the dairymaid was becoming increasingly professionalized during the eighteenth century, in trusteeship Georgia few women brought sufficient experience to make more advanced products such as butter and cheese. In late December 1734 Robert Parker complained that the only dairy wife capable of making decent butter had been punished excessively for a minor offense, made to sit in the stocks for three hours during a rainstorm, carried aboard a sloop, and ducked so forcefully that she was lame for months.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to free wives who turned their hand to small-scale husbandry and those involved in sericulture, many indentured female colonists were given agricultural responsibilities by the trustees, another indication of the scantiness of laborers. The trustees employed seventeen German male servants and twenty-three females "at the Crane and in the Garden," perhaps because the trustees were aware of the Germans' superior proficiency at agriculture. A number of indentured Swiss families were similarly instructed to tend to the cow pastures on Hutchinsons Island. The women servants were to be employed as directed by overseers or petty officials at each location and paid the sum of six pence per day (compared with eight pence for men) to maintain themselves in food and clothing. However, the pay was conditional upon completion of allocated tasks, and if they failed to perform their work as directed, they were to be paid in proportion only to the work they did. Though a superficially reasonable stipulation, it was one that left them dangerously dependent upon the character of the overseers, and economic muscle frequently buttressed other forms of exploitation. Even wives in the service of freeholders often found themselves laboring in the fields rather than in a domestic environment. When a tree fell on a boy in 1743, breaking both his legs, his indentured parents received relief of ten shillings a week. This was to pay for someone to help support and exercise him because neither his father nor his mother could afford to give up the "plantation work" they were doing.<sup>19</sup>

Other common extradomestic female occupations, particularly for older women, were teaching and nursing (including midwifery, discussed in chapter 1). Teaching took place for the most part in the home, although early schools were founded in Ebenezer, Savannah, and Bethesda, and some evidence of peripatetic instruction survives. The education of young children was a mother's responsibility, and, although mothers were not yet endowed with the higher status afforded maternity by the discourses following the American

Revolution, their informal instruction of their children in early Georgia was crucial to the survival and prosperity of their sons and daughters. Reading and writing on the frontier were implicitly acknowledged as less important for girls than learning to sew, cook, spin, knit, and keep house--practical skills that they would apply and perfect before they reached adulthood.

Women's responsibility for the upbringing and informal education of their own offspring often expanded to the teaching of larger groups of children--particularly in community-based settlements such as Ebenezer. Salzburger teachers imparted not only practical but religious wisdom using a pamphlet entitled "The Little Order of Salvation," which was thought to be of great benefit to children. Religious virtue was a key area of instruction that women were expected to instill in their children, but other subjects held similar significance. The trustees hired Henry Hamilton and his wife, Beguina Charlotta, a couple who had indentured themselves for four years, to teach English to German speakers in 1741. Paid teaching in proprietorship Georgia was unusual for either gender, though the trustees later sponsored the exclusively male post of schoolmaster in Savannah (providing for any children who were sent), as the trustees did teachers in Ebenezer like the Ortmanns.<sup>20</sup>

Women were employed to teach the forty children enrolled at the Bethesda orphan house (established in Georgia by Rev. George Whitefield), though women were never afforded the same status as their male counterparts'. A visitor described the arrangements in 1745<n>46: "After Dinner they retir'd, the Boys to School, and the Girls to their Spinning & Knitting."<sup>21</sup> The girls were to learn the arts of managing a household--including washing, cleaning, and sewing--and their female instructors assumed that practice made perfect, serving the dual role of teaching the children and attending to the domestic needs of the orphanage. Only a handful of girls received an education in a particular trade, since one specialized skill was not as



useful as a variety of abilities in the absence of a well-developed market economy, though the daughter of William Kilbury was put out by the trustees as "Apprentice to a Mantua Maker" as a reward for her dead father's services.<sup>22</sup>

The trustees remarked in their promotional literature that the presence of women was necessary to provide succor to the afflicted. Nursing, particularly in such a death trap as the disease-ridden lowcountry of colonial Georgia, was an extremely common pastime. In an oft-quoted letter written by Oglethorpe upon his return to Georgia in August 1733, in which he bemoans the mutinous and idle environment in the colony and the sickness raging among the population, he states that "some of the Women (most handy about the Sick) dyed; so that we had neither Doctor, Surgeon nor Nurse." Clearly, the position demanded experience, time, and exposure to a variety of transmittable diseases and perhaps for these reasons was more often remunerated than was teaching.<sup>23</sup>

Some women undoubtedly maintained themselves entirely by attending to the sick, for example, Ann Bliss, who was sent across on the James specifically to "act as Nurse in Georgia," but generally nursing and the practice of medicine, unlike professional midwifery, were only sidelines by which the poor supplemented their meager earnings. Evidence of such part-time employment is found in the expenses of Thomas Hawkins, a doctor and apothecary who died in Georgia; the expenses included reimbursements for nurses who had assisted him. Margaret Fitz, herself an indentured servant, was employed by the trustees to nurse sick servants in Frederica--but she and others like her could expect to collect a limited income for time, travel, and expenses spent caring for the sick. Mrs. Creon and her husband were bequeathed the entire estate of William Harvey in 1745 for having taken care of him during his sickness, although their efforts evidently fell somewhat short of his survival. The potential profitability of nursing is also evident

in the capital accumulated by a Dutch nurse who was appointed to keep a house in Savannah where she took care of the infirm. When she was the victim of a theft in 1739, it was found "to the Admiration of every Body when known" that she had saved a sum of seventeen guineas (roughly \$3,500 today).<sup>24</sup>

The reality of female extradomestic labor patterns belied the status of married women at law. Formal responsibility for most economic activities was prohibited to married women, as all their unprotected property and goods--and anything they earned--became subsumed into their husbands' estates. But the principle of tacit consent appears to have been widely applicable, aided and abetted by the confused state of legislative affairs during the trusteeship. Given the high level of widowhood, the prolonged absences of many husbands, and the sparse pattern of settlement, it appears that women frequently operated with comparative independence from men.

This was not necessarily a question of acting outside the law, despite the assertion by some historians that there existed "laws forbidding women to work."<sup>25</sup> For one thing, since the trustees held the absolute right to legislate for the colony in its first two decades, they were able to make exceptions to normal practices. Arguably, as a bunch of paternalistic philanthropic males, they were liable to be peculiarly receptive to female petitions--as evidenced in their willingness to grant women land despite the trustees' own strictures. For example, when Penelope Fitzwalter's husband died in 1742, she successfully applied to be appointed to the traditionally male office of wharfinger, a position that attended to the maintenance and organization of the rudimentary shipping facilities at Savannah, though it paid only small rates.<sup>26</sup> Second, even English common law made some provisions for unusual commercial circumstances. When a couple ran a business together, the law did allow the female to act as her husband's "agent." His approval of all her transactions was assumed, and she became a "feme sole trader." Such a condition existed in most American colonies in the eighteenth century,

although interestingly Marylynn Salmon has documented a more liberal and comprehensive protection of women's legal rights in the southernmost colonies and in particular in South Carolina (sadly, Georgia was not part of her study).<sup>27</sup> Women's capacity to act with a degree of economic independence was therefore informally legal, established by precedent and custom rather than by statute. Given the lack of competition, and the critical shortage of labor and facilities, few people cared that women (and often married women at that) played a more active role in the trades than might be expected elsewhere. In this period in England women tended to find their economic activities restricted as the locus of trade and manufacture moved away from the household.<sup>28</sup>

During the trusteeship, then, wives were allowed extensive control of finances across the whole spectrum of exchange--from marketing and bartering for home produce to large-scale transactions. Indeed, given that the variation in property laws from colony to colony stemmed from the diversity of English boroughs, counties, and towns, it may well be that in proprietorship Georgia the high incidence of women's owning--or expecting to own--the monetary proceeds from their personal transactions was born of early eighteenth-century London idiosyncrasies. Such ethnic origins certainly explain the frequency of female control of proceeds in German American households in other colonies, and the Salzburger women appear often to have spent their own cash and profited from their own endeavors. Mrs. Ortmann was personally awarded £7 and 5s, after presenting to the trustees a "Bill of Charges" for an orphan who was lodging with her and her husband. Reverend Bolzius recorded in his will that his wife was to keep a small hundred-acre plantation that "she had bought with her own money by raising cattle."<sup>29</sup>

One might speculate that the independence of their German counterparts motivated female English immigrants' desire to control the proceeds of their own labors. Martha Causton bought tablecloths and pewter for nearly three

pounds, a purchase that may well have been made out of her own profits. She evidently considered her own earnings to be distinct from her husband's work, for in April 1739 she delivered an impressive torrent of abuse and foul language when she was denied cash payment for mulberry leaves that she had cultivated and that she apparently thought "a Perquisite of her own."<sup>30</sup> Mary Hodges Townsend, wife of a trader frequently away from the province, wrote to the trustees in March 1740 complaining that her prices (probably for provisions) were being unfairly undercut by their official. Ann Emery, whose husband piloted ships into the mouth of the Savannah River, successfully petitioned the trustees "that She may have a license to sell Beer" on Tybee Island in 1739. Her enterprise had paid off by 1741 when she kept a chandler's shop, sold a "good store of retail ware," and allegedly flogged rum under the counter.<sup>31</sup>

One incident in particular illustrates how conditions on the colonial frontier--away from close-knit communities and institutionalized proprieties--allowed disadvantaged minorities the latitude to command significant degrees of economic and social authority, given the opportunity. On 29 May 1739 an English tradesman named Pope, new to the colony, considered it well within his rights to administer a slap to a slave woman who had had the tenacity to argue with him about prices. But his actions that afternoon generated an uproar in Savannah. The trustees' secretary recorded the incident in his journal, remarking that this girl was more than just a slave, as she was the mistress of Capt. Caleb Davis, a colonial trader of some reputation. The captain, he wrote, "suffered almost every Thing to pass through her Hands, having such confidence in her, that she had the Custody of all his Cash, as well as Books. . . . It may easily be supposed the Life of such Slavery was not a heavy Burden upon her, and that she had Art enough to shew, all Persons who had any Business with Captain Davis, were expected not to treat her with Contempt."<sup>32</sup> Pope, familiar only with European attitudes toward both women and

slaves, misunderstood the ability of the colonial frontier occasionally to distort such norms. His imprudent blow was delivered in ignorance of the special status that Captain Davis's slave, nurse, mistress, and accountant had forged for herself, belying her appearance. The records do not reveal whether Pope faced any consequences for his actions.

Wives traveling to fulfill specialized extradomestic labor activities were a common sight in trusteeship Georgia. The silk industry was a popular outlet for supplementing family income, but other options were also available. Magdalena Sanftleben traveled to Ebenezer to help with the hog slaughtering at the orphanage. Maria Gruber similarly worked at the orphanage threshing flour. In July 1741 Juliana Ortmann spent a great deal of time picking fruit, which she sold or "like others, tries to put to good use by making dried fruit and spirits." Margaretha Kalcher installed herself in the public house near the mill, where she baked bread and brewed beer from syrup from the West Indies and Indian corn. Wives often traveled long distances to engage solely in trading activities: on several occasions Maria Magdalena Rauner traveled from Ebenezer to Savannah, where she boasted of earning much money from the produce of her fieldwork, knitting, spinning, and apparently selling the labor of her three children.<sup>33</sup> Many wives, especially when sick and/or unable to assist in fieldwork, would compensate with their needlework, by which they could earn a significant amount, as local people might "bring them all sorts of tailoring and women's work."<sup>34</sup>

The women who gained access to the most de facto economic agency more often than not engaged in manufacturing, retail, and tavern keeping. Women involved in manufacturing contributed to the production of their families to varying degrees but might be expected to spend any free time--that is, after fulfilling their domestic duties--by helping to ply the trade in question. This could range from the minimal verbal efforts of Mary Duchee to persuade her obstinate husband to "stick to his Trade of Pottery" to more substantive

contributions.<sup>35</sup> By 1750 such was the level of female involvement in home-based crafts that one commentator observed that while "there is still a shortage of carpenters, turners, brickmakers, carriage builders and potters in Georgia . . . weavers, hosiers, knitters, needlemakers, bakers, millers and so on are not necessary here."<sup>36</sup>

The level of contribution a wife made to a given trade can be measured to some extent by her capacity to continue production in the absence of her husband. When her husband returned to England in 1743 to obtain servants, a Mrs. Smith of Frederica continued to profitably operate the baking business initiated by her spouse. Catherine Perkins was responsible for running the same settlement's most prosperous store during her husband's frequent absences--and her successful management impressed clerk John Brownfield sufficiently to warrant his noting it in his copybook.<sup>37</sup> The widowed Anne Dorothy Helvingstine petitioned to resettle with her children in Abercorn, to pursue their trade as leather dressers, a request that the trustees granted to avoid losing "so promising a family."<sup>38</sup>

However, for every case that displays a salient female economic contribution to extradomestic pursuits, another reminds us of the considerably worsened status of a family without a father. Many women who lost husbands had no alternative but to seek relief. Elizabeth Anderson, who continued to run a bakery after the death of her husband, did so because she found "Business failing and Times growing hard with her for Want of Employment" in 1746--and the trust extended to a number of widows small cash payments, provisions, and occasionally servants. Other widows, such as Lucy Mouse, sought work as mantua makers; she wrote a letter dated May 1747 in which she requested the lot of a deceased family, insisting that she "must follow her Business in Savannah."<sup>39</sup>

Extradomestic work in manufacturing, retail, and education, as Helen Bartlett, the first historian of early Georgia women, noted in 1939, could be

a worthwhile pursuit only in settled towns and older communities. Tavern keeping and lodging, however, were businesses that could find customers even in the most remote outposts of trusteeship Georgia. The tavern hostess, found equally in the backwoods and backcountry districts as well as in the larger seaboard settlements and towns, appears to have shared largely in the business; the enterprise, after all, was predominantly based on domestic skills and demanded little outlay. Moreover, as Sarah B. Gober Temple and Kenneth Coleman have remarked, though there was precious little currency around in the colony, some money could be made from the tavern business, a point reinforced by the complaint of the Earl of Egmont himself about the sizable sums wasted in Georgia taverns.<sup>40</sup>

Many activities that occurred behind the doors of taverns were frowned upon by the trustees, whose moral concerns led to the prohibition of hard liquor and the severe punishment of gambling and prostitution. But this could not detract from the taverns' usefulness as communal focal points, sources of information, and places where guests could be accommodated: dined and especially wined. Public houses were often used to entertain visiting Indian or European dignitaries; here, William Stephens reports, several strangers "pass'd their time of waiting merrily and by Invitation" and found plentiful entertainment.<sup>41</sup> Where Puritans congregated inside churches, Virginians convened outside courthouses, and Quakers massed in meetinghouses, early Georgians went down the local pub.

The trustees attempted to maintain stringent control of the activities that took place in taverns. They insisted, for instance, that tavern keepers have an official license, give accommodation to travelers, and sell neither dry goods nor any other articles usually kept in shops, a regulation that, as I shall describe shortly, was enforced in regard to Mary Hodges in the summer of 1733. Rum and gin, in particular, were commodities dangerous enough to have a moral value attached, a not-inconsiderable achievement in the heyday

of the slave trade. Such spirits were construed as evil: the scourge of metropolitan London society and a disease poised to infect the colonial experiment. The trustees encouraged their officials to name, shame, and prosecute miscreants to the letter of the law, like John and Henrietta Scott in Savannah, who were twice convicted of selling rum, by the testimony of two sailors between 1736 and 1738.<sup>42</sup>

However, a large number of tippling houses existed without licenses; these catered to the tastes of laborers, soldiers, sailors, and travelers in the colony. The most popular and successful unlicensed tavern was that of the Penroses, and it even hosted a public banquet in 1735. John Penrose spent little time in Georgia, leaving the running of their inn and their shop to his wife while he traded in New York. Elizabeth Penrose, already forty-six when she left England in 1732, would become known in the colony as "Mother" Penrose. This nickname, like "Godfather" or "Daddy," beautifully highlights the importance of popular notions of hierarchical familial authority. Penrose was an extremely influential woman whose reputation and connections allowed her considerable ascendancy in Savannah. She illegally employed a servant contracted to work for Joseph Hetherington in March 1735, but Hetherington wistfully observed in a letter to Oglethorpe that "troubling my head with her, is what I did not Care for, She still remaining Conqueror Over the whole place."<sup>43</sup>

Mother Penrose's dominion apparently extended beyond retail, tavern keeping, and rum selling, for she was convicted in May 1736 of "keeping a bawdy-house."<sup>44</sup> As in the 1930s, prohibition had a tendency to amalgamate all insalubrious activities under one roof, under one sovereign. This provoked rather hypocritical complaints from other tavern keepers, such as Mary Hodges and the Mercers, who wrote to the trustees informing them that "your honours good intentions were intirely frustrated by Mrs Penrose being encouraged not only to keep public House without license, but also to Sell rum, and punch



publicly, and in great quantities, by which means all Strangers and many of the Towns people frequent there . . . notwithstanding that Said Penrose has been twice fin'd in Court, for Said practice."<sup>45</sup> The rival tavern keepers even went as far as to allege that the trustees' storekeeper, Thomas Causton, had supplied Penrose with large quantities of rum and held public events at her tavern. It is impossible to gauge the accuracy of such allegations, but in Causton's defense the task of enforcing the law was problematic, to say the least.<sup>46</sup> For one thing, members of any jury empaneled to hear a case against a tavern keeper were more than likely to be regular customers. It was only "by an absolute Charge upon the Consciences of the Grand jury" that both Elizabeth Penrose and Mary Hodges were convicted of retailing liquor without a license, and since reliable testimony and proof could realistically come only from a colonial official, most retailers escaped prosecution.<sup>47</sup>

Again, taking women's capacity to continue to work after a husband's death as an indicator of the importance of her contribution to a given trade, one finds that the tavern hostess played a key role in the working relationship--perhaps an unsurprising conclusion given the pseudodomestic nature of the business. Mary Hodges continued to operate after her husband's death and the revocation of her license; she was paid £7 7s. 9d. for the "Diet and Lodging" of an official translator, and in March 1735 the trustees owed her as much as one hundred pounds for provisions. In 1735 her activities were again legalized when at forty-five she married Edward Townsend, who held a license to keep a victualling house. Their pooled resources and shared discontentment with the administration of the colony led to her tavern's becoming the first gathering station for Malcontents. She therefore became infamous in Savannah not for being a woman fulfilling a maverick economic role but for being a deliberately disruptive social influence. The Earl of Egmont noted in his List of Early Settlers that she was a "vile foul mouthed Malecontent," an assessment based on a number of unsavory incidents in which

she had damaged the reputation of the trustees--circulating letters, for instance, that claimed the king had rescinded their charter. William Stephens's response to her departure from Georgia was to "Thank God."<sup>48</sup>

The cases of Mother Elizabeth Penrose and the "Venom-Scatterer" Mary Hodges Townsend offer instructive instances of women who were operating as economically independent and socially powerful agents in early Georgia--and were mirrored elsewhere in the colony. But it is critical to note that these female tavern keepers, though they played the major role in the business and challenged local authority in myriad ways, remained psychologically attached to preconceptions of gendered place. None remained unmarried for long. Penelope Wright's second husband apparently took great delight in her experience and expertise in tavern keeping. Ann Bennet married Samuel Lee shortly after the death of her first husband, and within a year her prosperous tavern in Frederica had been ruined. Widowed tavern hostesses were evidently attractive propositions for single men, but the women's command of income and influence was rarely sufficient to discourage them from seeking the solace of someone whose masculinity underwrote the validity of their daily transactions. Just as these women's work after widowhood discloses their key economic role, their marital choices disclose a paramount need to reconstruct familial attachments.<sup>49</sup>

As I have noted, in most of their domestic and extradomestic activities, Georgia women emulated female patterns of employment in other colonial settings. But in one trade, in one occupational respect, the labor of Georgia women was quite distinctive. For about forty years the silk industry offered female colonists considerable employment opportunities that were impossible in northern Europe and most other colonies on account of the climate. The mulberry trees from which silkworms were fed could flourish only in warm conditions, which meant that Britain was forced to import--at great expense--silks from elsewhere (especially from the Mediterranean and India)

to fulfill its consumer needs. The trustees, aware that the Georgia experiment had to appeal to Parliament and the British public for funding and support, showed in their promotional literature that they were keen to advance the cultivation of silk and wine (another commodity imported for climatic reasons) while emphasizing that domestic goods produced in Britain would not be threatened by competition from the colony. Indeed, the Salzburgers were specifically prevented from bringing people skilled in glassware or pottery from the continent in order to assuage such concerns. Achieving immediate results in the production of silk was a prime objective that occupied a great deal of the trustees' time, energy, and funding. In 1736 Queen Caroline arrived at the birthday celebration of her husband, George II, in a resplendent gown of raw silk from Georgia that had met the approval of a host of British experts, been processed in Sir Thomas Lombe's revolutionary mill in Derby, and tailored by one of London's most eminent silk weavers. At a dinner event a year later she leaned over and commented to Catherine Parker Percival (wife of the Earl of Egmont) that "Georgia was a good thing, and particularly for the silk."<sup>50</sup> An official presentation was later made to the king's customs commissioners of the first full chest of silk to arrive from Georgia on 23 February 1742.<sup>51</sup>

**<Insert photo 3 approximately here: Queen Caroline>**

Such publicity stunts, and the wider machinations of the British politicians and economists who directed trade policy, depended enormously on the willingness of a sufficient number of women who had no previous training to take up the cultivation of silk--while striving to establish their families and homes in the New World. Although they could make supply and cultivation of mulberry trees compulsory in colonial statutes, they recognized that these measures would be futile if the labor force was disinclined to work. The trustees needed to appeal directly to every age group of women, from young girls to old widows, as well as to foster a

proclivity in husbands and fathers who might encourage the women's interest and dedication. The trustees achieved this by offering a great deal of financial, technological, and educational support that ensured swift returns on labor. The trustees offered salaries, bounties, and bonuses; procured equipment and specialist literature; and institutionalized apprenticeships. The comparative success of the trustees' endeavors in silk production--which stood in sharp contrast to many of their other economic policies--can largely be ascribed to the nature of the labor required.

In terms of actual time and exertion, the appeal of silk production to female colonists is easy to understand. The work with which women were associated included first the cultivation of mulberry trees and leaves; then the feeding and care of worms until a sufficient number had cocooned themselves; and, finally, the drawing off, winding, and refining of the silk itself. Employment was therefore seasonal, typically comprising a six-week feeding blitz of the silkworms between early March and late April, followed by a refining and reeling-off period that lasted into late May and often beyond. The exertion required was demanding but not particularly physical, except for picking the leaves. Wives needed to manage their time effectively and ensure that they paid sufficient attention to the delicate tasks of feeding and drawing off, but aside from these times of increased application, it was more than possible to perform other necessary familial functions, though space for the operation might be at a premium. Moreover, women handled most of the work inside the household, where they could call upon supplementary child labor and where they could closely watch the worms, an important facet because the quality of the worms' winding would ultimately determine the price returned for the silk cocoons. In this way the labor can broadly be categorized as seasonal, domestic, nonphysical, and of course remunerative--again offering women some degree of control over their own

finances. They were paid in proportion to the weight and quality of coquons, or the silk balls, that they delivered to the appointed officials.

One lively incident taken from the journal of William Stephens highlights the prominence of women in sericulture. In April 1739 Marie Camuse, a Piedmontese silk winder employed by the trust, persuaded official Thomas Jones to purchase a number of prime mulberry tree leaves at a plantation at Ockstead at the rate of three pence per tree. Three German indentured servant-girls were dispatched to gather the leaves, which they did somewhat carelessly, in the process damaging the branches. When Martha Causton, wife of the owner of Ockstead, discovered what had happened, she was understandably enraged. Not only had her mulberry trees been spoiled, but the money she had expected to receive herself had been credited to her husband's (overdrawn) account at the trustees' stores. Suspecting herself "defeated in such Payment as she looked for," she embarked on a tirade of abuse on such a scale that Jones warned Causton's husband to keep his wife's tongue in order. Though ultimately limited, significant extradomestic employment opportunities were clearly available to women through the silk industry.<sup>52</sup>

Many women in proprietorship Georgia were willing and able to take up the challenge of a new occupation that offered then so many advantages, and many exciting predictions were made for the future of the silk industry in light of their pioneering production--although none reached the level of £500,000 posited in the trustees' pamphlets. The trustees paid out top salaries of twenty to sixty-five pounds per annum to highly skilled women who were willing to train others. The trustees paid bonuses of up to five pounds to those apprentices who successfully learned the art of winding from scratch. And they offered bounties of up to two shillings per pound of cocoons that were brought to their filatures (silk factories), as well as cash payments for mulberry leaves. As a result it wasn't uncommon to see young girls on their way to town in late April, carrying boxes on their heads

with their own silk yields. It also wasn't uncommon to hear of husbands' relocating their households and families to areas with more pine barren, to allow their wives better access to mulberry trees.<sup>53</sup> James Habersham estimated that if five hundred women in Georgia could be put to work at the silk business, their product would be worth over £28,125.<sup>54</sup>

The trustees' enthusiasm was to prove misplaced. By the 1780s the silk industry was dead, the equipment buried in cellars and the women forced to other alternatives. The white mulberry, with leaves suited to a silkworm's diet, obstinately refused to grow in the wild, unlike its cousin the black mulberry, whose leaves were too sharp for the silkworms' taste. Hundreds of thousands of trees of the white variety, morus alba, were successfully imported and planted, reminders that, as Mart Stewart has best articulated, "the natural environment was not merely a scene in which action took place; environment was entangled with action."<sup>55</sup> But the white mulberries tended to survive only in richer soils, which, after the legalization of slavery in 1751, brought mulberries into direct competition with the rapidly expanding cultivation of agricultural crops in the lowcountry. As early as 1741 one influential South Carolinian, Hector Beringer de Beaufain, had warned the trustees that the mulberry trees required the "Best Corn land."<sup>56</sup> But it was the tried-and-tested formula of lowcountry rice cultivation that stifled, in Georgia's planters, the kind of experimental spirit that motivated more cosmopolitan contemporaries.<sup>57</sup> Rice needed a complex and grueling sequence of hoeings and floodings between late March and May, which coincided precisely with silk's highest labor demand period.<sup>58</sup> It would be one ancient Chinese commodity or the other.

Sericulture dominated the metropolitan depiction of Georgia in its first years. In a pamphlet entitled Reasons for Establishing the Colony of Georgia, Benjamin Martyn painted an idyllic picture of a utopia across the Atlantic that promised to provide rewarding work for both genders. He

described the women and children's feeding and nursing silkworms and winding off the silk while their menfolk plowed and planted their lands. The trust adopted the mulberry leaf as part of its official seal. Even in contemporary poetry the silk workers were portrayed as idyllically at work:

<VEXT>Here tend the Silkworm in the verdant Shade  
The frugal Matron, and the blooming Maid.  
Th'expiring Insect's curious Work resume,  
And wind Materials for the British [sic.] Loom<sup>59</sup>

**<Insert photo 4 approximately here: Seal of Trustees>**

<TXT> To be fair, the trustees matched their imaginary flights of fancy with substantial backing. In addition to sending the white mulberry trees, silkworm eggs, instructional pamphlets such as Thomas Boreman's Compendious Account of the Whole Art of Breeding, Nursing, and the Right Ordering of the Silk-Worm, and, later, copper basins and winding looms, they recognized the need to invest in expertise in the form of a number of European specialists.<sup>60</sup> These specialists were located and approached for their talent and/or experience in the field. They were often consulted on the progress of the industry and given special employment, either in Georgia or back in England to monitor the results. The "scientific" aspects of the industry--botanical literature and market economics--were predominantly male-oriented spheres. This was demonstrated in the exclusively male authorship of tracts pertaining to the silk business and the exclusively male patronage of botanical development. As a result a number of male consultants and specialists were employed to supervise the planting and nursing of mulberry trees. But the "artistic" aspects of sericulture also rendered a handful of women particularly conspicuous as experts in the care of worms, drawing off and winding, and refining the silk itself.

On 18 November 1732, while on board the Anne, which carried the first batch of colonists ready to populate the new settlement, James Oglethorpe

wrote to the trustees concerning the arrangements made with two Italian silk weavers from Piedmont. The Amatis brothers were contracted to bring two men and four women "who understand the whole of the Silk Business." The agreement is remarkable not only because the women were required in an equal ratio to men as specialists but also because they were afforded the same wages, a pattern that was not repeated in other areas (such as indentured service, where women received half to two-thirds of men's allowances). It was a woman, the mother of three young sons, who became the most prominent specialist in the early years of the colony after she and her husband offered their services to the trustees and embarked in April 1733.<sup>61</sup>

A series of deaths and desertions left Marie Camuse with a virtual monopoly on silk knowledge in early Georgia that she manipulated regularly and effectively to her advantage, leading one contemporary to complain that "this Wicked Woman domineer[ed] over all." In July 1740 Major Horton warned the Earl of Egmont that "if that woman should die, the art would be lost," and she certainly knew it. Camuse fiercely guarded her technique, or art, from potential competitors. Trustee officials described her as secretive and unwilling to instruct others. She was prone to angry outbursts if she felt her finger movements were being studied, and she refused to permit her reeling wheel to be copied. Camuse also misused the trustees' apprentice system by artificially restricting the number of apprentices and habitually employing her apprentices in domestic tasks (in which they were already proficient). Bolzius bemoaned in 1745 that she was "unwilling to tell us the least Article concerning this Art," and two years later his wife undertook to make absolutely certain that no woman in Ebenezer could likewise "pretend a Monopolium" in the art of winding.<sup>62</sup>

For a long time the trustees and their officials had no choice but to acquiesce to the machinations of Marie Camuse, whose work was attested to in the first chest of silk to arrive from Georgia (in February 1742), which she



had wound from 220 pounds of cocoons. She was offered a gratuity for every person "certified to be properly instructed by her in the Art of winding Silk," although a visitor in 1735 rightly judged the training of apprentices to be a burden to her. The profits were not inconsiderable, for Camuse was a shrewd businesswoman. In early May 1741 William Stephens had noted that she "knew what use she was of," and he found himself compelled to supply her with what she asked for (including ten pounds in cash and various provisions), simply because she "must not be disobliged." That September he was forced to show her the colony's account books to silence her suspicions, while he was forced to grant her claim for twenty-nine pounds two months later "for the Sake of keeping her Quiet." Camuse even spread rumors that she would return to England if she were not better accommodated. When the Board of President and Assistants, the administrative body of officials appointed by the trustees, tentatively asked in November 1743 whether she would accept a salary of sixty pounds per annum and the assurance of a pension offered by the trustees, Camuse rejected the offer--haughtily stating that Oglethorpe had allowed her one hundred pounds, and "she would accept of nothing less." Needless to say, the board complied, its minutes wearily recording that its members had given way "to her perverse Temper Rather than hazard the loss of a Manufacture always designed by their Honours as a Staple of the Country."<sup>63</sup>

Ultimately, Marie Camuse's monopoly collapsed in the face of prolonged pressure, as her demands exceeded her worth. Her salary was suspended at the end of August 1747, as her worst fear--that of one of her own students' actually becoming educated--was realized in the person of Elizabeth Anderson. Anderson had been under Camuse's instruction for three seasons and was soon installed as the new silk diva in Savannah--complete with a larger rent-free house and a cash sum of twenty pounds. She proved a far more amenable teacher than her predecessor, regularly providing the board with an account of the industry's progress and content to share her trade knowledge. All were

impressed when she showed the Salzburgers how to operate new winding machinery that she had assembled according to instructions sent from England.<sup>64</sup>

Winding apprenticeships like Anderson's were actually paid for by the trustees, and they gave rewards of five pounds each to three young Salzburg women to encourage their further interest. But little technical proficiency was required to attend to the earlier step of feeding and nursing the worms, which also brought cash remuneration. Payment for the cocoons was to be immediate (literally "upon the Spot") and carefully measured according to the quality of the product and the role of the worker. Cocoon production increased after a number of "careful Housewives, had taken Thoughts about it, and were persuaded it might be time well bestowed." When they were delivered to Savannah, an expert like Camuse or Anderson was on hand to value them. Many women took up these labor and training opportunities, and some tried to squeeze even more out of the trustees. Rev. Johann Martin Bolzius increased the profitability of female silk labor in the Salzburger community by gently threatening the trustees. After he explained that their regulations might discourage Salzburgers from engaging in sericulture, the trustees doubled the bounties, from one to two shillings per pound of the finest cocoons, and from four pence to eight pence for the poorest quality.<sup>65</sup>

As more boxes arrived in England, the trustees responded by providing equipment, such as the two dozen copper basins exported in June 1750, and the machine for reeling in August of the same year, and by approving a recommendation to construct filatures in Savannah and Ebenezer. By 1750 fourteen young women in Ebenezer were proficient at winding, while in Savannah James Habersham was assured that even more women--both married and single--intended to learn it in the coming season. Husbands were looking to buy copper basins and machines for their wives and daughters, though some expressed concern at the "neglect of their private House Business."<sup>66</sup>

The legalization of slavery in Georgia signaled the long-term erosion of mulberry tree (and therefore silk) cultivation. But for a short period the high-water mark of investment in sericulture coincided with the introduction of slavery--an intersection that threw up novel situations. At a grassroots level one shoemaker earned so much money through his wife's spinning of silk that he was able to buy a female slave in Carolina in 1750.<sup>67</sup> At a constitutional level the trustees did not insist that those elected as deputies in the new assembly hold a certain amount of land or wealth. Rather, the candidate had to conform to the limitation of the number black slaves in proportion to white servants in his household and have at least one female in his family who had been instructed in the art of reeling silk. The two main contemporary concerns, in other words, were minimizing the negative consequences of slavery while maximizing the positive advances in sericulture. Racial language gradually permeated measures relating to the silk industry: the trustees now specifically offered "To each White Woman" an allowance of forty shillings to those who learned the art of reeling.<sup>68</sup>

Yet in the formative years of slavery in the province, sericulture was peculiarly biracial. At public filatures it was recorded that "young People, both white and black, are employed in a work," while James Habersham, Pickering Robinson, and James Harris all made reference to planters' sending "their Daughters and Negroe Women" or "their Daughters as well as Young Negroe Slaves" to acquire the art of reeling. Sadly, nothing is known about conditions inside the filatures. Patterns of socialization, treatment, and task distribution may well have been racially demarcated. But for a short time white and black women were engaged in an identical pursuit, offered the same training, and labored in the same extradomestic factory. Such shared conditions did not last long--and by the 1760s the silk industry had become the dwindling preserve of poor white women, for, as Gov. James Wright noted,

"People of Property can make more by Employing their Negroes about other things."<sup>69</sup>

The withdrawal of planter interest in sericulture in this defining moment of Georgia's growth would prove to be a crippling blow, although metropolitan agencies continued to pour in capital, and women in provincial strongholds--particularly around Ebenezer--continued to use their newly learned skills each spring, producing more than fifteen thousand pounds of cocoons annually in the early 1760s.<sup>70</sup> In 1772 James Habersham wrote something of an epitaph for sericulture in Georgia, difficult for a man whose own plantation was named "Silk Hope." He too associated silk's failure with slavery, concluding that silk would never become "a considerable Branch of Commerce" in Georgia until the province had "a number of white people of middling circumstances."<sup>71</sup> Silk failed in Georgia not purely for climatic reasons but because of a lack of expertise and a failure to divulge it before the 1750s, because of an understandable reluctance among planters to dissent from the orthodoxy of rice and indigo cultivation after the 1750s, and because of occasional disasters such as late frosts or fires in buildings housing the silkworms--which crippled supplies for subsequent years.<sup>72</sup> But for a short time silk production altered the landscapes of a host of Georgia settlements and the livelihoods of a host of female laborers.

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Conditions on the colonial frontier dictated that its female inhabitants engage in a wide variety of economic pursuits--both domestic and extradomestic. This need for occupational flexibility was as true for the poor and low-status as it was for the comfortable and high-status women (for few could be described as wealthy). At the upper end of the status spectrum, flexibility allowed women to coordinate their activities to maximize unique advantages--whether they had a monopoly on trade knowledge, a unique skill like Indian interpreting, or controlled access to rum, retail goods, or

information. Such advantages differentiated the prominent and successful women from the bulk of frontier females, who lacked access to either economic or social capital. At the lower end of the spectrum, adaptability was not so much about profit or power as a strategy critical to survival.

Many wives, like Lucy Mouse, found that the rapidly changing conditions on the frontier demanded occupational diversity and tried their hands at various vocations and in different locations. Thomas Mouse, a clog maker, arrived with his wife and five daughters to take up a land grant on Skidoway Island in January 1734. The Mouses kept a small-scale public house, but having failed to establish a workable farm after seven years, they moved to Savannah, where Lucy found occasional employment as a midwife and also took on work in textiles. She lost her husband to a fever in the summer of 1742, by which time her house on Skidoway had been destroyed--the boards stolen and the frame burned by Indians--prompting her to sell her share of the cattle for £8 10s. and search for permanent accommodation in Savannah. Like Lucy Mouse, many women found that their survival required constant adjustments of their working regime to adapt to novel circumstances.<sup>73</sup>

The exceptional and well-documented career of Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomworth most clearly outlines the remarkable scope of wives' potential employment on the frontier of settlement. A mixed-race niece of one of the kings of the Creeks, she was born around 1708 in Coweta Town on the Ockmulgee River with the tribal name of Cousaponakeesa. She married the prosperous Indian trader John Musgrove around 1725, but her greatest opportunities arrived with the Anne on Yamacraw Bluff seven years later--opportunities that she seized with open and dexterous arms. Her success in translating for Oglethorpe and dealing with the Indians gave her great influence over the young colony as well as more material rewards. She was the largest landholder in the first years and operated a trading post and storehouse with which she supplied both the Europeans and Indians with meat, bread, and liquor.<sup>74</sup>

Her first husband died in 1737, but E. M. Coulter suspected that "all along he had appeared the lesser half of the household, overshadowed as he was by his influential wife."<sup>75</sup> Her activities, if anything, became even more vigorous. She set up a communications point, Mount Venture, on the southern bank of the Altamaha River from where the Spaniards' activities could be surveyed and reported, and in 1740, when open warfare had broken out, she rallied the Creeks to Oglethorpe's side. By now she had married again, this time to her own servant, Jacob Matthews. Her crucial role in providing intelligence (if not full-fledged espionage) was often called upon to deal with tense situations, and Col. Alexander Heron referred to her as "a Woman of such consequence."<sup>76</sup> The historian Michelle Gillespie has more recently concluded that Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomworth "wielded substantial power as a cultural broker."<sup>77</sup> Her marriage to a third husband, Rev. Thomas Bosomworth, in 1744 prompted her to try to make further gains from her exalted position, culminating in claims that she was both "Empress and Queen of the Upper and Lower Creeks."<sup>78</sup>

In a remarkable showdown weekend in August 1749, Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomworth, once a lowly interpreter, asserted that she was no subject but rather the equal of King George II. She claimed that she could command every man in the Creek nations to follow her, and she threatened the colony with extinction. Nor were these entirely idle threats--for at her behest, hundreds of Creek warriors had descended upon Savannah, and the townsfolk were understandably paranoid. Faces and tempers were strained, words carefully chosen, doors barred, and the militia stood armed. As Savannah officials looked on aghast, she stomped her foot on the ground and screamed that "that very Ground was hers." Only by arresting the Bosomworths, procuring an independent interpreter, dividing the Creek leaders, and distributing plenty of gifts were Savannah officials able to turn the diplomatic tide in their favor. The Indian leaders were assured they had been deceived, and though

several remained unconvinced, the Creek headman Malatchee professed that he had not understood that he had been "Ranked with an Old Woman." The supposed empress was contrite after the event--though not as contrite as her husband, who openly wept while promising that he would use his utmost endeavor to prevent his wife from creating any more disturbances. Escaping with little more than an embarrassing caution, she retained what Governor Ellis described as "questionless great ascendancy over some of the Indian tribes" in the 1750s and was finally granted sixty-two hundred acres in St. John's Parish in recognition of her services on 13 June 1760.<sup>79</sup>

**<Insert photo 5 approximately here: Mary Bosomworth>**

The situation in which Mary Musgrove found herself was partly fortuitous, but she certainly took full advantage of her prospects. She was active, mobile, diplomatic, and remarkably forceful. In 1735 the Indians had complained of the behavior of the trader Joseph Watson, desiring that either "another man might trade with us," or that Musgrove could trade by herself. These objections were raised after Watson endeavored to shoot Mary Musgrove and would have done so had she not overpowered him in her own defense, in the process apparently wrestling the gun from him and breaking it. As the historian E. Merton Coulter concluded, "A woman with far better opportunities than Mary ever had might have done much worse."<sup>80</sup> Yet, on the colonial frontier it is hard to envisage what these better opportunities might have been. Mary's work as a translator, diplomat, trader, herdsman, negotiator, and landholder of course depended partly upon her strength of character and ambition but mainly upon her social capital. Her subsequent marriages (albeit to lower-status men) served to emphasize her quasi-European status, while her strong Creek connections and the reliance of the European colonists upon her cooperation lent her more material advantages. Her unusual employment opportunities were a product of the frontier's capacity to allow a greater

diversity of roles for free white, red, or black people than did older, more established societies.<sup>81</sup>

The labor patterns and flexible occupational experiences of Georgia women during the trusteeship challenge any suggestion that the eighteenth century witnessed a universal narrowing of women's economic roles and a decline in their public economic activities. But while these experiences show that the late colonial frontier remained capable of extending females considerable economic latitude, they also convey a number of important qualifications.

First, though many women benefited from the disrupted market and labor conditions, these self-same conditions proved intensely detrimental to a significant proportion of female settlers. Elasticity in the range of opportunity could rebound in either direction. Second, though several women were able to exercise an unusual degree of economic and social power, their behavior was never fully disassociated from their gender. This qualification was captured most clearly in the frames of reference that male commentators used to describe influential women. Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomworth may have been "Mary" to the Indians, but colonial officials insisted upon using her formal European identity ("Mrs. Bosomworth" or "the wife of Mr. Matthews") despite her obvious independence and even though this frequently required some clarification. Elizabeth Penrose's nickname, "Mother," served as an ironic reminder of her womanliness. Marie Camuse was explicitly likened to the stereotype of the recalcitrant male English artisan. Writers also freely assumed mitigating circumstances to account for the unseemly behavior of such women--most commonly drunkenness or simply madness. In short, the activities of these women were never conceived in isolation, or on their own terms, but squeezed into preexisting gender categories. There would be no new episteme that might have facilitated the persistence of such phenomena in early Georgia.



Third, because women's economic gains were underwritten by the demographic instability outlined in chapter 1, any financial success on the frontier came at a high price and was temporary. How far Georgia women could enjoy their comparative freedom, given their extra time spent grieving for lost relatives and partners, migrating around the province, and struggling without assistance, is questionable. Equally, the duration of this liberality would be limited by the speed with which the demography of the province normalized in the second half of the century, as I discuss in part 2. Finally, despite the myriad ways in which frontier females assumed greater latitude than their counterparts in more settled societies, it remained absolutely clear that nothing was more important to wives' economic experiences than their relationship with husband.

Families functioned most productively when their most basic components, husband and wife, operated as a unit. Failure of wives to streamline the economics of the domestic environment could become a serious problem for families. Anna Riedelsperger apparently failed to take part in farm work, failed to economize in her housekeeping or cooking, and squandered money on unnecessary luxuries. As a consequence her family found it impossible to prosper. Some husbands went so far as to implore local authorities to intervene, and Reverend Bolzius agreed with one man who dragged him into his hut, confirming that the wife paid "too little attention to her household and its economy, and this causes much loss and places a double burden on the husband." At the opposite end of the spectrum were those women capable of shrewdly balancing the demands of the colonial world upon their time and energy, and another husband in the same community proudly displayed a new tile oven that his wife had set up with her own hands, almost as tidily as a mason.<sup>82</sup>

Husbands and wives had to function as an efficient team in order to maximize their household income. This did not necessarily mean working

together, nor did it mean getting on with one another, although a number of families--particularly in the fields of artisanry, manufacturing, teaching, tavern keeping, and retail--operated best this way. John Teasdale and his wife ran a tavern that was profitable and popular because they acted "in a double Capacity." The Hernbergers were the only tailors in Ebenezer, and Bolzius remarked that "he and she are always busy and receive cash." Even in an employment as male oriented as soldiering, husband and wife could operate in tandem: Maria Magdalena Rauner followed her husband (who had enlisted) to the War of Jenkins' Ear, "because she could earn money there as well as he." More usual cooperative practices were part time and agricultural--including the grinding of corn, weeding, making hay, and mowing grass.<sup>83</sup>

In the same way that wider female economic agency remained formally unacknowledged, the high level of practical cooperation necessitated by the frontier never effectively challenged the contemporary gendered labor paradigm. In other words, though women might work side by side with menfolk and were obviously vital to the colonial economy, though a few might occupy critical socioeconomic positions and in practice commanded significant commercial power, this never afforded them a higher status in theory or at law. In part, this reflected how deeply the paradigm was psychologically entrenched within every settler, whose understanding that a wife was absolutely subordinate to her husband was as unquestioned as the settlers' understanding of her importance to household economy. In part, it reflected the peculiar executive and legislative powers held by the trustees, which were uncommonly supple--and thereby accommodated a wide range of female economic activities. But the persistence of the paradigm unscathed through the upheaval of the trusteeship would make it far easier in later decades for male authorities to legitimately deny women (and especially wives) the practical latitude that the frontier had demanded.

## &lt;N1&gt;Chapter 2. Economy

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<sup>1</sup> Col.Rec., 20:275, 6:262; W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 22 March 1744.

<sup>2</sup> Col.Rec., 20:394.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 4:394<n>95,

<sup>4</sup> Dayton, Women before the Bar.

<sup>5</sup> Lady Bathurst's eulogy was recorded in the South Carolina Gazette, 8 May 1736. Anne Bradstreet's 1643 epitaph is quoted in Ulrich, Good Wives, vii. Wesley's note appears on p. 375 of his Journal.

<sup>6</sup> Col.Rec., 20:15; Moore, Voyage to Georgia, 10 (quote), 14, 31. Women traveling on the London Merchant and Simond also washed linen while they were ashore (Col.Rec., 21:137<n>38).

<sup>7</sup> The Minis household boasted a pair of bellows, a hanging shelf, four flatirons, a gridiron, an iron dripping pan, a split, tongs, a frying pan, two iron skillets and pot hooks, three iron pots and two pans, five kettles, a warming pan, and five pewter candlemakers (Estate of Abraham Minis, 30 June 1757, Inventory Book F, 49<n>51, Georgia Estate Records, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta). The dig is detailed in Honerkamp, Colonial Life on the Georgia Coast.

<sup>8</sup> Ewing, "Rights of Women," 1; Rogers, "Shadowy Presence," 14<n>21; Col.Rec., 4:627. For a concise account of the kinds of chores this "&c." encompassed, see Woloch, Women and the American Experience, 25.

<sup>9</sup> For the quotes see Col.Rec., 22:250<n>51, 348; Det.Rep., 4:113. The example of dutiful sons is in Det.Rep., 18:132. Ruprecht Steiner paid two-thirds of his crops and butter to a family of servants who offered to care for his house and three undisciplined children (Det.Rep., 14:200). The trustees' recommendations for the employment of newly arrived servants in 1738

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underlines the importance of surrogate housekeepers in the absence of wives or mothers: one woman servant was placed in the service of the trustees' secretary, William Stephens, and one with John Brown, both men living alone (Col.Rec., 22:250<n>51).

<sup>10</sup> Col.Rec., 4:454; W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 15 October 1743; Col.Rec., 20:150 (Hill quote). Also see Fant, "Labor Policy of the Trustees," 1<n>16. More recent commentaries on labor in the colony include B. Wood, Slavery in Colonial Georgia, chaps. 1<n>5.

<sup>11</sup> Det.Rep., 17:268, 14:93 (quote). Tim Lockley engages with the replacement of white servants by slaves in the late colonial era (see Lockley, "Encounters," chap. 4).

<sup>12</sup> Col.Rec., 1:445.

<sup>13</sup> Ready, Castle Builders, 6 (quote), 104. On preadaptation see E. Jones, "European Background."

<sup>14</sup> Col.Rec., 21:80; Det.Rep., 1:176, 3:63.

<sup>15</sup> Col.Rec., 4:543, 680; 6:74; 20:359<n>60. Both men and women did the work to keep up a property and its garden, as demonstrated by the petition of Mary Fage, who was "praying some consideration," when the trustees sold her lot in Highgate, for improvements that both she and her late husband, Peter (Col.Rec., 2:348).

<sup>16</sup> Ready, Castle Builders, 104; Col.Rec., 4:100 (Harris comment); 20:357<n>58.

<sup>17</sup> Det.Rep., 1:91; Col.Rec., 25:252<n>60.

<sup>18</sup> Col.Rec., 20:23, 141. The Salzburger community in particular, again bringing genuine experience from their homeland, was quick to capitalize on the livestock provided by the trustees: "Some of the people now have milk-giving cows, for which they cannot thank God enough. And some of them have begun to make fresh butter, which is very rare in this colony and especially amongst us" (Det.Rep., 2:92<n>93).

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<sup>19</sup> Col.Rec., 2:251, 277; 6:62.

<sup>20</sup> Det.Rep., 1:32; Col.Rec., 2:374. Harold Davis lists the men who served as schoolmaster from 1736 on (Fledgling Province, 234<n>36).

<sup>21</sup> Collections, 4:17.

<sup>22</sup> Whitefield, Account of Money Received, 1<n>2; Col.Rec., 2:109.

<sup>23</sup> Col.Rec., 20:27<n>31.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 2:100, 375<n>76; Col.Wills, William Harvey; Col.Rec., 4:259.

<sup>25</sup> Ewing, "Rights of Women," 2.

<sup>26</sup> Col.Rec., 6:51.

<sup>27</sup> The colonies she studied were Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, as well as Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. See Salmon, Women and the Law of Property.

<sup>28</sup> For a recent survey of the changing nature of women's livelihoods in early modern England, see Laurence, Women in England, 108<n>43, 273.

<sup>29</sup> Norton, "Evolution of White Women's Experience," 296; Col.Rec., 2:100, 6:31; Col.Wills, John Martin Bolzius.

<sup>30</sup> Col.Rec., 4:310, 386.

<sup>31</sup> Mary Hodges Townsend complained that Thomas Jones "supplies Shops with Goods by wholesale, Whilst he undersells them by retale; And that he has a Pettiaugua or large boat, and no other Boat can expect Employment when his wants any" (Col.Rec., 1:371). For Emery quotes, see Col.Rec., 2:287<n>88, 4a:114.

<sup>32</sup> Col.Rec., 4:344.

<sup>33</sup> Det.Rep., 4:8, 6:122, 8:17 (Ortmann quote). Mrs. Pichler caused outrage by selling goods to the English "at a price far in excess of that demanded by the rules of common decency" (Det.Rep., 4:88), while an Englishwoman from Old Ebenezer similarly journeyed to the Salzburgers several times to sell barrels of rendered beef fat (Det.Rep., 6:122, 8:37).

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<sup>34</sup> Det.Rep., 10:58; also see 9:27, 38, 317; 15:7. Such part-time employment supplemented the income that Mrs. Ortmann derived from teaching.

<sup>35</sup> W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 8 February 1744.

<sup>36</sup> The commentator is Bolzius, quoted in Loewald, Staricka, and Taylor, "Johann Martin Bolzius," 235. Other examples include vintners, weavers, and flax spinners (Col.Rec., 2:391; 20:353; 25:163<n>64, 363; 29:190, 327).

<sup>37</sup> Spalding and Wilson, Women on the Colonial Frontier, 25.

<sup>38</sup> Col.Rec., 6:149<n>50.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 1:505, 6:166. By working as a mantua maker in Frederica, Anne Harris similarly provided for her son, William, and her mother after Anne's husband died in 1737 (Spalding and Wilson, Women on the Colonial Frontier, 25).

<sup>40</sup> Bartlett, "Eighteenth Century Georgia Women," 76; Temple and Coleman, Georgia Journeys, 144; Egmont, 3:202.

<sup>41</sup> W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 25 August 1743. At least one woman was actually commissioned to trade in alcohol: Mary Morels supplied wine to the Indians in Savannah, for which she was reimbursed by the trustees, who spent considerable sums on presents to pacify and impress the Creeks and Chickasaws. Her claim for three pounds was examined and reduced to £2 8s. (Col.Rec., 7:214).

<sup>42</sup> Col.Rec., 4:90, 29:67; List, 47; Temple and Coleman, Georgia Journeys, 144.

<sup>43</sup> For references to Penrose, see Col.Rec., 2:363, 410; 4:211<n>12, 222, 327, 361<n>62, 365; 4a:153, 158<n>59, 163, 174; 5:395; 20:285, 334; Col.Wills, John Penrose; Temple and Coleman, Georgia Journeys, 165. For the Hetherington quote see Col.Rec., 20:275.

<sup>44</sup> List, 40.

<sup>45</sup> Col.Rec., 20:334.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 20:285.

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<sup>47</sup> H. Davis, Fledgling Province, 118; W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 4 May 1744. Similarly, the Freemasons were an influential enough body in 1735 for comment to be made about a preponderance of its members on juries: Paul Amatis hinted that the reason some people did not have to pay fines for selling rum was because they were Masons (Col.Rec., 20:373, 383, 369).

<sup>48</sup> Col.Rec., 2:452, 4:624, 20:287<n>89, 23:287; List, 24.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 22:pt. 1, 229; W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 78; Temple and Coleman, Georgia Journeys, 210<n>11; Spalding and Wilson, Women on the Colonial Frontier, 25.

<sup>50</sup> Account of the conversation proudly recorded in Egmont, 2:387. In fact, the topic had been raised because the queen had heard rumors that the silk was Italian, not Georgian. Egmont explained that the trustees had "debauched [persuaded] two Italians" (the Amatis brothers).

<sup>51</sup> Collections, 107<n>11.

<sup>52</sup> Col.Rec., 4:310<n>11. For an analysis of the motivation of poor women, see Lockley, "Encounters," 88<n>91.

<sup>53</sup> Det.Rep., 11:46, 14:74, 17:137, 18:217; Col.Rec., 25:378, 500.

<sup>54</sup> Davis, Fledgling Province, 161.

<sup>55</sup> Stewart, "What Nature Suffers to Groe," 2.

<sup>56</sup> Cited in H. Davis, Fledgling Province, 122.

<sup>57</sup> For an excellent discussion of lowcountry planters' experimentation and apprehensively modernist approach, see Chaplin, Anxious Pursuit. Those with a more cosmopolitan outlook included, for example, the Earl of Halifax, Henry Ellis, Charles Townshend, James Wright, and Benjamin Franklin. Overall, it is clear that British administrators of Georgia during the royal era took the prospect of silk extremely seriously indeed. In the transition from a proprietorship to a Crown colony, the items that attracted the most lavish

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parliamentary grant were the governor's salary on the one hand and the "encouragement to the Growth and Culture of Silk" on the other (both one thousand pounds) (Col.Rec., 37:pt. 1, 207). Familiar names in Anglo-American commerce such as George Montagu Dunk (Earl of Halifax) and Charles Townshend interested themselves in Georgia's silk prospects (Col.Rec., 39:187).

<sup>58</sup> B. Wood, Slavery in Colonial Georgia, 137<n>38. South Carolinian rice had been the product of earlier experimentation and peaked in 1740 with the production of about forty-three million pounds valued at about £100,000. As a consequence "lowcountry planters concentrated on rice, their most profitable staple, and had little time for anything else"(Menard, "Economic and Social Development of the South," 275<n>76). By 1770 Georgia's rice and indigo crops were worth more than £40,000 (283<n>85).

<sup>59</sup> Martyn, Reasons for Establishing the Colony of Georgia (London, 1733), in Collections, 1:204. Poem from J. Stephens, Georgia, and Two Other Occasional Poems, 9<n>10.

<sup>60</sup> Boreman, Compendious Account.

<sup>61</sup> Col.Rec., 1:100, 20:3 (quote).

<sup>62</sup> W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 22 March 1744; Egmont, 3:155; Col.Rec., 25:62, 181.

<sup>63</sup> Col.Rec., 1:406; 4a:134; 6:6<n>7, 85<n>86.

<sup>64</sup> Camuse retired to Purysburgh, where at least her French mother tongue could be properly understood, and died sometime before June 1749. A complete list of references to Camuse in the records is as follows: Col.Rec., 1:100, 362, 392, 406, 527<n>29; 2:276, 416<n>21, 428; 4a:134, 136, 141, 146, 231<n>32; 6:6<n>7, 85<n>86, 95, 190<n>91, 251; 25:62, 140<n>41, 169, 179<n>81; 26:92; 28:pt. 1, 103; also Det.Rep., 18:4<n>5, 201; W. Stephens Journal of William Stephens, 4 February 1744, 20 March 1744, 27 March 1745; Moore, Voyage to



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Georgia, 30; Egmont, 3:155. For references to Anderson see Col.Rec., 1:547; 6:166, 190<n>91, 206, 218, 251, 323; 25:140<n>41; 26:145, 426<n>31.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 1:527<n>28, 4a:134, 1:539.

<sup>66</sup> Col.Rec., 1:545, 552, 568<n>69; 4a:134; 25:369<n>73, 500; 26:92, 218; for the quote see 25:373.

<sup>67</sup> Det.Rep., 15:4. The slave was apparently brought down while pregnant and the next year bore a little girl.

<sup>68</sup> Col.Rec., 1:544, 2:498<n>500.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 26:332, 289, 231; 28:pt. 2, 154.

<sup>70</sup> For statistics and information on silk production in Georgia, see Col.Rec., 1:392,532, 529; 4a:134; 25:140<n>41; 28:pt. 1, 125<n>27, 213, 341, 377, 445; 28:pt. 2, 49; Cashin, Governor Henry Ellis, 118<n>21; W. Smith, Georgia Gentlemen, 111, 118, 121<n>22; G. Jones, "John Adam Treutlen's Origin and Rise," 221<n>22; Bonner, History of Georgia Agriculture, 16<n>17; P. Stephens, "Silk Industry in Georgia"; McKinstry, "Silk Culture in the Colony of Georgia"; W. Smith, "Utopia's Last Chance?"

<sup>71</sup> Habersham to Hillsborough, 24 April 1772, Collections, 6:173<n>74.

<sup>72</sup> Col.Rec., 28:pt. 1, 162. In 1758 the Savannah filature was consumed by a raging fire in which half the cocoons were lost (two to three thousand pounds), along with all the utensils, forty pounds in cash, and other valuables; Ed Cashin reckoned that "a record amount of silk would have been produced." On the bright side, the heroic efforts of some sailors prevented the flames from spreading to the building next door, which contained the provincial arms and ammunition (Cashin, Governor Henry Ellis, 120). Two years later, in 1760, an unusually cold February devastated the budding mulberry leaves; Ebenezer pastors reported that four widows' silk efforts had failed, probably because of poor weather (Det.Rep., 17:168). In July 1761 only 325

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pounds of raw silk had been wound off at the Savannah filature on account of "excessive, hard and unseasonable Frosts" (Col.Rec., 28:pt. 1, 341).

<sup>73</sup> Temple and Coleman, Georgia Journeys, 53<n>56. Lucy Mouse was granted Mr. Dobell's vacated "small Hut . . . convenient for a single person" but denied further compensation for her cattle on Skidaway on 18 August 1748 (Col.Rec., 25:319).

<sup>74</sup> For secondary sources that discuss the life of Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomworth, see Gillespie, "Sexual Politics of Race and Gender"; Coulter, "Mary Musgrove"; Baine, "Myths of Mary Musgrove." For primary references see Col.Rec., 1:277, 286, 487, 537<n>38; 2:263; 4:49<n>50, 217<n>20, 327<n>28, 518; 4a:86, 103, 160, 219; 6:72, 111, 176, 252, 256, 264, 268, 272, 274, 277, 305<n>6, 355; 20:64<n>65, 122<n>23, 141, 173, 237<n>38, 246, 452; 26:405; 27:1, 7, 24<n>25, 66<n>280; 28:pt. 1, 75, 228, 315; Det.Rep., 4:34.; Col.Wills, John Musgrove, Jacob Matthews; W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 88, 90; Egmont, 2:313, 375, 486.

<sup>75</sup> Coulter, "Mary Musgrove," 5.

<sup>76</sup> Col.Rec., 26:405.

<sup>77</sup> Gillespie, "Sexual Politics of Race and Gender," 189.

<sup>78</sup> Col.Rec., 7:277.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 6:264, 271; 28:pt. 1, 75; 20:173; land grant detailed in 28:pt. 1, 315.

<sup>80</sup> Col.Rec., 20:173; Coulter, "Mary Musgrove," 30.

<sup>81</sup> Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomworth was not the only Native American female translator used by the colonists and who made the most of the benefits of racial intermarriage in the sphere of communication. Edward Jenkins was asked to inquire about Indian discontent "with a Lingester [linguist] which was Bartlets wife" (Col.Rec., 20:185).

<sup>82</sup> Det.Rep., 5:96, 6:21 (quote), 9:203.

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<sup>83</sup> W. Stephens, Journal of William Stephens, 19 July 1744; Col.Wills, John Teasdale; Det.Rep., 7:147, 108. For elaboration see Col.Rec., 5:659. Det.Rep., 7:108, 147, 214; 18:56; 21:106; 13:95.