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**EARNING A LIVING IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BOSTON:
SILVERSMITH ZACHARIAH BRIGDEN**

by

Hilary Anderson

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

May 1996

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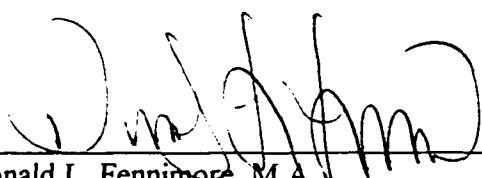
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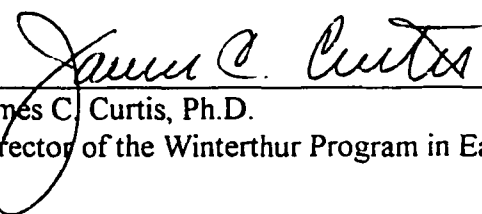
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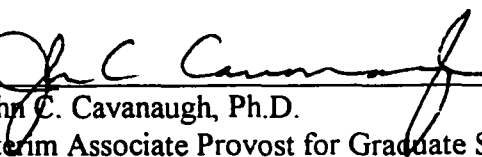
SILVERSMITH ZACHARIAH BRIGDEN

by

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ABSTRACT

Boston silversmith Zachariah Brigden (1734-1787) practiced his craft for over three decades at his shop in Cornhill. Looking at Brigden's career through his daybook, a picture of the variety and types of work undertaken by a colonial silversmith develops. This picture reveals the skills, contacts and strategies a craftsman employed to make a living in urban eighteenth-century America.

Brigden's work and location do not make him an unusual craftsman, but the preservation of his daybook, as well as some receipts, family papers and over one hundred objects he produced provide a rare opportunity to examine a craftsman's work. This study is primarily based on Brigden's 1765-1775 daybook.

Variety in tasks and clients characterized Brigden's work throughout his career. In order to satisfy his clients Brigden not only fashioned silver objects but repaired objects and arranged for engraving. As well, he sold jewelry and silversmithing tools. Brigden's clients ranged in social position from bakers and milkmen to merchants and councilors. Brigden drew his clients from the ranks of his neighbors, business associates, silversmithing colleagues, family connections, relatives and fellow church members. No one group provided the bulk of his clientele. To earn a living Brigden needed both his skills as a silversmith and his contacts with a wide range of people who would bring him business. The information and interpretation presented in this study will be useful in analysis of eighteenth-century silver objects, the silversmithing craft and the society that utilized silver objects and employed silversmiths.

INTRODUCTION

On the busy street across from the Boston Town House, silversmith Zachariah Brigden (1734-1787) plied his craft. For ten years from 1765 to 1775 Brigden recorded orders and sales in his daybook. In a small bound book he noted the date, who requested an object or repair, how much it cost and, sometimes, how the customer paid. Brigden's work and location do not make him an unusual craftsman, but the preservation of his daybook, receipts, family papers and over one hundred objects he produced provide an opportunity to examine closely the work of an eighteenth-century urban craftsman. Looking at Brigden's career through his daybook and objects, we can develop a picture of the variety and types of work undertaken by a colonial silversmith. This picture suggests the skills, contacts and strategies a craftsman utilized to make a living.

Born in 1734, Brigden grew up with his father, Michael Brigden, stepmother, Elizabeth Abbot Gill Brigden, and siblings in Charlestown.¹ Brigden's blacksmith father apprenticed his son to the successful Boston silversmith Thomas Edwards (1701-1755). Brigden likely completed his term with Edwards in 1754 or 1755, when he reached the age of twenty or twenty-one. The first evidence of Brigden working as a silversmith

¹Michael Brigden (1698-1767) married Winifred Sprague (1700-1739) and, after her death, he married Elizabeth Abbot Gill (1706/7-1787). He had eleven children. Four of these children, Winifred Brigden Davis (1721-1794), Timothy Brigden (1726-1796), Zachariah Brigden (1734-1787), and Thomas Brigden (1745-1774), survived their father. Thomas B. Wyman, Charlestown Genealogies and Estates, (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 128-129, 408. Boston Athenaeum, Index of Obituaries in Boston Newspapers 1704-1795, vol. 2, (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1968), 291.

under his own mark is a teapot made for Mary Sargent (see figure one).² The teapot bears the date 1760, five or six years after Brigden finished his apprenticeship. Four years later an advertisement in the Boston Gazette links Brigden with a Cornhill address.³

Like many apprentices who finished their terms and wished to set up their own business, Brigden faced the challenge of gathering capital to open and equip his shop. Brigden solved the problem of massing capital with which to start his business in part by marrying his former master's daughter, Sarah Edwards (1724-1768), in 1756 or 1757.⁴ Sarah Edwards' father died the year before the marriage. Edwards' will declared Sarah Edwards the executrix and the most significant heir of his estate.⁵ Upon marriage, Brigden assumed the responsibilities of executor and shared the property his wife inherited from her father. As executor of Edwards' estate Brigden transacted business the Edwards' family and Edwards' former business associates. Some of these men became important and long-term business contacts for Brigden.

In 1774, six years after the death of his first wife, Brigden married Elizabeth Gillam (1735-1793). The couple had three children; John Gillam (1775-1779), Elizabeth

²Kathryn C. Buhler, American Silver 1655-1825 in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, vol. 2, (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1972), 650.

³George Francis Dow, The Arts and Crafts in New England 1764-1775, (Topsfield, Massachusetts, The Wayside Press, 1927), 42. Dow details the advertisement from the Boston Gazette, 19 November 1764. Brigden ran this advertisement several times in the winter of 1764 including on 26 November and 3 December.

⁴Boston Marriages 1752-1809, (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1903), 22.

⁵Suffolk County Probate Records, docket number 11126, probated 19 September 1755.

Cumming (January–October 1777), and Catherine (b. 1778).⁶ Elizabeth Brigden presided over the recording and dispersal of Brigden's estate at his death in 1787. Elizabeth Brigden also sold the brick house where Brigden had lived and worked to pay the debts Brigden left. She died in 1793, leaving a fifteen-year old daughter.⁷

Papers and objects associated with Brigden give insight into his business, the desires of his clients and the material world of colonial Boston. The information and description arising from this study not only aid in understanding Zachariah Brigden, but shed light on the Boston silversmithing industry at the last third of the eighteenth century. As well, because the dates of his career coincide with those of the well-documented and widely-known silversmith Paul Revere (1734–1818), in the future Brigden's and Revere's lives and careers can be usefully compared.⁸ Although Paul

⁶For births see "Records of the West Church," unpublished pages prepared by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1933, pages 026–029, housed at the Massachusetts Historical Society (hereafter MHS). For deaths see Gravestone Inscriptions and Records of Tomb Burials in the Granary Burying Ground, (Salem, Massachusetts: The Essex Institute, 1918), 46. Catherine survived childhood and, in 802, she married John Rowe Parker. Boston Marriages 1752–1809, (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1903), 200.

⁷Mrs. Brigden sold her house to John, Thomas and Frances Amory in April of 1792 for L990. Dolbeare papers, folder 1790–93, MHS. See also Suffolk County Deeds, libro 174, folio 34. For the death of Mrs. Brigden see Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts Records of the Trinity Church, vol. 56, (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts), 807.

⁸There is a good-sized literature on Paul Revere as a silversmith. For the most recent treatment see Paul Revere-Artisan, Businessman, and Patriot: The Man Behind the Myth, (Boston: Paul Revere Memorial Association, 1988), and Deborah Federhen, "Paul Revere, Silversmith: A Study of his Shop Operation and His Objects," unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, December 1988 and the silver section by Leslie Greene Bowman in American Rococo: Elegance in Ornament, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 71–131.

Revere is arguably the most famous colonial craftsmen, remarkable success as a silversmith and businessman were not typical. Through understanding a single craftsman and eventually comparing craftsmen, scholars can better interpret the complex interactions between clients and silversmiths, as well as gain insight into business transactions and the roles silver objects played in eighteenth-century Boston.⁹

This paper, describing Brigden's career and production, consists of four chapters. The first outlines the evidence: the daybook, objects, bills and receipts associated with Zachariah Brigden. The second chapter discusses the kinds of tasks that Brigden undertook; making, selling, repairing and engraving silver objects. The third chapter explores the people connected with the tasks and objects mentioned; Brigden himself, his household and his clients. The conclusion interprets the significance of the material discussed in the first three chapters. The information and interpretations presented in this paper will be useful in analysis of eighteenth-century silver objects, the silversmithing craft, and the society that utilized silver objects and employed silversmiths.

⁹Barbara Ward's "The Craftsman in Changing Society: Boston Goldsmiths, 1690-1730," unpublished dissertation, 1983, and "Boston Goldsmiths, 1690-1730," in The Craftsman in Early America, Ian Quimby, ed., (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 126-157, treat silversmiths as an artisan group, drawing conclusions from collected profiles of individual craftsmen. The introduction of the "The Craftsman in Changing Society: Boston Goldsmiths, 1690-1730" includes a useful summation of scholarship on American silver from the late nineteenth century through the early 1980's.

Chapter One

THE EVIDENCE

The daybook of the Boston silversmith Zachariah Brigden forms the basis of this study. Bills, invoices, inventories, advertisements and objects associated with Brigden enrich the information presented in the daybook.¹ These various documents chronicle

¹ Yale University Art Gallery acquired the Zachariah Brigden Papers (hereafter ZBP) for the John Marshall Phillips Collection in 1985. In 1987 they were transferred to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

The papers consist of fifty-six folders housed in two boxes, stored under the general manuscript number eight-six. Folders 1-41 hold papers associated with Brigden's household and business. Folders 42-56 contain documents, receipts, and miscellaneous correspondence associated with Brigden, his family and the family of Brigden's first wife, Sarah Edwards.

Of this collection, three folders contain a bound book, signatures of books separated from their bindings, and loose pages that record orders, a few designs, accounts and information of use to an eighteenth-century silversmith. The partial book in folder 27 is a late seventeenth-century account book, the blank spaces of which have been used for notes and drawings in the eighteenth century. A page bears the inscription, "Paid Book/June 12th 1782". The sketches, notations and patterns inside the book appear to have been made by more than one person. Some of the writing appears to have been by Brigden, based on its similarity to that in the daybook in folder 29. Some of the notations in the partial book were made by someone learning the business and craft of silversmith in the 1780s. A few dates in the book post-date Brigden's death.

The partial book and papers in folder 28 pertain to the business of a silversmith and date from the 1740s, and 1750s. The folder contains notes connected to later decades in the eighteenth century in the same hand. They record the same kind of information as the loose signature in folder 27. Like the book in folder 27, this book appears to contain notes in several different handwritings made at different times. Because of the family connection, the entries in the book that date from the 1740's and 1750's could be by the silversmith Thomas Edwards, the father of Brigden's first wife.

Folder 29 contains the Zachariah Brigden daybook upon which much of this study is based.

some of the day-to-day activities and clients of an eighteenth-century silversmith. Before discussing Brigden's activities it is necessary to describe the kinds of information found in the daybook, bills and receipts. How these documents fit in the eighteenth-century business environment will also be considered.

The Daybook: A Record of Brigden's Tasks and Clients

A daybook, like Zachariah Brigden's, constituted part of the group of accounting tools utilized by eighteenth-century businessmen and craftsmen. Colonial craftsmen operated on a system in which customers paid for goods or services rendered in cash, credit, barter, or a combination of those methods of payment.² In a daybook a craftsman or business-owner kept a record of orders, credits, trade, and cash transactions as the transactions occurred. A daybook was not an account book. An account book kept a running total of money owed and accounts settled. Sometimes a daybook was used in conjunction with an account book. A craftsman or businessman entered information in the daybook that he could transfer to a ledger-book or account book for the purpose of reckoning accounts or preparing bills.³ Daybooks were the first record of a business transaction. The term "waste book" also describes a daybook and clarifies the function of this kind of document. The entries in a daybook were used to keep accounts straight, figure bills or to remind the craftsman of the order. After the order was complete and

²W. T. Baxter, "Accounting in Colonial America," Studies in the History of Accounting, edited by A. C. Littleton and B. S. Yarney, (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc. 1956), 274.

³Robert J. Wilson III, Early American Account Books: Interpretation, Cataloging, and Use, AASLH Technical Leaflet #140, unpaginated.

paid for the entries in a daybook were essentially useless. Typically daybooks records were crossed out when they were finished and billed.

Brigden's daybook is a palm-sized leather-bound volume of approximately seventy pages with marbled endpapers. Brigden wrote his records on pages divided by three vertical red lines on the right hand edge to separate pounds, shillings and pence.⁴ In Brigden's daybook the first forty or so pages contain business orders and notes dating from 1765 to 1775. A group of blank pages follow the entries. The last twelve pages contain business, personal and household notes from the same period.⁵ Brigden's daybook acted as a repository for two kinds of information; business entries started from the front; household and other notations were essentially a separate book begun from the back.

In his daybook Brigden noted clients' orders, the approximate date of the order, the price, and how much silver the customer gave Brigden at the time of the order. He did not keep very consistent records. Brigden occasionally noted if an order was paid for, or sometimes crossed the order out if it was completed, but did not note all those stages in every order. For example, on facing pages in the daybook dated May 1772 to May 1773, Brigden noted fourteen orders and transactions.⁶ Only six of these are crossed out, some with an "X", others by lines through the writing. One of the entries is marked, "Setled 1773". Brigden's daybook is a personal document understood by its

⁴ Twelve pence equal one shilling, twenty shillings equal one pound.

⁵ ZBP, folder 29. These personal and household notes include, among other things, a list of linens in the house, a list of wood purchases, and a notation of a ticket purchase with John Gill and Thomas Brigden.

⁶ZBP, folder number 29.

user, not a systematic record created to communicate particulars of his business to other people.

Orders recorded in the daybook are in approximate chronological order on each page with some exceptions. Brigden dedicated some pages exclusively to more active clients, like Daniel Boyer (1725-1779) and Nathaniel Sparhawk (1744-1814). The orders on those pages follow in sequence, but do not fit chronologically with the dates recorded on the surrounding pages. Brigden undertook a considerable volume of work with these two clients. On some of Boyer's pages Brigden does not adhere to a daybook method of recording. Instead, he uses an account book method that records not only the specifics of an order but how it was paid. Once the reader is acquainted with its idiosyncratic style, Brigden's daybook reveals fascinating details about the business of an eighteenth century silversmith: the clients who patronized his business, the variety of tasks he did and the range of objects he made and repaired.

The language of description in Brigden's daybook indicates differences among objects straightforward to Brigden but unclear to modern readers. Without an empirical characterization such as weight or a description of how a completed object looked, it is hard to know exactly what Brigden's descriptions of his products meant.

Some of the objects in the daybook are easily identified such as tea spoon or cann. An object noted as "Cup" is less clear; did Brigden mean to describe a standing wine cup or a vessel with two handles?⁷ Other objects, like a pair of "Silver spreaders"

⁷ Brigden made both of these kinds of cups; a pair of standing cups for the Church of Christ in Medfield, Massachusetts (on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), and a two-handled vessel for the First Church of Christ in Hadley, Massachusetts (on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). I am indebted to Jeannine Falino for bringing the Medfield cups to my attention and to Karen Parsons for bringing the Hadley cup to my attention.

defy description or identification based on extant eighteenth century silver objects.⁸ The descriptions and notations in the daybook effectively distinguished objects, clients and payment to Brigden at the time he made the notation.

Brigden rarely noted if an order was paid for in his daybook. This suggests the entries in the daybook seem to have been made at the beginning of the transaction, not throughout the the course of the transaction. In examples where payment is recorded Brigden wrote, "Setled" in the margin or above the entry.⁹ As mentioned, in Brigden's ongoing and extensive business relationship with Daniel Boyer (1726-1779), a Boston silversmith and retailer, Brigden occasionally set up a page in his daybook that noted how Boyer paid for his services. In some of the Boyer orders Brigden set up a "Contra" or against column that placed comparative transactions across from each other.¹⁰ But the Boyer transactions are an exception, for the most part other documents need to be consulted to understand the whole of Brigden's transactions. Fortunately, a number of bills, receipts and objects associated with Brigden survive that help us understand the other parts of Brigden's transactions.

⁸ In October 1767, Brigden noted "To a pr of Silver Spreaders-- 11 3.." under the name of Stephen Harris. This object is also noted in Paul Revere's account book, see Deborah Anne Federhen, "Paul Revere, Silversmith: A study of his Shop Operation and his Objects," unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1988, table A, p. 82.

⁹ The title on the back page of the book fragment in folder 27, "Paid Book" suggest Brigden employed a separate mechanism for keeping track of the outcome of transactions, or that this book is not connected with his business. Many of the sketches, notations of weight and engravings suggest someone who was learning about the products and methods of a silversmith compiled the book.

¹⁰ For example, in March 1770, Brigden made six spoons, gave or used ten ounces, 3 pennyweight of silver to or for Boyer, and mended a tankard, a teaspoon, and a strainer. In return Boyer gave Brigden silver.

Bills: The Other Side of a Transaction

The records in the daybook looked at with Brigden's surviving bills and receipts gives a fuller picture of how he carried on his business. The bills and receipts in the Zachariah Brigden papers are a small and incomplete group of materials when compared to the 1765-1775 daybook. They do not replicate the range of clients and products recorded in that document. However, the bills give clues to the processes of ordering and paying for silver objects and other products and services available through Brigden. In addition, they provide information about Brigden beyond the decade covered in the daybook.

Brigden's daybook does not tell the entire story of a transaction. Except in a few cases, it is not clear how the clients paid for an object or service they got from Brigden. As well, the daybook rarely gives any indication of how much time elapsed between an order, the completion of the order, and final payment. The bills and receipts associated with Brigden's business and household illustrate aspects of his business and life style. They show what Brigden bought and sold, the variety of methods of payment his clients used, how long payment took, the time Brigden required to produce objects, and how objects and money moved around Boston in the eighteenth century.

The term bill describes an itemized list of services and products that Brigden provided for his client listed with their individual costs. Bills in the Brigden papers include requests for payment from business owners who sold services and products to Brigden. When receipted, bills served as a record of payment for a debt. In the bills among the Brigden papers, typical of eighteenth-century practice, the blank space along

their lower margin was used as a space to write a receipt. For example, Brigden received a bill from an auctioneer in 1783 for seventeen shillings and one pence for the purchase of five units of buckles. Instead of rewriting the transaction, the auctioneer used the bill as a receipt, adding the phrase, "Receivd the above In full Boston april the 15th 1783....," at the bottom of the page.¹¹ Very often one bill or receipt was used to record another transaction, presumably in an effort to save paper or because the old bills and receipts were easily accessible. For example, on one piece of paper Brigden recorded separate bills to his clients Isaac Royall (1719-1781) and Nathaniel Sparhawk (1744-1838) on the front. On the back Brigden executed a bill to Daniel Boyer. Thus one fragment of paper records three unrelated transactions.¹²

As suggested by the previous example, bills can be complex multi-purpose accounting documents that convey a great deal of information. The front of a bill might delineate expected facts like how much a transaction cost, when and how it was paid. The back of the bill might show less predictable information such as who carried the bill, or who received the money, and what kind of currency was used to settle the transaction.

Consideration of how money and paper moved in eighteenth-century Boston is valuable in picturing the business landscape in which Brigden and his clients operated. Bills in the Brigden papers relate ways money and financial obligations traveled through eighteenth-century Boston. Much of the movement of money and notes was in response to the chronic lack of hard specie colonists experienced. A bill in Brigden's papers states on the front, "Boston, march 19th 1766/Due to Mr. Ebenzer Elliot for milk/to this Day the Sum of Six pounds Lawfull money from me/ Zech Brigden" on one side. On the

¹¹ZBP, folder 12.

¹²ZBP, folder 38.

other side is written, "March 19th 1766-/Mr. Brigden, Pleas to pay the within to Mr Ephriam/ Frost Junr of Cambrige/ Ebenezer Elliott," which is followed by, "Boston july 18 1767/ Recd the within Contents in full/ Ephraim Frost."¹³ Elliott used Brigden's payment to pay a debt he had with Frost. From the wording on the bill it is clear that the money in question was actually transported within the bill. This appears to be the case with other bills in Brigden's papers.¹⁴

Other bills in the Brigden papers clarify the method—carrying by hand—that Bostonians used to get bills, money and notes from person to person and place to place. One note from S. H. Sparhawk to Brigden provides an example of this kind of transportation of funds, "Mr Brigden be so good as to send me by the bearer a Negro Boy 1 Dollar, and charge it to me. Yours..."¹⁵ Apparently Brigden kept this note to help in the reckoning of his ongoing account with the Sparhawks. The term "boy" as delivery person appears occasionally in Brigden's papers, as does "Negro boy", and "Yr Son".¹⁶ Carrying notes between various creditors and debtors was an important task of junior apprentices and children. Brigden's daybook and bills evidence how busy an apprentice, slave, or child could be kept running notes, money, finished products and bills all over town.¹⁷

¹³ZBP, folder 11.

¹⁴Frost and Elliot were both milkmen who provided Brigden with milk. Their profession is noted in the daybook when they made purchases, ZBP, folder 29.

¹⁵ZBP, folder 22.

¹⁶ZBP, folder 29.

¹⁷W.J.Rorabaugh, The Craft Apprentice. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3-31, discusses the duties and conditions of colonial apprentices in many trades.

Some of the bills preserved in the Brigden papers echo or consolidate entries in the daybook, showing how Brigden used the daybook to figure and monitor bills. For instance, Brigden's bill to Dr. James Lloyd dated July 1768, details eight transactions over a six year period. Seven of these transactions are recorded in the daybook, the eighth one is dated 1762, three years before the daybook records start. This particular bill restates what is recorded in the daybook, and illustrates how Brigden used his book as a record from which he made up his bills. This bill also provides a telling example of how long accounts could be carried without settlement. There is one interesting difference between the bill Brigden gave to Dr. Lloyd and the Lloyd entries in the daybook. Most of the prices that Brigden noted in his daybook differ from the ones he recorded on the bill. For example, on 5 September 1766, in the daybook Brigden noted a charge for "2 Silver Salt Spoons 3-12", but the charge that appeared on Dr. Lloyd's bill for 5 September 1766 was 0-9-7.¹⁸ The majority of the entries on this bill follow this pattern. The reason for the discrepancy is difficult to explain, but it could be that Brigden used a different rate of exchange in the daybook than on the bill.¹⁹ During the

¹⁸ZBP, folder 29.

¹⁹James J. McCusker, Money and Exchange in Europe and America 1600-1775: A Handbook, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 131-137. The medium of exchange and accounting in eighteenth-century Massachusetts is confusing. Paper exchanges were expressed in the colonies with the terms, pounds, shillings and pence, referring to the British monetary system. However, the colonies did not all use the same standard as a basis for their paper money. The pound in New York and the pound in Massachusetts did not have the same value, as they used a different rate of exchange based on different legislated values of the Spanish dollar. From 1690, Massachusetts issued paper currency, later called "Old Tenor". On 31 March 1750, Massachusetts returned to a silver standard. The new Massachusetts pound was called Lawful Money. Both terms for money, Old Tenor and Lawful Money, were in use during Brigden's career, as well as the terms New Tenor and Middle Tenor (these terms indicated yet another rate of exchange for English money). L7.50 Lawful Money

thirty year span of Brigden's career many kinds of paper and hard currencies were used in Boston. Unless noted, it is difficult to ascertain to which standard Brigden calculated his bills and orders.

Extant bills that Brigden sent to his clients and bills that they sent to him provide good examples of how each paid the other for goods or services rendered. In 1785, lumber-seller Joseph Eustis billed Brigden L2:6:1 for plank, wood, fence and other building materials. On the bottom of the bill Brigden subtracted L0:18:1, for a pair of tea tongs. Brigden paid half of an ongoing 1774-1775 bill amounting to L3.11.0 from Josiah Spelling for "...Bread at Sundry times..." with a pair of shoe buckles, a pair of knee buckles, a coral necklace and eight gold beads.²⁰ In 1780, Brigden billed Major Edward Carns (1730-1782) for mending a tankard, a cream pot, a spoon and also for making spoons, a cream pot and a pair of castors. In return, Carns gave Brigden silver and a barrel of sugar.²¹ Bills which indicate payment in goods or products provide important evidence of comparative values and give a sense of what Brigden's products were worth in terms of products used in the household. They also offer insight into the importance of the barter system in Brigden's business activities.

An inspection of Brigden's bills and receipts also illustrates how Brigden's products could be used by other individuals as a medium of exchange. A note dated 1769 from Nathan Phillips asked Brigden, "...Please to lett Mr Josiah How Have one pair

equaled L1.00 Old Tenor, so an order first noted in Lawful Money but presented to the client in Old Tenor would not appear to be the same. This is one possible explanation for the difference between the daybook entries and the final bill for Dr. Lloyd.

²⁰ZBP, folders 2 and 8.

²¹ZBP, folder 37.

Silver Buckles and Charge it to the Acct of my Father..."²² This note helps explain why Benjamin Phillips and his son Nathan had so many buckle purchases recorded under their names in the daybook and also why so many of their entries were noted as being picked-up or delivered by someone else. The Phillips used their account with Brigden to keep their own business running without using hard-to-find cash. From 1767 to 1772, Brigden recorded making twenty-two pairs of buckles for the Phillips. Most of these were silver shoe buckles; Phillips purchased only one pair of knee buckles. The daybook entry "To a pr Silver Buckle- 8 7-/Delvd Josiah How...", dated 21 May 1770, indicates that the Josiah How mentioned above received his buckles five months after Nathan Phillips drew up his request.²³ It is interesting to consider that at no place in the transaction, from the original request to the daybook entry, did Phillips or Brigden define the vague term silver buckles. Were they decorated, plain, of a standard size?

In transactions of this kind, where Brigden's products become a medium of exchange, smaller jewelry items seem to be favored, especially shoe buckles. One example of earrings being used as a medium of exchange was executed by Brigden's sister, Winifred Brigden Davis (b. 1721). Her note to Brigden reads, "Mr. Brigden Sir Pleas/to lett Mrs. Stowens have/ a pair of Erings on my account and you will oblige your sister...", over her signature.²⁴ Davis also sent her brother another request, which states, "Sir Please to pay to Mr Moses Collin/the sum of one Pound Thirteen/ Shillings out of your Shop and/Charge it to your humble Servant/Octr 4 1786 Winefrad Davis." It

²²ZBP, folder 38.

²³ZBP, folder 29.

²⁴ZBP, folder 47.

specifies the amount of money that Collin should have on her account instead of an object.²⁵ Like Benjamin and Nathan Phillips, Davis used the credit she had with her brother to pay debts without spending cash. Bills in the Brigden papers, like Carns', Phillips' and Davis', expand and deepen the picture of Brigden's business activity seen in his daybook and suggest the complexities of doing business in eighteenth-century Boston.

Objects: Manifestations of Skill and Desire

Brigden's daybook, bills and other papers give evidence of how he conducted his business, the kinds of clients that he had, and the variety of objects he made, sold and repaired. Another body of evidence regarding Brigden's career as a silversmith needs to be considered, the silver objects bearing his mark.

Over one hundred Brigden objects survive in museum and private collections.²⁶ These objects provide rich avenues for understanding Brigden and his career as a silversmith for several reasons. Looked at in conjunction with Brigden's bills and receipts, these objects give tangible form to descriptions that exist on paper as well as provide an opportunity to understand Brigden not only as a craftsman and a businessman

²⁵ZBP, folder 47.

²⁶I am indebted to Patricia Kane of the Yale University Art Gallery for making the preliminary catalog and files of extant Brigden objects compiled for the Bigelow-Phillips Project biographies of Massachusetts silversmiths available to me. The holdings of the Decorative Arts Photographic Collection at the Winterthur Museum and the index of early American silver pictured in auction catalogs and in advertisements in Antiques magazine assembled by the Argentum Gallery (housed in DAPC), in addition to published American silver catalogs from various collections were useful for getting a sense of how much Brigden silver exists.

but as a designer and workman.

Brigden's daybook names approximately fifty kinds of objects he sold or produced. In his daybook Brigden further described these objects in other ways. Sometimes he noted the material an object was made of, the decoration, the size or the function. Most of the objects that Brigden made and sold were made of silver. Consequently, he rarely noted if an object was made of silver, but left the material unspecified. He noted objects made of gold. All the gold noted in the daybook was used for different kinds of buttons, necklaces, lockets and rings. Brigden also recorded stone buckles and buttons, probably indicating decoration with cut glass (paste) stones.²⁷ The use of terms designating size, such as small or large, were most often applied to spoons. Brigden also used descriptions for sizes of different vessel forms like tankards and porringers, recording them in quart and one and a half pint sizes. These categories of description are not used in all entries. Rarely are more than two descriptions attached to an object in the daybook. All the descriptions in the daybook help for a better understanding of the variety of choices available to the silver consumer, as well as the flexibility required of the craftsman to provide consumers with options.

The objects that Brigden sold the largest numbers of, buckles, buttons and spoons, required the most description in the daybook.²⁸ For instance, in the period

²⁷Interestingly, the one known pair of extant Brigden buckles, in the Clearwater Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, are of silver cast in a shape that imitates the look of stone or paste buckles. There is a possibility that stone buckles in Brigden's daybook meant silver buckles in that design.

²⁸In the ten year period 1765-75 Brigden sold approximately 200 spoons, 140 pairs of buckles, fifty rings, forty units of buttons and forty thimbles. Unit indicates a set, pair or a single article. Brigden sold buttons primarily in pairs but also mentions sets without specifying what number composes a set. Set could mean a pair, in a few instances the price for a set of buttons is the same as the price for a pair.

covered by the daybook, Brigden sold buckles, shoe buckles, knee buckles, neck buckles, stock buckles and a girdle buckle. Brigden sold these buckles in silver, and "plaited".²⁹ The buckles were further described with decorative distinctions, such as stone or cypher.³⁰ Brigden used similar decorative descriptions and materials to keep track of his numerous button orders.

Brigden noted selling more spoons in the daybook than any other item and employed several ways of describing them. He sold teaspoons, small spoons and large spoon singly or in groups of two, three, four, six and twelve.³¹ He charged the consumer for the cost of the material by the ounce and for the cost of the labor, as evidenced by a list in the Brigden papers entitled, "the Prises of Things in the Case," which itemizes,

It could be that Brigden was quite typical in making and selling large numbers of buckles and buttons. Kathryn C. Buhler notes that buckles and spoons are the most numerous entries in Revere's day-book in Paul Revere Goldsmith, (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1956), figure 62.

²⁹ZBP, folder 29. Brigden primarily sold silver buckles. In the period covered by the daybook Brigden only sold three pair of plated (fused silver) buckles. There is evidence that he bought and sold plated buckles later in his career. It is possible that plated describes a kind of design on the buckle in which the metal looked braided.

³⁰Stone indicates decoration with paste stones. Paste stones are cut glass backed with silver or colored foil to imitate colored and cut gems. Eighteenth-century paste stones and paste jewelry were generally of English or French manufacture. For more information on paste jewelry, see M. D. S. Lewis, Antique Paste Jewellery, (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), and Dereck Plint Clifford, Anne Clifford's Antique Jewellery: The Story of a Collection, (London: Nottingham Court Press, 1985).

Cypher might have indicated a monogram or crest engraved on the face of the button. Stone cypher, another designation used by Brigden, may have described tiny gold wire initials placed between the cut glass and colored or silver foil so that the initials appear "inside" the stone.

³¹ Interestingly, only teaspoons were sold in groups of twelve.

"Large Spoons at 52/ pr. oz & 20/ for making--Tea Spoon 52/pr oz-& 10/ for making--
 ."³² Larger spoons cost more because they required more material.

Brigden differentiated the silver spoons he manufactured by function and size. Most of the spoons that Brigden produced were described by the food they were designed to carry: gravy, marrow, mustard, salt or soup. Brigden's indication of a "child spoon" probably referred to its size and diminutive user. As in the case of buckles, there was a fabulous variety of silver spoons available. However, most of the spoons that Brigden sold were designated as large, small or teaspoons. Marrow, mustard and gravy spoons are rarely cited in the daybook. These were specialized and comparatively uncommon forms, preferred by families who practiced and spent money on elaborate dining rituals.

The rest of the objects in the daybook, if described beyond a name, are done so using either material or function. Small jewelry items are generally described by materials, while tabletop forms are described by function.³³ Many of the objects Brigden noted in his daybook were small personal items used by individuals, like the buttons and buckles previously mentioned. In this category Brigden also sold; necklaces, brooches, boxes, clasps for shoes and books, a tweezers case, a cockade, sword hilts, lockets (decorated clasps for necklaces), rings, thimbles coral beads, gold beads, and spectacles.³⁴

³²ZBP, folder 38.

³³An exception to this was a ferule, a connecting device found on swords and canes. Brigden identified ferules for swords, canes or no specific purpose.

³⁴For more information on these kinds of items see Martha Gandy Fales, Jewelry in America 1600-1900, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club Ltd., 1995), and Madeline Siefke, "Colonial Silver Tobacco, Snuff, and Patch Boxes: Their Manifest and

The objects discussed above, as well as buckles and buttons, were generally visible costume accessories. As such, they served as portable indications of the wearers' taste, wealth, and social position. The social significance that silver and gold ornaments, fittings and accessories had for Brigden's clients cannot be overstated. The very variety of small personal silver and gold items the eighteenth-century consumer had to choose from suggests the complexity of personal expression through dress at the time. Limited examples of these objects survived. For the most part gold and silver eighteenth-century jewelry and accessories have been lost, refashioned, or melted down for the gold they contained or broken. In terms of numbers of entries indicating units sold, jewelry and personal items constituted a substantial part of Brigden's business.

Brigden also produced flat and hollowware objects associated with dining and tea drinking for his clients. The vast majority of Brigden's objects that survive relate to these functions. Central to Brigden's business was the large variety and number of spoons he provided. The other flatware forms that Brigden sold were ladles for punch, salt and soup spoons and tea tongs. In the daybook Brigden also recorded orders for hollowware; salvers, canns, porringers, castors, cream pots, milk pots, strainers, tankards, cups, tumblers and chaffing dishes.

Extant objects collaborate descriptions in the daybook, Two Brigden teapots survive at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, one of a Rococo form from the mid-eighteenth century, and the other in the neo-classical taste (see figures 1 and 2). Two of Brigden's chocolate pots survive (see figures 3 and 4).³⁵ Oddly, neither teapots nor

Latent Functions", unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1991.

³⁵One chocolate pot, which bears Storer family arms, is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The other is in the collection of Historic Deerfield.

chocolate pot fabrication appear in Brigden's daybook in the period 1765-1775. This could be explained by looking at the particular objects in question. Both of the teapots bear engraved dates, one for 1760 and the other for 1786. These dates fall before and after the dates of the daybook. It does seem remarkable that in ten years Brigden is not called upon to make another teapot. As expensive forms, perhaps teapots were not often required or requested by Brigden's clients, or maybe the anti-tea political climate of pre-Revolutionary Boston influenced Brigden clients against spending a fair amount of money on vessels for serving a politically charged beverage.³⁶ It is possible that chocolate pots would have been a costly and old-fashioned commission that not many of Brigden's clients wanted. The two extant Brigden chocolate pots probably pre-date the daybook. Also, these are the kind of forms that would have likely been repaired rather than replaced if they were damaged.³⁷ It is less easy to explain the absence of sugar bowls and salts in the daybook, especially since Brigden examples of both forms survive (see figures 5 and 6).³⁸ Given these gaps and discrepancies in surviving Brigden objects, it is important to look at all kinds of available documentation associated with Brigden; the objects, the daybook, the bills and receipts. Only with complete consideration do we get a sense of the whole of Brigden's activities and career.

³⁶The silversmith Paul Revere produced nine teapots before the Revolution, compared to fifty he made in the last twenty years of the eighteenth century, Deborah Federhen, "Paul Revere, Silversmith: A Study of his Shop Operation and his Objects," unpublished master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1988, p. 40 and tables A and C.

³⁷In the period covered in the daybook Brigden repaired two teapots.

³⁸There is a sugar bowl at the Yale University Art Gallery and another one at the Newark Museum. There is a pair of salts that descended in the Bliss family at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Beyond comparison with bills and daybook entries, surviving objects can also be studied as physical manifestations of Brigden's workmanship and habits as a craftsman. The secondary literature on Brigden consists solely of object entries in larger catalogs of American silver. Two of these publications mention that Brigden's objects are characterized by heavy weight and tidy seams, signs of solid construction.³⁹

Close inspection of Brigden's objects reveals an interesting series of numbers scratched on the bottom of hollowware forms. The Sargent teapot and the Storer chocolate pot, both at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, a sugar bowl at the Newark Museum, and a sugar bowl at Yale all have scratched weights on their undersides.⁴⁰ The presence of scratched weights on silver objects is not remarkable. Silversmiths often scratched or engraved the finished weight of an object on the bottom. Since the principle cost component of silver was its weight, having that information readily accessible was helpful for craftsmen and consumers alike. There may have been the additional benefit of helping make the object recognizable in case of theft. The manner in which these weights are recorded on Brigden's objects is somewhat unusual. All four have their weights recorded in ounces, pennyweights and grains. Most silversmiths who scratched weights on their work noted only ounces and pennyweights, not grains. This makes sense because a grain is a very small amount of silver, one-four hundred eightieth of an

³⁹ Kathryn C. Buhler, Massachusetts Silver in the Frank L. and Louise C. Harrington Collection, (Worcester, Massachusetts: Barre Publishers, 1965), 97, Henry N. Flynt and Martha Gandy Fales, The Heritage Foundation Collection of Silver, (Old Deerfield, Massachusetts: The Heritage Foundation, 1968), 166.

⁴⁰In the files at the Yale University Art Gallery there is a photograph which shows the bottom of the chocolate pot at the Heritage Foundation in Deerfield. It has a scratched weight similar to the others mentioned. I am indebted to Patricia Kane for making these files accessible to me.

ounce, practically negligible on an object which weighs over ten ounces.⁴¹ What this characteristic reveals about Brigden is difficult to say. It indicate he was an extremely careful workman of precise habit, or it might suggest an unidentified facet of his record keeping and workmanship.⁴²

⁴¹Silver was and is weighed in Troy ounces, pennyweights and grains. In the Troy system used in England and America, twelve ounces make a pound, twenty pennyweights make an ounce and twenty-four grains make a pennyweight. See Martha Gandy Fales, Early American Silver for the Cautious Collector, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1970), 232-233, for more information about weights and silver content standards.

⁴²One speculation might be that Brigden needed to keep careful track of all the silver a client gave him or that was used to made an object because Brigden himself was not making the object. There is no evidence in the daybook or bills to support this idea, but it is a possible explanation for Brigden's unusual scratch weight practice. I am indebted to Patricia Kane for sharing this possible explanation of why a silversmith would record the grains on the bottom of an object with me.

The scratch weights on the Brigden objects seem to be in his handwriting. They were scratched shallowly, so not all are legible. The following is a note of the scratch weights that appear on the Brigden objects, as well as the present weight of the object, if it is noted in the Decorative Arts Photographic Collection at the Winterthur Museum.

The Newark sugar bowl (#US.91.72 a+b) bears scratch weights of 12.9 and 12.7 with 9 obscuring the 7. Another notation on the bottom of that bowl is:

oz d
12x10x0

This notation is not completely legible, but looks like the other scratch weights on Brigden objects, except for the crosses dividing the numbers. The present weight of this object is 12 ounces and 3 pennyweights.

The Storer chocolate pot at the Museum of Fine Arts (#56.676) has a scratch weight on the bottom as follows:

oz wd gr
? 3 ?

This object weighs 27 ounces and 7 pennyweights.

The Sergant teapot at the Museum of Fine Arts (#1971.50) has a scratch weight of:

oz wd gr
16 7 0

This object weighs 17 ounces and 19 pennyweights.

All identified Brigden objects bear his mark. Silversmiths put their mark in form of their name or initials on their products for several reasons. The mark assured a purchaser of the silver content and quality of the workmanship. It could also identify the object if it was stolen, and marks served as a form of advertising. Eighteenth-century American silversmiths generally marked their silver with given and surname initials or the initial of the given name and the surname spelled out. A silversmith might simultaneously use different marks suitable for different sizes of objects. The dies used to strike marks in silver would wear out or break with normal usage. In replacing worn or damaged dies, a silversmith had the opportunity to change or retain the design of his touchmark.

Three marks are attributed to Zachariah Brigden.⁴³ One is his first initial, "Z"

The sugar bowl at Yale University Art Gallery bears a scratch weight of:

? wd gr
11? 5 12

It currently weighs 10 ounces and 16 pennyweights. The interior of this object also displays some practically illegible words and dates written under the lid. As well, there is a repair under the finial which disturbed what appears to be one of Brigden's touchmarks (type b Z*B--four pointed star), that was formerly near the finial.

The chocolate pot at Historic Deerfield (75-463) bears a scratch weight of:

oz mot gr
28= 7 1

I am indebted to Amanda Lange for looking at this object for me.

⁴³Henry N. Flynt and Martha Gandy Fales, The Heritage Foundation Collection of Silver with Biographical Sketches of New England Silversmiths 1625-1825, (Deerfield, Massachusetts: The Heritage Foundation, 1968) cite "Z. Brigden" in a cartouche and "Z" dot "B" as Brigden marks, as does Louise Conway Belden, Marks of American Silversmiths, (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University of Virginia Press, 1980). Buhler in American Silver 1655-1825 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and with Graham Hood in American Silver in the Yale University Art Gallery, (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1970) cite the Z. Brigden mark and "Z" four pointed star "B".

followed by a pellet and last name surrounded by a conforming cartouche (see figure 7). In mark A the letters that spell "Brigden" are in the style of handwritten script. The top of the "d", which falls forward and curves down to barely touch the top of the "g" is a distinctive feature of this mark.⁴⁴ The graceful formation of this element, the way its form echoes the shape of the tail of the "g" and the conforming shape of the cartouche suggests that this mark was specifically designed. The design of this mark is not a die cut in the shape of typeface used in printing. Brigden used this mark on two of his three objects which bear engraved dates. These are the 1760 Sargent teapot and the 1786 Charles River Teapot. The years noted on these objects date from the beginning and the end of Brigden's career. Brigden seems to have used this mark throughout his career.

The second mark attributed to Brigden is the capital letter "Z", a four pointed star and the capital letter "B" in a rectangular cartouche (see figure 8). This mark is smaller than the one described above and appears on jewelry, as well as hollowware.⁴⁵ Brigden used this mark on the third of his known dated pieces, the mourning ring made to commemorate the death of Deborah Prince (1699-1766). The small size of this mark allowed Brigden to use it on small objects like buckles and sleeve buttons or objects with difficult to mark places like casters.⁴⁶ The small mark also appears on spoons and other

⁴⁴Brigden consistently forms his handwritten "d"s in this fashion.

⁴⁵This mark is found on sleeve-buttons and the Deborah Prince ring at Yale, the buckles at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and on the caster at Winterthur (79.200 a+b).

⁴⁶There are three extant pieces of Brigden jewelry in museum collections, the Deborah Prince ring at Yale, a pair of gold sleeve buttons at Yale and a pair of shoe buckles at the Metropolitan Museum. All three of these objects display the "Z" four-pointed star "B" mark. The caster at Winterthur and a pair of casters owned by the antique dealer S. J. Shrubsole of New York City in January 1993, are also marked on the bottom with this mark. As a caster is an object with a small base, it was probably easier

hollowware.⁴⁷

Brigden's third mark, the capital letter "Z" with a dot just above the right-hand bottom seraph of the "Z" and the capital letter "B" in a rectangular cartouche was not as widely used as the other two marks. In fact, it seems that this mark appears only on spoons.⁴⁸

for Brigden to use the small mark than the "Z.Brigden" mark.

⁴⁷This mark is often recorded and published as "Z+B". That is a descriptive expression of the mark, but can lead to confusion because it does not describe the mark precisely. The four-pointed star is more of a star than a "+", as the rays of the star taper to points.

⁴⁸This mark appears on spoons in the collection of the Winterthur Museum, numbers 62.240.80 and 62.240.985.

Chapter Two

A SILVERSMITH'S TASKS

Brigden sold his clients objects he produced as well as objects he procured from other sources. To maintain his clients' silver and fulfill their requests Brigden repaired and engraved silver objects. Brigden participated in many non-silver related business activities. Among these activities were selling jewelry and tools that he did not produce, acting as agent for clients, and provisioning the Union Club. The data in Brigden's daybook shed light on the scope of his business activity. Although his contemporaries called Brigden a goldsmith, he pursued more than that trade. Brigden undertook a diversity of business pursuits in order to make a living. The following chapter will discuss the specifics of what Brigden did as a silversmith as well as touch on other business activities that augmented his silversmithing business.

Objects Made by Brigden and Others

There are fifty kinds of objects noted in Brigden's daybook. Brigden produced many of these items himself. Brigden procured some of the other things he sold in his shop through other silversmiths and from merchants. A first clue as to if Brigden made an object or bought it ready made is the notation of that object in the daybook. Brigden often wrote, "To making...", or "To the fashion...", before an object order or entry. This

prefix to an order shows that Brigden did make these certain kind of objects.¹ It appears Brigden charged his clients separately for material and the labor involved in making an object. However, Brigden's system and logic of pricing objects is not clear from the daybook. Looking for the prefix, "To making..." as a sign that Brigden manufactured an object recorded in the daybook indicates that Brigden made cups, spoons, porringers, canns, a fork, marrow spoons, tea tongs, chains, ferules, rims for glasses, tankards, clasps and boxes.² Descriptions on Brigden's bills to clients indicate that he made or fashioned cream pots, teapots, waiters, gold buttons, sugar dishes, butter boat bodies, lids and spouts. Information in an inventory after Brigden's death of an auction of goods from his house and shop shows that he had button molds for casting buttons.³ A bill from the estate of silversmith Samuel Edwards (1705-1762) shows that Brigden purchased a swage especially for making tankards from the deceased silversmith's stock of tools.⁴ From the evidence in the daybook and bills it is clear that Brigden was able to make many different hollowware and flatware forms, probably more than certainly indicated in the documents.

The same bodies of evidence also reveal that Brigden did not make everything he sold. Brigden bought a number of objects he did not make but sold in his shop, primarily tools and jewelry, from other silversmiths and merchants. These craftsmen and

¹ZBP, folder 29.

²ZBP, folder 29.

³ZBP, folder 31. Interestingly, the one known pair of Brigden gold sleeve buttons are not cast but appear to have been made of gold sheet, wire, and solder. I am indebted to Patricia Kane for discussing the construction of this pair of buttons with me.

⁴ZBP, folder 49.

merchants imported such items from England and Europe or had access to someone who did. Although it is relatively clear what items Brigden did not produce himself, it is not possible to tell if the items he bought from other Boston silversmiths were manufactured by them or imported from England and Europe.

In the few cases when bills from merchants to Brigden exist, the items were most likely imported from England. The merchant selling such items had the contacts, experience and knowledge to get products from England. Brigden bought plated buckles from his brother-in-law the merchant and sugar trader William Downes Cheever (1720-1788).⁵ Brigden also bought buckles from an unidentified auctioneer.⁶ Two of Brigden's silversmithing colleagues, Daniel Boyer and Joseph Loring (1743-1815) were most likely also importers.⁷

Both Loring and Boyer sold Brigden items which came from Europe, most likely England. One of the imported items that played a role in Brigden's business was the chape. All of the many buckles that Brigden sold contained a pointed and hinged mechanism which enabled them to grasp the fabric or leather of a shoe and hold the shoe together. The part was called a chape or a chape and tongue.⁸ Brigden put chapes in buckles that he made; he also used them for the many buckle repairs he did for his

⁵ZBP, folder 12.

⁶ZBP, folder 20.

⁷ZBP, folder 4, and Martha Gandy Fales, Jewelry in America 1600-1900, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club, Ltd., 1995), 65-66.

⁸American eighteenth-century buckle chapes are generally steel, although there are some silver and a very few gold examples.

clients.⁹ Brigden bought the chapes by the dozen. In one purchase recorded on an undated bill Brigden purchased five dozen chapes from Loring.¹⁰ Brigden also bought dozens of chapes from Boyer. In the period 1769-1772, Boyer provided Brigden with many imported items, which Brigden noted in the daybook opposite the tasks and products that Boyer got from Brigden. Brigden received files, gravers, hammers, plated buckles, sets of stones, sheets of red and ruby foil, button stones, cypher stones, a brass box, crucibles, wire, buttons, earring stones and gold beads from Boyer.¹¹ Some of these items, like the gravers, hammers and files were tools that helped Brigden fashion, decorate and repair items. Other items Brigden used in the repair of silver items, like the foil and stones. Foil was used to back cut glass (paste) stones to help the stone capture and reflect light. If one stone fell out of a buckle, Brigden could replace it. Items like gold beads and button stones Brigden used to make complete products to sell to customers.

As discussed before, Brigden did not only sell silver and gold objects. His daybook also shows transactions in tools, and general groceries. Some of the preserved bills confirm and expand the range of products that Brigden sold and noted in the daybook. A bill from Brigden to William Cario Jr. or Sr., a silversmith, outlines the interesting variety of objects that Brigden sold.¹² In this bill Brigden charges Cario for

⁹ZBP, folder 29. In the period covered in the daybook Brigden repaired over thirty buckles and sold fourteen single or pairs of chapes that may have been used in repair.

¹⁰ZBP, folder 4.

¹¹ZBP, folder 29.

¹²There are two New England silversmiths named William Cario, a father and son. The silversmith doing business with Brigden seems to be the elder (c.1714-d. before 1771), see Patricia Kane, ed. Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewelers, (New

supplies such as stones for buttons, rings and earrings, potash and crucibles used in silversmithing, but also for grocery items like candles and chocolates and a book, "To Cash for one of Pilgrim Progrss...0:3:7."¹³ In this bill Brigden appears to be functioning more as a merchant or a banker than a silversmith, none of the objects mentioned on the bill are objects or products which Brigden himself produced. The bill, in conjunction with the Cheever and Loring bills to Brigden, suggests that silversmiths in urban areas relied on each other as well as merchants to keep supplied with the products and materials required in their trade.

One last interesting clue as to what Brigden made and what Brigden had for sale from other sources is a newspaper advertisement Brigden placed in the Boston Gazette on 19 November 1764.¹⁴ This advertisement begins with the phrase, "Just Imported from London, and to be Sold by Zechariah Brigden....," and states Brigden sold coral beads, stick coral, scales, weights, watch plyers, tongs, shears, vices, wire, brass hollow

Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1996), 68. The younger William Cario (1736-1809) worked in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Boston, Massachusetts, and South Newmarket, New Hampshire. William Cario witnessed a legal document for Brigden's master Thomas Edwards in 1753 which is preserved in the Brigden papers, ZBP, folder 48. The connection between Thomas Edwards and William Cario helps explain the connection between Brigden and Cario in later years, although which William Cario is unclear. I am indebted to Deborah Federhen for discussing the confusing William Carios with me.

¹³Exhibition labels in "First Masters of American Silver: The Craft of the Silversmith in Colonial Massachusetts", Yale University Art Gallery, 3 February-21 July 1996, suggest William Cario Sr. worked for Brigden as a journeyman concentrating on jewelry work, citing this 1762 bill from Brigden which charged Cario for materials used in his work as well as for rent, candles and reading matter. ZBP, folder number 38.

¹⁴George Francis Dow, The Arts and Crafts in New England 1764-1775, (Boston: Wayside Press, 1927), 42.

stamps, files, pipes, gravers, scorpers, sandpaper, sandever, lead pots, crucibles, brushes, borax, salt peter, rotten and pumice stone, and moulding sand. This portion of the advertisement seems directed towards silversmiths. All of the objects mentioned, many of which appeared on Cario's bill as discussed above, are silversmith's supplies. As well, the wording of the advertisement implies that all of the listed objects were imported from London. The same holds true for the second paragraph of the list.

In the second section of the advertisement Brigden listed the imported consumer goods he offered for sale: shoe, knee, and stock buckles, buttons, crystal and cornelian seals, broaches, garnet, hoop rings and stone earrings. From this list it can be suggested that these objects, also listed in Brigden's daybook, could have been imported. Because there were so many different kinds of buckles available to Brigden's clients from his shop, some could have been produced by Brigden others may have been imported. The advertisement and the evidence in the Brigden daybook, bills and receipts makes clear that Brigden both sold imported objects and objects which he made himself.

Repair

Brigden's daybook shows over forty kinds of objects he was called upon to repair.¹⁵ Many of these were the kind of objects that Brigden produced and sold in his business, such as buckles, buttons, cans, cream pots, cups, ladles, and tankards. Other forms that Brigden repaired were objects which he did not record the production of in

¹⁵Brigden's daybook recounts forty-four different kinds of objects that he repaired. There are also about four entries that are hard to read or ambiguous that refer to repair.

the daybook, such as a basin, a butter boat, a toothpick, seals, fans and a saucepan.¹⁶ The objects that Brigden repaired most often seemed to be objects that utilized moving parts in their operation. For instance, there are over twenty entries for repair of buckles, fans, and tankards, all objects whose use required the operation of moving parts. Aside from those items, Brigden's clients called upon him to repair earrings, whistles, and boxes, all of which have moving or attached parts. The element of a moving part on a silver object increased the likelihood of breakage through wear.

Brigden also repaired many objects without moving parts. The largest number of repairs that appear in the daybook are of spoons. This testifies to the fact that silver spoons were owned and used by many people. However, the number of spoons Brigden repaired, around thirty-five, does not compare with the two-hundred spoons he made and sold in the same time period. Porringers are noted in Brigden's daybook as being repaired sixteen times, one of the more regularly repaired objects.

Repair was one of the services Brigden offered his costumers. The repair services that Brigden provided, which included repair, mending, refitting, cleaning, burnishing and replacing missing parts, helped his clients maintain the silver that they possessed and used. It also helped Brigden keep his business going. Although there are not as many entries for repair as there are for making and selling items, entries pertaining to repair are constant throughout the daybook. Brigden likely priced repair on the time and materials that a repair required, although he rarely noted these cost factors in the daybook. Generally though, repair is comparatively less expensive than purchases

¹⁶The book of notes and sketches in folder 27 contains drawings of a toothpick and of parts of a saucepan which might be examples of Brigden's production, but no entries for these objects are in the daybook.

detailed in the daybook, rarely exceeding a pound. The few instances where the cost of a repair is over a pound involve replacement of parts. For instance, in 1768, Brigden charged Nathaniel Sparhawk L2:5 for repairing two pairs of stone buckles in the daybook. He noted that he added stones to the buckles. Mending a teapot in the same order only cost £0 13 6.¹⁷ Repair was not the most important aspect of Brigden's business, but it was a consistent part of all the activities which allowed Brigden to make a living.

Engraving—Embellishment and Identification

Brigden's daybook and bills show that Brigden's clients requested he engrave objects for them. Many of the extant Brigden objects bear engraving. Some of this engraving is unelaborate, like the simple initials seen on spoons. Several Brigden objects, in particular the Storer chocolate pot, the Sargent teapot, the Charles River teapot and the two sauce boats at the the Clark Art Institute, exhibit detailed, stylish and well-executed engraving.¹⁸ Other Brigden objects show engraving which, in terms of complexity of design, and time required for execution were not as involved, but demanded more time and effort than straightforward engraving of monograms or initials seen on spoons. The Hadley church two-handled cup and the pair of standing cups Brigden made for the Medfield Church at the Museum of Fine Arts bear this kind of

¹⁷ZBP, folder 29.

¹⁸I am indebted to Beth Wees for speaking to me about the Brigden silver at the Clark Art Institute and to Peter Wisbey for bringing the Brigden silver at the Clark to my attention. The pair of sauce boats is pictured in the catalog for Sotheby Parke Bernet sale 3571, 15-17 November 1973.

engraving, circles with simply decorated borders surrounding a message.¹⁹ Although many silversmiths were competent engravers, not every silversmith could execute refined and sophisticated engraving. Inspection of this assortment of engraved Brigden objects exhibiting various degrees of complexity suggests the question, how much engraving did Brigden do himself?

In his daybook Brigden recorded instances of engraving on: cups, spoons, gravy spoons, a box, a porringer, tankards and buckles. Clearly engraving was a service Brigden provided to his customers. However, the daybook does not give clues as to who actually did the engraving. A bill from Brigden to Isaac Royall (1719-1781) shows that Brigden repaired and engraved a tankard with the entry, "To repairing a Tankard and engraving..."²⁰ The tankard featured in this bill was not a new item which Brigden produced. The bill shows that Brigden did not confine his engraving to objects which he sold or produced. This further obscures the complicated problem of who did the engraving on Brigden silver.

The engraving on the Storer chocolate pot and the Sargeant teapot is intricate and fine work which was likely executed by a specialist. Possibly Brigden did not execute the engraving on these objects. However, without documentation or

¹⁹Similar engraving also appears in a color photograph of a large two-handled cup in the Decorative Arts Photographic Collection at the Winterthur Museum. The actual location of this cup, whose engraving identifies it as the gift of an unknown donor to the Church at Kittery, at the time of the photograph, is not noted. For more information about this cup see E. Alfred Jones, The Old Silver of American Churches, (Letchworth, England: National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, 1913), 237. The cup is illustrated in Charles S. Parsons, New Hampshire Silver, (Adams Brown Company, 1983), 18.

²⁰ZBP, folder 83.

comparable engraved objects, the question of who did the engraving is difficult to answer. Fortunately, among Brigden's accounts are two bills describing engraving done for Brigden by Joseph Callender. Joseph Callender (1751-1821), a Boston engraver, trained with the notable engravers Paul Revere (1734-1818) and Nathaniel Hurd (1729-1777).²¹ He engraved illustrations for the Royal American Magazine, numerous bookplates and was a die sinker.²² Joseph's older brother, Benjamin Sr. (1749-1811?) was also a silversmith.²³ Joseph Callender's nephew, Benjamin Jr. (1773-1856) was primarily an engraver of maps and charts.²⁴ One of the bills in the Brigden papers is receipted by Benjamin Callender. It is uncertain which Benjamin Callender receipted the bill, it could either be either Joseph's brother working in partnership with him or Joseph's nephew serving an apprenticeship to learn engraving. Although Joseph Callender trained as a silversmith, not much of his work survives, he seems to have worked more as an engraver.

In these two bills, the Callanders bill Brigden for, "Engraving Arms on Tankard, To Engravg Teapot, To Engravg Cypher on 12 Tea Spoons..." in 1785 and for

²¹Henry N. Flynt and Martha Gandy Fales, The Heritage Foundation Collection of Silver with Biographical Sketches of New England Silversmiths 1625-1825 (Deerfield, Massachusetts; The Heritage Foundation, 1968), 175.

²²The Winterthur Museum has a medal attributed to Paul Revere and Joseph Callender in its collection (86.166). According to the files in the Registrar's Office, Revere made the form and Callender sunk the die. For more information on Joseph Callender's bookplates see H. W. Fincham, The Artists and Engravers of British American Book Plates, (London: Kegan Paul Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1897), 15.

²³H. W. Fincham, The Artists and Engravers of British American Book Plates, (London: Kegan Paul Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1897), 175.

²⁴H. W. Fincham, The Artists and Engravers of British American Book Plates, (London: Kegan Paul Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1897), 175.

engraving two teapots, each at a cost of L2.8., in 1787.²⁵ Brigden's bill to Nathaniel Gorham for the Charles River teapot exists. In this bill Brigden charges "The Hon. Nathl Gorham Esqr..." separately for a silver teapot weighing seventeen ounces, making the teapot, engraving it and for the handle and knob. The bill came to a total of L13.15.4, paid by a note for L15 by Richard Devens, Esqr.²⁶

Several connections link the Charles River teapot to the 1787 bill from Brigden to Gorham. One is the names noted on the bill. Gorham and Devens, who were both involved in the construction of the Charles River Bridge, Nathaniel Gorham as an incorporator of the bridge, Richard Devens as one of the directors of the project.²⁷ The second connection is that the bill enumerates both a wooden knob and handle. Although wooden handles were common on teapots, wooden knob parts were not, the Charles River Teapot is unusual in having one. Another connection between the object and the bill is the seventeen ounce weight recorded on the bill. Presently, the teapot weighs sixteen ounces, ten and a half pennyweights.²⁸ Callender's 1787 bill for the engraving of two teapots includes the £2.8 charges for engraving the Charles River teapot. The price Brigden charged his client for engraving that teapot is the same as Callander charged

²⁵The 1785 bill to Brigden from the Callanders is badly torn along the side which gives the prices, so it is difficult to see how much the Callanders charged Brigden for engraving all the objects outlined on the bill.

²⁶ZBP, folder 37.

²⁷For information about the construction of the Charles River Bridge see "Historic Processions in Boston from 1789 to 1824," The Bostonian Society Publication, vol. IV (Boston: The Bostonian Society, 1907), 67-74. and Justin Winsor, The Memorial History of Boston, vol. 3, (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1881), 553-555.

²⁸The small difference in weights can be accounted for through loss from polishing over two hundred years.

Brigden, he did not mark up the price of the engraving. As well, the date of the Callender bill, 26 February 1787, is one day before Brigden's entire teapot bill dated 27 February 1787, perhaps Brigden waited for Callender's bill before he made up the bill for Gorham. Given the skill of this engraver, in combination with the object and the bill, it is clear that the skillfully executed ornamental and pictorial engraving on the Charles River teapot came from the shop of Joseph Callender.

The attribution of engraving on the Charles River teapot details the relationship between Zachariah Brigden and the Callender engraving shop. The image on the Charles River teapot appears on a tankard made to commemorate the completion of the bridge (see figure 2). This tankard bears the mark of Benjamin Burt (see figure 9). The images on the teapot and the tankard depict the same view of the completed bridge, the same wording is used to thank the person involved with the construction, and the distinctive flower and wreath decoration on both objects is similar.²⁹ Both Brigden's teapot and Burt's tankard were engraved by Joseph Callender. This suggests the interrelationships of the silversmithing trade in eighteenth-century Boston, as well as enabling us to assign

²⁹The engraving on the teapot reads, "Presented to/Capt. David Wood,/by the Proprietors of/CHARLES RIVER BRIDGE,/in Testimony of their entire Approbation/of his faithful Services,/as a special Director of that Work,/begun in A. D. 1785,/and perfected/A. D. 1786." The engraving on the tankard bears the same message except that the name of David Wood is replaced by that of Richard Devens, Esqr.

The tankard currently weighs thirty ounces and fourteen pennyweights, almost double the weight of the teapot. Although both of the objects are impressive items given to individuals who apparently filled the same role in the construction of the bridge, the tankard, simply because of its weight and size, was a significantly more expensive and impressive item.

I am indebted to Jeannine Falino who brought the teapot and the tankard together for purpose of comparing the engraving.

a name to one of the engravers working in Boston at the end of the eighteenth century.³⁰

Less elaborate than the Charles River teapot and more extensive than the identifying engraving on the Brigden spoons is the engraving on several pieces of Brigden church silver. These cups, a two handled cup made for the Church of Christ in Hadley, and a pair of standing cups made for the Church of Christ in Medfield, exhibit a round shield decorated with an abstract border which contains a message about the donor and the date of the donation.³¹ Before the nature of the engraving can be

³⁰The engraving by Joseph Callender on the Charles River teapot and on the Charles River tankard is similar to a Brigden teapot pictured in *The English-Speaking Union's catalog, American Silver and Art Treasures* (London: The English-Speaking Union, 1960), 29, plate 21. The teapot is also pictured in a short description of the exhibition in Kathryn C. Buhler, "American silver on view in London," *The Magazine Antiques*, vol. 78, no. 3 (September 1960): 231. This teapot, whose present location is unknown, is the same shape as the Charles River Teapot. The engraving on this teapot is a hanging medallion festooned with a swag of flowers and a bow and ribbon. The flowers in this engraving and the device by which the medallion hangs, a circle of ribbon, looks like the engraving on the Charles River teapot. As in the case of the Charles River teapot the engraving on this teapot covers much of the body of the teapot as well as appearing on the spout and lid of the teapot.

The hollow round feet on the Charles River teapot do not appear to be original, they are not very worn, the bottom of the teapot underneath them is scored or severely scratched and the solder attaching the feet to the body of the teapot is bubbly. The feet do not appear to be Brigden's work. The teapot pictured in the English Speaking Union catalog does not have feet and probably looks as the Charles River teapot did originally, resting flush against the surface which supports it.

For a study of Boston engravers see, Martha Gandy Fales, "Heraldic Emblematic Engravers of Colonial Boston," in *Boston Prints and Printmakers: 1660-1775*, (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1973), 185-220.

³¹For analysis and description of church silver especially relating to the communion service, the sources of communion silver and discussion of patterns of accumulation of communion plate see Barbara Ward, "In Feasting Posture," *Winterthur Portfolio* 23, 01-24, and the metalwork section in *The Great River: Art and Society of the Connecticut Valley, 1635-1820* (Hartford CT: Wadsworth Atheneum), and Donald L. Fennimore "Religion in America," *The American Art Journal*, vol. V, no. 10 (November 1978).

For more information on Brigden church silver see E. Alfred Jones, *The Old*

discussed, it is important to point out some of the social functions of church silver. In understanding these functions, the ideas that motivated Brigden and his clients in choosing these cups and their engraving are more clear. The obvious purpose of church silver was to serve communion wine. Beyond that, engraved silver communion vessels were a long-lasting reminder of the wisdom, wealth and piety of the person who donated the vessel or the money used to make the vessel.³² The engraving on the vessels communicated the specifics of who had these qualities and when he or she lived. Barbara Ward in "In Feasting Posture" makes a convincing case that the form of communion vessels was important to convey social and religious information to members of a congregation.³³ The two Brigden objects discussed here, a two-handled cup and a standing cup, are traditional forms of American communion vessels. Aside from the form, the engraving on the Medfield cups and collaborative information in the Brigden papers give information about the donors, Brigden, and the process of how church silver was acquired. The Medfield cups are of the few extant Zachariah Brigden objects whose ordering is documented in the daybook. These cups were commissioned from Brigden by one of the deacons of the Medfield Church, Peter Cooledge (1703-1792), named

Silver of American Churches, (Letchworth, England: National Society of Colonial Dames of America, 1913).

Aside from Hadley and Medfield, Brigden made church silver for congregations at Duxbury, Salem, Stoneham, and Springfield, Massachusetts, as well as East Hartford, Connecticut, and Kittery, Maine.

I am indebted to Karen Parsons for bringing the Hadley cup to my attention. I am indebted to Jeannine Falino for bringing the Medfield cups to my attention.

³²Barbara Ward, "In Feasting Posture," Winterthur Portfolio, vol.23, no.1 (Spring 1988), 1-24.

³³Ward, Barbara Ward, "In Feasting Posture," Winterthur Portfolio, vol.23, no.1 (Spring 1988) 1-24.

deacon of the Church of Christ in Medfield starting in 1753.³⁴ His name appears in the daybooks twice as "Deacon Peter Coolidge", or as "Peter Coolidge of Medfeild", once on 25 October 1767 recording the ordering of a silver cup for sixty pounds, the other time recording a memorandum, "...2 Cups to be made weighing/oz 18 dwt 10 gr 0 a peice Oct 27th to be done/in five weeks."³⁵ This later entry records the two Medfield cups, although it makes no reference to engraving. Also pertaining to the Medfield cups is a receipt in the Brigden papers for delivery which states, "Boston Nov 25th 1769/Rec'd of Zech Brigden two silver Church Cups which I promis to Diliver to/Deacon peter Coolidg of medfield/James Boyden."³⁶ This receipt shows how the cups traveled the twenty miles from Boston to Medfield, although the date is perplexing.³⁷ Apparently the deacon was in Boston for the commissioning of the cups but another resident of the town was given the responsibility of getting the cups to Medfield.

One of the Medfield cups bears the script message, "The Gift of/Elizth (Adams) Richardson/To the Church of Christ/in Medfeild," the other, "The Gift of/Eleaszer Bullard/To the Church of Christ/in/Medfeild." Although the cups were ordered at the same time, they did not come from the same donor. Both of the cups appear to be the result of legacies left the church in the donors' wills. Elizabeth Adams Clark Richardson

³⁴William S. Tilden, History of the Town of Medfield, Massachusetts, (Boston: George H. Ellis, 1887, reprinted 1975), 365.

³⁵ZBP, folder 29. The second mention of Cooledge in the daybook is not dated. The 1767 order is blotted so it is not entirely clear if the order is for one cup or for two.

³⁶ZBP, folder 38.

³⁷No James Boyden is listed in Tilden's history of Medfield, but the Boyden family is in Medfield from the mid-seventeenth century, William S. Tilden, History of the Town of Medfield, Massachusetts, (Boston: George H. Ellis, 1887, repinted 1975), 321.

died in 1766, and may have left money for the purchase of the cup in her will.³⁸ Eleazer Bullard died in 1753, bequeathing five pounds to the church, which could have been used for the purchase of the cup which displays his name fourteen years later.³⁹ The engraving on the Medfield cups carries important information about where the church got the money to pay for the cups and preserved and aggrandized the names of the donors. The cups show that although the cups are an effort to revere the memory of the donors, the individual that ordered the cups and decided how they should look was one of the deacons of the church. The decisions about what the cups would look like or what the engraving would say was made after the donor had died. The donor relied on the deacon to choose something appropriate to the needs of the church.

The actual engraving on the Medfield cups is competent, but interesting in that the lay out of the words is not exact. The letters on the Richardson cup are cramped toward the right hand side of the medallion. As well, Brigden marked the cups in an unusual way. He marked the cups on the front of the cups directly above the circle that encloses the writing with the "Z four-pointed star B" mark.⁴⁰ The proximity of the mark to the engraving may suggest his authorship of the engraving.⁴¹ If that is the case, the

³⁸William S. Tilden, History of the Town of Medfield, (Boston: George H. Ellis, 1887, reprinted 1975), 470. Interestingly, the cup states her maiden name and her last married name but does not include the name of her first husband.

³⁹William S. Tilden, History of the Town of Medfield, (Boston: George H. Ellis, 1887, reprinted 1975), 333. Perhaps the church waited that amount of time to gather enough money to afford a pair of cups.

⁴⁰On the Richardson cup this mark is actually placed upside-down, right side-up to the user of the cup.

⁴¹I am indebted to Donald Fennimore for suggesting this idea to me.

engraving on the Medfield cups could be engraving Brigden did himself, not engraving done by a specialist engraver. The Hadley cup has similar engraving and the message is markedly like the message on the Medfield cups, "The Gift of--/C/H*I/I/To the first Church of--Christ--/in Hadley--."⁴² The style of the engraving on the Hadley cup is like the engraving on the Medfield cup but the filler between the words and the decoration of the border are not exactly the same as seen on the Medfield and Hadley cups.

As the daybook and objects attest, Brigden provided his clients with a variety of kinds of engraving. Some of the more simple engraving on Brigden items may have been done by Brigden. If the closeness of Brigden's mark to the engraving on the Medfield cups is an indication of authorship, then that cup may display the extent of his skills as an engraver. For more detailed and stylish engraving Brigden got work done by specialists as seen on the Charles River teapot engraved by Joseph Callender, but the question of precisely who engraved Brigden objects is open.

⁴²The initials on this cup appear to be the initials of Isaiah and Hannah Carrier of Hadley. Karen Parsons kindly provided this information. For more information on Hadley history and Carrier genealogy see Sylvester Judd, History of Hadley, (Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1993, reprint of 1905 edition), 17.

This cup is marked with the "Z.Brigden" mark on the bottom of the cup.

Chapter Three

BRIGDEN AND HIS CLIENTS

After discussion of the evidence associated with Brigden and the different tasks Brigden undertook, it is important to examine the customers who patronized Brigden. These clients were the engine that drove his business.

Brigden's daybook provides a list of over a hundred of his customers. The customers range from the unidentifiable to the readily recognizable. Brigden's clients, Moses Gill, Lady Pepperell, Reverend Samuel Cooper, for example, might be well-known to fellow eighteenth-century Bostonians.¹ Other notations refer to Boston silversmiths such as Benjamin Hurd (1739-1781), William Cario or Daniel Boyer. More names in Brigden's book are discernable as neighbors: shopkeeper Elizabeth Cumings, hatter and tavern-keeper Daniel Jones, or members of his family: Brigden's brother, Timothy, his sister Winifred Brigden Davis or his brother-in-law William Downes Cheever. In other cases Brigden recorded the purchases of clients about whom little is known. The number and range of names the daybook contains speaks to the variety of

¹Moses Gill (1733/4-1800) was a brazier, landowner and later lieutenant (1797-99) and acting governor (1799-1800) of Massachusetts, see Carrie Reborá et. al., John Singleton Copley in America, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 200-203. Lady Pepperell, Mary Hirst Sparhawk, (d.1789) was the widow (1759) of Sir William Pepperrell of Kittery, Maine. Reverend Samuel Cooper (1725-1783) was an outspoken Whig, and the minister of the Brattle Street Church Shipton, Clifford, K., Sibley's Harvard Graduates, vol. XI, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1960), 192.

clients the smith served.

Over half of the approximately one hundred and forty clients in Brigden's daybook were entered only once.² About a seventh of Brigden's clients over the ten year period covered in the daybooks appear over five or more times.³ Only a fifth of his clients purchased over twenty pounds worth of goods and services in ten years.⁴ Of that fifth, only five consistently made purchases from Brigden over the eight year period, 1766-1774 for which the daybook is most complete.⁵ Brigden's several clients who spent a substantial sum of money with him over the years might not have provided enough requests to keep his business going. He needed everybody: clients who spent large sums of money over the years, the client who made a large single order, the client who made a series of small-value requests and the single orders for small amounts of work. Brigden's business did not come from one kind of clients but came from satisfying many kinds of clients' needs.

²About one hundred and forty client names appear in Brigden's daybook. Around half of those name appear only once. Some of the entries are ambiguous. It is not always clear if the individual in question is actually buying or ordering an object as opposed to picking up or paying for an order made for someone else, or if Brigden wrote the name down for some other reason.

³Nineteen of the names have five or more mentions in the book.

⁴Twenty eight of Brigden's clients recorded in the daybook spent over twenty pounds.

⁵Those clients are Daniel Boyer, Benjamin Phillips, James Lloyd, Ebenezer Storer and John Gill.

As noted, the daybook contains entries from October 1765 to March 1775. Brigden and his wife left Boston in June of 1775, as recorded in the 1775-6 journal of William Cheever (son of William Downes Cheever) published in Proceedings October, 1926-June 1927, vol. 60, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1927), 91-97. Although Brigden worked in Boston for some years after that date, it seems his daybook closed after March 1775.

Just as Brigden's clients spent variously, they came to him through a range of connections or circumstance. The majority of Brigden's identifiable clients fall into several groups: other silversmiths, clients who spent a great deal of money with Brigden, business owners and family who took advantage of the credit Brigden offered them, clients who placed a one-time large order, clients who came to Brigden from out of town, merchants and businessmen with whom Brigden worked, relatives, and neighbors. Many of Brigden's clients fall into a couple of these categories. Examination of these groups and how they supported Brigden gave us a sense of the complexity of Brigden's business. This examination will focus primarily on the fifth of Brigden's clients noted in the daybook who spent over L20 from 1765-1775.

To students of American silversmiths Brigden's relationships with other practitioners of his craft are of special interest. In decades past, the touchmarks found on American silver, the smith's initials or name, have led to investigations which suggest the a silversmith's work was undertaken by an individual. More recent exploration of records beyond marked objects suggests silversmiths took advantage of each others' skills and connections to satisfy clients' needs.⁶ Brigden recorded many transactions with other silversmiths in his daybook which give a glimpse of how smiths worked with one another. Other relationships that Brigden had with silversmiths appear in his bills, receipts and public records. In the daybook Brigden noted transactions with the silversmiths Benjamin Burt (1729-1805), William Cario, Joseph Coolidge, Seth Coburn, David Greenleaf (1737-1800) and Benjamin Hurd. Bills and receipts preserved in the

⁶For an example of how many people were involved in Paul Revere's work as a silversmith see, Deborah Federhen, "From Artisan to Entrepreneur Paul Revere's Silver Shop Organization," in Paul Revere-Artisan, Businessman, and Patriot: The Man Behind the Myth, (Boston: The Paul Revere Memorial Association, 1988), 72-4.

Brigden papers tell of dealings Brigden had with Benjamin Pierpont (1730-1797), Josiah Flagg (1737-1794) Joseph Loring (1743-1815), Joseph Edwards (1737-1783), Joseph and Benjamin Callender as well as some of the silversmiths mentioned in the daybook.⁷ Many of these transactions are straightforward buying and selling of silver objects, tools and repaying cash. For example in 1770 Coolidge purchases a pair of buckles and a spoon, in 1767 Coburn received a pair of brass chapes, and silver, in 1772 Greenleaf purchased six nests of crucibles.⁸ In 1767 Brigden purchased three enameled rings from Benjamin Pierpont and in 1766 Brigden purchased three enameled "splitshank" rings from Josiah Flagg.⁹ Brigden also purchased five dozen pairs of chapes, six files and one pair of flat pliers from Joseph Loring.¹⁰ Brigden's professional relationship with other silversmiths also comes up in public records. Brigden, with Daniel Boyer, appraised the estate of the silversmith Daniel Henchman in 1775. In 1781 Brigden and Benjamin Burt

⁷In 1783 Brigden gave S. Henshaw three pounds, eleven shillings and two pence for "wrought" silver and gold. This name does not appear in the standard references of silversmiths. He could be either a silversmith or a merchant of some kind. I am indebted to Deborah Federhen for pointing S. Henshaw and Josiah Flagg out to me. ZBP, folder 19.

⁸I am indebted to Deborah Federhen for bringing the problematic and not very well know silversmith Coolidge to my attention. Brigden notes a Joseph Coolidge in his daybook and well as a Coolidge described without a first name but as, "goldsmith." Federhen suggested that Joseph Coolidge was a merchant, and the other Coolidge a silversmith. Kathryn C. Buhler, American Silver 1655-1825 in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, vol. 1, (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1972), 330, noted Joseph Coolidge as a smith and a merchant.

⁹ZBP, folder 19. Benjamin Pierpont was a silversmith, jeweler and importer. In 1764 Pierpont inherited and deeded away (from the Griggs estate) half of a brick house south of Brigden's house and land see the Thwing Index, MHS.

¹⁰ZBP, folder 4.

assessed the estate of Benjamin Hurd.

Of all the transactions with other silversmiths in the Brigden daybook, three are of particular interest. As mentioned previously, William Cario purchased many silversmithing tools and supplies from Brigden from 1765 to 1766. One 1767 receipt in the Brigden papers, shows Brigden purchasing a gravestone to commemorate the first Mrs. William Cario Jr. from a Boston stonecutter called John Homer.¹¹ This transaction and other evidence suggest a close relationship between the two smiths. A document signed by William Cario in 1753 at Thomas Edwards' indicates Cario was at or near the Edwards' during the time Brigden served his apprenticeship. Exhibition labels from "First Masters of American Silver: The Craft of the Silversmith in Colonial Massachusetts," suggest William Cario Sr. worked as a journeyman jeweler for Brigden.¹² An explanation of the later relationship between Brigden and William Cario might be that both Brigden and Cario served their apprenticeship with Edwards and became friends or associates. The 1753 document witnessed by Cario, and the fact that William Cario Jr. and Brigden were two years apart in age support this idea.¹³ Alternately, perhaps William Cario Sr. and Zachariah Brigden worked with Edwards at the same time.

¹¹ZBP, folder 12. For more information regarding John Homer see Harriette Merrifield Forbes, Gravestones of New England, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), 65-67.

¹²See Patricia Kane, ed, Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewelers, (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1996), 68, 140. Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewelers suggests William Cario Sr. worked for Zachariah Brigden as a journeyman.

¹³ZBP, folder 48.

It appears William Cario Jr. was in Boston in the early 1760s. Records for the West Church, where Brigden also attended, note Cario owning the covenant in February of 1761, the baptism of a son, William, in March of the same year, and the baptism of a daughter, Abigail, in 1763.¹⁴ By the middle of the 1760s, William Cario Jr. lived in South Newmarket (later Newfields), New Hampshire.¹⁵ The 1767 bill is the last evidence of interaction between Brigden and Cario.

Brigden's relationship with Cario is alluded to in Brigden's daybook. Although it is not detailed in the daybook, Brigden appeared to enjoy a close relationship with the silversmith Benjamin Burt.¹⁶ Receipts from the later part of Brigden's career show that Brigden borrowed money from Burt and that the two silversmiths exchanges goods and services. According to a 1787 bill from Burt to Brigden's estate, in the previous three years Burt had provided Brigden with gold beads and cash in return for cream pots, buckles, a bottle of gin, half a cheese and parts of silver hollowware; specifically butter

¹⁴Records of the West Church, MHS, 017. William Cario Jr. married Abigail Peavey of Portsmouth in Boston in 1759, see Charles S. Parsons, New Hampshire Silver, (Arthur Brown Company, 1983), 21.

¹⁵James L. Garvin, "Report on the William Cario, Jr., House," Unpublished report prepared for the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources, 9 July 1993. In 1765 the house where William Cario lived for over four decades in South Newmarket (later Newfields) was sold by the estate of the original builder to Daniel Warner who, in turn, rented it to William Cario. In 1785 Cario purchased the house. I am indebted to Donna-Belle Garvin and Jim Garvin for bringing this report to my attention. A dated snuff box (1769-in the collection of Smithsonian Institution) and beaker (1770-on loan to the New Hampshire Historical Society) put Cario in the Portsmouth area in the late 1760s and the 1770s. See Charles S. Parsons, New Hampshire Silver, (Adams Brown Company, 1983), 20-21.

¹⁶Brigden notes Burt once in his book, in 1767 for "cash rec'd of Burt for Seth Coburn." ZBP, folder 29.

boat bodies and spouts.¹⁷ In the early 1780s Burt aided Brigden with cash loans.¹⁸ Is it possible that Burt and Brigden were both colleagues and friends? At the time of Brigden's death Burt owed Brigden a manageable L4 whereas Brigden owed Burt L120, an imbalance which might suggest friendship. As well, the two smiths shared some activities. Burt and Brigden both owned shares in the Charles River Bridge Corporation, and, as discussed in Chapter Two, garnered silversmithing work from the project.¹⁹ Brigden and Burt may have shared political views. Their names appear on a list of the "Sons of Liberty" celebrating the anniversary of the first Stamp Act protest.²⁰

One of the most active relationships is the one Brigden has with Daniel Boyer, a Boston silversmith and jeweler. Boyer's purchases noted in the daybook start in 1766 with two silver spoons and continue in the 1770s. The transactions between Brigden and Boyer were especially active in the early 1770's. In pages of the daybook devoted exclusively to Boyer, Brigden notes selling Boyer molding sand, watch pliers, sand paper, and brass stamps. He also recorded making Boyer many forms in silver; a variety

¹⁷ZBP, folder 30.

¹⁸Small loans are noted on the 1787 bill. ZBP, folder 30. A larger amount, L120, is noted on a list of claims against Brigden's estate made by Elizabeth Brigden after her husband's death. ZBP, folder 31. The sum of L120 may have been a total from two notes from Burt that Brigden took out in 1782, one for L50 in May, and the other for 150 Spanish dollars in March. It took Elizabeth Gillam Brigden nine years to pay back the loans to Burt. ZBP, folder 40.

¹⁹For more information on the set up of the bridge corporation and the shareholders see the broadside, "Charles River Bridge Committee, Boston...", 1785, at the Boston Public Library, Evans microtext 44662.

²⁰"An Alphabetical List of the Sons of Liberty who dined at Liberty Tree Dorchester Aug. 14 1769," Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society 1869-1870, vol. XI, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1871), 140-42.

of spoons, ladles, pairs of porringers, cream pots, a cann, a box, a cup, a sword hilt, a silver fork, a gold locket, a rim for a glass, salt shovels, a stainer, tankards, pump bows, broaches, chains, frames for spectacles, tea tongs, and ferules for swords and canes. Some of the items, such as bows and broaches, recorded in Brigden's book are only recorded in conjunction with Boyer.²¹ Aside from a large volume of sales, especially in the years 1770, 1771, 1772 and 1773, Brigden refitted, repaired and mended many items for Brigden, all of the kinds of silver forms that he sold to Boyer and also some others; a butter boat, casters, chaffing dishes, salts, swords, a sauce pan, thimbles, a tea pot and whistles. As in the case of the objects Brigden produced for Boyer, some of the forms Brigden repaired for Boyer are only noted in the daybook in connection with Boyer repairs, for instance the butter boat, the sauce pan, cream pots, punch ladles, and the salts.

In the years 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773 Brigden did an enormous amount of work for Boyer. In the daybook the pages that describe the Boyer Brigden relationship during those years are set up as a ledger and show that Boyer generally paid Brigden in silver but red foil, sparks, chapes, plaited buckles, stones, cyphers, gravers, files, and crucibles are also noted on the Boyer side of the account. Bills and receipts preserved in the Brigden papers show that Brigden purchased what were probably imported goods

²¹While Brigden generally notes the process connected to Boyer's entries in the daybook, like making, repairing, refitting and the like, the notes concerning broaches and bows say only, "To 4 pr Bows..." which might suggest that Brigden is not making these articles himself. The term bows seems to indicate spectacle frames, a shorted version of Brigden's notation, "... a pr Temple Spectel Bows...", though it may also mean pump bows, a kind of decoration for shoes. The confusion comes in when Brigden only notes the items as, "...pr Bows," both the bows for shoes and the bows for glasses came in pairs.

such as; files, chapes for buckles, black pots, and nests of crucibles from Boyer. As well, Brigden purchased items from Boyer that could have either been imported by Boyer or manufactured by him; stone rings, coral beads, and enamelled rings. Interestingly, although Brigden and Boyer did a large amount of business in spoons, one of the mainstays of Brigden's business, the two smiths never do business with buckles or buttons, two other categories of objects that Brigden made and sold in quantity. Apparently Boyer had another source of these objects, perhaps he made them in his own shop or imported them from Europe.

As has been mentioned, Brigden's daybook dates from 1765 to 1775. The latest date mentioned in the orders and accounts section of the book is 29 April 1775. Although after 1773 Boyer does not have a page in the daybook devoted to him there is a bill from Brigden to Boyer for, "...To making of Sundry from Sepr 3 1774 To Jany 1775....," so the two smiths were doing business together at the time.²² During the years 1770-1773 Boyer's orders must have been essential to Brigden's business, due to the number of objects produced and repaired for Boyer. In his records Brigden noted over three hundred and forty pounds worth of objects which Boyer purchased and over fifty pounds worth of repair he undertook for Boyer.²³ Both of these amounts exceed total expenditures noted in the daybook by any other of Brigden's clients. There are notes in the papers which show that Brigden did business with Boyer in 1777 although it does not seem to have been on the same scale as earlier.²⁴ The relationship enjoyed by Boyer and

²²In this bill Boyer owed Brigden L89.11.10 (old tenor) for making sundries which was countered by Brigden owing Boyer L94.16.10 for sundries. ZBP, folder 32.

²³From the daybook it appears Boyer did L348-18-11 worth of business in objects, L52-11-5 worth of business in repair.

²⁴One 1777 bill shows that Zachariah Brigden purchased files, chaps and a hammer for

Brigden seems to have lessened about the time of the events surrounding the Revolutionary War in Boston, starting with the Siege of Boston from October of 1775 to March of 1776. Boyer died in 1779.²⁵

Brigden's large dealings with Daniel Boyer evidence the fact that Brigden probably did not import the imported items he sold himself but obtained them through merchants and importers. As well, Brigden's work for Boyer shows that Brigden possessed the skills to fabricate and repair many kinds of hollowware and flatware. Brigden's transactions with Boyer make clear that silversmiths who were busy, less-skilled or specialized used the services of other smiths to help keep up with the requests of their clients. Brigden's work with Boyer may offer some insight into Boyer's work as a smith. There is little hollowware that bears Boyer's mark.²⁶ Although Boyer worked as a silversmith, he is better described as a jeweler who likely retailed silver items.²⁷

a total of L4.13.08. The other 1777 paper (which looks to be a note that Brigden wrote for himself on loose paper) notes Boyer's purchase of 6 large chased spoons and Brigden's purchase of rotten stone, a couple dozen chaps, locketts, coral beads, crucibles and black pots. ZBP, folder 32.

²⁵Continental Journal and Weekly Advertiser, Tuesday, 2 September 1779. "Last Friday morning departed this life, Mr. Daniel Boyer, of this town, Jeweler, aged 54 years. A gentleman whose agreeable deportment through life gained esteem, and whose death is much lamented by fellow citizens. His remains were decently interred on Many last."

²⁶Buhler notes a spoon and a ring marked by Boyer in the MFA collection. DAPC at the Winterthur Museum contains records of some hollowware marked by Boyer, canns, porringers, a beaker, a strainer, buttons and spoons in public and private collections. It would, of course, be extremely interesting to know how or if the hollowware sold by Brigden to Boyer was marked.

²⁷Fales reaches a similar conclusion in her discussion of Daniel Boyer. Martha Gandy Fales, Jewelry in America 1600-1900 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club Ltd., 1995), 65-6.

Boyer was, in terms of money spent, one of the most important of Brigden's clients. Judged by the same measure, other important Brigden clients were wealthy customers who purchased large amounts of jewelry and silver objects. Isaac Royall, Moses Gill, and Dr. James Lloyd were all such clients. As noted in the daybook, Royall, in five years, spent over L350, Gill, in seven years, over L240, and Lloyd, in eight years, over L190. Unlike Brigden's other clients who spent similar amounts of money, these three were not, like Daniel Boyer, silversmiths or involved in allied professions. Nor were these three businessmen taking advantage of the credit that Brigden offered. These individuals choose to purchase sizeable amounts of jewelry and silver objects from Brigden for their own use.

Both Isaac Royall and Moses Gill were men of substance. Born and raised in Bermuda, Royall owned a house and 500 acre estate in Medford, a few miles outside of Boston. His lavish domestic arrangements included over two dozen slaves. He is remembered for and hosting remarkable parties.²⁸ Gill was a connection of Brigden's through Brigden's father's second marriage to Gill's mother, Elizabeth Abbot Gill Brigden (1706/7-1787), in 1740. Born in the same year, Brigden and Gill were step brothers and may have grown up together after the marriage of their parents when they were about six years old.²⁹ Gill was described as a brazier and also held various public offices. His 1771 marriage to Sarah Prince put him in the way of a good deal of property to which he

²⁸Carrie Rehora, et. al. John Singleton Copely in America (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 182-184, Charles Brooks, A History of Medford, (Boston: James M. Usher, 1855), 170-8. Royall's house in Medford still stands and is open to the public.

²⁹Thomas B. Wyman, Charlestown Genealogies and Estates, (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 408.

eventually added.³⁰ At his death Brigden owed Gill L101-16:3 suggesting some loan or business transaction.³¹ Royall and Gill came by their sizeable wealth by different avenues. However, both men appear to have had large real estate holdings, grand homes and were known by their contemporaries as wealthy men of taste.

It is interesting to note that the significant purchases which Royall and Gill made were mourning rings to commemorate the deaths of their wives in 1770 and 1771. Royall bought, for over three hundred pounds, twenty-nine enamel, one stone and three gold mourning rings to memorialize the death of his wife, Elizabeth MacIntosch Royall. She died on the 14th of July in 1770. Royall ordered the rings a few at a time over the course of the summer.³² A bill to Brigden from Daniel Boyer shows Bridgen purchased the enamel and stone rings from Boyer within a few days of the order.³³ It appears Brigden made the gold rings himself. Gill's ring order for his wife, Sarah Prince Gill (d. 1771) consisted of eleven "gold mourning rings" and five enamel rings, all ordered on 30

³⁰Carrie Rebor, et. al. John Singleton Copely in America (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 202. On 1 April 1799 Gill took an inventory of his real estate ("all the Real Estate I own on Earth..."), bonds, notes of hand, public paper, and "mixt" estate. This remarkable document testifies Gill's extraordinary wealth. Boylston papers, MHS.

³¹ZBP, folder 31. Gill purchased land from Brigden, his brother Timothy, and his sister Winifred which they inherited from their father in 1767. Thomas B. Wyman, Charlestown Genealogies and Estates, (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 128.

³²Royall was noted in the daybook on 21 July for 12 enamel rings, for 8 enamel rings on 26 July, for 5 enamel rings, one stone ring and 3 gold rings on 8 August, for 3 enamel rings on 25 August and finally for 2 enamel rings in September. ZBP, folder 29.

³³ZBP, folder 32.

August 1771.³⁴ Beside the notation in the daybook, no other information about this order survives.

James Lloyd (1728-1810) was a Boston physician who patronized Brigden, from 1762-1774.³⁵ Over his long association with Brigden, Lloyd purchased tea spoons, salt spoons, thimbles, enamel rings, gold rings, stone buttons, and gold buttons. His 1767 purchase of a pair of salvers made of over 17 ounces of silver cost over L95, nearly equalling the value Gill's and Royall's purchases of mourning rings. The salver form was an especially showy object used for the presentation of beverages, a tool of hospitality. As in the case of Gill and Royall, Lloyd's purchases from Brigden suggest a flow of small to medium sized requests and one large ticket request. With this category of Brigden's clients, a purchase of a major object or group of objects of over or near L100 set them apart from Brigden's other client in terms of how much money they spent with Brigden. It is also interesting to note that even in the case of these three comparatively wealthy individuals, noted for the lavishness of their houses, hospitality and personal effects, an investment in Brigden's goods of close to or over L100 was the exception rather than the rule.

Gill, Royall and Lloyd provide example of prosperous Brigden clients who spent, when compared with other clients, a good deal of money with Brigden. As we have

³⁴ZBP, folder 29.

³⁵Evidence of this patronage is found in the daybook (1766-1774) and in a bill from Brigden to Lloyd outlining a variety of purchases made from 1762 through 1768. ZBP, folder 38. In 1768 Lloyd and Brigden, with about twenty other men and women, supported with a commitment of money, a scheme whereby indigent local women and children who be given employment making duck or sack cloth. E. Price papers, 15 March 1768, MHS. Lloyd also tended Brigden in his last illness. ZBP, folder 31.

seen, they spent their money with Brigden on a few orders but one large purchase such as mourning rings for an important funeral or a large piece of hollowware pushed up their total expenditures with Brigden. Benjamin Phillips, another of Brigden's clients provides a different sort of example of a pattern of purchases with Brigden. Phillips, spent a good deal of money with Brigden, L258 in six years. However, the manner in which he spent this money differed from the purchases made by Lloyd, Gill and Royall.

Benjamin Phillips was a wharfinger. A bill in Brigden's papers show Brigden purchased lumber and cord wood from Phillips and his son, Nathan.³⁶ Phillips purchased some hollowware from Brigden, a pair of castors for L29 in 1767, a pair of cans for L20 in 1772 as well as a number of spoons, thimbles and a pair of tongs.³⁷ Additionally Phillips' purchase of a tea pot, a porringer and a butter cup paid for Brigden's wood purchases from 1762-1764.³⁸ However, the most intriguing of Phillips purchases are over twenty pairs of buckles. Taking advantage of the credit Brigden offered him, Phillips settled some of his business obligations using buckles purchased on credit from Brigden's shop as payment. A 1769 note in the Brigden papers from Nathan Phillips illustrates this kind of transaction. Nathan Phillips wrote to Brigden, "Please lett Mr Josiah How have one pair Silver buckles & charge it to the account of my Father..." On 21 May 1770 Brigden recorded "To a Pr Silver Buckles Delivd Josiah How L8 7/," in his daybook showing Josiah How came to Brigden's shop and picked up his buckles a year

³⁶The bill dates from August 1762 and was settled in June of 1764. ZBP, folder 34.

³⁷ZBP, folder 29.

³⁸ZBP, folder 34.

and a half after he received the note from Nathan Phillips.³⁹ From 1767 to 1772 the Phillips purchased over twenty pairs of buckles from Brigden's shop, the majority of them to satisfy debts with various individuals the names of whom Brigden noted when they came to collect the buckles.⁴⁰ The example of the Phillips business suggests that buckles, and possibly other objects in the daybook, reflect use of available credit to settle debts rather than personal or family use.

Phillips used his credit with Brigden to oil his business. Another of Brigden's clients used the credit Brigden provided to take care of debts in a slightly different manner. Brigden's older sister Winifred Brigden Davis is noted in Brigden's bills.⁴¹ Requests she signed asking Brigden for "a pare of Errings on my account," and "the sum of one Pound Thirteen Shillings out of your shop," show how she used her credit with Brigden to take care of her business needs.⁴² Both the examples of Davis and Phillips illustrate how Brigden's clients used the credit he made available to them to help their own business run smoothly.

Most of Brigden's clients were local, residents of Boston or those who had cause to come to Boston for business. However, Brigden also had out of town clients who

³⁹ZBP, folder 38.

⁴⁰Some of these individuals include Captain Eliphath Greeley, James Timberlake, Silvanus Drinkwater, Cornelius White, John Baker, Thomas, Nathan and Benjamin Phillips Jr. ZBP, folder 29.

⁴¹ Winifred Brigden Davis was born in 1721, and widowed by 1767. Thomas B. Wyman, Charlestown Genealogies and Estates, (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 128. She died at Malden in 1794. Boston Atheneum Index of Obituaries, vol. 2, (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1968), 291.

⁴²ZBP, folder 47.

contributed significantly to his business.⁴³ One of the most significant of these clients was Nathaniel Sparhawk (1744-1814) of Kittery. Over the six years (1766-1772) Sparhawk and his family appear in Brigden's daybook, Sparhawk only purchased one hollowware object.⁴⁴ In 1767 he ordered a twenty-six ounce two-handled engraved cup. Which, it seems, Sparhawk's mother, Lady Pepperrell anonymously presented to the First Church of Christ in Kittery in 1767.⁴⁵ The silver used to make the cup cost L69, the making and engraving cost L25.⁴⁶ The over L200 Sparhawk spent with Brigden on silver items and services was for making and repairing buckles, tipping points, a stone brooch, a cockade, rings, fabricating spoons, buttons, engraving a box and making a pencil head. Names of some of the family members for whom these items were intended were noted by many of the orders.

As he lived in Maine, Sparhawk needed agents in Boston procuring goods from him to sell and acting as his banker, and shipping agent. Brigden seems to have acted in all those capacities for Sparhawk from 1766-1772. To keep their business straight Brigden devoted entire pages to his dealings with Sparhawk and his sons, Sam and Andrew. Five pages of entries dating from 1766 to 1772 show Brigden noting, "To cash

⁴³The example of Peter Cooledge of Medfield was discussed in Chapter Two.

⁴⁴In addition to Nathaniel Sparhawk, his sons Samuel (1751-1789) and Andrew (d.1783), brother John Sparhawk of Salem, mother Lady Pepperrell, and brother William Pepperrell appear in Brigden's daybook.

⁴⁵E. Alfred Jones, The Old Silver of American Churches, (Letchworth, England: National Society of Colonial Dames of America, 1913), 237, and Stephen Decatur, "The Early Church Silver of Kittery, Maine," American Collector, vol. V, no. 10. (November 1936): 15. I am indebted to Bert Denker for bringing this article to my attention.

⁴⁶ZBP, folder 29.

for..., " and "To..., " for a myriad of products. These products included, gallons of wine and madeira, bushels of rye, pounds of chocolate and candles, barrels of cranberries, apples and oysters, pecks of chestnuts, and many, many pairs of shoes.⁴⁷ Brigden also charged Sparhawk for posting a letter, truckage, execution, trunks and the cost of smoking bacon. The amounts recorded on the separate Sparhawk pages of Brigden's daybook run into hundreds of pounds. Unfortunately, it is not possible to tell how or how much money Brigden himself made from these transactions. Brigden laid out a good deal of cash on Sparhawk's business. It seems trust must have existed on both sides of the Sparhawk-Brigden business; Brigden trusted Sparhawk to pay him for money expended and Sparhawk trusted Brigden to keep a fair accounting. Receipts and bills from sea captains and shoemakers, as well as from Sam and Andrew Sparhawk, show the source of some of Brigden's charges to Nathaniel Sparhawk. Brigden's business with Sparhawk, as recorded in the daybook, shows how a portion of Brigden's business had nothing to do with his specialized skills as a silversmith but did relate to his location close to markets and craftsmen, trustworthiness and ability to keep financial records.

So far many of the Brigden clients discussed have been substantial property owners or active businessmen employed in commerce and trade who spent, literally, hundreds of pounds with Brigden. But Brigden did work for a spectrum of business people, many of whom followed less elevated professions than doctors, merchants, and

⁴⁷ZBP, folder 22. Sam and Andrew Sparhawk purchased several pairs of shoes and pumps from the cordwainer Ebenezer McIntosh, thought to have been an active Son of Liberty and Revolutionary agitator, see "A note on Ebenezer MacKintosh," Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, vol XXVI, Transactions 1924-1926, (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1927), 15-64.

office-holders. The most substantial of this different group of business men was Stephen Harris and his son, also named Stephen Harris. The Harrises were bakers who sold Brigden bread from 1766 to 1772. Harris purchased L175 in silver and mending from Brigden from 1766 to 1771. The items Harris purchase ran the gamut from rings, buttons, buckles and spoons to coral and bells, coral beads, gold beads, a pair of castors and a creampot. The amount of money Harris spent with Brigden and the kind of objects Harris purchased suggest that the Harrises business met with success. A note from John Foley, "attorney to said Harris," requesting an overdue L2:6:6 implies that the relationship between the Harrises and Brigden did not end on a happy note.⁴⁸

Brigden's relatives also contributed to his business. His sister Winifred Brigden Davis (1721-1794), and his brothers Thomas Brigden (1745-1774) and Timothy Brigden (1726-1796) purchased items from him. The most active of Brigden's siblings was Thomas. He spent about L60 with Brigden from 1769-1773, ordering a variety of objects including earrings, gold beads, a pair of silver rings, buckles, tea tongs and two mourning rings.⁴⁹ Brigden also notes six pounds of tobacco under his brother's name and L2-4-0 cash "for Rebecca." Brigden notes cash entries for a few of his clients and grocery items for fewer. It seems Brigden, sensibly, put cash out only for clients with

⁴⁸An undated note in the miscellaneous section of Brigden's daybook states, "the Last Bread of Stephen Haris Junr taken febr 14th." ZBP, folder 29.

⁴⁹Technically Thomas and Zachariah Brigden were half-brothers. Thomas Brigden's wife Rebecca White died a few months before her husband, who died 17 March 1774, see Thomas B. Wyman, Charlestown Genealogies and Estates, (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879), 128. Possibly the mourning rings, purchased in November of 1773, were to mark Rebecca Brigden's death.

whom he had a close connection or a special business relationship.⁵⁰ Among Brigden's other relatives, Brigden's niece Winifred Davis Swift (daughter of his sister Winifred Davis) and her husband appear to have spend a fair amount of money with their uncle, around L40 for a necklace and a pair of silver rings, buttons and buckles in 1766 and 1767.⁵¹ As discussed earlier, Brigden's step brother Moses Gill also contributed to Brigden's business.

When Brigden married his first wife Sarah Edwards he gained both the use of her recently deceased father's estate, including his shop and house on Cornhill, and the important connections of her family.⁵² These advantages lasted beyond Sarah Brigden's life, especially as Brigden assumed his wife's duties as the administrator of her father's good-sized estate.⁵³ The relationship between Brigden and the Edwards family might

⁵⁰For example, William Cario and Nathaniel Sparhawk.

⁵¹Winifred Davis Swift and her husband may have enjoyed a close relationship with her uncle and his family. The Swifts' first girl (b. 1769) was named Sarah Brigham Swift, perhaps after her aunt who died in 1768. (Brigham is occasionally mixed up with Brigden.) The Swifts' second girl (b. 1771) was name Elizabeth Gillam Swift, perhaps after the Elizabeth Gillam whom Brigden married in 1774. Thwing index, MHS.

⁵²Patricia Kane, ed. Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewelers, (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1996), 67. For Edwards' estate see, Suffolk County Probate Records, docket number 11126, probated 19 September 1755. In eighteenth-century Boston not every death warrented an obituary (or even a notice). Sarah Edwards' 4 April 1768 Boston Gazette obituary suggests her importance in the community and the importance of her father, "Wednesday Night died Mrs. Sarah Brigden in the 43rd year of her Age, consort of Mr. Zechariah Brigden, of this Town, Goldsmith, and Daughter of the late Mr. Thomas Edwards; and on Saturday following her Remains were decently interred."

⁵³Thomas Edward's estate ranked among the top 10 percent of Boston's population. Barbara Ward, "Boston Goldsmiths 1630-1730," The Craftsman in Early America, Ian Quimby, ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 139-140.

explain why two of his significant clients, William Downes Cheever and Ebenezer Storer brought business to Brigden. Cheever married Sarah Edwards Brigden's sister, Elizabeth, in 1749. In his daybook Brigden recorded L120 or so worth of purchases made by Cheever. In four years, 1766-1770 he purchased buckles, a tweezer case, a silver cup, a strainer, a box, salts and a pair of gold buttons as well as what must have been a remarkable gold ring for L45.⁵⁴ Brigden in turn purchased sugar and other merchandise from Cheever. Cheever, like Brigden, attended the West Church.⁵⁵ At the time of Brigden's death in 1787, Cheever appeared to have held bond and mortgage on Brigden's house valued at L295.⁵⁶

The merchant Ebenezer Storer II (1729-1807), Brigden's cousin by marriage, in over eight years of business with Brigden had, among other things, twenty-eight fans repaired. Storer did not purchase any hollowware from Brigden even though Storer's father, also Ebenezer (1699-1761), purchased a chocolate pot from Brigden.⁵⁷ Storer appears numerous times in the daybook as a customer for repair work and a purchaser of buckles, buttons, spoons, and thimbles.

Brigden also received business from his neighbors. Boston, a city of 15,000 in 1770, was broken into a variety of neighborhoods, communities within the larger town.

⁵⁴A copy of Cheever's probate inventory notes a sizeable "parcel of plate" weighing 323 ozs. Davis papers, MHS.

⁵⁵"List of Pew Owners of the West Church, Boston," typescript, MHS.

⁵⁶See "...a list of claims exhibited to Elizabeth Brigden administratrix of the estate of Zachariah Brigden..." ZBP, folder 31. A 1790 note in the Brigden papers suggests that Cheever's widow, Elizabeth, gave Brigden's widow use of the house for three more years. ZBP, folder 31.

⁵⁷Buhler, MFA, p. 373.

Brigden's neighborhood on Cornhill was located a bustling area near the Town House, the Customs House, Long Wharf and a myriad of shops and residences.⁵⁸ A 1770 plan of Brigden's neighborhood show his immediate neighbors were a doctor and a merchant. A jeweler, watchmaker, hatter, shopkeepers, and merchants, in addition to three taverns, did business near Brigden, facing the square around the Town House (see figure 10).⁵⁹ Several of Brigden's neighbors brought business to him. Although most of this business did not amount to much in monetary terms some neighbors spent a fair amount with Brigden. Shopkeepers and milliners Amy and Elizabeth Cummings, and tavern keeper and hatter Daniel Jones each spent over twenty pounds with Brigden between 1765 and 1770.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ For a useful map of Boston in Brigden's time see David Hackett Fisher, Paul Revere's Ride, (New York: Oxford Univeristy Press, 1994), 10.

⁵⁹The most useful tool for understanding Brigden's neighborhood is a plan of the Boston Massacre prepared by Paul Revere for the trial of the British soldiers involved in the confrontation (see figure 10). Revere noted "Brigden Goldsmith" on the third from the left labeled house/shop. This plan is reproduced in Esther Forbes, Paul Revere and the World He Lived In, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, between pages 130-131. The original map is in the collection of the Boston Public Library. A list of individuals charged for the 1765 repair of the pump in Cornhill in shows merchants, shopkeepers, milliners, and a hairdresser, among Brigden's neighbors. A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston Selectmen's Minutes from 1764 through 1768, (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1889), 142-143. I am indebted to Jeff Hardwick for bringing this reference to my attention.

⁶⁰Brigden and his second wife may have had a close relationship with the Cummings. They named their second daughter Elizabeth Cumming Brigden. Amy and Elizabeth Cummings are of the few women that show up in Brigden's daybook. Brigden recorded orders noted as for women in his daybook but many of them seem to have been placed by men. For instance, Nathaniel Sparhawk ordered, among other things, a cup for Lady Pepperrell. ZBP, folder 29. The few women who show up in Brigden's daybook appear to be unmarried or widowed neighbors such as the Cummings sisters.

Chapter Four

CONCLUSION

For over three decades Zachariah Brigden carried on the business of a silversmith at his shop in Cornhill. His daybook, receipts and the bills associated with his business and household detail the work of a silversmith. Essentially a repetitive list of clients, orders and prices for similar objects and tasks, Brigden's daybook offers a sense of how Brigden got things done. It tells how much silver he needed to make a pair of salvers, what it cost for a chased versus a plain spoon, from whom Brigden procured the goods he sold, how distant clients collected finished objects, how long his clients took to pay. As well, the bills and receipts help give a sense of what the spoons, buttons, milk pots and rings Brigden sold were worth in real terms, compared with the cost of bread, wood and wigs. Objects bearing Brigden's mark which have survived for two hundred years fill out the picture of the information recorded in the daybook, helping the modern-day viewer understand what Brigden's clients went to trouble and expense to possess.

Through looking at this collection of evidence a myriad of conclusions regarding Brigden can be drawn. We know he fashioned literally dozens of kinds of silver objects. The most profitable work he did was fabricating hollowware forms, but no task was too small. Brigden also engraved and chased objects he sold, although he did not undertake all elaborate engraving himself. Brigden also repaired many kinds of objects, from spectacles frames to coffee pots. Additionally, Brigden sold items he did not make himself. From crucibles to enamel rings, most of these items were the traditional goods

of a silversmith and jeweler or tools needed by those practicing the trade. Brigden also acted as an agent for at least one of his clients, record-keeping and shipping goods.

The daybook sets forth the names of Brigden's clients from 1765-1775. From this we learn that Brigden served both the grand and the humble. No single group of people provided the bulk of his clientele. As in the tasks Brigden undertook, no individual was too important or too undistinguished for his attention. Of the clients more carefully examined, those who spent at least L20 from 1765-1775, they were fellow-church members, merchants, doctors, family members, neighbors and business associates. Some clients came to Brigden only a few instances in ten years, with others he enjoyed long relationships. To make a living Brigden needed both his skills as a silversmith and his contacts with a wide variety of people who would give him business.

The communities to which Brigden belonged put him in touch with a wide variety of people who gave him business. One of the communities in which Brigden operated was his neighborhood. It seems Brigden set up his business in the shop where his master and father-in-law, Thomas Edwards, worked.¹ When Brigden established his own business, after completing his apprenticeship and his marriage to Sarah Edwards, at the Cornhill shop, people in the neighborhood were accustomed to a silversmith's shop being at that location.

Several documents give clues as to what Brigden's shop was like. These documents are notes Brigden made to himself or for people who worked in the shop or

¹Patricia Kane, ed. Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths and Jewelers (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1995), 67, and Stephen Ensko, American Silversmiths and Their Marks III, (New York: Privately printed by Robert Ensko, Inc., 1948), 263-264. Kane suggests that Brigden worked in Edwards' shop after the elder smith died. Ensko lists both Edwards and Brigden as on Cornhill although at different addresses on the map of the location of Boston silversmiths.

for other people describing his shop.² As well, the inventories taken of Brigden's estate after he died and the list of household and shop contents sold at auction soon after fill out the picture.

Brigden wrote an undated note to Moses Gill which clearly outlined the size of his shop, "Moses Gill Esqr/Sir that Belongs to the Shop/Is 23 feet in the Rear/23 feet in the front/the length 32 feet."³ This shop gave Brigden over seven hundred square feet in which to sell and produce objects. The fact that for the purpose of describing the shop Brigden noted the front and back separately, even though they were the same size, might suggest that the shop was divided. Perhaps the front of the shop was used for selling and the back for fabrication of objects.⁴

In the selling area of the shop Brigden displayed wares in a glass case. A list of "The Prises of things in the Case" details the kinds of items in the case. The list includes stone earrings set in gold, and set in silver with gold wire, cypher stone buttons, brilliant stone buttons, shoe and knee buckles, single, double and stone broaches, large spoons and tea spoons, neck buckles, gold earring tops and drops, plated shoe and knee buckles, small and large sleeve buttons, black pots, crucibles and tortoise shell rings.⁵ A 1780 list

²These documents are: a note from Brigden to Moses Gill, ZBP, folder 26, a list of "Works in the Case...", and "The Prises of thing in the Case...", ZBP, folder 38.

³The inventory taken when Brigden died details the different rooms in his two-story house in addition to the shop: a parlor, a little room, a front room, a kitchen, a back chamber and a kitchen chamber. ZBP, folder 30. I am indebted to Bernie Herman for discussing Brigden's house with me.

⁴I am indebted to Charlie Hummel for suggesting this possibility.

⁵ZBP, folder 38. The list reads: "...L old ten/Stone Earrings Set in gold..8.0.0/Ditto Sett in Silver with gold wier..4.10.0/Cypher Stone buttons--2.5.-/Brilliant Ditto--2.0.0/Shoe and knee Buckls--/marked undernathe/Single Broaches--0.18.0/Double Ditto--1.2.6/Stone Ditto--2.5.-/Large Spoons 52/pr oz/& 20/ for making--/Tea Spoon

or inventory, "Works in the Case," shows Brigden had twelve large spoons, forty-eight tea spoons, thirty-eight pairs of shoe buckles, twenty knee buckles, six stock buckles, fourteen thimbles, six pairs of stone buttons, fifteen pairs of sleeve buttons, thirty-five broaches, four gold necklaces, four gold rings, five pairs of gold tops (for earrings), one pair stone earrings, a "Sizers" (scissors) chain, five pairs of sugar tongs, and four pairs of salt spoons.⁶ These small objects in the case were likely not bespoke goods but goods that Brigden bought from merchants and silversmiths or things manufactured himself to have on hand for sale. It seems these items were placed in the case both to let clients know what he had for sale and to entice customers to make immediate purchases. At Brigden's death in 1787 the case contained similar items: shoe and knee buckles, a can, spoons, many pairs of earrings, rings, stone rings, stock buckles and "stone pins." The case itself was sold at Brigden's death and valued at ten shillings.⁷

Brigden's shop was located in a bustling part of Boston. Businesses near Brigden included merchants, doctors, a wigmaker, jewelers and a hatter. There were also three

52/pr oz-/&10/for making--/Neck Buckles--3.0.0/gold Earrings-tops & Drop
3.0.0/Tops--1.16.0/Plaited Buckls L1.2.6 & 1.10--/Knee Ditto--0.15.0/Silver Sleeve
Buttons Larg 0.18-/Small Ditto--0.15.-/Black pots no1-39//No2 46//No36//Crucibles
46/Nest/Tortis Shell Ring 76/" A tortoise shell ring is a silver hoop covered on the
outside with tortoise shell. I am indebted to Martha Gandy Fales for describing this kind
of ring to me.

The date of the list appears to be 1775, based on a date found on the other side of the list.

⁶ZBP, folder 38.

⁷For an illustration of what the case may have looked like see Sir Ambrose Heal, The Signboards of Old London Shops, (New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1972, reprint of 1947 edition), plate lxxi. For the contents of Brigden's shop see, "Inventory of the Real and Personal Estate of Zachariah Brigden...", ZBP, folder 30 and "Sale of Furniture...", ZBP, folder 31.

taverns near by Brigden's house; Mrs. Clapham's, the Brazen Head and The Exchange. The Town House, where the Provincial Council and legislature of the Colony held meetings, was opposite Brigden's front door. This location may explain why some clients stopped by Brigden's shop. Isaac Royall, for example, was a member of the Governor's Council and came into Boston from Medford to attend meetings and undertake business at the Town House. The Custom House, where merchants declared shipments of imported goods to pay duties, was also close by Brigden's shop, two short blocks away. King Street ended at Brigden's door. The other end of King Street was Long Wharf, one of the busy wharves accommodating ships, shops, houses and goods. Merchants, office-holders and a great many other people had business in Brigden's area. Brigden's central location doubtless contributed positively to his business.

In addition to his neighborhood, Brigden was a part of other communities. Records of the West Church show Brigden, some of his clients and colleagues were also members.⁸ John Gill, Thomas Parker, Edward Carnes and William Downes Cheever all owned pews in the church. Brigden took his business to other West Church pew holders such as hatter and tavern-keeper Daniel Jones and printer Benjamin Edes.⁹ Other Brigden business associates or clients, such as William Cario, or the Rev. Jonathan

⁸See, "List of Pew Owners of the West Church, Boston," typescript, MHS, and "Records of the West Church," unpublished pages prepared by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1933, MHS.

⁹"List of Pew Owners of the West Church, Boston," typescript, MHS.

Mayhew show up in the West Church records.¹⁰

Brigden lived in politically charged times. Unlike Paul Revere, the artisan distinguished by his activities as a patriot, what political views Brigden held are not clear. As mention in Chapter Three, Brigden's name appeared on the list of Sons of Liberty that dined at Dorchester 14 August 1769 to celebrate the repeal of the Stamp Act. His colleagues Benjamin Burt and Josiah Flagg were also there, as was Paul Revere and Brigden's clients William Downes Cheever, Moses Gill, John Gill, and Edward Carnes.¹¹

A few notes in Brigden's daybook hint at additional political activity. Under the heading "Union Club," Brigden kept a record of expenses incurred on behalf of the club starting in October of 1769 and running intermittently through April of 1774. The entries in this account start with the term, "To cash..." or "To..." and then outline the reason for the expenditure. Generally the products connected with the Union Club account suggest convivial activity, materials for making punch, lobsters, crackers, tobacco and pipes.¹² The group seems to have met in Mrs. Clapham's tavern, just a block away from Brigden's house. G. B. Warren mentions a "Union Clubb" associated

¹⁰Jonathan Mayhew was the radical minister of the West Church until his death in 1766. Sibley's describes him as one of the "leading figures in the formation of the ideology of the American Revolution." Clifford K. Shipton, Sibley's Harvard Graduates, vol. XI, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1960), 440-469.

¹¹Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. XI, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1869-70), 140-142.

¹²Brigden notes these items under the heading Union Club: loaf sugar, spirits, pipes, tobacco, lemons, lime, biscuits and rum. He also notes money paid out for "servering" (the writing is unclear) and to "Mrs. Claphams Act..." ZBP, folder 29. For the location of Mrs. Clapham's tavern see figure 10, right side, middle block.

with the mob who hung tax collector Andrew Oliver in effigy and tore down his office.¹³ Other sources suggest that the name "The Union Club," was an early name for the Sons of Liberty.¹⁴ Forbes states the "The Union Club," was, "mostly mechanics...at their secret meetings planning the measures which should be undertaken to bring about the desired liberty." She claims they eventually ordered the Liberty Bowl from Paul Revere.¹⁵ Brigden's role regarding the club is unclear, as are his political views.¹⁶

Additional questions about Brigden and his career persist. Brigden's connection with the Edwards family, which started with his apprenticeship, proved crucial to his career. From this connection he gained his training with a successful and prominent silversmith, his first wife Sarah Edwards Brigden, his house and shop, access to capital and link with the prominent Edwards family and some of the Edwards' business associates. However, it is not certain if Brigden, in turn, ever trained an apprentice. Examination of Brigden's daybook does not offer conclusive evidence for an apprentice. During six years of decade covered in the daybook Brigden was unmarried, perhaps families would hesitate to place a child with an unmarried man. Examination of clothing

¹³G. B. Warden, Boston 1689-1776, (Boston: Little and Brown and Co., 1970), 164.

¹⁴Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1873-5), 200.

¹⁵Harriette Merrifield Forbes, Gravestones of Early New England, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), 65.

¹⁶Another clue to Brigden's political views might be suggested in his church membership. During the occupation of Boston, British troops used the unsympathetic West Church as a barracks. To protest the minister Simeon Howard and much of the congregation sailed to Nova Scotia and lived there for over a year. Eventually most of the group returned to Boston. See Rev. C. A. Bartol, West Church and its Ministers, (Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Company, 1856).

bills does not reveal the presence of an apprentice.¹⁷

However, the one of the books in the Brigden papers tantalizes. Marked "Paid Book June 1782" on one of the front pages, this book fragment is an old (1690s) record book, the unfilled spaces of which were used for notes and drawings. Some of the notes are domestic, "Kitchen Chimney Swept July 11...", " or "Began to take the Sentinal August..."¹⁸ However, most of the notations in the book have to do with silver objects including sketches of a "French Fork," "Hooks and Eyes," "Tea Tong Spring," and "Pattern for a Whisdl."¹⁹ Notes of finished or suggested weights accompany some of these sketches. For example, near the tea tong spring notes say, "Cut out at [?]-12-0," or near a sketch of a spout, "0-13-12 when done."²⁰ In the 1780s Brigden was in his forties, a working smith, well-acquainted with his craft. An apprentice, just learning the craft, might have wanted notes of the kind of information that appears in this book. Additionally, a silly verse, suggesting the notes were kept by a young person, appears underneath the pattern for a whistle: "Annie Blanchard may better/ Think of me when Im at Sea."²¹ As well, a previously discussed document, the list, "The Prises of things in the Case," implies that someone besides Brigden minded the shop. It is open to questions if

¹⁷I am indebted to Patricia Kane for suggesting this idea. There are two clothing bills to Brigden from Nathaniel Kneeland which mention making an article of clothing for what looks to be Boy but could also be read as Ben. These bills date from 1774 and 1775 when Brigden's own little boy, John Gillum, born on 15 January 1775 would have still been a baby. ZBP, folder 35.

¹⁸ZBP, folder 27.

¹⁹ZBP, folder 27.

²⁰ZBP, folder 27.

²¹ZBP, folder 27.

this person was an apprentice, Mrs. Brigden or some other individual. Without more evidence it is not possible to state with certainty that Brigden taught an apprentice.

Brigden put together his living using his skills and cultivating his connections. From his 1765-1775 daybook it appears Brigden operated a busy shop. Many kinds of people brought him their business. Among the ones who spent the most with Brigden were wealthy businessmen and property owners such as Isaac Royall and Brigden's stepbrother Moses Gill. Brigden did the most business in the decade covered in the daybook with another silversmith, Daniel Boyer. Brigden also undertook serious amounts of business with the wharfinger Benjamin Phillips, who took advantage of the credit Brigden offered to run his own business. Brigden also did a fair amount of work with his baker, Stephen Harris, and family connections such as his brother-in-law Daniel Cheever and cousin by marriage Ebenezer Storer. Additionally, Brigden's work as an agent for the merchant Nathaniel Sparhawk illustrates Brigden took on tasks outside the scope of a silversmith.

Brigden and his clients lived in tumultuous times. Throughout the period covered in the daybook British soldiers lived in Boston. There was unrest, looting and mobs in the city. The Boston Massacre, a 1770 clash between colonists and soldiers, took place steps away from Brigden's front door. In the winter of 1775-1776 Boston was under siege. Food was short and disease, especially smallpox, ran through the town. In March of 1776 British troops left the town, taking over a thousand loyalists with them. Brigden and his wife, and presumably their baby boy, left Boston in June 1775 in time to avoid the siege.²² The last transaction Brigden recorded in the daybook took

²²William Cheever Jr. wrote in his journal on 7 June 1775, "Mr. Brigden and wife went over the Ferry today by whom I sent a blue-painted chest and a trunk of goods, as also a small Scotch Carpet..." See Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

place on 29 April 1775.²³

After the siege ended, Boston was relatively calm for the remainder of the war. Evidence in the Brigden papers suggests the family was back in his house sometime in 1777.²⁴ However, a great deal in the city and countryside had changed. Brigden seems to have spent the years after the war adjusting his business to new clients and situations. After the war he could no rely on the clients and connections he had established. As well, because no daybook from the late 1770s and 1780s survived, evidence of Brigden's work and clientele is indirect and fragmentary. A complete exploration of Brigden's work after the war is not possible but the evidence available does reveal information about how his business changed.

Several of Brigden's clients were loyalists who left Boston and Massachusetts in the 1770s. One of Brigden's most important clients, Isaac Royall stopped coming to Brigden in 1773 when Royall resigned from the Governor's Council because of illness.²⁵ Royall "was obliged to flee from home," he traveled to Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1775.²⁶

(Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1926-1927), 91-97. The population of Boston dropped to under 3,000 in 1776 (down from over 15,000 in 1770) because so many townspeople left town to avoid the threat of war and disease. See Record of the Commissioners of Boston, vol. 22, (Boston: Municipal Printing Office).

²³ZBP, folder 29.

²⁴Brigden received a bread bill in November of 1777 from Josiah Spelling and a bill for butter and rice from John Head the same year. ZBP, folders 2 and 6.

²⁵E. Alfred Jones, The Loyalists of Massachusetts, (London: The Saint Catherine Press, 1930), 249-250,

²⁶E. Alfred Jones, The Loyalists of Massachusetts, (London: The Saint Catherine Press, 1930), 249-250, and Charles Brooks, A History of Medford, (Boston: James M. Usher, 1855), 174-175.

Other Brigden clients, among them Amy and Elizabeth Cummings and Adino Paddock left Boston with British troops to journey to Halifax.²⁷ Brigden's client Nathaniel Sparhawk did not travel to Halifax but his business suffered enormously because of the war.²⁸ As well, members of Sparhawk's family, specifically Sir William Pepperell and his family, whose requests occasionally appears in Brigden's records, traveled to Britain. They did not return.

Regardless of their affiliation, the lives of Brigden and his clients were, at the least, seriously disrupted and more likely turned upside-down by the events surrounding the Revolutionary War.²⁹ The goods Brigden sold were not essential, as bread, wood or even clothing were. It seems probable that only after some time to recuperate from the siege and the war would Brigden's clients think of purchasing silver. Miscellaneous notes in 1777 show Brigden doing a little work.³⁰ However, the post-war years seemed to be difficult for Brigden. He borrowed a fair money from his colleague Benjamin Burt and had trouble paying off a 1771 loan.³¹ The two documented commissions Brigden

²⁷"List of the inhabitants of Boston, who on evacuation by the British...", Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. XVIII, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1880), 266.

²⁸Merchant Nathaniel Sparhawk's stores were confiscated and sold. As well, the ships through which he made his living were taken by the British. E. Alfred Jones, The Loyalists of Massachusetts, (London: The Saint Catherine Press, 1930), 264.

²⁹For example, the life of Brigden's client Dr. James Lloyd was disrupted by imprisonment in 1775. See the Cheever journal in Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1926-1927), 91-97.

³⁰Brigden purchased goods from Daniel Boyer and did work for Mrs. Lair, Mr. Burt, John Leverett and Jackson Newbury in 1777. ZBP, folders 19 and 32.

³¹Brigden took two loans from Benjamin Burt in 1782. His 1771 loan was from Harrison Gray. Elizabeth Brigden paid these loans after her husband died. ZBP, folder

received in the 1780s illustrate his attempts to expand his base of clients and increase his business.

The commission for the Charles River teapot, the engraving of which was discussed in Chapter Two, came out of Brigden's association with an investment organization. In 1785 a group of men including John Hancock (1737-1793) and Nathaniel Gorham (1738-1796) formed a corporation with the purpose of building a bridge between Boston and Charlestown, the first bridge to span the Charles River. To finance the bridge the incorporators gathered money from a number stockholders who met at Boston taverns to discuss the progress of the bridge and make decisions about the management of the company.³² Brigden and his colleague Benjamin Burt made an investment of approximately £100 each in the Charles River Bridge, becoming stockholders. The arrangement the stockholders in the corporation accepted stated that twice a year, once expenses plus six percent were collected from the bridge toll-taker, the corporation would distribute the profits to the shareholders.

The corporation superintended a speedy building of the bridge, which opened in June of 1786 with extensive and spectacular celebrations, including a parade, fireworks, a dinner and a specially composed ode, equally lauding the achievements of the bridge builders, the veterans of the American revolution, and the ideals of the young republic.³³ A writer in the *Boston Independent Chronicle and Universal Advertiser* described the

40.

³²For more information on the set of the Bridge corporation see broadside, "Charles River Bridge Committee, Boston..", 1785 at the Boston Public Library, Evans microtext 44662.

³³"Occasional Ode For 17th June 1786....," broadside, MHS.

opening of the bridge as characterized by "...uninterrupted felicity and unfeigned hilarity," as well as blessed with particularly agreeable weather.³⁴ Soon after the bridge opened, the number of toll-paying bridge-crossers exceeded expectations. Consequentially, the Charles River Bridge shareholders reaped significant profits. Original holders of bridge shares earned a princely 30% or 40% of their investment a year for the first decade or so of its operation.³⁵

As discussed in Chapter Two, to commemorate the successful and timely construction of the Charles River Bridge the proprietors presented special project directors Richard Devens and David Wood with a tankard and teapot, each engraved with the same image of the Charles River Bridge and a legend expressing gratitude for their service. Benjamin Burt fabricated the thirty ounce tankard given to Devens, Brigden made the sixteen ounce teapot given to Wood. It is likely Burt and Brigden received these commissions because of their association with the Charles River Bridge project. From his investment in the Charles River Bridge Brigden not only eventually received cash dividends but an opportunity to execute a valuable commission.

In October of 1784 Harvard College awarded Gen. Lafayette a degree, celebrated by a dinner. The College Treasurer's Journal contains records from this event, charges for the dinners, for the diploma, for a tin case for the diploma, for ribbon and wax and also for, "a Silver Box for Seal." Brigden provided the silver box and charged

³⁴"Historic Processions in Boston," Bostonian Society Publication, vol. IV, no. 1, (Boston: The Bostonian Society, 1907), 70.

³⁵Boston Transit Commission, "Historical Statement in Relation to Charlestown Bridge, Prepared by the Chairman of the Commission," Fifth Annual Report, (Boston: Boston Transit Commission, 15 August 1899), 60.

the Harvard Corporation L1.6.0.³⁶ Brigden likely received this commission through the offices of Simeon Howard, the minister of the Brigden's church who also served as Secretary of the Board at Harvard and a member of the Corporation from 1780.³⁷ Howard's name does not appear earlier in Brigden's records but perhaps he was willing to put business in Brigden's direction.

In spite of his efforts to cultivate new clients using what connections he could create or build upon, when Brigden died in 1787 he did not leave his widow and young daughter in good circumstances.³⁸ Elizabeth Brigden recorded a daunting list of over six hundred and eighty pounds of debts owed by Brigden's estate in 1788.³⁹ In March of 1787 she received permission to sell real estate to pay debts, by June of 1787 she had the firm Russel and Clap auction of contents of the house for L105.⁴⁰ It took Mrs. Brigden literally years to pay some of her husbands debts. Although the auction brought in some money, as likely did the sale of Brigden's pew in the West Church and the sale of real estate in Cambridge, it is difficult to imagine where Mrs. Brigden got the money for

³⁶Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, vol. X, Transactions 1904-1906, (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1927), 352. I am indebted to Jeff Hardwick for this reference.

³⁷Sibley's Harvard Graduates, vol. XIV, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1968), 279-289.

³⁸Brigden's obituary in the Massachusetts Centinel of 14 March 1787 read, "Died Last Sunday evening, Mr. Zachariah Brigden, of this town, goldsmith, aged 52. His funeral will be tomorrow afternoon, at half after three o'clock, from his house opposite the State-House."

³⁹ZBP, folder 31.

⁴⁰ZBP, folder 31.

debts or to support herself and her daughter.⁴¹ It appears that in 1790 Mrs. Elizabeth Cheever, whose husband held the mortgage on Brigden's house, agreed to let Elizabeth Brigden live there for another three years.⁴²

Eventually Elizabeth Brigden sold the house to John, Francis and Thomas Amory for L990.⁴³

Mrs. Brigden died in 1793. Catherine Brigden, Zachariah and Elizabeth Brigden's daughter, and her relations preserved Brigden's daybook and papers for many years. The daybook and papers, examined in conjunction with Brigden's extant work, papers give us a view into a craftsman's life, work and concerns. The picture painted by Brigden's daybook reveals the connections and strategies silversmith Zachariah Brigden used to make a living in eighteenth-century Boston.

⁴¹"Inventory of the Real and Personal Estate of Zachariah Brigden...", ZBP, folder 30.

⁴²ZBP, folder 31.

⁴³Copy of deed in the Dolbeare papers, folder 1790-1793, MHS. This deed was witnessed and recorded in Middlesex County.

FIGURES

PLEASE NOTE

Materials in this document have not been filmed at the request of the author. They are available for consultation, however, in the author's university library.

**Figures
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