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THE MARKET ECONOMY AND THE FURNITURE TRADE OF
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND: THE CAREER OF JOHN
CAHOONE, CABINETMAKER, 1745-1765.

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE (WINTERHUR PROGRAM),
M.A., 1981

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OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND: THE CAREER OF
JOHN CAHOONE, CABINETMAKER, 1745 - 1765

by

Jeanne A. Vibert


A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University
of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Master of Arts in Early American Culture.

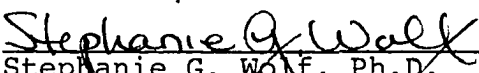
December, 1981

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INTRODUCTION

Newport, Rhode Island, was a center of prosperity in the mid-eighteenth century. The rapid accumulation of wealth by ambitious individuals engaged in international trade gave the city a cosmopolitan and sophisticated character. Just as historians have given much attention to the flamboyant careers of Newport's wealthiest merchants, scholars of furniture have been attracted to the ornate objects commissioned by Newport's elite.¹ These costly and sophisticated pieces of furniture, while creating a distinctive style of cabinetmaking in Newport, represent only a small portion of the purposes and products of the Newport furniture industry.

The high-style furniture made by the Townsend and Goddard families of Newport illustrates that wealthy merchants were willing to pay for highly-embellished, labor-intensive cabinetwork. These customers, like patrons of art, desired objects to convey prestige and supported time-consuming design and construction of stylistically-innovative furniture. Most cabinetmakers in Newport, however, did not rely on special patronage to support

artistic expression. Instead, these craftsmen sought the opportunities offered by a booming mercantile economy, and became employers and entrepreneurs in their own rights.

The access to a large outside market, provided by Newport's active harbor, gave economic incentive to producers of furniture. Cabinetmakers of this period were middle-class artisan-producers, not artists. To view the products of this craftsman community in the light of surviving rare and labor-intensive objects is to overlook the context in which most Newport furniture was created and used.²

Elaborate custom-order work comprised only one level of production in the pre-industrial economy. Expanding trade in the eighteenth century provided the craftsman with a wide market for his goods, so that he looked beyond his own neighborhood for customers. Colonial cabinetmakers, like other artisan-producers, manufactured goods of varying levels of quality and cost depending on the nature of the market. Economic historian John R. Commons examined the effect of the expanding market on production methods of American shoemakers from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.³ Commons argues that the development of new markets determined the "forms of organization" of craftsmen. His definitions of varying levels of pre-industrial production may be applied to the

Colonial cabinetmaking trade. An understanding that different types of goods were produced for different markets helps place surviving custom-order furniture in its original context.

According to Commons, a market based on the commissions of a craftsman's neighbors and personal associations resulted in custom-made goods, called in the period, "bespoke products." In the next level of production, the craftsman extended his market by stocking his shop with standardized goods for retail sale. This increased output demanded larger shops and hired journeymen. The shop master then acted as employer and retail merchant, and made standardized "shop work" in addition to custom-order "bespoke" work. Access to a distant market further increased the size and output of the pre-industrial shop. Merchants, who transported goods to an outside market, ordered standardized products in quantity, and the shop master supplied this "order work" at wholesale prices.⁴ The trade economy and general prosperity of Newport provided cabinetmakers with particularly large markets for "bespoke," "shop," and "order" work.

Not only did Newport's market economy affect the levels of furniture produced by cabinetmakers, but it also affected the aspirations of these artisan-producers. While Newport's trade economy brought riches to only a small

group of men, it greatly affected the aspirations and activities of artisans, shopkeepers, and farmers throughout eighteenth century Rhode Island. The economic and social effects of an urban center of trade, then, were not limited to those who attained upper-class standing.

From its seventeenth century foundations, Newport society, for both economic and cultural reasons, stimulated entrepreneurial behavior on all economic levels. In the eighteenth century, successful merchants encouraged artisans to manufacture goods for the expanding market. Middle-class producers were necessary to maintain the town's prosperity. Cabinetmakers, like other producers, helped support Newport's trade economy.

John Cahoone, Newport maker of case furniture in the 1750s, aggressively pursued opportunities provided by the export trade. His career serves as a case study of a middle-class cabinetmaker whose entrepreneurial aspirations superceded aesthetic considerations. Despite the survival and fame of elaborate custom furniture by Townsends and Goddards, the great majority of furniture made in eighteenth century Newport was "shop" and "order" work, products of standardized, cost-effective manufacture stimulated by Newport's market economy.

II. NEWPORT SOCIETY AND ENTERPRISE

The mercantile prosperity of Newport in the mid-eighteenth century had roots in a local tradition of economic self-interest. Newport was founded by followers of radical Puritan, Anne Hutchinson, who encouraged individuality and enterprise. In 1638, Hutchinson was banned from Massachusetts for the Antinomian beliefs, which challenged the theology of Boston Calvinists. She fled, with wealthy merchant, William Coddington, and other supporters, to the island of Aquidneck in the Narragansett Bay. In Pocasset, their settlement on the northern end of the island, the Hutchinsonians encouraged direct communication with God and the pursuit of individual prosperity through industry. Their endorsement of speculation and profit differed from the restrictions on trade imposed by Massachusetts Puritans. Antinomian principles encouraging enterprise inspired the founding of Newport, settled in 1639 by Coddington and other Pocasset merchants who wanted the advantage of its fine natural harbor.¹

Newport's founders, having attained religious and economic freedom, aggressively pursued profit through

trade. "Prospering merchants took their business success as a sign that God was pleased with their piety and concluded that the state should not meddle in business or regulate trade."² From its earliest years, then, the town functioned as a center of mercantile activity, supported by community value systems that rejected moral strictures on acquisitiveness.

The Antinomians did not impose a "religious monopoly" on Newport, but were tolerant of other religions in the town. Many even became Baptists or Quakers when these new sects arrived at the end of the seventeenth century. Religious toleration differentiated Rhode Island society sharply from that of other Colonies, where religion governed life in a traditional manner. Richard D. Brown, whose influential definition of "modernism" includes individuality, popular participation, high aspiration, and speculative activity, has said of Colonial religion in the seventeenth century:

Except for Rhode Island, where religious toleration and pluralism took hold, the modernization of New England religious organization was arrested by the orthodox establishment.³

In Newport, no controlling orthodoxy dominated religious or entrepreneurial activity.

By the early eighteenth century, Newport's laissez-faire economic and religious policies and its

advantageous location had attracted enterprising Baptists, Quakers, Jews, Anglicans, and Congregationalists. Half of the population, which had increased from 300 in 1650 to 2,600 in 1690, was active in some aspect of maritime trade. From the beginning of settlement in Newport, agriculture on Aquidneck developed for commercial purposes, rather than strictly for subsistence.⁴ Although the soil on Aquidneck was rich, Newport trade demanded more exportable produce than the island could supply. This lack of a sufficient agricultural hinterland proved a detriment to Newport's economy throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and caused merchants who required a constant supply of products for export to promote local manufactures toward this purpose. The shortage of natural products also caused Newporters to rely heavily on the slave trade. The town's resulting 10% black population in the mid-eighteenth century added to Newport's already ethnically-diverse community.

Newport commerce and prosperity grew steadily in the eighteenth century. The issue of paper money between 1710 and 1750 created an inflationary economy which stimulated speculation, production, and trade. In 1741, Rhode Island was the home of 120 ships, which exchanged goods with the North American coast, the West Indies, Africa, and Europe.⁵ The Colonial wars from 1736 to 1763

also provided profits for Newporters, who engaged in privateering.

Newport reached a peak of wealth and size in the 1750s and 1760s, when it became the fifth largest Colonial city. Most residents of this port town earned their livelihood through direct or indirect trade by sea. Merchants, skilled artisans, and seafaring traders (common mariners and ship captains) composed the three largest occupational groups in the city. Newport, a center of market activity, also supported a large number of shopkeepers.⁶

Newport's primary export products were rum, whale products, fish, cheese, iron, livestock, and horses. Newport distillers manufactured rum, the colony's major product, from West Indian molasses. Rhode Island merchants exported rum to Africa in exchange for slaves and bills of credit for highly-valued European goods from London merchants. Newport captains traded slaves in the West Indies for tobacco, molasses, sugar, and bills of exchange on London. Southern colonists also bought slaves and supplied Newport ships with return cargoes of cotton, tobacco, corn, skins, and lumber.⁷ This "triangular" trade brought great wealth to pre-Revolutionary Newport.

The influx of foreigners and exotic imports and the emergence of great individual fortunes gave Newport a cosmopolitan, sophisticated, and urbane flavor. Although the elite merchants were businessmen, not leisured aristocrats or intellectuals, they supported a public library in 1747, a newspaper in 1758, and fine public and private architecture in a style expressing "burgher lavishness."⁸

While 10% of the population claimed over 50% of the wealth in mid-century Newport, the conspicuous successes of those at the top had great effect on the aspirations and activities of men on all strata of society. Rapid and widespread economic mobility--both upward and downward--testifies to the number of men trying to take advantage of commercial venture in Newport. Risks involved in mercantile activity resulted in great, though reversable, extremes of wealth and poverty in this period.⁹

Middle-class artisans, pursuing profit in Newport, responded to the three different markets described by Commons. These producers answered the demands for cheap local-use goods and cheap, exportable goods with standardized "shop" and "order" work, and provided the growing number of wealthy local consumers with a smaller amount of labor-intensive "bespoke" work. Newport's artisan community recognized the promise of an expanding market and, like the entrepreneurs who reached the

top, aggressively pursued mercantile opportunity in
Newport.

III. THE MIDDLE-CLASS ARTISAN IN NEWPORT

The economic and social factors in mid-century that stimulated entrepreneurial activity among Newport's artisan class were: the labor-intensive Colonial economy, the merchants' dependence on domestic manufactures, a rapidly growing local market, the enticing prospect of a direct venture into the distant market, and a competitive, individualistic, and tolerant culture. By 1760, skilled artisans made up one-third of the labor force in Newport.¹

Colonial American artisans had a greater opportunity to prosper than artisans in England because more relatively inexpensive land was available in Colonial cities and skilled labor was relatively scarce in America.² Newport merchants, in their efforts to obtain goods for export, intensified this demand for craftsmen.

The powerful merchants, unable to draw upon a large agricultural hinterland, directed their demands for goods to urban producers. Newport's twenty-two distilleries in 1750 manufactured rum, the most important commodity for export. A variety of artisans produced other goods vital to the export trade such as shoes,

saddles, barrels, carriages, furniture, and wooden and iron holloware and utensils.

Domestic manufactures also contributed to the town's prosperity by producing items which satisfied local consumers, whose taste for English and Continental imports would otherwise have drained the economy. Imported goods were popular, however, and during the British trade restrictions and depression of the 1760s, Newporters adopted a proposal "for encouraging Industry, Frugality, and our own Manufactures." The proposal states:

Whereas the excessive use of foreign superfluities is the Chief Cause of the present distressed State of this Town, as it is thereby drained of its Money this Town will take all prudent and legal Measures to encourage the Produce and Manufacture of this Colony.³

Before the Revolution, British restrictions on Colonial manufactures weakened the American economy. Newport's proposal, similar to those of other towns, indicates that a healthy economy depended on local manufactures.

Newport's leaders passed legislation that fostered urban production in the mid-eighteenth century. In order to attract artisans, one measure created small lots of land to be sold at reasonable terms to "industrious and ambitious members of the lower middle class." The town also offered incentives to local manufactures by granting subsidies to craftsmen to insure "merchantable" goods.

Industry was not promoted recklessly, however, and other laws protected established small businessmen from incoming competitors wishing to practice similar trades.⁴

Newport merchants encouraged the artisan class not only for economic reasons, but also as a means of social control: as a way of inducing cohesion in a culturally-diverse, highly competitive community. If the lower classes sensed a common identity with the industrious merchant, artisans and producers might remain deferential to their "superiors," content and loyal within the structure of Newport society.

These middle class artisans and craftsmen, manufacturers and farmers were essential components of the social structure of Newport, and as such, they had to function in the sense required by that social system. Moreover, their proper behavior, if it were to be completely satisfactory, could not be obtained by brute force or by dire threats. Industrious, orderly, punctual activity had to be voluntary, "free."⁵

Newport merchants, then, instilled the middle class with aspirations.

This sense of economic opportunity combined with Newport's relatively open social structure to foster entrepreneurial behavior in artisans. Although eighteenth century society was fundamentally deferential, the property-owning artisan participated freely in official community affairs. All land-holding men in Newport held

the right to vote. Merchants, well-aware of the power of the franchise in the large and growing middle class, respected the artisan's and shopkeeper's position in society. Besides voting, these men participated in town meetings, held public office, and exercised their rights in the colony court system.⁶

Along with economic incentive and social acceptability, cultural factors peculiar to Newport contributed to the entrepreneurial activity of the middle class. Newport's social atmosphere was tolerant, open, and fluid.⁷ As an ethnically-diverse urban center and a busy port, Newport was characterized by demographic and economic fluidity, which diminished the cultural limitations of more traditional, rural societies.

In isolated agricultural communities, the absence of an external market, the expense of land transportation, the low level of specialization, and pre-industrial technology limited cash profits and aspirations.⁸ These land-based economies fostered cultural attitudes that valued the family unit and the stability of the community over the individualistic drive for profits. Since security could be achieved through the mechanism of the lineal family, access to a market did not induce rural Colonists to produce large surpluses. James Henretta has found that

even in the most market-oriented areas of the middle Colonies, many farmers participated in the commercial capitalist economy in a . . . limited way . . . There was little innovative, risk-taking behavior; there was no determined pursuit of profit. Indeed, the account books of these farm families indicate that they invariably chose the security of diversified production rather than hire labor to produce more wheat or to specialize in milk production . . . These men and women were enmeshed also in a web of social relationships and cultural expectations that inhibited the free play of market forces.⁹

Because Newport's economy was capital-based, not land-based, entrepreneurial activity was not circumscribed by a sense of the primacy of family and community. Land was not so plentiful that the head of a household could subdivide his property among his heirs, preserving family stability. Newport's families tended therefore to disperse, and the city's fluctuating population prevented a fixed community character. Familial roots were not necessary for economic success. Newport, as a city of cultural diversity and as a commercial center, constantly attracted newcomers and potential customers for real estate.¹⁰ Merchants and artisans, unrestrained by lineal family bonds and a closed community structure, took financial risks, speculated directly in the market, and strove to increase production.

Economic, social, and cultural incentives to middle class productivity in Newport from 1720 to 1765

improved merchants' trade, increased the number and prosperity of the artisan class, and fostered social cohesion. These factors in the community also inspired artisans, shopkeepers, and farmers to initiate their own mercantile activities. Like the merchants, these businessmen recognized the advantages of direct access to the market. Entrepreneurial ambitions are evident even in farmers of Newport's hinterlands, who, by 1750, invested accumulated capital in seagoing ventures.¹¹ This pursuit of an expanding market through both direct and indirect means is evident in the cabinetmaking careers of John Cahoone and other Newport joiners.

IV. CABINETMAKING AND THE TRADE ECONOMY

Cabinetmakers were one of the groups of skilled artisan-producers who helped sustain the carrying trade. Furniture manufactured in Newport was in great demand in the agricultural South and West Indies. Newport merchants, in their constant need for goods to export, provided the Newport furniture industry with a large clientele. Shipping statistics and business records of merchants and craftsmen indicate that this access to a large market in turn stimulated and supported the production of furniture in Newport.

The entrepreneurial intent of the Colonial cabinetmaker in Newport has been obscured by the traditional historian's focus on Newport furniture as an object of connoisseurship. The twentieth century rage for collecting Newport high-style furniture, and nostalgia for the pre-industrial period have combined to distort the true context in which such furniture was originally produced. Such a naive picture of the furniture export trade appeared in Antiques in 1932:

A cabinetmaker in a port town--and virtually every coastal village with a harbor was, in

those days, a shipping centre--might have on hand a larger stock than he could sell locally. In such case he would arrange with a friendly skipper to transport this excess on a forthcoming trade voyage.¹

Both economic and social conditions in pre-Revolutionary Newport illustrate that the export market functioned as a motivator for the cabinetmaker rather than as a last resort. The production of furniture for export was not accidental, but was inspired by the opportunities implicit in a market economy.

Furniture composed a sizeable portion of New England's export cargoes from early in the eighteenth century. The British Council of Trade and Plantations reported in 1734 that

The people of New England being obliged to apply themselves to manufactures more than other of the plantations, who have the benefit of a better soil, the warmer climate, such improvements have been made there in all sorts of mechanic arts, that not only escritaires [desks], chairs, and other wooden manufactures, but hoes, axes and other iron utensils, are now exported from thence to the other plantations.²

With these large markets for furniture, and the shortage of exportable goods in Newport, cabinetmakers and chair-makers had strong incentive to produce for the export market.

Early newspaper advertisements from Southern port cities demonstrate the significance of furniture in

Newport trade. The earliest newspaper reference to furniture from Rhode Island imported into Charleston is an advertisement of 1748 for tables in the South Carolina Gazette.³ In 1768, this journal printed an advertisement which lists goods of Rhode Island export:

Just imported . . . from Rhode Island, and
to be sold . . . Northward rum, Cordials,
Loaf and brown Sugar, Spermacetae Candles,
Soap, Train Oil, Cheese, Tables, Desks,
Riding Chairs, Iron Tea Kettles, Potatoes,
Oats, Cyder. Three Moses built Boats,
from Twelve to Seventeen Feet.⁴

Records of ships entering Southern ports show that this cargo of items manufactured in Rhode Island and products made from West Indian sugar is typical of cargoes sold in the South by Newport captains.

While these advertisements provide only individual examples, inward shipping returns for Southern ports indicate the abundance of furniture as a commodity in eighteenth century Newport trade. A quantitative study of shipping entries for three Southern ports reflects the economic importance of the furniture industry in Colonial Newport.⁵

A tabulation of ships from Boston and Rhode Island entering the port of Annapolis between April 6, 1756, and December 24, 1774, shows that the larger city sent 61 more ships there over the almost eighteen-year period. Even though Boston shipped more cargoes to Annapolis,

Rhode Island ships carried a greater quantity of case furniture, tables, chairs, and riding chairs than Boston ships (Table 1).⁶ The average number of pieces of furniture on a ship from Rhode Island was 9.1; the average number on a ship from Boston was only 3.4.

Three and a half years of shipping entries in the port of Charleston, South Carolina, also show that furniture made up a large portion of Rhode Island cargoes (Table 1).⁷ During these eighteen years of shipping to Annapolis and Charleston, Rhode Island merchants relied much more heavily on cabinetmakers for export goods than did their counterparts in Boston. Furniture was obviously an important element in Newport's trade economy.

Records of entries into the port of Accomack on the eastern shore of Virginia from 1727 to 1769 show a steady increase in ships from Rhode Island (Figure 1).⁸ Along with this increase in shipping, there is a concomitant increase in exported furniture. The first year that Accomack received furniture from Rhode Island was 1730. The earliest shipment of furniture from Boston was in 1728. Boston exported, on the whole, more chairs and case furniture to Accomack than any other northern port, although Rhode Island shipments became increasingly competitive in number. Figure 1 shows that Rhode Island

TABLE 1

Number of Ships and Furniture Entering Annapolis and
Charleston from Boston and Rhode Island

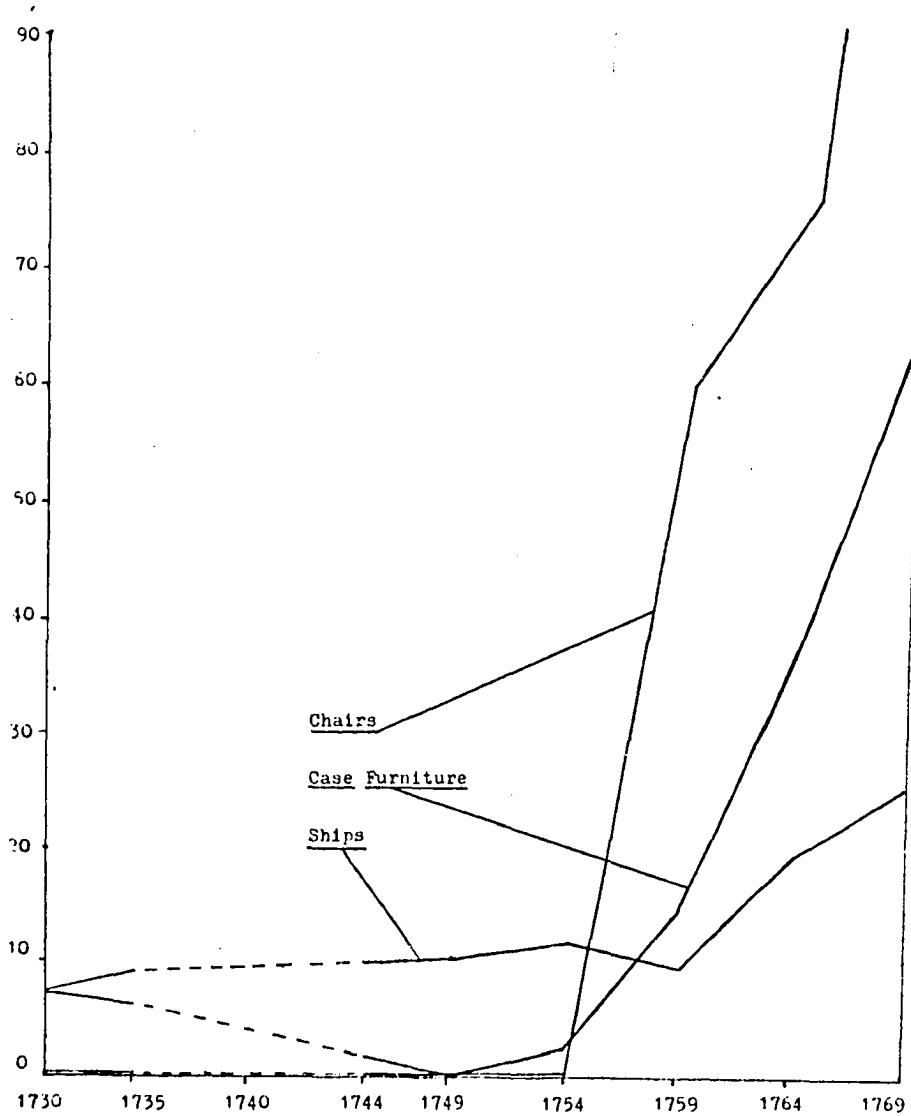
		Boston	Rhode Island
Ships	Annapolis	128	67
	Charleston	Unknown	Unknown
Chairs	Annapolis	380	492
	Charleston	0	133
Case Furn.	Annapolis	25	71 ^a
	Charleston	10	70
Tables	Annapolis	20	30
	Charleston	0	33
Chaises	Annapolis	14	17
	Charleston	0	11

Source: Port of Annapolis Entries, April 1756-December 1775; Shipping Returns of Charleston, January 1764-June 1767.

^a59 of these pieces of case furniture were desks.

FIGURE 1

Number of Ships, Case Furniture, and Chairs
from Rhode Island Entering the Port of
Accomack, Virginia, 1727-1769^a



^aYears 1736-1744 are missing from records.

Source: Virginia Shipping Returns, Public Records Office, London.

furniture exports to Accomack reached a peak in the 1760s, the decade of greatest prosperity in Newport.

Because of the demonstrated popularity of its manufactured products, Newport provided a tremendous opportunity for cabinetmakers. It was therefore able to support a large community of cabinetmakers for its size. Between 1745 and 1775, Newport public records list 56 cabinetmakers (Appendix A). A search of similar records in Boston yields 64 cabinetmakers in the same period.⁹ In 1755, Newport's population was 6,753, while Boston's mid-century population was over 15,000.¹⁰

Other documentary evidence suggests that virtually all of the cabinetmakers in Newport pursued the export trade. Between 1747 and 1749, John Bannister, a merchant, purchased desks for export from joiners John Hookey, Clement Packom, James Pitman, and Job Townsend, Jr.¹¹ Townsend's ledger from 1750 to 1759 records many sales of tables and case furniture to merchants for export.¹² Although the Townsend and Goddard families made the most high-style furniture, or "bespoke work," for use in the homes of wealthy local merchants, the number of references to their production of export furniture, or "order work," suggests that they, like other cabinetmakers, depended on the export trade for their livelihood. Special commissions

and other local-use furniture alone could not create the success enjoyed by the Townsends and Goddards.

Aaron Lopez, a prominent merchant, bought export furniture from John Goddard, Edmund Townsend, and John Townsend, as well as from six other cabinetmakers from 1761 to 1771.¹³ Christopher Townsend became the wealthiest member of his family by making export furniture during the pre-Revolutionary peak of trade in Newport.¹⁴ An agreement between John Townsend and Capt. Peleg Bunker illustrates that, even after the sale of an object for export, Townsend had a stake in the profits it earned in the retail sale. Capt. Bunker's receipt states the terms as follows:

Received of John Townsend two Red Cedar Desks in Cases at one hundred & seventy pounds old Tenor each & one Maple Desk in case at fifty pounds also four Maple Tea Tables at Twenty three pounds old Tenor in Cases which I promise to carry to the West Indies their to dispose of to the best Advantage the Danger of the Seas only excepted and remit the neat proceed in Molasses Coffee or Cotton Wool & thereof unto said Townsend he allowing me one half of the profits that shall neat from the price of said goods it being in Lein of Freight and Commissions.¹⁵

This receipt illustrates Townsend's eagerness to profit from the triangular trade.

An article in the Newport Daily Advertiser in 1849, written before the ideas of the Colonial Revival in the late nineteenth century had romanticized the picture of

early America, offers an accurate view of Newport cabinetmaking:

All the cabinetmakers on Bridge and Washington Streets, employed a large number of hands, manufacturing furniture, for which a ready market was found in New York and the West Indies. The stores of David Huntington and Benjamin Baker were also on the point; both these men were extensively engaged in manufacturing furniture, which they shipped to New York, and the West Indies . . . Benjamin Peabody, cabinetmaker who carried on a large trade with Surinam . . . was an ingenious man.¹⁶

This early reminiscence describes a trade-oriented industry, where at least three cabinetmakers had established independence from the merchant-middleman. The existence of an outside, foreign market caused these shop masters to become, in Commons's terms, "wholesale merchant-employers." Small shops producing custom furniture were outmoded by the presence of the large and distant market.

V. JOHN CAHOONE, PRODUCER AND ENTREPRENEUR

Surviving records of the cabinetmaking business of John Cahoone in the 1750s provide a test case for the response of a middle-class artisan to the economic, social, and cultural factors in Colonial Newport which fostered entrepreneurial behavior in artisan-producers. Cahoone's response to market demand, social incentives, and a culture of aspiration in Newport is evident in his rationalized production methods and his entrepreneurial activities.

While the eighteenth century cabinetmaker customarily learned his trade from a master craftsman, no records exist of Cahoone's apprenticeship or service as a journeyman. Possibly, Cahoone learned his craft from Ebenezer Cahoone, who worked as a joiner in 1733, although no birth record exists for Cahoone in Rhode Island, and his relationship to Ebenezer is unknown.¹ The earliest documentation of his cabinetmaking activity and presence in Newport is his account book begun in 1749.² Original documents attest that he referred to himself as a cabinetmaker or "shop-joiner" in Newport until at least 1786.³ The inventory of his personal estate, listing unfinished

furniture, tools, and lumber, indicates that he was still working at the time of his death at age 67 in 1792.⁴

John Cahoone's ledger between 1749 and 1765 itemizes furniture and barter goods sold to customers on credit.⁵ The accounts do not include cash sales, but one may assume that those customers who were not extended credit by Cahoone bought inexpensive stock furniture. While the exact amount of simple, standardized furniture produced by Cahoone, then, cannot be determined, his credit accounts alone provide enough information to show that he participated in all aspects of the trade production. As a retail merchant, he sold furniture to residents of Newport for use in their homes. As a wholesale merchant, he sold furniture to ship owners or captains for export to the South and West Indies. A quantitative analysis of Cahoone's ledger reveals a general pattern of reliance on the sale of export furniture (Table 2). The average portion of yearly credit income from export furniture was 34%; the average from local furniture was 20%.

Cahoone's account book is filled with sales of furniture to be used as venture cargo. He made furniture with cases for shipping for many prominent merchants, including Daniel Ayrault, Jr., Daniel Fourtane, George Gibbs, Jonathan Nichols, and Phillip Wilkinson. A surviving bill from the sale of a desk to Newport ship

TABLE 2

Cahoone's Yearly Credit Income, 1750-1759

	1750		1751		1752		1753		1754	
	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%	L	%
Furniture for the Local Market	0	0	82-5-0	10.82	50-10-10	9.97	227-10-0	14.97	519-17-0	20.75
Furniture for the Export Market	150-0-0	19.0	318-0-0	41.82	425-0-0	46.82	415-0-0	27.30	1073-0-0	42.83
Miscellaneous Joinery	2-12-0	0.31	20-0-0	2.63	10-3-0	1.12	29-12-0	1.95	93-14-0	3.74
Repairs and Services	0	0	0-10-0	0.07	10-8-0	1.15	90-14-0	5.97	9-3-0	0.37
Coffins	0	0	6-0-0	0.79	24-10-0	2.70	20-15-0	1.36	13-0-0	0.52
Rum	0	0	59-10-0	7.82	63-10-0	7.0	46-5-3	3.04	264-12-6	10.56
Wood	0	0	39-14-6	5.22	4-10-8	0.50	0-5-0	0.02	27-39-5	1.16
Barter Goods	679-8-2	80.69	234-9-9	30.83	279-1-10	30.75	689-19-3	45.39	502-18-4	20.07
Total	842-0-2	100	760-9-3	100	907-13-4	100	1520-0-6	100	2505-4-3	100

TABLE 2, Continued

	1755		1756		1757		1758		1759	
	L	"	L	"	L	"	L	"	L	"
Furniture for the Local Market	286-5-0	16.24	394-10-0	31.64	335-0-0	56.87	0	0	802-0-0	33.85
Furniture for the Export Market	625-10-0	35.48	300-6-8	23.96	102-0-0	17.34	377-0-0	42.35	983-0-0	41.49
Miscellaneous Joinery	25-15-0	1.46	25-0-0	2.00	7-0-0	1.19	4-8-0	0.5	68-0-0	2.67
Repairs and Services	18-12-0	1.05	11-16-0	1.52	22-1-0	3.75	20-7-0	2.31	17-5-0	0.73
Coffins	49-10-0	2.81	27-10-0	2.19	3-12-0	0.61	9-0-0	1.02	6-10-0	0.27
Rum	223-14-0	12.69	2-5-0	0.18	0	0	0	0	24-4-6	1.02
Wood	69-7-6	3.94	0-17-0	0.17	0	0	0	0	4-0-0	0.17
Barter Goods	464-5-2	26.33	481-16-0	38.44	118-7-0	20.13	469-3-0	53.32	464-0-10	19.59
Total	1762-13-8	100	1253-5-8	100	508-0-0	100	879-18-0	100	2369-0-4	100

Source: John Cahoon Account Book

captain, Elnathan Hammond, in 1754 illustrates a typical export transaction and also includes the name of the sloop to transport Cahoone's desk (Figure 2).⁶ In 1751, merchant Isaac Stelle purchased three cedar desks, one tea table, and a mahogany table from Cahoone for export.⁷ Stelle's account book shows that Cahoone received one hogshead of rum and a barrel of sugar as barter for the furniture costing £205.⁸ Because currency was scarce in Newport, the cabinetmaker used these imported goods to obtain other goods and services.

The existence of a large market for Newport furniture and the active pursuit of that market by Newport cabinetmakers encouraged rapid, cost-efficient production of furniture, and Cahoone's shop organization reveals the way in which he attempted to rationalize his own production methods. He used hired labor to increase the output of the shop, while standardizing manufacture to increase the rate of production.

From 1750 to 1759, Cahoone hired a total of seven workers who made case furniture, finished and polished cabinetwork, and constructed cases for export furniture. Cahoone's account book shows that he paid wages, in the form of cash, goods, and orders, to an average of three journeymen working simultaneously in each year (Table 3). Apprentices working for Cahoone added to the size of his

1754
 Febr^y 20
 Novem^r 11

for Sloop Union ---
 Mr Elnathan Hammond, Jr.
 To a Cedar Desk & casing ditto
 To polishing & casing ditto
 L 46-10
 L 5-0
 L 51-10
 John Cahoon

Figure 2. Bill, John Cahoon to Capt. Elnathan Hammond, 1754, for a desk to be exported on the sloop, Union. (Newport Historical Society, Box 43, Folder 13).

TABLE 3

The Number and Costs of Journeymen
Working for Cahoone, 1751-1759

	Number of Workers Per Year	Wages Paid to Workers in Goods and Cash (£ -s- d)
1751	2	106-17-0
1752	1	170-15-0
1753	1	173-1-0
1754	5	323-4-7
1755	5	335-17-3
1756	3	839-19-1
1757	3	184-4-8
1758	3	664-15-0
1759	3	94-8-0

Source: John Cahoone Account Book.

labor force and to the amount produced in the shop. These assistants, usually between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, worked in a master craftsman's shop in return for training, room, and board. Because apprentices earned no wages, their services and payments do not appear in Cahoone's ledger. The only evidence of an apprentice in Cahoone's shop is a court document involving Samuel Slocum, "Infant & Apprentice" to John Cahoone in 1755.⁹ If Slocum served his full seven-year term in the 1750s, Cahoone had an average of at least four people working for him each year. This cabinetmaking shop was relatively large for the pre-industrial period.¹⁰

Hired labor allowed Cahoone to produce more goods at a faster rate than if he had kept his shop small. Cahoone also increased efficiency and, therefore, profit, by specializing his activities. He limited his production to cabinetmaking, and limited his cabinetmaking primarily to desks and tables. Journeyman's labor charges appear in the ledger in every month of the year, indicating no break in production for seasonal agricultural activities. Tax lists show that he owned no horses, sheep, or cattle, and his inventory also yields no evidence of farming. Rather than diversify out of a desire to be self-sufficient, Cahoone obtained all necessities for subsistence in the marketplace. Barter goods in his ledger include grain,

cheese, meat, vegetables, tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, and rum. Since Newport's harbor and climate allowed year-round shipping, Cahoone took advantage of a year-round market for his goods.

Cahoone's specialization in case furniture was probably a response to the large export demand for these furniture forms. Desks, or "scrutoires," were the most popular form of case furniture exported to the South (see Table 1), and were the form that Cahoone produced most often. From 1750 to 1759, he sold 35 maple desks, 25 cedar desks, 16 mahogany desks, and 8 desks of other or unspecified woods. While this total is only 84 desks, labor charges during the same period indicate that journeymen produced 139 desks in Cahoone's shop. The discrepancy is probably caused by cash payments which did not require recording, and to the existence of additional account books for Cahoone's business.

Tables, the second largest group of cabinetwork exported to the South, were Cahoone's second most frequently-produced items. From 1750 to 1759, he sold 24 maple tables, 21 mahogany tables, 4 cedar tables, and 23 tables of other or unspecified woods. The next most frequent item of sale by Cahoone is coffins, a local necessity totaling just 20 over the ten year period. The ledger records sales of only 10 bedsteads, 9 tea tables,

8 cases of drawers, 2 desk-and-bookcases, and 2 dressing tables. Although Cahoone was equipped to answer local demand for a variety of furniture forms, he found it most profitable to specialize in the production of desks and tables, forms demanded by the larger export market.

No information exists to prove that Cahoone supplied his workers with patterns, but surviving Newport furniture on the whole indicates a great standardization of products. Nearly all surviving desks measure 41-42 inches in height, 36-37 inches in width, and 18-19 inches in depth.¹¹ Such consistency of size indicates that Newport craftsmen assembled furniture from identical parts, sawn in quantity. Perhaps the workers within Cahoone's shop had specialized tasks such as sawing, planing, dovetailing, carving, or finishing. This orderly division of skills would undoubtedly speed up the production process.

Standardization of products can also be inferred from the labor charges in Cahoone's ledger. In one year, Job Clark made 18 maple desks, which cost Cahoone £12 each for labor, and brought him £36 from the buyer.¹² In 1752, Cahoone paid journeymen £11-15-0 for making a maple desk with three drawers, and £13-0-0 for making one with four drawers. His tables, presumably of standard width and height, varied and were priced by length. In 1754, three foot maple tables cost £10-0-0, four foot maple tables

cost £ 14-0-0, and five foot maple tables cost £ 17-6-4. Job E. Townsend, son of Job Townsend, Jr., also found it profitable to standardize his products. In 1769, he recorded a price list for "Tea Boards," a table-top tray that he made in fifteen sizes, ranging from 6 inches for £ 1-15-0 to 20 inches for £ 16-0-0, in the inflated Rhode Island currency of the day.¹³ Standardizing products and optional parts of products, such as an extra drawer, helped speed the manufacturing process.

The later careers of Cahoone's seven journeymen suggest that Newport craftsmen in their competitive industry either succeeded as property-owning shop masters or remained dependent, propertyless wage-earners. Two journeymen, Job Clark and James Searl, left no record of their activities other than their work in Cahoone's shop, and may have emigrated from Newport. Three others, Jonathan Brier, Moses Norman, and Benjamin Tayre, became cabinetmakers with taxable wealth, although by 1772, none was as successful as Cahoone.¹⁴ Tayre, the only journeyman to achieve prosperity, worked steadily in Newport until 1796, and served as a constable in 1761.¹⁵ He was the only journeyman who owned his own building, which had enough room to rent--probably to his own apprentices or journeymen.¹⁶ Gideon Lawton and Jonathan Swett remained in Newport, probably as wage-earning cabinetmakers, until

at least 1769 and 1774, respectively, but never acquired enough money to own property, pay taxes, or serve in public office.¹⁷ Perhaps these variations in achievement indicate a trend like that in Boston, where, Brock Jobe suggests, "middle class property-owning craftsmen of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were gradually replaced by increasingly wealthy merchant-craftsmen and poor journeymen."¹⁸

Although successful as a shop master, it is unlikely that Cahoone could have achieved financial competence purely on the profits of his furniture business. Scholars are beginning to find that artisans, in order to fulfill their economic aspirations, had to apply capital accumulated through their craft to other, more lucrative, pursuits. Stephanie Wolf has proposed that the high cost of labor in the Colonies prevented the shop master from increasing his wealth by merely increasing shop size and production. Profits earned through manufacturing were best invested in more speculative ventures.¹⁹ Cahoone therefore engaged in a variety of entrepreneurial activities, including merchant enterprise to improve his overall economic position.

Statistics of economic mobility in Newport suggest that this tactic was generally successful for middle-class entrepreneurs. From 1760 to 1775, 60% of workers with

middle-sized incomes increased their wealth, 17.6% lost wealth, and 22.5% remained the same.²⁰ Clearly, Newport's booming economy during the pre-war period provided many opportunities for the ambitious member of the artisan class.

In 1749, Cahoone made his earliest speculative endeavor to eliminate the middleman and increase his share of the profit by launching a mercantile venture to directly export his own furniture. A surviving charter party agreement documents that Cahoone, with fellow independent cabinetmakers Constant Bailey and Benjamin Peabody, chartered a sloop to sail to North Carolina, a colony that imported a large quantity of Rhode Island furniture.²¹ But, in an economy short on cash and large-scale credit, he needed partners to provide the capital to finance a speculative activity, and joint enterprise was a common way for the ambitious Colonial artisan to increase profits.²² No records exist to indicate the success of this venture or whether Cahoone repeated attempts to export his own products. However, the account ledger suggests that he remained dependent on sales to merchants in the 1750s, probably because he lacked the trade contacts and capital necessary to sustain mercantile activity.

In addition, Cahoone took advantage of Newport's active marketplace by selling merchandise accumulated

through barter. Throughout the years of business recorded in the ledger, Cahoone sold a variety of goods, including rum, grain, vegetables, meat, and imports. Retail sale of general merchandise provided Cahoone with an average of 40% of his annual credit income (Table 2).

After the Revolution, Cahoone continued to produce furniture and to engage in speculative activity outside the cabinetmaking trade. In 1771, Cahoone bought two adjoining lots on Thames Street, along Newport's valuable waterfront. Investing in land was likely to produce success in the Colonies, and Cahoone probably profited from the sale of these Thames Street lots, which he sold as one unit in 1775.²³ Cahoone had attempted to procure desirable Thames Street property at least once before. A surviving court document of a dispute of ownership reveals that Cahoone lost his claim of title to another waterfront lot in 1749.²⁴ This court document, which describes Cahoone's rather tenuous claim to the property in question, indicates that Cahoone, aware of the investment value of land, was aggressive in his pursuit of real estate.

Late in the eighteenth century, Cahoone and his son, a mariner, and other family members, formed partnerships in order to finance mercantile ventures. In 1788, John Cahoone, John Cahoone, Jr., and Charles Cahoone--by trade, a carver--owned a sloop called the Minerva, which sailed in

that year to New York with a cargo of general goods and "A quantity of House Furniture &c."²⁵ John Cahoone, Jr., along with Stephen and Henry Cahoone, owned and/or served as masters of the sloop Aurora from 1790-1799.²⁶ In a seven-month period in 1791, the Aurora carried twenty-three desks and other goods to New York in thirteen voyages.²⁷ John Cahoone, Jr., who remained a sea captain until his death, evidently realized that wealth in Newport was earned through trade by sea.

Cahoone, through his various business activities, attained the firm middle-class status of a moderately wealthy artisan. His personal estate, worth £ 65-18-8 at his death in 1792, placed him right at the average of master cabinetmakers who left recorded inventories.²⁸ The upper and lower limits were represented by Christopher Townsend, the most successful of the family of cabinet-makers, who died shortly after Cahoone with an estate valued at £ 176-11-6, and Eleazar Trevett, a joiner who died in 1795, leaving an estate worth only £ 24-0-6.²⁹ Both Townsend Goddard and Benjamin Peabody had estates of comparable size with that of John Cahoone. Goddard's 1790 inventory was valued at £ 64-11-0, including tools worth £ 6-12-0.³⁰ Cahoone had £ 6-3-4 worth of tools in 1792. Benjamin Peabody, whose estate was appraised at £ 73-10-2 in 1794, left tools worth £ 15-10-6.³¹ Peabody, an

associate of Cahoone, left an inventory with an unusually detailed list of cabinetmaking tools (Appendix B). This list illustrates the range of tools used in an urban eighteenth century cabinetmaking shop. Cahoone undoubtedly used similar types of tools, although probably had a smaller quantity.

Cahoone's household inventory listed not only basic necessities but also expensive and imported status-bearing items (Appendix C). Objects such as looking glasses, Chinese export porcelain bowls and plates, English "queen ware" earthenware plates, bed curtains and coverlets, books, "pictures," tea tables, and silver tea spoons indicate that Cahoone could afford to own fine wares and luxuries. Cahoone's inventory displays not only conspicuous consumption but also his appreciation of such refinements as the social ceremony of tea drinking. Most important, his elite tastes reflect that this middle class artisan had upwardly-mobile aspirations; he emulated the style of his social superiors, and to this extent shared their values.

Although Newport's merchants might serve as role models for bourgeois artisans like John Cahoone, eighteenth century society in general restricted the success of middle class entrepreneurs. Colonial limits of social deference, poor credit, currency shortages, and British trade regulations circumscribed the achievements of artisan-producers.

While Cahoone participated actively in the community structure by holding a variety of public offices, the positions he held were reserved for men of middle class status. From 1755 to 1776, Cahoone served as Grand Juryman, Assessor of Rates, Clerk of the Market, and Overseer of the Highway. Many other cabinetmakers held public offices, such as Surveyor of Joiner's Lumber, Town Treasurer, or Fireman.³² In his survey of public offices in Colonial Boston, James Henretta concludes that the above offices constitute a middle range of social status.³³

Cahoone also exhibited modest success by owning a pew in the First Congregational Church from at least 1753-1760.³⁴ This church, while popular with the merchant class, was less prestigious than the Second Congregational Church and Anglican Trinity Church. Members of the First Congregational Church were, in general, less wealthy and sophisticated than members of the other two churches.³⁵

As an obedient and productive member of the artisan class, so necessary to the town's economic and social structure, Cahoone was honored with a brief obituary in the newspaper, which deemed him "a reputable citizen."³⁶ While Cahoone's career was successful, his achievements were limited by a deferential social order, evident even in Newport's relatively tolerant community.

Poor access to credit, a result of low social status, curtailed the economic success of most artisans. Newport's shortage of currency, which caused merchants and artisans alike to rely on a system of credit and barter, was especially limiting to the middle-class entrepreneur. Artisans did not have extensive trade contacts and thus could not readily obtain bills of credit. Colonial artisans remained subservient to the merchant community in gaining access to a market for their goods. The high percentage of Cahoone's credit income from sales of export furniture to merchants and sea captains indicates his dependence on middlemen already established in trade. Newport merchants profited from Cahoone's productivity but not his entry into the trade network. His 1749 venture probably failed due to the intense competition and exclusivity of the mercantile world.

Paper money issued in Rhode Island between 1710 and 1750 had allowed merchants not only to establish credit networks but also to accumulate capital in the ownership of wharves, ships, and stores. By 1750, currency in Newport had depreciated to about half its original value.³⁷ This shortage of specie in the 1750s is evident in Cahoone's extensive use of barter goods and his reliance on partnership to launch ventures.

Social and economic limitations compelled the middle class artisan to rely on personal relationships in order to obtain necessary capital and credit. Cahoone used his family, church, and professional relationships to establish business partnerships and clientele.

Since Cahoone did not have the resources to invest in a venture of his own in 1749, he formed a partnership with two fellow members of the First Congregational Church. Both Constant Bailey and Benjamin Peabody owned pews in the 1750s, and Peabody was Deacon of the church until his death in 1794.³⁸ Combining resources with family members was another way that Cahoone accumulated venture capital. In the late eighteenth century, several Cahoones formed partnerships for mercantile endeavors.

In addition to finding capital, obtaining and extending credit were important business activities that depended on trust. Cahoone relied heavily on fellow church members for credit customers as well as partnerships. Aside from Anglicans, the most wealthy and powerful merchants in town, Cahoone dealt most frequently with members of his own church (Table 4). A relatively small percentage of Second Congregationalists, even though they were generally wealthier than First Congregationalists, traded with Cahoone. Very small percentages of Quakers, Baptists, Jews, and Huguenots patronized Cahoone, although there were

TABLE 4

Religious Affiliation of Cahoone's Furniture Customers

	Number of Families in Each Newport Sect, c. 1760	Number of Furniture Customers of Cahoone	Percent of Furniture Customers of Cahoone
Anglican	169	54	48.6
First Congrega- tionalist	118	24	21.6
Second Congrega- tionalist	51	6	5.4
Quaker	105	5	4.5
Baptist	190	3	2.7
Jewish	15	1	0.9
Huguenot	&	1	0.0
No Known Affiliation	—	17	15.3
Total		111	100.0

Source: John Cahoone Account Book. Number of families in religious sects from Franklin B. Dexter, ed., Itineraries and Correspondence of Ezra Stiles 1755-1794, p. 13.

prominent merchants in each sect.³⁹ Religious affiliation, then, helped this middle class artisan build up a trustworthy clientele.

Cahoone also established social and business contacts through his profession. Fraternity among tradesmen was common in Colonial society because the irregular pace of work encouraged artisans to spend frequent periods of leisure time together. In the pre-industrial economy, "social intercourse and labour are intermingled," allowing personal relationships to develop between journeymen, masters, and neighboring artisans.⁴⁰ In Newport, most cabinetmakers' homes, with shops attached, were concentrated in Easton's Point, where workers presumably gathered on the street or in the taverns.⁴¹ Cahoone's account book entries reveal that many other cabinetmakers depended on him for credit. He exchanged general goods and services with fifteen other joiners, including journeymen.

Cahoone's entrepreneurial endeavors also indicate his loyalty to the structure of the mercantile system. As an industrious producer, he desired to join but not overthrow the upper classes, and seemed satisfied to contribute to the middle class productivity which sustained the carrying trade. Apparently content within the framework of Newport society, Cahoone, like many others, supported the established economic and social order.

VI. PRODUCTS OF THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY

The assumption that export furniture was merely surplus suggests that such objects were undesirable and therefore of lesser quality than furniture made for the local market. However, while the demands of Newport's export trade for rapid, efficient production of "order work" resulted in standardized products, often, of similar design, they were of consistently high quality. The same was true of the majority of furniture made for local use, where there was an attempt to eliminate labor time, and therefore, costs. Both kinds of furniture, therefore, export as well as that for local use, may be found in a range of styles, from plain to elaborate.

An analysis of surviving mid-eighteenth century case furniture indicates that Newport cabinetmakers standardized their production process so that furniture of all prices was of a similar basic construction. The difference between expensive urban furniture and inexpensive urban furniture was one of embellishment rather than quality.

Newport's high-style furniture, like its architecture, reflects the local taste for "bourgeois baroque."¹

While the English preferred a lighter, Classical, rococo style in the mid-eighteenth century, Newport style was characterized by heavy, almost mannered, curving lines contained in a symmetrical format. The bourgeois mercantile elite of Newport seemed to prefer the richness of baroque in the design of their specially-commissioned furniture. Stylistic similarities between Newport furniture and Spanish and French furniture in the West Indies have suggested aesthetic influences from the triangular trade to two authors.² Whatever its source, the Newport style is richer, heavier, and more curvilinear than that of neighboring Boston.

This local style was probably perfected by the Townsend and Goddard families, who left an abundance of signed examples of the most elaborate Newport styles. Their great skill attracted patrons who could afford elaborate, labor-intensive furniture. These cabinetmakers answered such demands with innovative design and expensive products. Townsends, Goddards, and other Newport cabinetmakers refined and embellished the famous blockfront style that probably originated in Boston (Figure 3).³

Several other cabinetmakers produced high-style furniture in Colonial Newport, although few documented examples survive from their shops. A high chest of drawers signed by Benjamin Baker illustrates the skill and



Figure 3. Desk and Bookcase (mahogany), 1761,
by John Goddard, Newport, R.I. (Museum of Art,
Rhode Island School of Design).

sophistication of another Newport cabinetmaker (Figure 4). John Cahoone's account book indicates that he, as well, made expensive, elaborate, furniture. He sold four mahogany and walnut "O.G. Case of Draws" to wealthy merchants between 1752 and 1759.⁴ Cahoone described one of these as "a Case of Black Walnutt drawer O.G. Head," which probably refers to a high chest of drawers with a scrolled pediment, similar in form to Baker's high chest. Another expensive piece of furniture sold by Cahoone was a "Mahogany Desk and Bookcase" costing £ 200-0-0 in 1756, a year when a plain mahogany desk cost £ 66-0-0.

The only known piece of furniture that relates to the shop of Cahoone is a desk made in 1753 by Jonathan Swett, who worked for Cahoone from 1757 through 1759 (Figure 5). This desk, with its blocked interior drawers and carved shells, is somewhat elaborate but also typical of surviving mid-century Newport desks in materials, construction, methods, and design. It is close in style to a desk with a bookcase signed by Job Townsend (Figure 6). Both cabinetmakers constructed their desks in the same general manner and used mahogany, chestnut, white pine, and tulip in similar places on the exterior and interior.⁵ The passing down of traditions through the apprentice system, the standardization of products, and communication among competitors resulted in great stylistic and technological consistency in Newport.

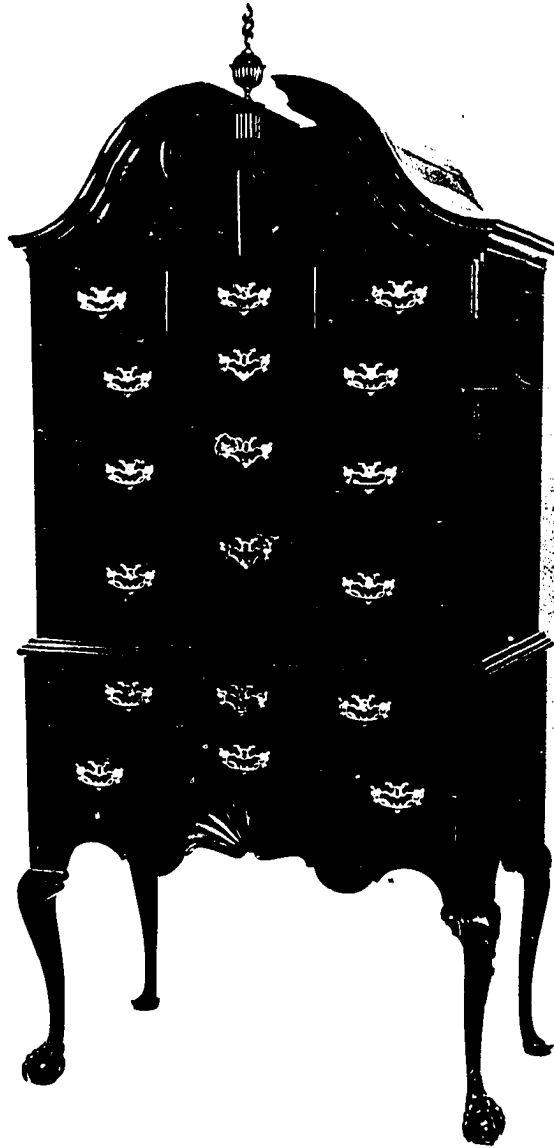


Figure 4. High Case of Drawers, 1761-1780, by Benjamin Baker, Newport, R.I. (Newport Restoration Foundation; photograph, courtesy Decorative Arts Photographic Collection, Winterthur Museum).

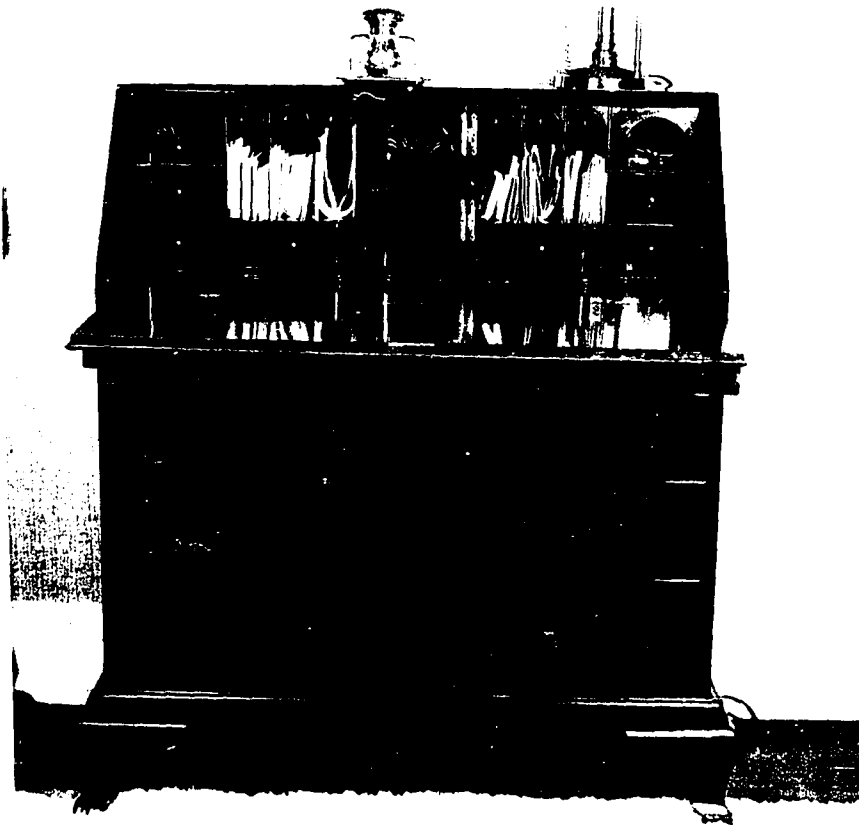


Figure 5. Desk (mahogany), 1753, by Jonathan Swett, Newport, R.I. (Private collection).



Figure 6. Desk-and-Bookcase (mahogany), 1745-1765, by Job Townsend, Newport, R.I. (Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design).

Newport cabinetmakers made desks in the style of the Swett desk from mahogany, maple, cedar, and, less often, walnut or cherry. Cahoone made desks in all these woods, including one elm desk made in 1752. Cahoone, like other Newport joiners, bought mahogany from merchants who imported it from the West Indies.⁶ Walnut, not very popular in Newport, was imported from the Southern Colonies.⁷ Maple, cedar, cherry, and the secondary woods, white pine, tulip, and chestnut, grew locally.

Mahogany was the most expensive material, followed closely by black walnut. Maple and cedar were about half the price of mahogany.⁸ Of case furniture and tables sold between 1750 and 1759, Cahoone sold 65 of maple, 45 of mahogany, 31 of cedar, and 36 of unspecified and other woods. His mahogany furniture was more often sold to the local market, while maple and cedar were popular export materials (see Table 5).

While maple desks survive in Newport in quantity, cedar desks are very rare. The lack of existing furniture of this wood suggests that cedar furniture was made almost exclusively for export. A study of all 565 recorded household inventories from 1743 through 1771 also indicates that cedar furniture was rarely used locally.⁹ In this 28-year

TABLE 5
Furniture Sold by Cahoone for
Local and Export Markets, 1750-1759

		Mahogany	Maple	Cedar	Unspeci- fied/ Other
Desks and Case Furniture	Local	12	13	0	3
	Export	9	25	25	4
Tables and Tea Tables	Local	19	9	0	17
	Export	5	18	6	11

Source: John Cahoone Account Book.

period, 225 pieces of maple case furniture and tables were listed in inventories. The same inventories included only 6 pieces of cedar furniture. Since mahogany furniture appeared almost as often as maple, the reason for the lack of cedar furniture was not its price, which was only 10% higher than maple.¹⁰ Perhaps cedar was popular in the South and West Indies because it was believed to repel insects.

Most references to cedar furniture in period documents indicate that it was exported (Figure 2). Aaron Lopez purchased crated cedar furniture from John Cahoone, William Davis, and Edmund Townsend.¹¹ Other Townsends worked in cedar for the export market. Christopher Townsend sold "2 Cedar Desks & Casing" to merchant John Banister in 1748, and Job Townsend, Jr., sold a "Red Seader Desk & Ruff Case" to Solomon Townsend, merchant, in 1758.¹² A red cedar desk with a history of ownership in Newport is probably similar to a great deal of furniture exported from Newport (Figure 7).¹³ If so, it illustrates a simple type of export desk, as it lacks the amount of carving on the Swett example. The fine interior construction and well-carved feet and shell are examples of high-quality, yet time-efficient, Newport cabinetmaking.

Newport-made furniture with histories of ownership in the South illustrates the range of elaboration of export



Figure 7. Desk (red cedar), 1750-1790, Newport, R.I. (Private collection).

furniture. A maple desk owned in Edenton, North Carolina, represents the simplest of Newport exports in this form (Figure 8). The cabinetmaker produced this piece of "order work" quickly and at a low cost by eliminating all carved embellishment: the desk has straight, not ogee, bracket feet; flat, not blocked, drawer fronts; and no ornamental shells. It is nearly identical in style to a mahogany desk signed by John Goddard in 1745 (Figure 9). The Goddard desk, which has no history of ownership, involved even less labor than the example with the North Carolina provenance, as it only has three large drawers instead of four. A third desk in this plain style probably represents "shop work," as it was owned near Newport in the eighteenth century (Figure 10). These three desks indicate that the same simple styles of stock furniture were made for local retail sale as well as for wholesale to merchants.

The top section of a high chest with a history of ownership near the eighteenth century port Nixontown, North Carolina, is another example of simple standardized export furniture (Figure 11). This case of drawers, constructed in a distinct Newport manner, bears the inscription, "maid by Constant Bailey Shop Joiner in Newport Rhode Island."¹⁴ Originally, it probably resembled a high chest signed by Christopher Townsend in 1748 (Figure 12). Bailey, maker of the export example, was one of Cahoone's partners in the



Figure 8. Desk (maple), 1745-1790, prob. Newport, R.I. (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts).

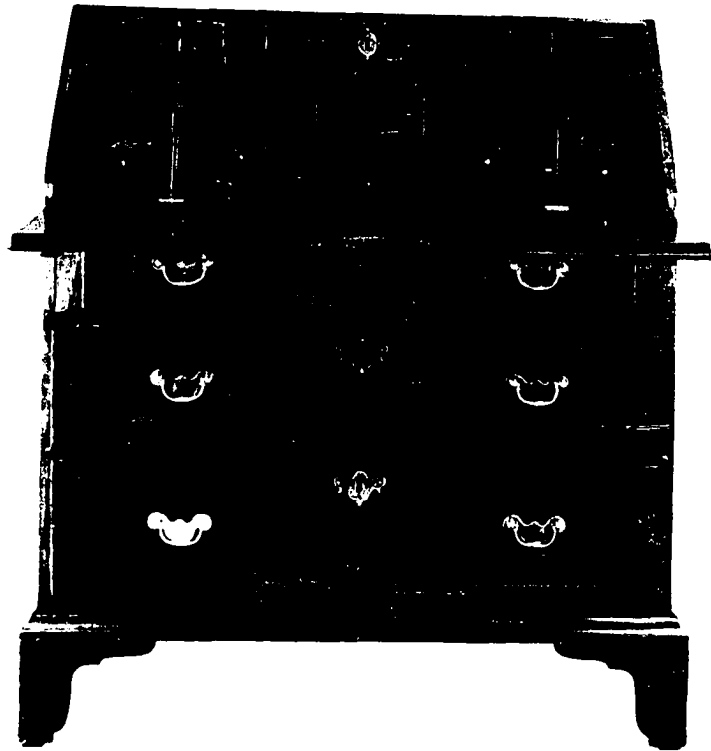


Figure 9. Desk (mahogany), 1745, by John Goddard, Newport, R.I. (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Decorative Arts Photographic Collection, Winterthur Museum).

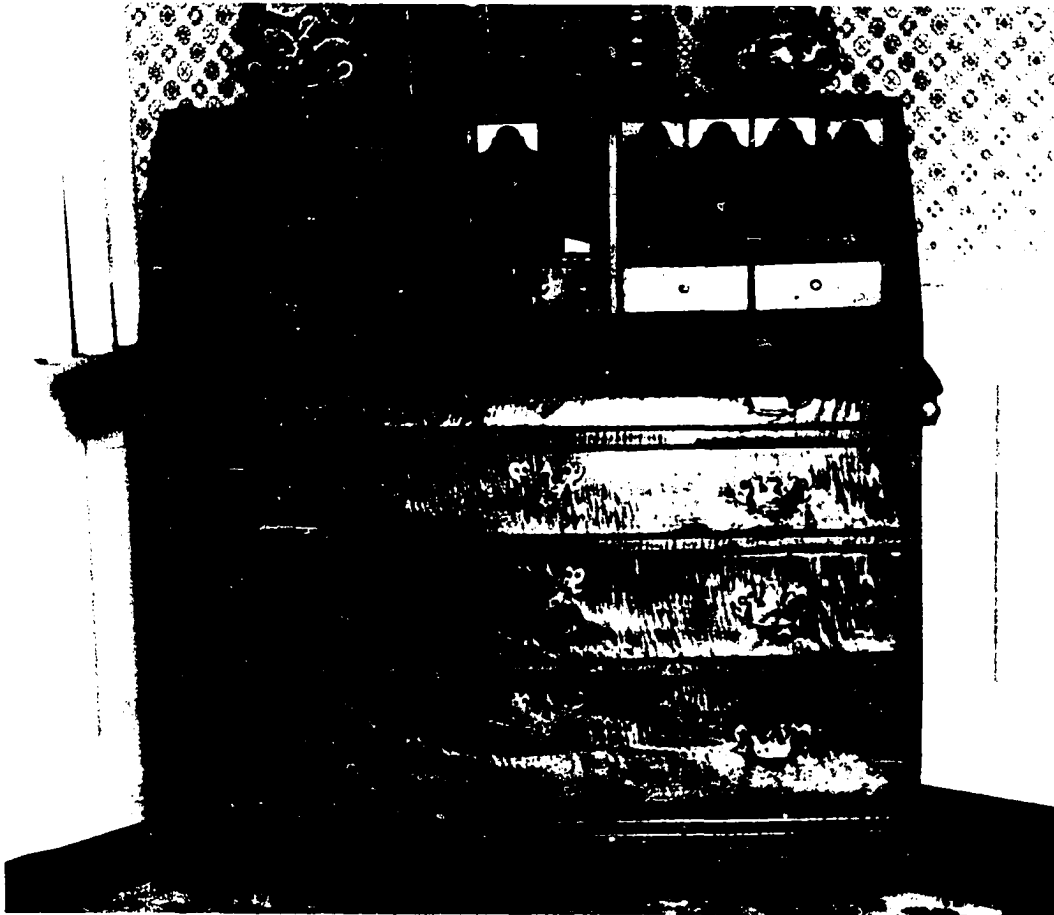


Figure 10. Desk (maple), 1745-1790, prob. Newport, R.I. (Private collection).



Figure 11. Top Case of High Case of Drawers (mahogany), 1740-1760, by Constant Bailey, Newport, R.I. (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts).



Figure 12. High Chest of Drawers (mahogany), 1748, by Christopher Townsend, Newport, R.I. (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Decorative Arts Photographic Collection, Winterthur Museum).

1749 venture to North Carolina. Whether or not Bailey's high chest arrived in North Carolina on the sloop he chartered with Cahoone and Peabody, it is a well-documented example of early Newport venture furniture. Unfortunately, no other signed furniture exported from Newport is known.

A plain tea table with sharp-edged legs and pointed feet is a typical Newport table of the kind undoubtedly used for export (Figure 13). The simplest furniture forms, however, were not the only pieces made to fill merchants' orders. A group of three similar Newport card tables with histories in Virginia indicate that standardized export furniture was not necessarily restrained in decoration. A table owned in the eighteenth century in Nansemond County, Virginia, is identical in style to one found in Petersburg and similar to another owned in Staunton (Figure 14).¹⁵ These tables have time-consuming carved ornament on the table-top edges, sides, legs, and brackets. Such examples of Newport "order work" illustrate that stock items made for distant markets could incorporate fine ornamental details.

An elaborate Newport table, similar to documented ones by John Townsend and John Goddard, has an eighteenth century history of ownership in the prominent Pinckney family of Charleston, South Carolina (Figure 15).¹⁶ As an



Figure 13. Tea Table (mahogany), c. 1730-60, Newport, R.I. (Newport Historical Society).

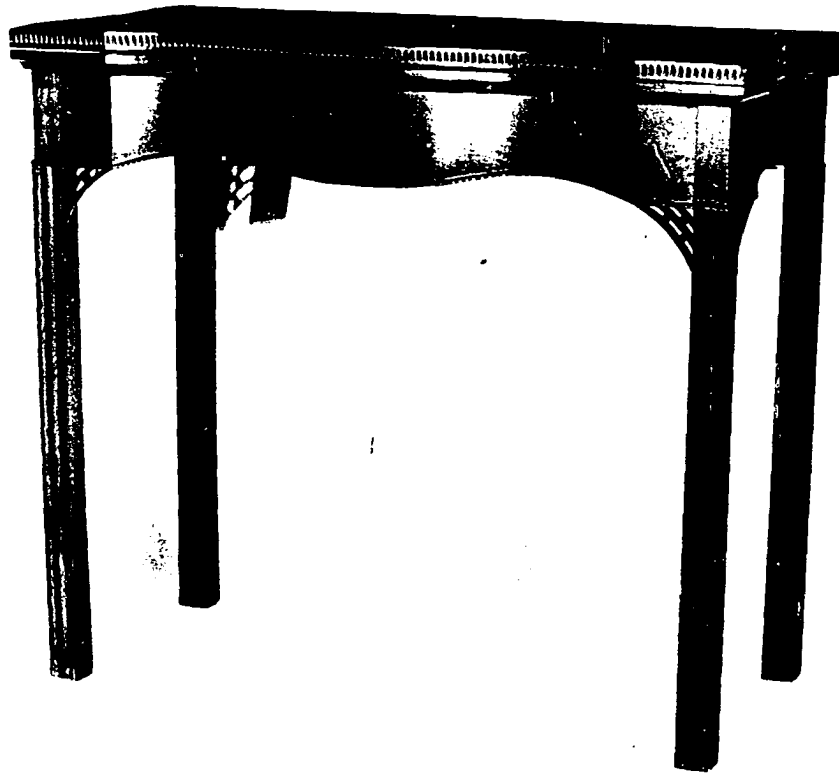


Figure 14. Table (mahogany), 1760-1790, Newport, R.I., (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts).

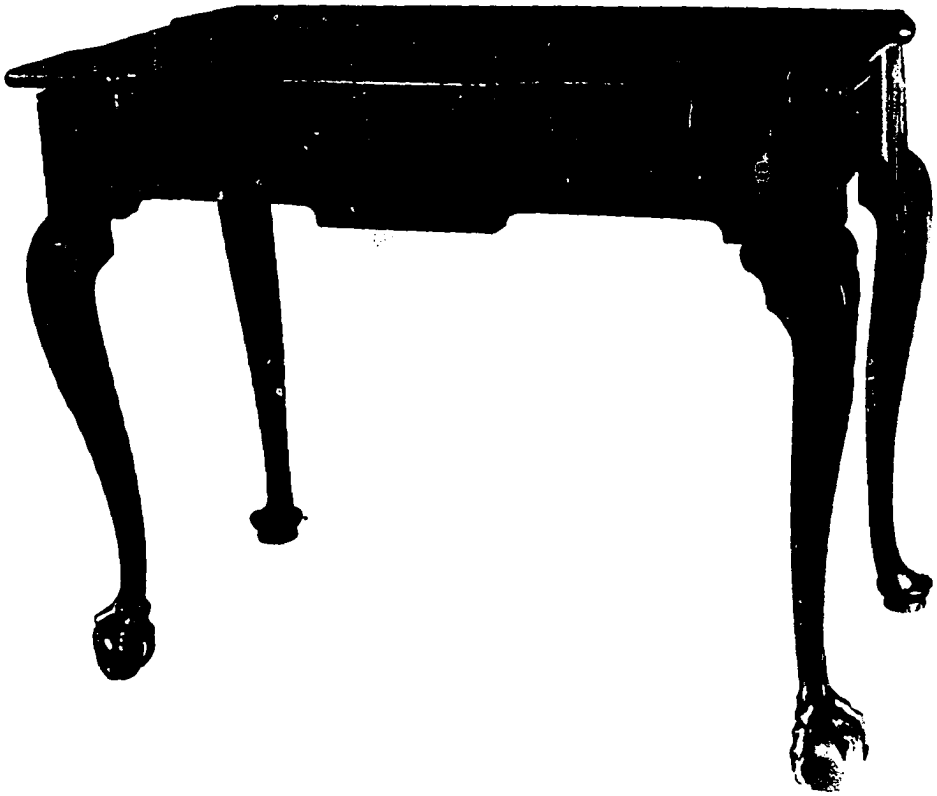


Figure 15. Table (mahogany), 1755-1785, Newport, R.I. (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts).

unusually labor-intensive export table, it may represent a custom order from a Southern merchant to a Newport merchant. A surviving receipt of Christopher Townsend indicates that such orders for expensive custom-made furniture did, in fact, form a part of his export business. In 1746, John Freebody, a Newport merchant, paid Townsend £ 61 for "One Case of Draws & one Tea Table of Mahogany Made for Mr. Thos. Moone of New York Mercht."¹⁷ This receipt, combined with the survival of the Pinckney table, demonstrates that highly-embellished furniture in the Newport style was fashionable in homes of wealthy Southerners.

The fact that Southern-made furniture imitated high-style Newport designs reinforces the conclusion that Southerners who desired the latest northern styles provided a sizeable market for Newport cabinetmakers. A desk made in North Carolina copies Newport style in its carved shell, ogee bracket feet, and blocked interior drawers (Figure 16).¹⁸ Another North Carolina desk betrays familiarity with the most elaborate Newport designs (Figures 17 and 3). Evidently, Newport cabinetmakers shipped enough pieces of high-style furniture to the South so that they served as models for local craftsmen.

The career of John Cahoone and examples of Newport export furniture suggest that, despite the high survival rate of custom-order furniture, the majority of furniture

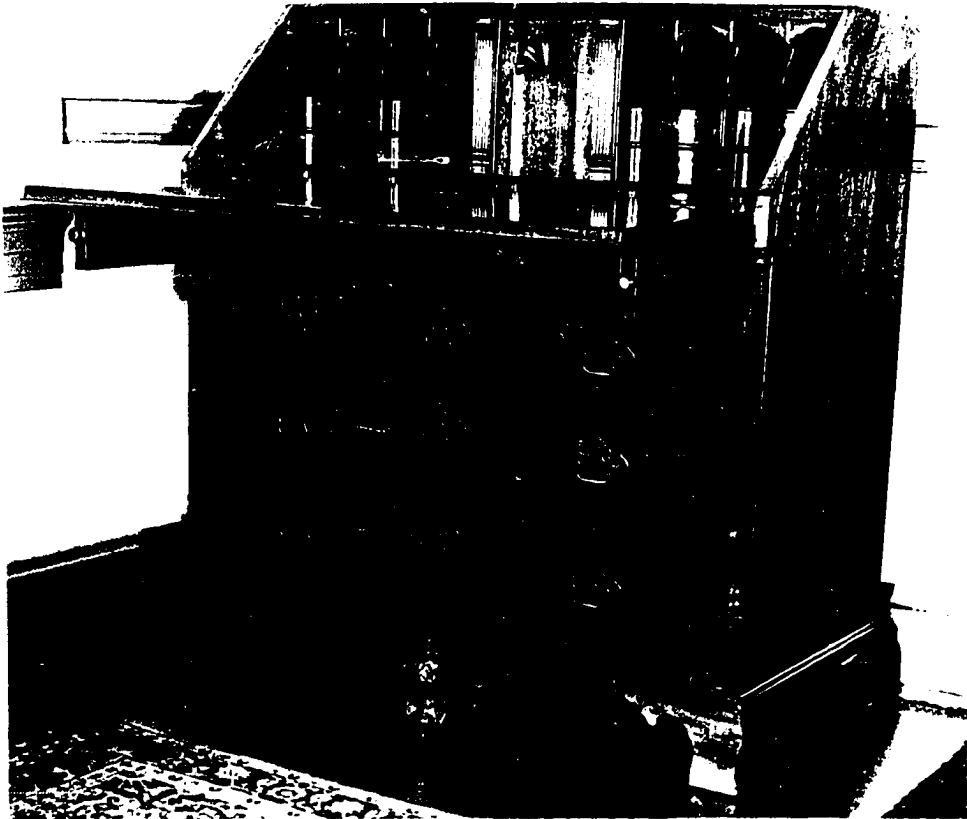


Figure 16. Desk (mahogany), 1750-1790, North Carolina (Private collection; photograph, courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts).

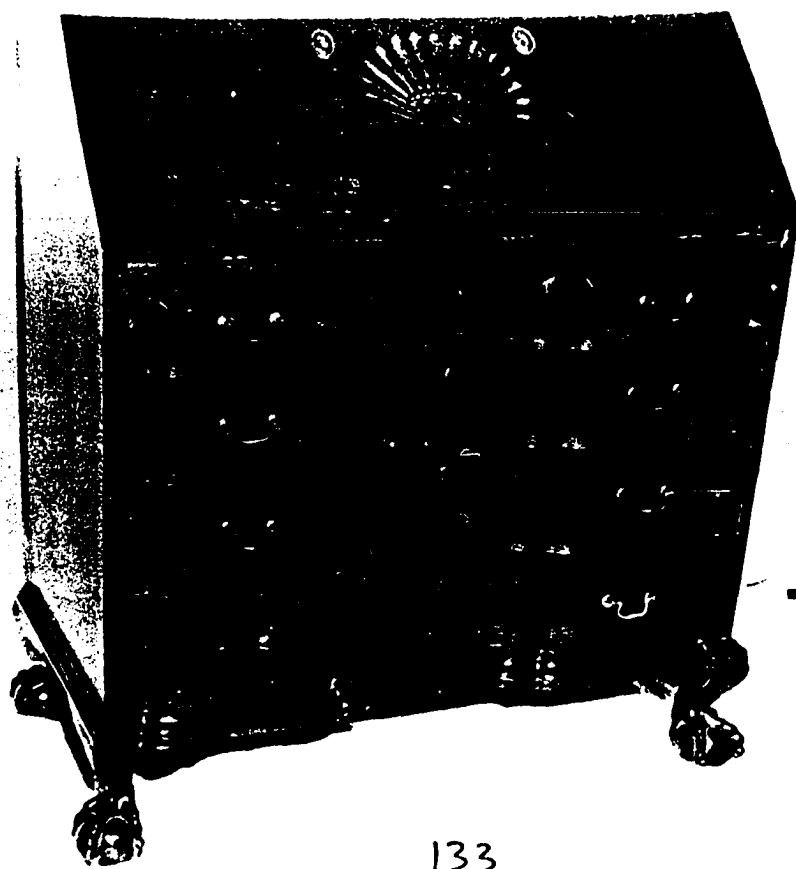


Figure 17. Desk (mahogany), c. 1750-1790, North Carolina (Private Collection; photograph, courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts).

made in mid-eighteenth century Newport was standardized, of simple design, and of inexpensive woods. Newport cabinet-makers made a large quantity of plain, inexpensive furniture simply because a greater demand for it existed, both in Newport and elsewhere. Not every urban householder filled his house with high-style objects. Even wealthy merchants mixed less expensive, and presumably plainer, maple furniture with more elaborate mahogany pieces.

In the capital-based economy of urban Newport, material objects rather than land conveyed the owner's success and prestige. It was important, therefore, that objects which expressed social status appear in public rooms of the house. These rooms, in sociological terms, were "settings," where the occupant, by manipulating the furnishings, manipulated the image of himself presented to visitors.¹⁹ Furniture placed in these "front regions" had the non-utilitarian function of bearing status. Furniture placed in private areas of the house was more strictly utilitarian, and less likely to be seen, so it could be plainer in style. In 1759 inventory of a wealthy Newport distiller, John Brown, illustrates that even the upper class had limited use of highly-ornamented furniture. In the parlor, or "Great Room," Brown had two tables, one tea table, and one desk, all of mahogany. In a second lower room, two upstairs bed-chambers, and the kitchen, Brown used only maple furniture.²⁰

The production of high-style, labor-intensive objects alone could not support the cabinetmaker. Simple, standardized objects, not embellished custom objects, were the mainstay of Newport craftsmen. The large markets, both local and distant, for labor-efficient objects sustained the Newport furniture industry. These markets directed the activities, fostered the aspirations, and shaped the products of the Newport cabinetmaker.

VII. CONCLUSION

Economic, social, and cultural conditions in mid-eighteenth century Newport increased the number and prosperity of middle class artisans. The large size of the cabinetmaking community in Newport and the importance of furniture in export cargoes testify to the positive impact of the market economy on cabinetmakers. Indeed, "the great affluence of Colonial Newport made skilled artisans a necessity, not a luxury."¹

The career of John Cahoone demonstrates that the trade economy and urban society of Newport encouraged him to produce for the export market. Cahoone's pursuit of a large market for furniture resulted in rapid, efficient shop operation and standardized, high-quality goods. Moreover, Newport's distinctively individualistic and opportunistic culture encouraged Cahoone to speculate in the export trade and other ventures.

Specialized, future-oriented, and speculative activity among entrepreneurs has been classified by Richard D. Brown as a "modern" characteristic, resulting from the opportunities of the expanding market of the early



nineteenth century.² Social historians have argued that Americans after the Revolution adopted "occupational ambition, planned ahead systematically, took risks for economic ends, and attuned themselves to time-discipline."³ An urban center such as Newport, however, had been conditioned by distant, impersonal markets since the early eighteenth century. The effects of such an economy on entrepreneurial behavior and personal ambition are apparent in Newport in the Colonial period. Indeed, Cahoon acted in "modern" ways when he "actively took risks and aggressively manipulated the natural environment on behalf of production and profit."⁴ Cahoon's venture of 1749 and other speculative enterprises prove that he was ambitious, rational, efficient, future-oriented, and willing to take risks for economic gain. Newport society was particularly conducive to enterprising behavior among its middle class.

However, the same market economy that stimulated the prosperity of the middle class also created a hierarchy based on mercantile wealth and social differences that prevented Cahoon and other artisan-entrepreneurs from becoming fully independent and competitive. The Revolution, by implementing a democratic society and an independent economy, helped American artisans fulfill long-standing aspirations. As Howard Rock has argued,

Indeed, for craftsmen, the central meaning of the Revolution, together with the fulfillment

of Republican ideals, was the opportunity for unfettered entrance into the marketplace.⁵

The aspirations and career of John Cahoone illustrate that Colonial Newport society fostered the germ of the "expectant capitalist," a term usually applied to the entrepreneur of the nineteenth century.⁶ The town's dynamic market economy encouraged activity in Cahoone and other artisans which anticipated the professional behavior and personal aspirations of enterprising Americans of the early republic.

NOTES

I. Introduction

¹The two major publications on Rhode Island furniture concentrate on Newport high-style objects, the genealogy of the Townsend and Goddard families of cabinet-makers, and the wealthy merchants who purchased their most elaborate pieces. See Ralph E. Carpenter, The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1820 (Newport: The Preservation Society of Newport County, 1954) and Joseph K. Ott, The John Brown House Loan Exhibition of Rhode Island Furniture (Providence: The Rhode Island Historical Society, 1965).

²Some studies of Newport furniture have dealt with the export trade, but are not in-depth or interpretive works. The only systematic study of shipping records focuses on the post-Revolutionary period: Joseph K. Ott, "Rhode Island Furniture Exports, 1783-1800," Rhode Island History, 36, (Feb. 1977), pp. 3-13. Mabel Swan's "Coastwise Cargoes of Venture Furniture," Antiques, 55 (April 1949), pp. 278-280 cites some examples of cabinetmakers' making export furniture. Neither of these studies explores in full the role of the furniture industry in Newport's economy.

³John R. Commons, "American Shoemakers, 1648-1895: A Sketch of Industrial Evolution," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 24 (Nov. 1909), pp. 39-84.

⁴Commons, pp. 48-50.

II. Newport Society and Enterprise

¹William G. McLoughlin, Rhode Island: A History (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1978), pp. 19-25.

²McLoughlin, p. 22.

³Richard D. Brown, Modernization and the Transformation of American Life, 1600-1865 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), p. 41.

⁴Lynne Withey, "Population Change, Economic Development, and the Revolution: Newport, Rhode Island as a Case Study, 1760-1800," Diss. University of California at Berkeley 1975, pp. 6-7; and McLoughlin, p. 25.

⁵Sydney V. James, Colonial Rhode Island (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), p. 158.

⁶Withey, pp. 74-83.

⁷Withey, pp. 124-126; McLoughlin, pp. 63-64.

⁸Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., The Architectural Heritage of Newport, R.I., 2nd ed. (1952; rpt. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1967), p. 54.

⁹Withey, p. 74.

III. The Middle Class Artisan in Newport

¹Withey, p. 85.

²Howard B. Rock, Artisans of the New Republic (New York: New York University Press, 1979), p. 8.

³"At A Town Meeting . . . Nov. 26, 1767," MS. bDB N558, John Carter Brown Library of Americana.

⁴Quotations from Sheila Lynn Skemp, "A Social and Cultural History of Newport, RI, 1720-1765," Diss. University of Iowa 1974, p. 188.

⁵Skemp, p. 190.

⁶Skemp, pp. 125-126.

⁷James, pp. 188, 238.

⁸James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America," William and Mary Quarterly, 35 (Jan. 1978), pp. 3-32.

⁹Henretta, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰Withey, p. 19.

¹¹McLoughlin, p. 63.

IV. Cabinetmaking and the Trade Economy

¹Thomas H. Ormsbee, "New Delvings in Old Fields: Old Tradeways for American Furniture," Antiques, 22 (Sept. 1932), p. 109.

²Report of the Council of Trade and Plantations to the House of Lords, 1734, Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1734-35, A. P. Newton, ed. (London, 1953), item 20; quoted in Barry A. Greenlaw, New England Furniture at Williamsburg (Williamsburg, Virginia: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1974), p. 1.

³South Carolina Gazette [Charleston, S.C.], 25 July 1748, p. 3.

⁴South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal [Charleston, S.C.], 26 April 1768, p. 3.

⁵Since no records exist of outward shipping clearances for pre-Revolutionary Rhode Island, an exact count of Colonial Newport's exported furniture cannot be determined. For statistics on Rhode Island furniture exports after the Revolution, see Ott, "Furniture Exports."

⁶Port of Annapolis Entries, 1756-1775, MS, Maryland Historical Society, vol. I, ms. 21.

⁷Shipping Returns of Charleston, S.C., Jan. 1764-June 1767, MS, Public Records Office, London, Colonial Office 5/510. Courtesy, Nancy Goyne Evans. Many entries during this period were not itemized.

⁸Virginia Shipping Returns, 1727-1769, MS, Public Records Office, London, Colonial Office 5/1443-1449. Microfilm, Virginia Colonial Records Project, courtesy Alderman Library, University of Virginia.

⁹Walter Muir Whitehill, ed., Boston Furniture of the Eighteenth Century (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1974), pp. 267-302.

¹⁰Withey, p. 8, and James A. Henretta, "Economic Development and Social Structure in Colonial Boston," William and Mary Quarterly, 22 (1965), 81.

¹¹Ott, "Furniture Exports," p. 3.

¹²Ledger of Job Townsend, Jr., 1750-1759, MS, microfilm 26, Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, Winterthur Museum (hereafter noted as JDMMC).

¹³Aaron Lopez Account Books, MS, Newport Historical Society # 48, p. 15; # 476, p. 21; O, p. 259.

¹⁴Mabel M. Swan, "The Goddard and Townsend Joiners: Part I," Antiques, 50 (April 1946), p. 229.

¹⁵Rhode Island State Archives, Providence. Quoted in Swan, "Goddard and Townsend Joiners," p. 229.

¹⁶Thomas Hornsby, "Newport, Past and Present," Newport Daily Advertiser, 8 Dec. 1849, p. 2, col. 1.

V. John Cahoone, Producer and Entrepreneur

¹Ethel Hall Bjerkoe, The Cabinetmakers of America: Their Lives and Works, (1957, rpt. Exton, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Ltd., 1978), pp. 55-56. No relationship can be established between John Cahoone and other Cahoones working in the woodworking trades in Rhode Island. His birth was not recorded in extant church records.

²Account Book of John Cahoone, MS, JDMMC, microfilm 26.

³John Cahoone, Debt to General Treasurer, June 15, 1786, MS, Rhode Island Historical Society, Channing-Ellery Papers, III, p. 103; General Court of Trials, MS, Newport Historical Society, microfilm, vols. E, C; Inferior Court of Common Pleas, MS, Newport Historical Society, microfilm, vol. E.

⁴Newport Wills and Inventories, MS, JDMMC, microfilm 83. Cahoone died in 1792 at the age of 67, according to his obituary in the Newport Mercury, 13 Aug. 1792.

⁵Cahoone's surviving account book may only represent a portion of his business activities. Cahoone may have recorded sales in a number of journals.

⁶John Cahoone, Bill for Elnathan Hammond, 1754, MS, Newport Historical Society, Box 43, Folder 13.

⁷Cahoone Account Book, p. 42.

⁸Isaac Stelle Account Book, MS, Newport Historical Society, # 496, p. 74.

⁹Inferior Court of Common Pleas, vol. E, p. 5.

¹⁰Statistics on the number of workers in an average eighteenth century shop are scarce. Stephanie G. Wolf, in a study of 162 land-holding craftsmen in Germantown, Pennsylvania, found that only 6% had 3 or more workers, and the largest number of workers in a shop was 5. See Urban Village (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 108-110.

¹¹Perhaps this 1" discrepancy results from each shop having its own system of standard measurement. Henry Glassie has suggested that each shop master made his own yardstick, and, therefore, one artisan's yard was slightly different than another artisan's yard. See Folk Housing in Middle Virginia, (Nashville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976).

¹²Charles Montgomery found that in Philadelphia in 1796, the retail price of a piece of furniture was three-and-one-half times the cost of labor. Similarly, Cahoone's retail prices were probably comprised of one-third labor,

one-third materials, and one-third profit. See American Furniture: The Federal Period (New York: Bonanza Books, 1978), pp. 19-26.

¹³Job E. Townsend Account Book, MS, JDMMC, microfilm 26.

¹⁴Inferior Court of Common Pleas, vol. F, pp. 205, 590; E, p. 267; D, p. 526. 1767, 1772, and 1774 Tax Lists, MSS, Newport Historical Society. In 1772, these men were taxed as follows: Brier, £ 1-6-0; Norman, £ 1-6-0; Tayre, £ 7-0-0; and Cahoon, £ 14-0-0.

¹⁵Newport Town Meeting Records, MS, Rhode Island Historical Society, microfilm, vol. II, p. 183; Newport Wills and Inventories.

¹⁶1767 Tax List, MS, Newport Historical Society.

¹⁷Lawton was identified as a "shopjoiner" in 1769 in records of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas, vol. H, p. 186. Swett appears as a household head in John R. Bartlett, ed., Census of the Inhabitants of the Colony of Rhode Island, 1774 (Providence: Knowles, Anthony & Co., 1858).

¹⁸Brock Jobe, "The Boston Furniture Industry, 1720-1740," in Boston Furniture of the Eighteenth Century, pp. 3-48.

¹⁹Stephanie G. Wolf, "Artisans and the Occupational Structure of an Industrial Town: Eighteenth Century Germantown, Pennsylvania," Working Papers from the Regional Economic History Research Center: Social Change in Early Industrial Communities, Glenn Porter and William H. Mulligan, Jr., eds., I, 1, (Spring 1977), pp. 50-51.

²⁰Withey, pp. 88-108, especially table, p. 96.

²¹Charter Party Agreement, 1749, MS, Newport Historical Society, Box 112, Folder 22. No other records exist of the involvement of Cahoon or other Newport cabinetmakers in the direct shipping of furniture.

²²Howard B. Rock, Artisans of the New Republic (New York: New York University Press, 1979), p. 157.

²³Many of Newport's early land evidences were destroyed during the Revolution, preventing a complete record of Cahoone's property holdings and shop location. Land Evidences, MS, Newport Historical Society, vol. 13, pp. 241-42; vol. 14, p. 243.

²⁴Inferior Court of Common Pleas, vol. F, p. 1.

²⁵Registry of Newport Vessels, 1785-1790, MS, Rhode Island Historical Society, N 472, p. 183.

²⁶Ship Documents of Rhode Island, vol. 1, (Providence: The National Archives Project, 1938-41), p. 48.

²⁷Ott, "Furniture Exports," p. 10.

²⁸Newport Wills and Inventories, p. 252.

²⁹Townsend's household inventory was valued at £ 76-9-8; £ 100-1-10 of the total value of the estate was mortgage money. Newport Wills and Inventories, p. 272-73; Trevett inventory, p. 427.

³⁰Ibid., p. 139.

³¹Ibid., p. 362.

³²Newport Town Meeting Records, MS, Rhode Island Historical Society, microfilm AH 61, vol. 2, p. 115-389.

³³Henretta, p. 85-90.

³⁴Rates of Pews in Rev. Mr. Vinal's Meeting House, MS, Newport Historical Society, 836c; Franklin B. Dexter, ed., The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, 1, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 44.

³⁵James, p. 188, and Skemp, p. 208.

³⁶Newport Mercury, [Newport, RI], 13 Aug. 1792.

³⁷McLoughlin, p. 58-60.

³⁸First Congregational Church Marriages, Baptisms, Meetings, 1744-1825, MS, Newport Historical Society, # 832, and Newport Wills and Inventories, p. 362.

³⁹The Ledger of Job Townsend, Jr., 1750-1759, lists 56 customers, only three of which also deal with Cahoone. Townsend, as expected deals with a large number of Quakers, and also a greater number of Jews than does Cahoone. See Microfilm #26, JDMMC.

⁴⁰E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," Past and Present, 38 (Dec. 1967), pp. 56-97. In this study of labor habits in eighteenth century England, Thompson distinguishes between pre-industrial "task-orientation" and post-industrial "time-orientation," which separated "work" from "life." This distinction is also apparent in American society.

⁴¹Townsend, Goddards, Peabody, Bailey, and others kept shops on the Point. Cahoone, from 1752 to 1759, lived above the Point, on "the Hill." Newport Land Evidences, MS, Newport Historical Society, Book 17, p. 259, and Book 6, p. 431. A surviving deed indicates that he bought "a Certain Shop or Building" on Thames Street near the wharves in 1770. See John Cahoone, Deed, 26 Mar. 1770, MS, Newport Historical Society, uncatalogued.

VI. Products of the Furniture Industry

¹Margaretta M. Lovell, "Boston Blockfront Furniture," in Boston Furniture of the Eighteenth Century, p. 78.

²Wendell Garrett, "Speculations on the Rhode Island Block-Front in 1928," Antiques, 99 (June 1971), pp. 887-891; R. Peter Mooz, "Origins of Newport Block-Front Furniture Design," Antiques, 99 (June 1971), pp. 882-886.

³Lovell, pp. 77-136. Lovell has provided strong evidence indicating that the blockfront style was transported from Boston to Newport, where it was "perfected."

⁴"O.G." here means "ogee," an S-shaped curve which is an integral element of the baroque and rococo styles.

⁵Small drawer fronts, sides, and backs are rabbetted to accept the bottom, although the Townsend desk has more dovetails. Large drawer fronts of both desks are grooved to accept the bottom, which has applied runners. These sides have four dovetails, front and back. Swett used five nails on the back of the drawer bottom, and Townsend used seven. The only other difference in the two drawers is a different character to the saw kerfs made when cutting the dovetails.

⁶For example, in 1757 and 1759, Cahoon received 243 feet of mahogany and 13 feet of black walnut from Capt. Joseph Arnold in return for a desk, a tea table, and three tables--all probably for export. Cahoon Account Book, p. 72.

⁷Virginia Shipping Returns, Maryland Shipping Returns.

⁸Prices figured according to prices of standard objects in varying woods in Cahoon's account book.

⁹Newport Town Council Records, MS, Newport Historical Society, vols. 10-14. Portions of these records have been destroyed.

¹⁰The majority of furniture listed in inventories is of unspecified woods. These figures, then, do not represent the exact amount of maple or cedar furniture owned in Newport, but do indicate general tendencies of preference.

¹¹Account books of Aaron Lopez, MS, Newport Historical Society, # 496, # 260, # 476.

¹²Waste Book of John Bannister 1746-1749, MS, Rhode Island Historical Society, KB 227, p. 270.

¹³Microanalysis identifies both primary and secondary woods in this desk as Juniperis virginiana, a local red cedar.

¹⁴Features characteristic of Newport are the exposed dovetails, the shape of the top molding, drawer construction similar to that of the Swett desk, and the use of chestnut on the interior.

¹⁵See Greenlaw, p. 163, figs. 140, 141.

¹⁶Redwood Library table, Ott, John Brown House Loan Exhibition Catalogue, p. 40, fig. 34; Winterthur table with letter from John Goddard to Moses Brown, 1763, Carpenter, p. 14.

¹⁷Receipt, Christopher Townsend, 1746, MS, Newport Historical Society, Box 43, folder 13.

¹⁸Quarter columns, beaded drawers, and a fifth foot betray its North Carolina origin.

¹⁹Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1959), see especially chapter, "Regions and Region Behavior," pp. 106-140.

²⁰Newport Town Council Records, vol. 10, p. 300.

VII. Conclusion

¹Skemp, p. 192.

²Brown, p. 6.

³Nancy F. Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 59.

⁴Brown, p. 73.

⁵Rock, pp. 151-152.

⁶Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (1948, New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1973), p. 71

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF JOINERS AND CABINETMAKERS WORKING IN NEWPORT BETWEEN 1745-1775^a

Atwood, Thomas	w. 1752
Baker, Benjamin	w. 1751-1792
Bailey, Constant	w. 1747-1801
Bailey, William	d. 1751
Bliss, Henry	w. before 1775
Brier, Jonathan	w. 1754-1808
Burroughs, Ezekiel	w. 1763
Burroughs, Samuel	w. 1762
Cahoone, Ebenezer	w. 1743-1749
Cahoone, John	w. 1748-1792
Cary, Peleg	w. 1750
Chapman, Israel	w. 1750
Clark, Job	w. 1751-1755
Cook, Silas	w. 1752
Cornell, Gerge T.	w. 1765-1800
Davenport, Thomas	w. 1745
Davis, William	w. 1772-1775
Goddard, John	b. 1723-d. 1785
Goddard, Townsend	w. 1750-1790

Green, William	w. 1746
Hefferman, William	d. 1748
Hookey, John	w. 1750
Huntington, David	w. 1766
Langley, Nathaniel	w. 1741-1752
Lawton, Gideon	w. 1759-1769
Little, Nicholas	d. 1759
Love, William	w. 1750
Lyndon, Josias	w. 1764
Lyndon, Samuel	w. 1741-d. 1750
Moody, James	w. 1739-1767
Nichols, Walter	w. 1775
Norman, Moses	w. 1754
Packomb, Clement	d. 1756
Paine, Royal	d. 1748
Peabody, Benjamin	w. 1750-1794
Pittman, James	w. 1769-1782
Proud, Joseph	w. 1769
Sanford, Joseph	w. 1775-1784
Searle, James	w. 1758-1759
Slocum, Samuel	w. 1755
Smith, Edward	d. 1746
Spencer, Daniel	w. 1775
Swett, Jonathan	w. 1759
Tayre, Benjamin	w. 1754-d. 1796
Taylor, James	w. 1775-d. 1826

Thurston, John	w. 1761
Townsend, Edmund	b. 1736-d. 1811
Townsend, Job, Jr.	b. 1726-d. 1778
Townsend, Job E.	b. 1758-d. 1829
Townsend, Jonathan	w. 1745-1772
Townsend, Thomas	b. 1742-d. 1827
Trevett, Eleazar	w. 1746-d. 1795
Vinson, Samuel	w. 1763-d. 1826
Weeden, George	w. 1768
Weeden, Sam C.	w. 1767
Wignerson, Charles	w. 1767-d. 1787

^aIn mid-eighteenth century Newport, the terms "joiner" and "cabinetmaker" were used interchangeably, both referring to makers of case furniture as opposed to chairmakers, housewrights, and ship-joiners.

Source: Wendell D. Garrett, "The Newport Cabinetmakers: A Corrected Check List," Antiques, 73 (June, 1958), pp. 558-561; Joseph K. Ott, "Recent Discoveries Among Rhode Island Cabinetmakers and Their Work," "More Notes on Rhode Island Cabinetmakers . . .," and "Still More Notes . . .," Rhode Island History, 28, (Winter, Spring, and Fall, 1969); and public and private records at the Newport Historical Society, Newport, Rhode Island.

APPENDIX B

TOOLS OWNED BY BENJAMIN PEABODY, SHOP JOINER, IN 1794

15 Saws large & small all old ones	2-2-0
68 Moulding Planes of diff't sort of size, all old	1-15-0
25 Planes, consisting of Jointers, Jack Planes, Smoothing Planes, &c	1-10-0
3 Augurs, & a Parcel of bitts, chizels, files, Gimlets, & Gouges	1-14-0
Old working benches and three Lathes	3-12-0
3 Bitt Stocks, 2 Axes, one hatchet, 2 holdfasts, 4 Adzs, 7 hammers, Pr Shairs & wench	1-4-0
1 fro, an Iron Stake, a Screw Cutter, 8 Squares & an Oval sweep	0-9-0
drawing knives, 2 Plows, 2 Spoke shaves & 1 drill	0-10-0
Old Spade, 2 Hoes, 1 Rake & Iron Barr, 2 Wood Vices & wood Clamp	0-12-0
an old chest with a Parcel of old wornout Tools & Rubbish	0-10-0
One black walnut Plank 7 Pieces for Gun Stocks (Maple) &c	0-13-0
A parcel of Patterns, Mandles, 3 Small boxes, & some Paint Potts, Jars, &c	0-6-0

1 Grind Stone, wood Horse, & Stive Box

[lumber, unfinished furniture, iron scraps, etc]

One Work Shop

7-10-0

Source: Inventory of Benjamin Peabody, July 5, 1794,
Newport Wills & Inventories, vol. II, p. 362.

APPENDIX C

INVENTORY OF THE PERSONAL ESTATE
OF JOHN CAHOONE, AUGUST 31, 1792

One Cherry tree Desk Olde
One Maple tea table, 1 square dining table
One Mahogany tea table (old)
One Small looking Glass, 1 Pr hand Irons
One round Chair Old, 1 Arm Chair
three China Bowls 10 ditto Plates
Six glass tumblers & Sundry Crockrey
Sundry old books fourteen Straw bott^d chairs old
twenty-four queen ware Plates (some old)
1 Mortar One warming pan
1 Kitchen Table & 1 dining Do Old
1 Pr hand Irons three Pr tongs & one Shovel
1 Trammel & Sundry hooks
one Pr flatt Irons 4 brushes 1 lamp 2 Candlesticks
8-1/2 old Copper 28dw Pewter
1 Iron Pott 3 kettles, 1 Cake Pan, 1 Chopp^g knife
Sundry Old Bottles & Jugs & Case
Old barrels, 2 Meat Casks, 1 funnel & bread trow
2 bunches knives & forks, Shavers & Scrimmer

4 bedsteads Old 3 Bed ditto
 4 Pillows 3 Boulsters 4 Towels
 1 Suit Curtains (Old) 4 blankets, 3 Coverlids, old
 4 Pr Sheets 4 Pillow cases 2 Table Cloths
 1 Old high Case draws 1 do dressing Table
 Sundry Old Pictures 1 Small Looking Glass
 1 Great & Small Spinning Wheel Wearing Apparell
 Clapboards & Shingles in His Chamber
 1 Frame of an Easy Chair
 Sundry Boards & Pieces of Stuff in the Garret,
 Mahogany, etc.
 One Framing Lathe & Tools
 Part of a book case begun
 Sundry old Irons in the Garrett
 4 Mahogany Desks & Bookcases begun
 1 Joiners working bench, sundry old tools & Table legs
 Old Iron at house & Shop
 1 small Shote 2 Cows & Some Hay
 1 Tarr Kettle, 1 Old Cradle
 3 Shop benches, old
 Joiners tools in the shop
 Red cedar in logs, plank & with some other stuff
 Maple boards
 742 feet mahogany in Plank, boards & pieces

1 Old Scow

6 Silver Tea Spoons

Source: Inventory of John Cahoone, August 31, 1792,
Newport Wills & Inventories, vol. II, p. 362.