Domestic Music Making in Late Eighteenth-Century Elite Chesapeake Society: The “Elegant Selections” of Shirley Plantation

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In late eighteenth-century Chesapeake society, music making in the home was not simply a leisure activity; it was a social endeavor through which the middle and upper classes were able to express and experience their gentility, and thereby display their taste, status, and wealth. As a prominent family of the Chesapeake, the Carters of Shirley Plantation used music as a way of representing — and engaging with — their status within society.

The eighteenth-century sheet music collection of Shirley Plantation provides crucial evidence of the style and genre of music being consumed in the home of an elite family. Yet this collection also reveals aspects of the practice and function of domestic music making among late eighteenth-century Chesapeake elites when considered within the context of the physical environment in which the music was consumed, as well as in conjunction with contemporary letters, diaries, and documents from Shirley and other Virginia plantations.

In this thesis I describe the relevant history of Shirley Plantation and the unusual musical instrument that is thought to have been in the house in the late eighteenth century, an organized harpsichord. I supply a description of the sheet music in general, offer specific examples from the collection to illustrate the music’s style and relevance, and suggest how some of this music may have been performed. I discuss the parlor as a semi-public space for the performance of music as well as the performance of identity and status, and thereby suggest how musical performance functioned in the lives of late eighteenth-century elites. I argue that the parlor, a semi-public space, was a stage on which cultural identity was constituted, defined, and redefined.

The music the Carters consumed during the Early Republic reveals an adherence to fashion expected of a family of elite status, yet certain selections also stand out as significant choices that can illuminate the Carters’ conception of their world. The inclusion of an early anti-slavery work, Inkle and Yarico (1787), and songs from the 1790s that sympathize with the plight of the French royal family, indicate an engagement with the tensions inherent in the elite lifestyle within the Early Republic. The Carters’ choice of sheet music — and the performance of that music in the Shirley parlor — suggests the family’s tastes, but more significantly offers a nuanced and complex view of the role of music making in elite society.
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DEDICATION

For Lee,
Calum & Aidan,
And my parents, Joe & Eunice
With love and gratitude
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John Watson of Colonial Williamsburg originally (and astutely) told me that the Shirley sheet music collection needed attention. Christine Crumlish Joyce, formerly of Shirley Plantation, was incredibly generous with her time, sharing with me her carefully researched knowledge of the Carters. The staff at the Rockefeller Library was unfailingly helpful.
INTRODUCTION

On a Tuesday in March 1797, Frances Baylor Hill, a young lady living in Virginia, recorded in her diary the activities of the day that she deemed most notable: “read a little sew’d on the shirt play’d on the Harpsichord & Mandalin, walk’d with Miss Betty to her henhouse, got some eggs, had the company of Mr John Roane, & Mr Wm Grigory to sup with us.”1 On another occasion she wrote, “knit a little on my stocking, read a little, play’d a little, & sung a little.” Music making, like sewing and reading, was an innocent and beneficial diversion for young people, especially young women living in late eighteenth-century Chesapeake plantation society.

A popular song of this era, “Be Gone Dull Care” (c. 1793), expressed the sentiment that music provided an excellent means to pass time, and dispel cares.

Be gone dull care, I prithee be gone from me,
Be gone dull care, You and I shall never agree;
Long time thou hast been tarrying here,
    and fain thou would’st me kill,
But in faith dull care thou never shall have thy will;
Too much care will make a Young Man Grey,
    and too much care will turn an Old Man to Clay;
My Wife shall dance and I will sing so merrily pass the day,
For I hold it one of the wisest things to drive dull care away.2

This song is one of forty pieces of music from the last quarter of the eighteenth century comprising a collection of sheet music that belonged to the Carters of Shirley Plantation

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1 Bottorff, “Diary of Francis Baylor Hill (1797),” 19.
2 Shirley Plantation Collection, box 114, folder 6. Rockefeller Library Special Collections, Williamsburg, Virginia. Future citations of materials from this collection will be given as “SPC” followed by box and folder numbers.
in Virginia. In the eighteenth-century world of the Chesapeake, music making in the home was a wonderful way to “drive dull care away,” but it was not simply a leisure activity. One can imagine the sounds of this music reverberating within the well-appointed parlor of Shirley: an elegant young person displaying talent, education, and refinement among family, friends, and visitors; the sheet music on the keyboard instrument, an inconspicuous yet crucial element in a scene of elite culture. Music making within the semi-public parlor was a social endeavor through which the middle and upper classes were able to express and experience their gentility, and thereby display their taste, status, and wealth. As a prominent family of the Chesapeake, the Carters of Shirley used music as an entertaining pastime, but also as a way of representing – and engaging with – their status within society.

Shirley Plantation on the James River in Virginia was established by English settlers as early as 1613. This land in Charles City County has been passed down through eleven generations of descendents of the original owners, the Hills. Since 1723, when heiress Elizabeth Hill married John Carter (son of Robert “King” Carter), the plantation has been owned and occupied by Carters, as have many plantations across Virginia. Because the property has remained within the same family for generations, many of the plantation’s buildings, historical records, and objects have been preserved.

In 1991 a collection of documents, letters, books, photos, ephemera, and music from Shirley was brought out of storage (in barns and attics) and deposited in Colonial Williamsburg’s John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library. The Shirley Plantation Collection, 1650-1989 contains 16,000 items, 93 volumes, 1400 photographs, and 1000 books that
have been indexed and organized into containers by date and item type.\textsuperscript{3} The collection includes several containers of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early twentieth-century sheet music. It is the sheet music from the last quarter of the eighteenth century with which this thesis is concerned. This portion of the sheet music collection corresponds to the era from 1771 to 1806 during which Charles Carter (1732-1806) was patriarch at Shirley.\textsuperscript{4} The Shirley Plantation sheet music from the late eighteenth century is representative of the most popular and fashionable music that was consumed by middle- and upper-class families in both America and England in this period and includes comic operas, ballads, popular songs, and instrumental chamber works for keyboard. All of this music was printed in London, reflecting the pervasiveness of British musical culture in America’s Early Republic.

The Shirley sheet music collection is a crucial resource; it offers evidence of the style and genre of music being consumed in the home of an elite family, and suggests domestic music making practices when considered in the context of the physical environment in which the music was consumed. Sheet music collections from the late eighteenth century such as this one are rare; there is therefore a lacuna in eighteenth-century cultural studies and musicology where domestic music making is concerned.

\textsuperscript{3} A nearly 700 page PDF file of the Rockefeller Special Collections finding aid for the Shirley Collection is available on-line at http://www.history.org/history/jdrlweb.guides/speccolaids.cfm

\textsuperscript{4} The latest piece of music in the eighteenth-century portion of the collection appears to date from 1800. There is a clear break in the sheet music collection between the end of the era of Charles Carter and the beginning of the residence of Hill Carter in 1816. Charles died in 1806 and his widow Anne remained at Shirley until her death three years later. The next portion of music that appears in the collection was published after 1816 when Hill Carter took possession of Shirley upon coming of age. There appears to have been no new music acquired between about 1800 and 1816. Music from that period may have once been at Shirley, but no longer exists as part of the collection.
which this study will attempt to remedy. While much eighteenth-century sheet music survives in archives today, it does not always retain a recognizable provenance associating it with specific individuals, families, or homes that might suggest cultural context. As a result, scholars have paid more attention to the more abundant resources and evidence of nineteenth-century musical practices in the home. The eighteenth-century Shirley sheet music collection, when considered within the context of contemporary letters, diaries, and business documents from Shirley and other Virginia plantations, and the extant physical context provided by the great house, outbuildings, and period material objects at Shirley, can offer a picture of domestic music making of late eighteenth-century Chesapeake elites. Furthermore, this view of domestic music making can be useful in accessing several correlated issues in the shifting landscape of the Early Republic, such as gender, identity formation, and the role of elites and elite culture in the nascent republican society.

Few scholars have considered the role of music making in early American homes, particularly late eighteenth-century homes. This study attempts to fill two voids: a lack of recent scholarship on late eighteenth-century sheet music in general, and specifically, a deficiency in our understanding of the function and importance of domestic music making and its practices.

Nicholas Tawa’s *Sweet Songs for Gentle Americans: the Parlor Song in America, 1790-1860* addresses the fact that most American parlor music was British until about 1810, but ultimately has little else to say on the subject. Tamara Livingston briefly considers domestic music making in America through the popularity of guitar-style

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instruments. While her study is an excellent resource on the repertoire and popularity of the English guitar in particular (a cittern family instrument popular with women the eighteenth century), it falls short of elucidating the significance of domestic music making.⁶

Judith Britt and Helen Cripe have both written about eighteenth-century sheet music collections that are associated with specific individuals, but their work is of a now out-moded style of musicology. Britt's *Nothing More Agreeable* is a glossy publication on the music of George Washington’s family. She considers the music collection in relation to other carefully kept family records and evidence.⁷ The specifics of who played what music upon which instrument in this family are clear in contrast with the complete lack of such evidence at Shirley. Although *Nothing More Agreeable* is a lovely resource, Britt does not venture into the significance of the music collection within a greater cultural context, nor does she use the collection to contribute to our understanding of domestic music practices. Helen Cripe’s *Thomas Jefferson and Music* presents evidence of Jefferson’s relationship to music, regarding the instruments he purchased, the music he selected, and the encouragement he gave his daughters and granddaughters.⁸ Like Britt, Cripe does not attempt to uncover the broader context of private music making in the eighteenth century.

In general, traditional musicologists have tended to treat domestic music making as a subject of far less consequence than public forms of music making in concert halls, opera houses, and theaters. In their survey chapters in *Music in Britain: the Eighteenth*

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⁶ See, Livingston, "‘Strike the Light Guitar’": The Guitar and Domestic Music-making in America, 1750-1850."
Century, preeminent musicologists Roger Fiske and Stanley Sadie demonstrate disdain for the vast majority of the music that was performed and consumed and show preference for the few composers and works that have gained a place in the art music canon. In his chapter called “Music in the Home, 1760-1800” Sadie rightly discusses the vast output of music printing shops as prime evidence of the prevalence of domestic music making, and of what people were buying. But he goes no further than to outline the popular genres of music for sale and offer examples of the “best” music of each genre by the “most important” composers. In keeping with the outmoded style of musicology of which this comprehensive volume is representative, the actual day-to-day music-making activities that were part of most peoples’ lives in the eighteenth century are ignored.

The work of scholars Richard Leppert and Ann Bermingham are central to this investigation of music making at Shirley Plantation because of the attention they pay to evidence that reveals the complexities of gender within the domestic realm. Scholarship dedicated to women in music has tended to focus on public music – women composers, performers, and conductors – and has ignored the realm in which music and women are historically most intimately connected: in the home. Leppert’s excellent work, Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-cultural Formation in Eighteenth-century England, shows how a creative approach to evidence can reveal volumes about social praxis. Using portraiture, prints, caricatures, and other types of images from the eighteenth century paired with various forms of documentary evidence (diaries, letters, 

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9 See Johnstone and Fiske, eds. Music in Britain.
conduct and courtesy books), Leppert vividly reconstructs the ideology of music in the domestic lives of British women and men. He also attempts to uncover some of the actual practices of music making in the home, from learning and instruction to the performing of accomplishments.12

Ann Bermingham does not so much consider music in her scholarship, but in looking at women’s accomplishments (drawing in particular) she reveals a great deal about the role of learning and subsequently demonstrating artistic accomplishments in the lives of young British women. Bermingham views “modes of aesthetic representation [...] as part of the social fabric,” and demonstrates how the doing and presenting of aesthetically driven accomplishments was a means for individuals to “negotiate their subjectivity,” or identity.13 Bermingham convincingly uses evidence in the novels of Jane Austen to illustrate British conventions in the late eighteenth century. While the scholarship of Leppert and Bermingham deal exclusively with British cultural practices, they provide an excellent starting point for evaluating evidence of music-making practices in culturally British America from the same period.

This thesis employs one family’s music collection to study elite Chesapeake plantation society and its domestic music-making practices. I apply to sheet music what Rhys Isaac theorizes about the “distinctive properties” of books, which have “captured voices” with the ability to tell the stories a society tells itself about itself.14 The texts and aesthetics of music contain and transmit stories of love, morality, social institutions,

12 Leppert, Music and Image, passim.
13 Bermingham, Learning to Draw, ix, xiii.
14 Isaac, Landon Carter’s Uneasy Kingdom, 89-90.
emotion, and sensibility, as well as stories that connect the listener to a particular social group and differentiate that individual from those outside that group.

The long eighteenth century in both Britain and America witnessed the emergence of the Self as a central societal construct, and a simultaneous rise in consumerism.\textsuperscript{15} An individual sense of personal identity\textsuperscript{16} became prominent in people’s lives, and found expression through the consumption and display of material objects. Historian Leora Auslander suggests that objects are agents able to reflect and – more importantly – create both social position and self-identity.\textsuperscript{17} This view of material culture can be applied to sheet music. I suggest that sheet music is a unique type of object that is an agent of the self on two levels. It is an agent as an object (in the sense Auslander describes), and it is an agent in and through the performance of music – an activity of cultural reproduction. Through the consumption of music and its consequent performance the Carters of Shirley were defining and negotiating the parameters of their social and individual identities.

The semi-public realm of the parlor in the homes of late eighteenth-century Chesapeake elites served as a stage for cultural presentations of identity – both an individual’s identity and the group identity to which that individual belonged. These identity “performances” were conducted through the presentation of what Erving Goffman describes as controlled “ordinary” behaviors intended to express and impress.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} See, e.g., Wahrman, \textit{The Making of the Modern Self}; McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb, \textit{The Birth of a Consumer Society}.

\textsuperscript{16} Identity can be understood, according to Wahrman, both as the “unique individuality of a person,” and as the “common denominator that places an individual within a group.” (Wahrman, \textit{The Making of the Modern Self}, xii.)

\textsuperscript{17} Auslander, “Beyond Words,” paragraph 6.

\textsuperscript{18} Goffman, \textit{The Presentation of Self}, passim. Goffman defines performance as “all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants.” (15)
Yet identities were also being performed – in a more traditional sense of the word – through musical performance. Borrowing from Greg Dening and Rhys Isaac’s methods of using a metaphor of theater (by way of Victor Turner) to make sense of a historical setting, I view the parlor in elite eighteenth-century Virginia as a stage on which cultural identity was constantly being constituted, defined, and redefined. The performance of music on the parlor “stage” was a reflexive act, and therefore served as a “performance” of gentility, taste, and status.

Although there is less extant evidence than scholars would like to help explicate the habits and sounds of music making in American homes in the eighteenth century, what evidence there is can be fertile for a scholar who is willing to be creative. Simply to raise questions about the how, why, where, when, and who of domestic music making is to move toward an understanding of a pervasive practice. An understanding of music making in the home can lead to further understanding of many other aspects of society, culture, and daily life in the eighteenth century.

Shirley Plantation provides a venue for better understanding the meaning and context of music making in late eighteenth-century Chesapeake planter society. Shirley’s sheet music requires a consideration of the popularity of British music in America, music consumption habits, gender roles and social hierarchy of the Early Republic, and the physical environment of the great house and its semi-public parlor. Chapter one briefly describes the relevant history of Shirley Plantation and the musical instrument that is thought to have been in the house in the late eighteenth century. Chapter two supplies a

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19 For a succinct explanation of this approach see Dening, in Hoffman et al, *Through a Glass Darkly*; for Isaac’s use of the metaphor of theater see, “Discourse on Method” in *Transformation of Virginia.*
description of the sheet music in general, offers specific examples from the collection to illustrate the music’s style and relevance, and suggests how some of this music may have been performed. Chapter three discusses the parlor as a space for the performance of music as well as identity and status, and suggests how musical performance functioned in the lives of late eighteenth-century elites. The music of the Shirley collection, viewed in conjunction with contemporary evidence from the diaries of two young women of Virginia, reveals some aspects of the practice and function of domestic music making, especially in the lives of women.

The music the Carters chose to consume during the Early Republic reveals an adherence to fashion expected of a family of elite status, yet certain selections also stand out as significant choices that can illuminate the Carters’ conception of their world. The inclusion of an early anti-slavery work, *Inkle and Yarico* (1787), and songs from the 1790s that sympathize with the plight of the French royal family indicate an engagement (through performance) with the tensions inherent in the elite lifestyle within the newly unfolding landscape of the Early Republic. The Carters’ choice of sheet music – and the performance of that music in the Shirley parlor – suggests the family’s tastes, but more significantly offers a nuanced and complex view of the role of music making in elite society.
CHAPTER I

The Organized Harpsichord at Shirley in the Era of Charles Carter, 1771 to 1806

In 1771, Charles Carter (1732-1806), son of Elizabeth and John Carter, inherited Shirley upon the death of his mother and began renovating the buildings.¹ For twenty years prior to 1771 Shirley had been owned and occupied by Elizabeth and her second husband, Bowler Cocke. During that period Shirley was prosperous, yet the brick great house and its surrounding brick structures had been allowed to fall into disrepair.² By 1770 Charles Carter had married his second wife, Anne Butler Moore Carter, and already had several children between the ages of three and nine-years old. Charles fathered a total of twenty-three children, fourteen of whom lived to adulthood. Until the renovated Shirley was ready for occupation, Charles lived at another of his seats, Corotoman in Lancaster County, where he had lived for much of his life.

The 1780s and 1790s were a very prosperous time at Shirley Plantation. Tax records of the 1780s indicate that Charles Carter owned more slaves and cattle than any other man in Virginia.³ Because Shirley Plantation is only 20 miles from what had

¹ John Carter was the first son of Robert “King” Carter. Therefore, Charles of Shirley was grandson of King Carter, and nephew to Landon of Sabine and Robert of Nomini.
² Lynn, “Shirley Plantation, A History,” 66. Thomas Jefferson wrote that when Bowler Cocke died, “he left [Shirley] improved and increased to a very great degree,” meaning that the land was productive. However, while the land was prosperous, the house had been allowed to decay. (ibid.)
³ Lynn, “Shirley Plantation,” 74. His total land holdings included 35,188 acres across eight counties.
become the new state capital of Richmond in 1780, the Carters had access during this period to newly expanded social and cultural opportunities.

In 1806, at the death of Charles Carter, Hill Carter (son of Robert) inherited Shirley from his grandfather when he was only ten years old, but did not take possession of the property until he came of age in 1816. Anne, Charles' widow, remained at Shirley until her death in 1809, after which a sale of household goods and furniture took place in order to distribute some of the household property among the family. Some of the objects not sold at that time remain in the house today. Among the items sold were goods that had been listed in the inventory taken at the death of Charles Carter.

The only musical object on this inventory is "one Organized Harpsichord," valued far higher than any other single object on the inventory ($200). An organized harpsichord is an atypical keyboard instrument, also known as a claviorgan. This instrument is no longer at Shirley, but its mention on the 1806 inventory is quite significant: it informs our understanding of music making at Shirley plantation and, perhaps more important, it is the only known mention of an organized instrument in Virginia in the eighteenth century.

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4 Lynn, 87. Lynn discusses the sale, but according to more recent unpublished research by Shirley Curator Christine Crumlish Joyce, the sale was a formality not intended to raise funds. Instead it was a means to gently subvert Charles' will, which had settled the whole estate on Hill.
5 The inventory can be found in Lynn, 80-85.
6 It is possible that the Carters also owned music stands and/or other music instruments, such as those from among the most popular instruments of the era – pianoforte, violin, German flute, and English guitar. These instruments were prevalent in the period and are frequently called for in the instrumentation of the sheet music in the Shirley Collection.
7 John R. Watson, phone conversation author (August 2, 2005). Watson, conservator of musical instruments for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, stated that he has never before come across evidence of an organized instrument in early Virginia.
An organized harpsichord is a hybrid instrument with both the strings of a harpsichord and the pipes of an organ. The pipes are installed in a case below the case of the harpsichord. These instruments could have either a single or double manual (one or two sets of keys). When played, the harpsichord and organ could be engaged together to produce simultaneously both a plucked and sustained sound. Or, each component could be played alone. In the late eighteenth century, organized pianofortes were also available for sale. Organized instruments were made by several of the most prominent keyboard builders in England, including Jacob Kirckman (instrument builder to the King), but are extremely rare today. An extant claviorgan (today in a private collection) built jointly in the 1740s by Kirckman and organ builder John Snetzler is likely to be similar to the one owned by the Carters.\(^8\) This Georgian style instrument has beautiful marquetry upon finished wood with elaborate grain and figuration. The case in which the organ is housed has several doors that can be opened for the pipes' sound to escape the instrument, but these can be also closed for a softer sound, or for a neater appearance when not in use.

The Kirckman-Snetzler claviorgan has two levers that protrude from the bottom of the case and that when pressed, pump air through the pipes. The locations of the levers gives the option for the air to be pumped either by the musician at the keyboard, or by a second person standing to the side of the instrument.\(^9\)

\(^8\) Kirckman was a prolific builder whose instruments were very popular among elites of Virginia. For example, the last Royal Governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, kept a Kirckman harpsichord in the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg.

In eighteenth-century England organized instruments were far less common than plain harpsichords or pianofortes; situated within the Shirley parlor, the organized harpsichord would have been a curious and beautiful object for visitors to behold.\(^{10}\) The workmanship, design, decoration, and builders’ marks would have communicated the value of the instrument, and the values held by the family. Large keyboard instruments in elite homes represented affluence and a dedication to refinement, or at least to leisure.\(^{11}\) A family in a small home with only a few rooms would have had no space for such a large instrument, but a wealthy planter with a multi-room great house would have had ample space for a spectacular instrument for display and use. Relative to other household objects, sheet music was not prohibitively expensive for middle and upper class white families, but keyboard instruments could cost as much as the equivalent of one year’s wages for a successful working-class tradesman.

All of the Shirley sheet music from the eighteenth century calls for a keyboard instrument for its performance, but any type of keyboard instrument – harpsichord, pianoforte, or organ – would have been suitable for the Carters’ music making at home. Eighteenth-century instrumentation almost always required a keyboard instrument, but decisions about the type of keyboard to use were left to the performer, or were decided by the instrument at hand. Title pages of sheet music often advertised a piece as being suitable for harpsichord or pianoforte, or simply listed it as being for *clavecin*, the generic term that encompassed all keyboards.

\(^{10}\) The order and grouping of objects listed on the 1806 inventory indicates that this instrument was kept in the parlor. Listed with the instrument are “2 mahogany tea tables,” “4 other small [tables],” “1 sofa,” and “1 small writing desk.”

\(^{11}\) Leppert, *Music and Image*, 156.
The fact that the Carters owned an organized harpsichord suggests that they were able to perform their music with great flexibility. A piece could be played with only the harpsichord, only the organ, or with both portions sounding together. This offered a great deal of musical variety in performance. Regarding the flexibility and desirability of organized instruments, Peter Williams points out that “some people appreciated the value of an instrument suitable both for Sunday-evening psalm-singing and for mid-week consorts.”

However, an organized harpsichord would also have posed a serious difficulty in the volatile climate of Tidewater Virginia – it would have been unfeasible to keep it in tune with itself. Harpsichord strings must be tuned nearly every time the instrument is to be played, but organ pipes, which go out of tune over time, must be tuned professionally by an instrument repairperson. The number of times, realistically, that the instrument could have been played with both strings and pipes sounding together – and in tune – must have been limited.

Why did the Carters own such an unusual instrument? There are several interpretations that might explain its presence. Why did they not simply own a standard harpsichord or pianoforte, or did they perhaps own a second keyboard such as the more current and fashionable pianoforte? Is it possible that the claviorgan belonged to Charles, but that another more standard type of keyboard instrument was owned by Anne? The instrument’s inclusion in the 1806 probate inventory (taken at Charles’ death) indicates that it was considered his property. Any property of his wife’s would not have been listed. According to Christine Crumlish Joyce, curator at Shirley, it is clear that Charles

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12 Williams, “The Earl Of Wemyss’ Claviorgan,” 79.
spent lavishly to furnish and decorate his home fashionably and seems to have done so particularly after the Revolution.\textsuperscript{13} Perhaps Charles bought his young wife a new pianoforte for her amusement and for the education of their children. The organized instrument may indicate that Charles used music as a scientific pursuit more than an artistic one. Eighteenth-century courtesy and conduct books in some cases encouraged gentlemen to pursue the scientific, theoretical, and intellectual aspects of music – a mode of musicianship that the organized harpsichord may have afforded.\textsuperscript{14} This rational approach reflected a gentleman’s education in a way that was distinct from a woman’s more elegantly artistic pursuits.

The instrument may have been a novelty that their neighbors lacked, and which displayed wealth and worldliness. Perhaps it was an older instrument that had been in the family’s possession for some time. Or could the instrument represent a subtle, aesthetically based choice? The Carters may have preferred the timbre and flexibility provided by the organized instrument. As a prominent Virginia family, the Carters of Shirley used music as an entertaining pastime, but also as a way of representing their status and gentility. As such, their ownership of an organized instrument is both curious and significant.

\textsuperscript{13} Christine Joyce, conversation with author, April 2006.
\textsuperscript{14} Leppert, \textit{Music and Image}, 22-23. For example, Charles’ uncle Robert Carter of Nomini Hall was known for his scientific experiments with musical instruments. (See Barden, “Innocent and Necessary.”)
CHAPTER 2

The Sheet Music of Shirley Plantation

In spite of the unpopularity which politics will annex to the assertion, the manners of Virginia are English.
- Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1797.¹

In Amelia [Virginia] I could have again fancied myself in a society of English Country Gentlemen (a character to which I attach everything that is desirable as to education, domestic comfort, manners and principles).
- Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1796.²

The Early Republic witnessed both great change and remarkable stability. While everything from culture to politics and government was in flux, the rapid transformation from British colony to American nation entailed important continuity in cultural identity and habits of consumption. Architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe observed a “hatred felt by the Virginians...in general...to the British.” He comments in his journal, “I have often thought it strange that it should be already forgotten that at furthest the two Nations are first Cousins.”³ Latrobe’s observations of Virginia reveal the irony that while some Americans were disdainful of their “first Cousins,” American manners and culture remained British.

² Ibid., 127. Letter to Colonel Blackburn, Rippon Lodge, Dumfries on the Potomac.
³ Ibid., 306. Entry dated 13 October 1797. (Original emphasis)
The Carters of Shirley Plantation, like most upper- and middle-class Americans, consumed music by English composers, as well as Italian, Austrian, and German works popular in England. The sheet music collection at Shirley is comprised of London-printed music by composers who were popular and fashionable in Britain, exemplary of the trend that favored British musical styles and composers in America until the early nineteenth century.

London was the predominant center for the printing of fashionable music; single works were often available from more than one printer. Americans could purchase London-printed music directly from London, or from American merchants who imported it along with other goods. It was not until 1787 that printing of secular sheet music began in the United States. Even then the business was slow to take off and most of what was printed represented the same body of works available from Britain.

American music of this period is scant compared to the large amount of music that flooded the American market from Britain. The contributions of American composers and musicians toward building a new national culture were few, isolated, and novel; they were not readily adopted into the routine musical habits of most white, middle- and upper-class Americans. Although some of the most prominent Americans (such as Thomas Jefferson) owned copies of American music, this was not the norm among music consumers.

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5 For scholarship on the vast array of shops that printed music in London and the catalogues of what they printed in the eighteenth century see, Kidson, British Music Publishers; Schappner, British Union-Catalogue; Squire, Catalogue of Printed Music.
7 See Crawford, all titles; Sonneck, all titles.
In the Early Republic the Carters selected only London-printed music that was fashionable in Britain for their use at home. A few of the pieces in the collection were available for sale in both American and English imprints, and similar music was available from printers in cities such as Edinburgh, Paris, or Dublin. However, it was likely more convenient, and part of a habit of consumption established before the Revolutionary War, to procure music directly from firms with which the Carters did business in London. It is also possible that the Carters made a conscious decision to buy London-printed music because of an association it may have held with fashion and superiority. London was a major cultural center and Britons and Americans avidly followed its musical fashions. When selecting music to perform at home, the Carters chose the aesthetic language that they had always known and that held cachet in their sphere.

Music consumed by the middle and upper classes of the late eighteenth century was written with their tastes and desires in mind, rather than for purely artistic reasons. Many, if not most, composers of the late eighteenth century wrote music that fit the popular mold rather than that attempted to break that mold for artistic gain; they wrote music that would sell. Popular music of this period called for the same trappings as more cultivated art music (appropriate settings, instruments, etc.), and although learning to play it was considered an important part of elite education this music was meant to entertain rather than enlighten. It provided the basis for an activity that was suitable and productive amusement for both men and women.

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8 No evidence of how the Carters procured their music has been uncovered, but was likely done through factors. Charles Carter used his factors to order custom silver pieces from London.
There are forty works of eighteenth-century music in the Shirley Plantation Collection\textsuperscript{10} representing the period from as early as 1770 to 1800.\textsuperscript{11} Included are sixteen popular songs that were printed and sold individually. These songs represent the hit tunes of London theatrical presentations; their title pages advertised as much with wording such as, "A Favorite Song, Sung by Mr. Taylor with Universal Applause at Vauxhall Gardens."\textsuperscript{12} Also in the collection are eight instrumental works for keyboard, some of which have accompaniment parts for the flute or violin. These are printed either singly or in collections of six or twelve sonatas each. There is one set of instrumental dance pieces arranged for keyboard or English guitar that includes directions for the dances, one unidentified keyboard tutorial (it is missing the first several pages),\textsuperscript{13} and one fragment of miscellaneous works for keyboard. There are four collections of ballads or songs scored for voice(s), keyboard, and in some cases additional instruments. There are nine multi-movement vocal works, including secular cantatas, comic operas, and other stage

\textsuperscript{10} The collection also includes a large amount of music from the nineteenth century not addressed here. See the Appendix for a listing of the eighteenth-century music.
\textsuperscript{11} The sheet music publication dates given here refer to the first possible year that a work was available from the particular printer who produced the version in the Shirley collection. Many of these works were available from several printers and were often reprinted for several years. In order make sheet music appear current and new (and therefore desirable) dates were not generally included on sheet music imprints. A work may have been available for years before the Carters purchased it. For a discussion of the practice of omitting dates see Wolfe, \textit{Early American Music Engraving and Printing}, and Crawford and Krummel in Joyce, \textit{Printing and Society in Early America}.
\textsuperscript{12} SPC, 114/1.
\textsuperscript{13} Keyboard tutorials were intended for use in the home to teach amateur musicians to play a keyboard instrument. Many different tutorials were available for sale. Most of these teach basic technique, ornamentation, and offer suggestions for playing musically. They often include exercises as well as short pieces, which become more difficult as the tutorial progresses.
works.\textsuperscript{14} These are in vocal score format – scored for keyboard and voices, and in some cases also include cues or sparse parts for other instruments as needed.\textsuperscript{15} Most include the overture and all the songs from the stage work.

Extant sheet music from this period found in other collections is sometimes bound with leather or board covers. The volumes that belonged to Jefferson and Washington, for example, are bound in this manner.\textsuperscript{16} The eighteenth-century Shirley sheet music, in contrast, is not bound but instead appears to have been printed and purchased in stitch book format, in which string is simply looped through two or three holes on the edge of the sheets and tied. For most of the music the title page serves as a cover, but in some cases there is an extra sheet of blank, rough paper placed to form a front and/or back cover. Only one work has a decorative marbleized paper cover. Some of these stitch books consist of a single work, such as an entire comic opera, and others consist of several single pieces of music that are unrelated, and often printed by different establishments. It is difficult to know whether the latter compilations were stitched by a merchant selling works from several publishers, or were compiled and stitched together by the purchaser.

All of the eighteenth-century sheet music exhibits a signature that says “Shirley,” perhaps suggesting that the music was thought of as belonging to the house rather than

\textsuperscript{14} In music printers’ inventories and newspaper announcements of theatrical performances, these stage works are referred to interchangeably as comic operas, musical entertainments, musical farces, or simply, operas. These terms are representative of the myriad genres of musical theater of the period. For purposes here, they will be referred to as comic operas or stage works.

\textsuperscript{15} The scores for these multi-movement vocal works are not full scores with string, wind, and/or brass parts that a stage company would have required, but are examples of vocal scores reduced from the original versions to require only voice(s) and keyboard. These were sold to the public for consumption at home.

\textsuperscript{16} See Cripe on Jefferson, and Britt on Washington.
one particular individual. Perhaps the Carters owned a separate set of music for use at their other home at Corotoman. The signature usually appears at the top of the blank cover sheet or title page and seems to date from the late eighteenth century when the music was new.

In addition to the "Shirley" signature, there are other instances of handwritten marks in the music such as doodling and nonsense. However, there are no performance markings or musical marginalia anywhere in the music. Music that has been regularly used for practice, teaching, or performance typically shows evidence of such use in the form of fingerings, dynamic markings, or phrasing indications. Other examples of eighteenth-century sheet music in the collection of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation have handwritten performance markings that include notes on technique and musicality, and directions for practicing.

The striking lack of performance markings in the Shirley music could be interpreted in different ways. Perhaps the Carters used their music carefully and chose to avoid markings in order to make it more legible for multiple users, or perhaps one very proficient musician who did not find markings necessary used the music. Or could the lack of markings indicate disuse? It is also possible that music once existed that was full of markings, but that only clean sheets were preserved by later generations. Regardless of the absence of musical handwritten marks, there are other interesting (and often charming) markings on these sheets of music such as sketches and doodling found on a few title pages and back covers. These markings could be construed as evidence that the

17 Charles Carter had lived solely at Corotoman until the early 1770s when he took possession of Shirley, after which he moved between his two households for a number of years.
Shirley sheet music was only a perfunctory household decoration and not used for music making. However, evidence that the Carters owned an organized harpsichord, a unique and expensive instrument, implies that the sheet music was not simply a decoration.

There is no evidence to suggest which family members were musical, however the children by Charles’ second wife, Anne, were most likely to have been the household members who enjoyed the use of the late eighteenth-century sheet music in the collection. It is possible that Charles Carter and his son, Robert (1774-1805), were amateur musicians as sometimes befitted wealthy gentlemen, but it is even more likely that their wives, Anne Butler Moore Carter (c.1750-1809) and Mary Nelson Carter (1774-1803), respectively, were musical. Becoming musically adept was part of an appropriate education for young women and was a way for them to appear to good advantage in social situations; in other words, it was a way for them to attract worthy young men.

Much of the doodling that appears on several sheets of music is redolent of adolescent handwriting and seems to indicate that young children had access to the music. The children of Charles and Anne Carter born between 1773 and 1791 would likely have at least heard the music at Shirley purchased during the 1780s and 1790s, and may have even been taught to play some of it. One piece of music in particular gives us a glimpse into the life of a little girl at Shirley who was perhaps shirking her practicing. On the front cover of a collection of miscellaneous songs and pieces that date to about 1795, there are several handwritten markings that include practice signatures of young Lucy Carter (b. 1789).¹⁸ There are several uppercase “L’s” and other fragments of her name such as “Lucy Cart,” and “Luc.” The lettering of Lucy’s handwriting is thick and

¹⁸ SPC, 114/6.
lacks the grace of adult penmanship. In another young person’s handwriting is written
“Miss. Eliza Nelson,” a cousin of Lucy’s who may have used this music at her Yorktown
home or when visiting at Shirley.\(^1^9\)

The music of Shirley included works by composers who were popular and
fashionable in England. English composers represented include James Hook (1746-
1827), William Shield (1748-1829), Samuel Arnold (1740-1802), Thomas Attwood
(1765-1838), and Stephen Storace (1762-1796). Several German, Austrian, and Italian
composers are also represented, such as J. F. Sterkel (1750-1817), Venanzio Rauzzini
(1746-1810), Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816), Tommaso Giordani (c. 1730-1806), F. J.
Haydn (1732-1809), and Ignace Pleyel (1757-1831). Many of these composers lived and
worked in London and/or Dublin for at least part of their careers. Some of the composers
whose music is represented in the collection are fairly obscure today, but most would
have been known to audiences for their contributions to performances at such famous
venues as Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and in concert series in London and Bath.
Rauzzini became famous for the weekly Wednesday concerts that he organized in Bath.
Scholar/composer Patrick Piggott asserts that it was these *de rigueur* performances that
Jane Austen’s character Catherine Norland attended in the novel *Northanger Abbey*\(^2^0\). In
other words, these composers’ names were familiar to any family that could afford the
consumption of music for leisure.

The late eighteenth century in Europe was the cradle of the Classical style
codified and made famous by W. A. Mozart (1756-1791) and F. J. Haydn, both of whom

\(^{19}\) Robert Carter’s (1774-1805) children were raised in part by his wife Mary’s family, the
Nelsons of Yorktown, after the death of both Robert and Mary (d. 1803). (Lynn, “Shirley
Plantation, A History,” 87.)

were very active during the years represented by the Shirley collection. Although Mozart and Haydn are represented in the collection in minor ways (such as in an arrangement of a Haydn melody as a song\(^{21}\)), most of the music in the Shirley collection falls outside of what is today considered to be art music of the Classical era. The Classical style flourished on the Continent, but had less influence on the consumption of music in Britain.\(^{22}\) In Britain, and therefore America, the distinction between art and popular music was particularly blurry. An excellent example of this blurriness is found in a fragment of unidentified music in the Shirley collection that includes three separate pieces that appear to be from a single gather of sheets that was once in a much larger bound volume of music: “Sonata II” by Thomas Haigh (1769-1808) for keyboard, “Scottish Air” arranged by Haigh, and “The Fowler, A Favorite Air extracted from the celebrated German Opera of the Zauberflöte Composed by Mozart.” Mozart is juxtaposed in this gathering with Haigh, a musician who did more arranging of works than composing and about whom very little is known today.\(^{23}\) The distinctions we might draw between these two men today meant less to consumers of music in the eighteenth century.

Generally speaking, the music most widely consumed in the home in England and America in the late eighteenth century was moderate in tempo and reasoned in style. The bass lines are mostly uncomplicated and straightforward but can sometimes be very active. The melodies are usually either energetic or sentimental. The music owned by the Carters of Shirley may have been fashionable at the time, but much of it is now

\(^{21}\) SPC 115/3.
\(^{22}\) See Leppert *Music and Image*; Johnstone and Fiske, *Music in Britain*.
considered artistically unremarkable. Twentieth-century music scholars tended to belittle much of this music despite its obvious popularity among eighteenth-century music lovers.

Musicologist Diack Johnstone, for example, refers to the style of music that developed in England in the second half of the eighteenth century as depending on “somewhat insipid and musically vacuous prettiness.” The Mozart scholar Stanley Sadie says that some of this music should be “flattered to be called third-rate.” These characterizations are somewhat ahistorical because they assess the music not as it was judged at the time, but rather in the context of the art music canon developed in the twentieth century. For instance, James Hook wrote over 2000 songs most of which were widely available for sale, popular, and successful, yet he does not receive mention in most music history textbooks. The view that this music is irrelevant or not worth scholarly notice is short-sighted considering the role this music played in the domestic realm. Rather than compare the music fashionable in Britain with the recognized genius of Mozart, it is worth considering the value of music that was popular for home consumption in Britain and America, represented by the Shirley collection, on its own terms.

The majority of music published for home use was fairly accessible, both intellectually and musically, and was therefore appropriate for amateurs. The goal of the music consumed in the home was to enable amateurs to produce pleasing performances for entertainment. As such, the performance and performer are allowed to shine while the music is simply a vehicle for expression. In vocal compositions the sounds themselves are almost subservient to the text. It is accessible music with entertainment value that

does not call for much sophistication on the part of the listener. A great deal of music from the late eighteenth century, like that in the Shirley collection, is light and undemanding, even when presenting emotional or moral content.

Comic operas offer a perfect example of this light quality in music. As the theater going public in London grew to include more of the middle and lower classes, comic opera took the place of more "serious" works like the opera seria of Handel from earlier in the century.\textsuperscript{26} The plots are loosely constructed and highly predictable, and the musical formula is straightforward. Some of the tunes used for the songs were already familiar, but set with new texts for the opera. Many professional performances of these works were part of long evenings of entertainment that included a hodgepodge of instrumental music, songs, dance, drama, comedy, pratfalls, and the like.\textsuperscript{27} Composers such as Arnold, Dibdin, and Shield wrote dozens of comic operas and other genres of stage works.

There are nine works for the stage arranged for voice(s) with keyboard accompaniment in the Shirley collection. The scores occasionally include indications for violins, oboes, or German flutes, but predominantly these vocal scores are intended for amateur performance with limited instrumentation at home. None of the scores include a libretto or even a synopsis. These multi-movement vocal works represent several popular forms of theatrical entertainment such as comic opera, musical drama (or melodrama), secular cantata, and operatic farce. These stage works were made popular with upper, middle, and working classes throughout the eighteenth century in both Great Britain and America through their constant performance at various theaters and pleasure gardens in

\textsuperscript{26} Hoskins, "Theatre Music II," in Johnstone and Fiske, eds. \textit{Music in Britain}, 262. \\
\textsuperscript{27} See Brooks, "Good Musical Paste."
and near London such as the Royal Theatres at Covent Garden, Drury Lane, and Haymarket.\(^{28}\)

*Caernarvon Castle* (Thomas Attwood), and *The Royal Orphan’s Dream* (Music by James Hook, words by William Palmer) are both secular cantatas (but have also been called musical dramas), shorter works written in honor of a person or event. *The Mountaineers*, an operatic melodrama, *Inkle and Yarico*, a comic opera, and *The Surrender of Calais*, a melodrama, were all plays written by George Colman the Younger, with music by Dr. Samuel Arnold. *The Farmer* (music by William Shield, words by J. O’Keefe) is an operatic farce, *The Cherokee* (Stephen Storace) is a comic opera, and *Love and Money or the Fair Caledonian* (Arnold) is an afterpiece.\(^{29}\)

A ninth stage work in the Shirley collection, which is only a fragment (it is missing the first six and last pages), I have identified as Charles Dibdin’s *The Recruiting Sergeant* from 1770.\(^{30}\) It is unusual and somewhat old-fashioned for its time because it includes traditional recitatives between the arias, a practice that had gone out of favor with British audiences and was therefore avoided by composers in favor of spoken dialogue between musical numbers.\(^{31}\) This work is also unusual as it is one of only two English stage works (out of hundreds that were available for sale) published in full score after 1760 (it included the original instrumentation for stage orchestra).\(^{32}\) Although unusual in these ways, *The Recruiting Sergeant* offers an excellent example of the


\(^{29}\) Designations for the type of stage work each piece represents from: Fenner, *Opera in London*, passim; Sutcliffe, *Plays by Colman*, passim.

\(^{30}\) SPC 114/11.

\(^{31}\) Recitative is the sung recitation of dialogue between arias in opera, oratorio, and cantata.

\(^{32}\) Hoskins, in *Music in Britain*, 261.
entertaining, light, undemanding, and often humorous nature of comic opera in general, and of those in the Shirley collection specifically.

In *The Recruiting Sergeant*, the title character comes upon Joe, a farmer who is at first ready to leave daily routine behind for the glories of military life. However, Joe’s wife and mother have other ideas and spend most of the work singing to him of the reasons why he should stay at home and turn his back on war. After listening to the Sergeant’s exciting and enticing tales of battles, Joe comically sings in lilting 6/8 time:

This slashing and smashing
with sword and with gun,
On consideration I’ve no inclination
to be the partaker of any such fun.

I’ll e’en stay home at my village
and carry no arms but for tillage.
The wounds shall be made
with a scythe or a spade,
if ever my blood should be shed;
a finger or so, if one wounds, or a toe.
For such a disaster
one soon finds a plaister,
but no plaister sticks on a head!33

Joe has realized that he might wound a finger or a toe while tending his farm, but it would be nothing that could not be mended with a “plaister,” or bandage; the wounds of battle, however, are not so easily bandaged since “no plaister sticks on a head!”

This comical song is typical of its genre for several reasons. The melody is uncomplicated, and is similar to popular fiddle tunes and country dances; it has a relatively narrow range and short melodic phrases that are well suited to setting the rhymes of the text. The subject matter of this song, and in fact the whole work, has a

33 SPC 114/11.
message (or perhaps a moral), yet it is embedded in the entertainment-value of the work and is not intended to be provocative. An anti-war subtext is represented by the way in which the characters are represented: the character of the recruiting sergeant is duplicitous, while the characters of Joe’s wife and mother who are loving and kind (and with whom the audience is meant to sympathize) are firmly against Joe joining the army for riches and glory. In *The Recruiting Sergeant*, diligently tending to family, home, and plow is more virtuous than going to war. This work, like many musical stage pieces and popular songs of the late eighteenth century, couches a moral and/or political stance within comical entertainment.

While many of the stage works in the Shirley collection were popular and frequently performed in Britain and America, others were rather obscure and rarely performed. For example, *Caernarvon Castle*, a musical drama by Thomas Attwood with words by Reverend John Rose, was ostensibly a birthday ode for the Prince of Wales, and was considered a failure. There is a nominal plot, but the work is mostly comprised of individual songs that deal with love, marriage, and patriotic themes. One song extols the value of obedience in royal subjects; another celebrates the triumph of “the twelfth of August,” which was the Prince of Wales’ Birthday. This work was less popular than others the Carters could have chosen, but because of an association with London and with famous composers and performers it would still have been considered fashionable – if it had not been fashionable, it would not have been printed as sheet music and sold.

Some of the comic operas in the Shirley collection were performed by touring theater companies in America. The state capitol moved to Richmond in 1780, and an

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34 Fenner, *Opera in London*, 401. Rose and Attwood collaborated on three works together, only one of which was successful.
active theatre scene emerged. It is possible that the Carters attended these performances in Richmond, but no documentary evidence of their attendance exists. Of the many comic operas performed in Richmond, the Carters owned three vocal scores. *Inkle and Yarico* was performed in Richmond in both January and December of 1804, *The Farmer* was performed three times between 1790 and 1796, and as late as 1819 *The Mountaineers* was presented. However, there were several works of greater fame and widespread popularity performed numerous times in Richmond, such as *No Song No Supper* (Storace), *Rosina* (Shield), and the *Maid of the Mill* (a pastiche of formerly composed miscellaneous music), for which the Carters do not seem to have owned any music.\(^{35}\)

This suggests that they did not purchase sheet music for every production that they may have had the opportunity to see in Richmond and raises the question of taste: why did the Carters choose the works they did? What was it that attracted them to certain comic operas? The subject matter? The music? The composers? The performers?

Some of the stage works in the Shirley collection have fairly challenging keyboard parts to accompany the vocal lines; these keyboard parts make it difficult to accompany oneself when singing. An amateur wishing to play these songs would have to be a rather proficient musician. Perhaps there were members of the Carter family able to play through some of the more difficult keyboard parts, or perhaps the works were purchased for the enjoyment of the vocal lines only. Since many individual songs from stage works often became “hits,” the vocal scores of stage works may have been enjoyed for their melodies and subject matter, rather than for an overall musical effect of vocal line(s) and accompaniment. Another possibility suggested by music scholars is that the

practice at home was sometimes to play the left hand part (bass) on the keyboard while singing, and to only add the right hand part when the voice was resting. This simplified matters greatly. The vocal lines are usually not very demanding. Conveniently for amateur musicians, many of the professional actor-singers for whom the vocal lines were written were better actors than singers, and their parts were therefore rendered less challenging to accommodate them. For instance, Charles Dibdin was known for writing songs that were more theatrical than they were musical: they were meant to amuse, not reach for great heights of artistry, complexity, or difficulty.

The Shirley collection contains several single popular songs and ballads arranged for one or more voices with harpsichord or pianoforte accompaniment. Many of these are songs from comic operas that had gained popularity and were available for sale individually, much the way that singles are sold today. Consumers had the option to buy a score of an entire comic opera, or could select just the highlights from various stage works. Other popular songs were not taken from larger works, but were written as incidental works for theater performances by star actors, and then sold for amateur consumption.

Three songs by the prolific James Hook, “The British Fair with Three Times Three” (1794), “Then Say My Sweet Girl Can You Love me” (1795), and “The Lass of Richmond Hill” (1790) had all been performed by famous theater personalities at fashionable venues. To advertise the songs for sale, printers often included the name of the performer associated with a song, and the name of the pleasure garden or theater

36 Sadie, in Music in Britain, 352-3.
37 Hoskins, in Music in Britain, 262.
38 Ibid., 288.
where the work had been performed. For example: “Be Gone Dull Care, A Favorite Duett, As Sung with the Greatest Applause, At Harrison & Knyvett’s Concerts.”39 Or, “The Lass of Richmond Hill as Sung by Mr. Incledon with the utmost applause at Vauxhall Gardens Composed by Mr. Hook.”40 Naming the venue and performer indicated the fashionableness, and therefore suitability of a particular work for domestic enjoyment.

The “Lass of Richmond Hill” is typical of a fashionable song written for public performance, and then printed and sold for amateur performance in the home. The melody is sweet and rhythmically unpretentious, and the text is simple. As is typical of many of the songs in the Shirley collection, this one refers explicitly to British cultural identity.

On Richmond Hill there lives a Lass more bright than May Day morn, Whose charms all other maids surpass a Rose without a Thorn. This lass so neat with smiles so sweet has won my right good will, I’d crown resign to call thee mine, Sweet lass of Richmond Hill.41

This first verse and chorus refers both to a famous, scenic location near London, and to gossip about an affair of the Prince of Wales.42 What could be more in vogue?

The second and third verses offer an excellent example of style of classical allusions and pastoral references also fashionable in such music:

Ye Zephyrs gay that fan the air and wanton thro’ the grove Oh whisper to my charming fair I die for her I love. This lass so neat...

How happy will the Shepherd be who calls this Nymph his own

39 SPC 114/6
40 SPC 114/1
41 SPC 114/1
O may her choice be fix'd on me, Mine's fix'd on her alone.
This lass so neat...

"The Lass of Richmond Hill" was a very successful song for James Hook. Its style exemplifies both the fashionable songs of the era in general and the music of the Shirley collection, specifically.

Scottish tunes, songs, and poems were at the height of fashion in this period in London. "A Second Set of Scots Songs," compiled and arranged by Robert Bremner (often known today as the Bremner collection), was one of several ubiquitous collections of Scottish tunes and songs in vogue throughout the Colonies and Great Britain for decades. This collection first appeared 1775 and was reprinted many times. The version in the Shirley collection was printed by Preston and Son in 1795. It includes twenty-six songs set to popular Scottish melodies. This collection includes songs such as "The Highland Laddie," "Lochaber," "Waly, Waly," and "Chevy Chase," all of which were popular enough to have appeared in other similar collections. According to Richard Crawford, "Chevy Chase" dates to the early 1600s and tells in great length (thirty-six stanzas) a story of British slaughter. It tells the tale of Piercy, Earl of Northumberland who goes deer hunting with his army and meets with a Scot, Earl Douglas and his army. After the noblemen have fought hand to hand to the death, their armies slaughter each other. This was a song of long-lived popularity in a collection that enjoyed wide distribution.

Another renowned set of songs found in the Shirley collection was that of William Jackson ("of Exeter" 1730-1803). Jackson wrote four sets of songs to be

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43 SPC, 114/12.
44 Crawford, America's Musical Life, 43.
performed in concerts in Bath. These were very popular and the sheet music for them sold very well in Britain and America due to their association with the fashionable setting for which they were written. However, their popularity for home use is curious since they were printed in full score, usually with four or five staves that required extensive instrumentation to be performed. It is highly unlikely that many homes that held this music could accommodate the requirements of two cellos, horns, oboes, etc. The instrumental parts are also clearly intended to be played by fairly accomplished musicians, which would usually mean professionals. Yet this music was very popular. In a London home where social circles were large and opportunity for informal domestic “concerts” was greater it is more likely that Jackson’s songs could have been performed as written. But at Shirley where neighbors (and therefore fellow musicians) were few and far between, it is more likely that these songs were played without the full complement of musicians, but instead with only the vocal line and keyboard part. The sheer popularity of Jackson’s songs made them an appealing addition to a music collection regardless of whether the richness of multiple instrumental lines could be achieved.

Although most songs and ballads were arranged for soprano voice, it was not uncommon for them to be performed by male voices an octave lower than written. Some of these songs include indications for optional instruments in addition to keyboard such as German flute, English guitar, violin, or harp. For example, the music for “The Anacreontic Song as Sung at the Crown & Anchor Tavern,” includes three versions of

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45 Fiske, in *Music in Britain*, 241-246.
46 Johnstone, in *Music in Britain*, 162-5.
47 The Anacreontic Society was a gentleman’s club for amateur musicians formed in 1766 in London. The melody of “The Anacreontic Song” was later used for the national anthem of the United States.
the song: one arrangement in C Major for voice and keyboard that includes all six verses; a second in G Major for guitar (and optional voice); and a third in D Major for the German flute (and optional voice). This type of multiple arrangement printing appears in several works in the collection and was a common practice that allowed versatility in instrumentation for the consumer (and was therefore a selling point). The music could be enjoyed on whatever instrument the consumer happened to have on hand.

The texts of the vocal music in the Shirley collection fall into a few basic categories: sentimental, romantic and/or pastoral texts, comic texts, patriotic or nationalistic texts (celebrating Britain), soldier/sailor texts (some of which denigrate war and the effects of war on individual lives), and texts that depict gender differences. Only one song in the collection could be considered a drinking song. The “Anacreontic Song” celebrates entwining the “myrtle of Venus with Bacchus’ vine.” The absence of other drinking songs is remarkable since they were hugely popular in America and enjoyed wide distribution. Unsurprisingly, Thomas Jefferson’s collection of music includes a veritable cornucopia of drinking songs. I interpret this lacuna in the Shirley collection as an indication that this music was mostly for the use of the female members of the household. Drinking songs tended to be the province of men and were often associated with men’s clubs and societies, as is the case with the “Anacreontic Song.”

Keyboard instruments – harpsichord and pianoforte – were central to eighteenth-century music. There were some genres such as a cappella vocal music and instrumental (non-keyboard) duets that were popular especially in the music clubs of London, but the most prevalent forms of music required the use of a keyboard. All of the eighteenth-
century sheet music in the Shirley collection calls for a keyboard instrument for its performance.

Throughout the eighteenth century keyboard instruments came progressively to be within the compass of women, as men began to see such instruments as potentially effeminate. As musicologist Diack Johnstone condescendingly says, "much of the eighteenth-century harpsichord repertoire was composed with the limitations of the female performer particularly in mind." I think this statement has less to do with the fact that they were female and more to do with the fact that there were so many young women demanding access to musically attainable sheet music. It was not, after all, the sole occupation of most women; the expectation of women was not that they should be artists, but should represent that which is artistic.

A genre of instrumental chamber music known as "accompained sonatas" provided a forum for women and men to play music in the parlor together. Typically, these sonatas feature a keyboard part that could easily stand alone – the accompaniment part is for the violin or flute and is so simple and inconsequential that it is hardly required for the piece to be successfully performed. This was to allow the presumed female performer at the keyboard to shine while her male accompanist took a lesser and therefore more gentlemanly role (on the flute or violin) by deferring to her accomplishments. The man could also therefore appreciate her performance even while

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48 See Leppert, *Music and Image*.
49 Johnstone, in *Music in Britain*, 188.
50 Violin and German flute (transverse flute) were instruments appropriate for gentlemen; the English guitar (sometimes simply called, guittar) was considered a ladies’ instrument and can be seen in the hands of elite women in portraiture. The violin and flute were considered inappropriate for ladies due to the ways in which one must contort the upper body and or face to hold and play the instrument.
he played since his part was so simple it would hardly keep him fully focused on his own notes. These sonatas were ideal for courtship in logistical terms as well. A young lady and her non-portable keyboard instrument were likely to be in her own home when an opportunity arose for her to perform. She would have needed to practice these sonatas prior to playing them for company, but the accompaniment parts could easily have been sight read by a visiting gentleman; he would not have needed to see the part before sitting down for an impromptu performance. Such music making provided young people with an excuse to spend time together. A young lady could exhibit her manners, skills, decorum, and character to a prospective partner while observing the same of him in close proximity. In this respect this form of music making was much like dancing.

Of the music in the Shirley collection for which publishing dates can be assumed, the accompanied sonatas in the collection are earlier (1775, 1781, 1787) than the solo keyboard works (1790, 1795, 1798). This is in keeping with the changes in fashion taking place over these years. Later in the century fewer men were learning to play flute and violin, and therefore fewer men would have been able to accompany these keyboard works.\textsuperscript{51} These shifts in fashion are reflected in what was available for sale, but it is difficult to know whether they reflect any changes in music-making practices in the parlor of Shirley.

A genre conspicuously missing from the Shirley collection is sacred music. Among the books in the Shirley Plantation Collection are several of a religious nature (such as collections of sermons) but no evidence of hymnals or other such sacred musical works exists. Yet it is clear that the Carters were very concerned with faith and the

\footnote{\textsuperscript{51} Leppert, \textit{Music and Image}, 14-25.}
religious upbringing of their children. In a letter written to his children in 1803 Robert Carter (1774-1805; son of Charles of Shirley) offers “some advice to which I will beg your attention.” This advice includes his thoughts on the evils of “ardent spirits,” and an entreaty for them to “read the New Testament,” and “respect and obey the ten commandments [sic].” Carter continues, “let your father conjure you by all you hold precious or sacred to consider yourselves amenable to an all-wise, all powerful, incomprehensible and just God who createth, governeth and disposeth of all things present and future as seems good to him.”

He seems to have been a father who would have encouraged the singing of psalms and hymns in the home and who was raised with a strong and central faith, not at all uncommon in late eighteenth-century Virginia.

The organized harpsichord the Carters owned suggests that sacred music could conveniently and appropriately have been enjoyed in the house. This instrument was versatile: it could be played as a harpsichord for secular music, as an organ for sacred music, or as both sounding together for chamber music of either a secular or sacred nature. Organs are associated with sacred music, and although they can be used to accompany secular music, their sound is inextricably linked to sacred aesthetics. The Carters could just as easily have owned a plain harpsichord or plain pianoforte. That they chose an organized instrument may indicate that they wanted the ability to enjoy the sound of an organ at home and therefore the lack of sacred music in the eighteenth-century collection does not prove that they did not own any. It is possible that a collection of sacred music at Shirley from this era may have been separated from the secular music at some point and then lost, given away, or destroyed.

52 SPC, 1/4.
Several aspects of this sheet music collection raise questions that appear to be unanswerable. Yet they are worth asking and pondering for the sake of better understanding the context in which the music was used and what meaning its use held. The first and most obvious question is, who played the music? Second, who heard it? What did the music sound like? Did the performance aesthetics of this British music differ in America from in Great Britain? Did a multi-cultural exchange between Shirley's white and black residents have an effect on the aesthetics of sound?

The musical content of the collection – light and entertaining keyboard music, suitable for amateurs – suggests that it was most likely intended for use by women (and girls) at Shirley. The texts of the songs, and the quantity of both solo and accompanied keyboard sonatas point to women’s music making.

There is no evidence to indicate how the Carters procured their London printed sheet music, but given evidence of specific directions for silver pieces that Charles special-ordered from London during the 1780s and 1790s, it is likely that the music was being handled in a similar way. It is possible that Charles ordered specific pieces of music, but he may have simply requested a parcel of music without specifying actual titles or composers. Either way, like the silver Charles procured, this sheet music was highly fashionable: it was British.
CHAPTER 3
Praxis and Function of Domestic Music Making in Early Republic
Chesapeake Plantation Society

Everyday life, like life on the stage, is talk and signs and significant action. Our ability to make sense of this theatre is our cultural survival gene. - Greg Dening, Performances (xv)

Such a countenance, such manners! And so extremely accomplished for her age! Her performance on the piano-forte is exquisite. - Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice

Erving Goffman defines performance as “all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants.”¹ In this sense, the performance of music in a parlor was an attempt to influence the participants (audience as well as performer) to discern the talents, accomplishments, and rectitude of the musician(s). In turn the audience also performed rectitude in its ability to receive the performance appropriately. I would argue that the performance of music in the eighteenth-century parlor was more an enactment of self than a performance-of-music as we might think of one today. The music is not the important ingredient in the activity or interaction; it is merely a vehicle through which to perform aspects of identity. In Goffman’s terms, the musical sounds and the physical objects of music-making (instrument, sheet music) are simply part of the “front,” defined as the “expressive

¹ Goffman, Presentation of Self, 15.
equipment” crucial to defining a particular type of performance. In a parlor performance of vocal music, even the singer’s voice could be considered part of her “personal front,” or set of personal markers that convey expression. So while domestic music making was an important activity and a means by which to engage with ideologies and identity, the music itself was merely part of a greater performance of social role. Playing a “social role,” Goffman explains, is defined as “the enactment of rights and duties attached to a given status.” By owning a house with a room specifically designated for the social display of manners, taste, and education, which included an instrument and sheet music, white elites such as the Carters were enacting their perceived social role.

In addition, performing music as a form of cultural expression is an act of what Victor Turner calls “creative retrospection in which meaning is ascribed to the events and parts of experience.” Turner says that performative genres allow communities to reflect on their status and modes. Turner states, “In a sense, every type of cultural performance...is explanation and explication of life itself. ... Through the performance process itself, what is normally sealed up, inaccessible to everyday observation and reasoning, in the depth of social-cultural life, is drawn forth.” In other words, the performance of music, such as in the parlor at Shirley, makes accessible the aspects of status and social modes that are usually latent.

Elite Virginians like the Carters, I suggest, were required by society to perform their eliteness and correlation to the elite group identity, which they did in part through
domestic music making; furthermore these performances of elite status through music were opportunities for creative cultural retrospection. The stage on which elites like the Carters exhibited their group and individual identities was the domestic stage. The objects and actions displayed on their domestic stages provided a means to perform alliance to the group identity through an adherence to fashion, as well as a means to articulate individual identity (the Self) by choosing unique objects and actions. In this chapter I would like to suggest that by choosing to buy (and we assume perform) particular selections the Carters were aligning themselves with the prevailing cultural fashion, but at the same time were also expressing and grappling with social tensions. A performance of this music in the Shirley parlor was both a performance of the family’s social role and expected adherence to fashion (à la Goffman) as well as a reflexive act of “creative retrospection” (à la Turner).

This chapter will address two sets of evidence in order to unpack the praxis, function, and significance of domestic music making as a complex form of identity performance. First, two diaries kept by young women of Virginia contemporary to the period of the Shirley sheet music will illuminate the kind of influential performance of social role defined by Goffman. Second, exemplary selections from the Shirley collection will help elucidate what Turner describes as performance as an act of retrospection in which the tensions of everyday life that are normally inaccessible and/or inexpressible are brought forth.

Before these two bodies of evidence and their implications are discussed, some context is required: an explanation of the ways in which the parlor was understood is followed by an elucidation of some secondary evidence regarding ideas about gender and
music making in relation to both perceptions about leisure and appropriate means of displaying accomplishment.

Within elite domestic landscapes in Virginia at the end of the eighteenth century, rooms in the home were articulated and specialized to reflect gentility, refinement, identity, ideology, and gender roles. Private homes were shaped to reflect and emulate the hierarchies and rituals of public spaces.\(^7\) A space for gender negotiations and partial parity, the parlor\(^8\) was a space in which men and women hosted guests and took part in performances of gender through rituals such as serving tea (feminine) and spirits (masculine), and playing/hearing music and dancing (both feminine and masculine). The parlor was a unique space in elite homes because of its gendered duality. While other important semi-public spaces in the home were masculine, such as the dining room, passage, and hall, the parlor was a stage for both masculinity and femininity to be performed together. Particularly however, this space was crucial for the semi-public performance of femininity because so many other spaces were dominated by masculinity; this was therefore a special place in which women could express female identity.\(^9\)

Domestic music making in the late eighteenth century was one of many ways in which white elites performed their identities within the semi-public spaces of their home.

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\(^7\) Wells, “The Planter’s Prospect,” 29.

\(^8\) The parlor in the eighteenth century may also have been called a saloon, or more often, drawing room. Today this room at Shirley is referred to as the parlor, but it is not apparent what the family called the space in the eighteenth century. The use and intent of the space was the same regardless of its name. For domestic room use and naming see, e.g. Wenger, “The Central Passage”; Wells, “The Planter’s Prospect”; and Upton, “Vernacular Domestic Architecture.”

\(^9\) For gendering in elite domestic spaces see Wenger, Wells. Probate inventories reveal that dining rooms, the most important and ornate rooms in the house, were often masculine and housed guns, shaving equipment, surveying instruments, swords, and other male paraphernalia, whereas parlors were more often devoid of such items and boasted instead tea tables, card tables, and ladies’ desks.
homes. It was a form of entertainment, but was also bound to specific notions of gender and social status. A woman’s musicianship was for her leisure and education, and was a means especially for an unmarried woman to perform feminine abilities and display gentility to others of her station in society. Like many other objects found in semi-public domestic spaces, sheet music enabled the conspicuous display (or performance) of affluence and status. Displayed upon a keyboard instrument in a family’s parlor, sheet music could visibly display taste, sensibility, education, and refinement; and when performed that music would do the same in an oral/aural fashion.

As described in chapter two, it appears that the style, instrumentation, and genres in the Shirley sheet music collection indicate that the music was mostly intended for use by women and girls in the house. Increasingly during the late eighteenth century it became prudent for young women to display their accomplishments in the privacy of the domestic realm rather than in the uncertain and potentially unsuitable public sphere.\textsuperscript{10} The domestic space lent such performances authenticity and safety, whereas conspicuous displays of accomplishment in public spaces to captivate the male gaze were rendered inappropriate.\textsuperscript{11}

Yet at the same time elite women were allowed greater access than ever to a wider variety of public social settings.\textsuperscript{12} Attending theater performances in Richmond may have been just such an opportunity for the women of Shirley. The Carters owned

\textsuperscript{10} Bermingham, \textit{Learning to Draw}, 184.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{12} Vickery, \textit{The Gentleman’s Daughter}, 288.
several scores from popular comic operas that were performed in Richmond.\textsuperscript{13} These special social occasions could be relived time after time at home through the ownership of sheet music. Perhaps Anne Carter attended performances in Richmond and later connected with her experience and with the world outside her door through the enjoyment of music in her parlor, which she had seen performed in public. Sheet music enabled public entertainment to be brought into the domestic realm, and subsequently enabled performances of that music both fashionably akin to yet disparate from public performances.\textsuperscript{14}

Playing music like that found in the Shirley Collection with even basic competency requires several hours of learning and practicing before a performance in front of an audience – even an audience of family. For elite young ladies, activities such as music practice, embroidery, and learning the duties of housekeeping were their work. Ironically however, activities such as music were crucial to the performance of identity because they represented leisure. The time spent in practice had value as it improved a woman’s skills and therefore her merit as a potential wife. Embroidery, too, emulates work, yet is an artful pursuit outside of (or perhaps above) the household economy. Such pursuits differentiated elite young women from those of lower status whose work included activities such as the production of food and clothing.

Scholar Richard Leppert demonstrates that musical proficiency by upper-class men and women was viewed in rather contradictory terms. Increasingly toward the end of

\textsuperscript{13} Stoutamire, Music of the Old South, 74-5, 109-113. Performances in Richmond include: The Farmer, 1790, 1791, and 1796; Inkle and Yarico, January and December of 1804; The Mountaineers, 1819.

\textsuperscript{14} The Early Republic witnessed a rise in several forms of print culture – especially in print media for women. (Vickers, The New Nation, 150; 152-3) Sheet music, intended for use in the home, was a part of this trend.
the eighteenth century learning music was considered less appropriate for active, useful men. It was gradually thought that young men ought to spend their time more productively, by studying subjects that would further their abilities in public lives and careers. Women, on the other hand, were encouraged to become musical, but not too musical: any activity that revealed or exhibited real effort or labor was ideally to be avoided so as not to align women with actual work or professionalism. Increasingly elite women were encouraged to adopt a soft, effortless appearance. Leppert uses portraiture of women with instruments to demonstrate this point. Young ladies were often depicted as barely touching the keyboards of their instruments so as not to come too close to actually "working" at music whereas portraits of professional musicians depicted gentlemen exerting effort into their craft.¹⁵ Accomplishments were valued and expected in women so that men could admire them, but their enactment was to be more artifice than art.

Imagine the parlor at Shirley where a young lady of the house is seated at the keyboard practicing her newest song. First she might become comfortable with the keyboard part and then begin to learn the vocal line. It might take quite some time to begin to piece together the vocal part and keyboard accompaniment. As she is stumbling through this tedious process, we can imagine who her unwitting audience might be. Slaves working in the house, siblings going about their morning activities, men coming to the house on business, aunts and uncles on an extended visit, and parents might all be privy to the sounds coming from the parlor.

Evidence from Women’s Diaries of Performance on the Parlor Stage

In lieu of evidence unique to Shirley that can illuminate the praxis and function of domestic music making there, I will explore two diaries kept by upper-class women living in Virginia in the last quarter of the eighteenth century in contextually similar settings to that of Shirley. The diaries of Frances Baylor Hill (1797), and Lucinda Lee Orr (1787), both unmarried young women, provide glimpses of domestic music making by revealing general attitudes and activities. These diaries demonstrate the ways in which the performance of music was carried out and the performance of status was understood.

Frances Baylor Hill demonstrated a high value placed on industriousness in her life: she carefully recorded the productive activities of each day, such as sewing, knitting, letter writing, reading, and musical activities. She was especially careful to notate how far she progressed each day on particular sewing projects. Being productive in her “work,” as she called it, was clearly something by which she measured her life. Although upper class, Frances was not of the highest echelon (she was of a slightly lower status than the young women at Shirley); her work seems to have been needed to contribute to the household economy in ways that the work of higher status unmarried women did not.

Frances wrote, “knit a little on my stocking, read a little play’d a little, & sung a little.” Two months later she wrote, “read a little sew’d on the shirt play’d on the Harpsichord & Mandalin, walk’d with Miss Betty to her henhouse got some eggs.” For Francis, it appears that practicing music was akin to her other productive activities such

16 Bottorff and Flannagan, eds. “The Diary of Frances Baylor Hill (1797).”
17 Orr, Journal of a Young Lady of Virginia.
18 Frances wrote in her diary every day for a single year as an exercise to test her discipline and record her daily life for future remembrance.
19 Bottorff, 8. January 11.
as knitting, mending clothes, and gathering eggs, and was differentiated from performing music. An instance of music making that was more performative prompted Francis to write: “heard several pretty songs & sung one myself to oblige the ladies.”

Lucinda Lee Orr was highly aware of other people’s appearances, intelligence, and manners. Upon meeting new acquaintances she invariably made comments such as, “he is homely, but a mighty worthy Man.” After seeing an old friend who did not behave in a manner with which Lucinda was pleased, she wrote: “You would have supposed she would have been delighted to see me – far from it, I assure you. She saluted me just as if I had been a common acquaintance, and was not, I thought, at all glad to see me; but I suppose it is fashionable to affect indifference.” Lucinda was apparently aware of various kinds of performances of identity, fashion, and gentility taking place in semi-public domestic spaces such as the parlor.

It is apparent throughout Lucinda’s diary especially, but also Frances’, that these women were attuned to parlor performance as a means of discerning the qualities of others. This was an important social skill for women whose option and goal in life was to be suitably married. Therefore, partaking in and observing all forms of parlor performance were crucial tools for success in elite life.

What is evident from these diaries is that each woman felt she was expected to act in a particular way, and therefore each woman performed the role in daily life that was expected of her and expressed the performance of it in her journal. These women

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21 Ibid., 13. February 7.
22 Lucinda wrote in this journal for two months while traveling to visit family and friends. It was written as an ongoing letter to her friend at home, Polly.
24 Ibid, 55. November 12
understood and embraced performance as a necessary part of their situation in the social hierarchy. As elites there were certain characteristics they were expected to learn and display in accordance with their status, particularly in public. The diaries show that these women performed their affirmation of the group identity even when off-stage: they performed their public roles in their diaries.

Similar to the entry in Frances’ diary about singing to be obliging (“heard several pretty songs & sung one myself to oblige the ladies.”)\(^{25}\), Lucinda stated, “The young Ladys have been singing for me: they are mighty obliging, and sing whenever they are ask’t.”\(^{26}\) These passages suggest an aspect of performance etiquette: one plays and sings only when asked, or feels oblied. There is a correlation here to the rule, “speak only when spoken to.” It is telling that this aspect of parlor performance etiquette is mentioned more than once in each of these diaries. These women were so immersed in the etiquette that they even displayed adherence to it in their journals.

Lucinda often mentioned the musical accomplishments of her cousin, Milly Washington. For instance, “I have been making Milly play on the fortipianer for me; she plays very well. I am more and more delighted with her.”\(^{27}\) Later the same day she described an evening in which she “prevailed on Milly to entertain us an hour or two on the forti-pianer.”\(^{28}\) This is a significant comment because it indicates not only that Lucinda “prevailed” upon Milly but also that Milly did not merely “oblige” Lucinda’s request with a couple of pieces, but played for a rather extended period of time. This may indicate, as Lucinda suggests, that Milly is rather accomplished. There were several other

\(^{25}\) Bottorff, 13. February 7.
\(^{26}\) Orr, 38. October 20.
\(^{27}\) Ibid., 43. October 27.
\(^{28}\) Ibid.
young women and girls around Lucinda at this time, but Milly was the only one mentioned as “performing” and “entertaining” at the keyboard.

A few days after Milly’s long performance Lucinda wrote that A. Spotswood, “the hopefull Youth,” had arrived and “commenced Milly’s lover” (had begun to court Milly). There is particular weight, then, on the observation that Lucinda had been “very much entertained hearing [Milly] perform on the Spinet” on the same evening that Mr. Spotswood arrived. Milly’s performance that evening was not simply a pastime to “oblige the ladies,” but was also a means to display her accomplishments before an eligible young man. According to the language of Lucinda’s accounts, Milly “entertained” friends and family, but “performed” when her suitor was present.

Music for dancing is another form of domestic music making that is apparent in Lucinda’s diary. One evening she writes, “We are all preparing to dance...I hear the Fidle.” But two days later, “the old man being sick that plays the Fidle, we have diverted ourselves playing grind the bottle and hide the thimble [games].” It is likely that “Harry the Fiddler” who is “sent for” is a slave. The music he provides is for the benefit of dancing, which is yet another type of performance in which the ladies engage.

The evidence in these diaries demonstrates the role of music within various forms of complex and important social performances. Domestic music making presents a multi-layered performance: it involves the literal performance of music, the performance of etiquette, the performance of cultural meaning through texts (lyrics), the performance

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29 Ibid., 47. November 4.
30 Ibid. (my italics)
31 Ibid., 33. October 15.
32 Ibid., 35-36. October 17. (original emphasis)
33 Ibid., 51. November 9.
of self, and the performance of group identity. It is a shame that these diaries do not tell us which songs they sang and pieces they played, or we could learn even more about domestic music-making practices. The musical practices revealed by the journals of Frances Baylor Hill and Lucinda Lee Orr can however be correlated with the extant sheet music collection from Shirley to speculate about late eighteenth-century domestic music making in Virginia. The journals offer evidence of how music functioned in the home, while the sheet music collection of Shirley reveals how the selection of music can carry particular significance within the context of the semi-public parlor.

**Performance of “Cultural Retrospection” in the Shirley parlor**

In the late eighteenth century a long-standing tradition of social hierarchy based on birthright and wealth began to shift into a democratic republic. Changes occurred in the last quarter of the eighteenth century that left the rich and powerful families of America with an ambiguous role in the new nation. Nascent tensions as well as old ones came to the fore. Charles Carter of Shirley, born into status and money under the British monarchy, was faced with tensions between an established way of life at the top of Virginia’s social hierarchy, and the socio-political implications of the new republic. The Carters’ sheet music collection of this period reflects these tensions.

The Shirley collection represents what was popular and stylish for the time, however certain pieces within the collection reflect conspicuous choices that raise questions about the Carters’ conception of their world. For instance, what does it mean that the Carters, whose property at Shirley alone included 134 slaves, owned sheet music

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34 See, Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia.*
for what is considered to be the first anti-slavery stage work, *Inkle and Yarico*? Another work in the collection, a Canzonet by Giordani, also expressed sympathy for slaves. These pieces were fashionable, like all of the music in the collection, but their performance in the Shirley parlor suggests at least that the Carters were aware of tensions over slavery, and at most felt a certain degree of discomfort with slaveholding. Also in the collection are several songs from the 1790s reflecting sympathy for the French royal family (who were losing their heads at the time) that I would argue are indicative of the Carters’ desire to maintain the lifestyle of a wealthy elite family of great consequence yet reveal concern for the precariousness of that position. The Carters’ selection of this sheet music reflects aesthetic taste, but more significantly offers a nuanced view of the discursiveness of music in the home.

It appears hypocritical that the family with more slaves than any other in Virginia also owned music with an anti-slavery message, yet there is clear documentary evidence of at least one family member’s negative outlook on slave holding. Charles Carter’s son and intended heir, Robert Carter (1774-1805), wrote a long and detailed letter of advice and family history to his young, motherless children in 1803 as he left them behind to pursue a medical education in Paris. Included in this letter is an explanation of his abhorrence for the institution of slavery and his preference, therefore, for an occupation other than agriculture:

> From the earliest point of time when I began to think of right and wrong, I conceived a strong disgust to the slave trade and all its barbarous consequences. This aversion was not likely to be diminished by becoming a slave-holder and witnessing many cruelties, even at this enlightened day, when the rights of man are so well ascertained. [*sic*]35

35 SPC, 1/4. (Original emphasis.)
While we do not know how Charles felt about slavery, Robert makes his feelings on the subject plain, expressing that slavery ought to have no place in enlightened society. Rather than face a livelihood he could not support in conscience, he turned his back on his duty to his father and to his children when he chose to go to Paris to become a doctor.

"Canzonet Three," from *Six Canzonets* (1795) by Tommaso Giordani, echoes Robert's view on slavery. *Six Canzonets* is a set of strophic, secular songs with poetic texts, rich with sensibility and full of classical allusions. All six of these canzonets are set to a slow tempo (either *andante* or *larghetto*), and evoke a beautifully melancholy mood. Amidst songs about female virtue, fading youth, and love is a single song expressing anti-slavery sentiments. The third Canzonet begins:

> Where the poor Negro with desponding heart,  
> and busy thought still streach'd across the main,  
> plies with unceasing toil his destin'd part,  
> whilst the fierce Sun beams scorch the naked plain,  
> Appear, appear and sets the Captive free oh Guardian Angel Sainted Liberty,  
> oh guardian Goddess Sainted liberty, Sainted liberty.36

The song continues with three more verses, which address other iniquities in the world to which "Sainted Liberty" should address her attention, namely all forms of tyranny. For instance,

> Where the bold Hero first in freedoms cause,  
> Friend, Soldier, Champion to the human race,  
> feels the keen rigour of the tyrants laws,  
> And scorns to purchase mercy with disgrace,  
> Appear, appear &c.

Giordani begins the song with the plight of the "poor negro" in slavery and follows with verses about noble heroes and statesmen who are wrongly imprisoned for

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36 SPC, 114/14.
standing up for freedom’s cause. The song parallels the predicament of those who are wrongly imprisoned with those who are enslaved, suggesting that both black slaves and white prisoners of injustice deserve liberty.

I suggest that a performance of this song in the Shirley parlor in the late 1790s would have been understood as an espousal of the virtue of liberty, and freedom from tyranny more akin to the values of the American Revolution than the values of abolition. However, the expression of sympathy for the “poor negro” in the first verse is clear and provides an excellent example of the ways that such a song can be both fashionable, and gently subversive. While the anti-slavery message of the Giordani canzonet is subtle, another work from the Shirley collection conveys its implications much more stridently.

_Inkle and Yarico_ (1787) was one of several collaborations between composer Samuel Arnold and librettist George Colman the Younger. The work was first performed at the Little Theatre in London and gained long-lived popularity. It was revived for almost fifty years, substantially longer than most works for the London stage.

Many scholars have referred to _Inkle and Yarico_ as the most important early anti-slavery stage work, yet others have downplayed its abolitionist overtones as somewhat insubstantial. Yet the basic tale was so well known to period audiences that its association with early abolitionist sentiments would have been understood.

The story of Inkle and Yarico had seeped into the collective consciousness of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world by the time Colman and Arnold’s comic opera came to the London stage in 1787. A tale of Yarico, an Indian maid sold into slavery by her unscrupulous English lover, first appeared in Richard Ligon’s _A True and Exact History_.

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37 Other works by these collaborators in the Shirley collection include _The Surrender of Calais_ (1791), and _the Mountaineers_ (1793).
of the Island of Barbadoes (1657). This tale became a widely known tragic love story in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world due to an embellished and reframed version by Richard Steele in the widely-influential daily publication The Spectator (No. 11, March 13, 1711). This story was remade and retold throughout the eighteenth century and the first third of the nineteenth century in England, France, Germany, America, and the Caribbean.\footnote{For lists of and examples from the many permutations of the Inkle and Yarico story see, Price, Inkle and Yarico Album; and Felsenstein, English Trader, Indian Maid.}

The comic opera version of Inkle and Yarico is no polemical work of art, yet the popularity and persistence of the Inkle and Yarico story in the eighteenth century renders it a significant work: it suggests one way in which British society was grappling with the implications of transatlantic mercantilism and slavery. Inkle and Yarico, while couched in the safety of light entertainment, presented a negative view of England’s implication in the slave trade at a time when the abolitionist movement was beginning to gain momentum in London.\footnote{Whether Colman and Arnold intended to sway its audiences or simply capitalize on a popular theme, is not clear.}

Inkle is a young Englishman setting out to make his fortune. He and his fiancé, Narcissa, are en route to Barbados where Narcissa’s father is the governor. However, when the ship stops off the coast of an American wilderness to take on provisions, Inkle and his servant, Trudge, are abandoned on shore. They are saved and protected by two native women with whom they romantically reside until able to gain passage on another ship bound for Barbados; the women leave their homeland to remain with their lovers.

Although Colman clearly sets the scene of the first act as “An American Forest” (and several characters refer explicitly to that location), he evokes the sense that in fact
the characters are in Africa: “natives” from whom the sailors flee are referred to with words such as “black” and “negro,” and references are made to lion’s skins.\(^{40}\)

Furthermore, Colman complicates Yarico’s ethnicity by emphasizing her Indian-esque beauty on some occasions and invoking a sense that she is black at other times. Shortly after being abandoned by their ship, Inkle and Trudge come upon Yarico and her servant Wowski as the two women are sleeping. Inkle is immediately struck by Yarico’s beauty but the lower-class Trudge only has eyes for Wowski’s African appearance.

Colman is known for blatant inaccuracy in his plays,\(^{41}\) but regardless of whether he made an error or a carefully calculated choice in conflating American Indians with Africans, the result is the same: the anti-slavery message is underscored by references to blackness. Slavery in the collective British mind was done to people of African descent; although enslavement of Indians was not unheard of, it was not at the heart of the British imagination of slavery. Although Yarico and Wowski are both supposed to be American Indian women, the texts of many of the songs often include puns and rhymes that allude to a black complexion. For instance, Trudge sings to Wowski that he would not slight her for a white woman because she is as “beautiful as any sloe.” A sloe is a blackthorn, a dark blackish colored fruit with a sour taste. Narcissa’s servant Patty sings a comical song about lovers as marksmen who sometimes “aim at the heart, [but] hit wide of the mark,” and points out that a lover sometimes shoots “at a pigeon and kills a crow.”\(^{42}\) This compares Inkle’s white fiancée with a pigeon and his lover Yarico with a black crow. By

\(^{40}\) Libretto for Inkle and Yarico in Sutcliffe, Plays by George Colman, passim. (Act I, scene i.)

\(^{41}\) Sutcliffe, 67, footnote.

\(^{42}\) SPC, 114/7.
metaphorically comparing the Indian women to black fruits, black birds, and Africans, the issue of slavery is kept at the fore.

There are three pairs of lovers interwoven within the plot of *Inkle and Yarico*. Each pair has a different relationship to the role of slavery, and together these characters represent the ways in which slavery affects everyone, not just those directly responsible for it. There is a love affair between the title characters, one between their respective servants, Trudge and Wowski, and a third between the ships captain, Campley and Inkle’s white fiancée Narcissa. Captain Campley loves Narcissa regardless of her fortune and is presented as a worthy, accomplished young man. He is a foil to Inkle who is clearly only interested in Narcissa for her wealth. Campley and Narcissa represent innocent lovers whose difficulties arise simply through association with people involved in the slave trade. Yarico is constant in her love for Inkle even after she is almost sold for a profit. Inkle’s utter lack of honor and human warmth is directly implicated by his immoral willingness to sell a woman who has loved and protected him. Trudge on the other hand stoutly refuses to sell Wowski to a planter who has offered good money for her. Trudge vociferously disdains the unchristian notion of selling the woman whom he loves, and to whom he is grateful for his preservation in the wilderness. Like Campley, Trudge is a foil for Inkle’s unscrupulousness and greed. Throughout the opera it is demonstrated that Inkle, who is linked to the slave trade, is selfish, avaricious, and materialistic, and Trudge, while of a lower caste, is more sensible and honorable than his master because he rejects slavery.

The outcome of Colman and Arnold’s opera is that virtue, kindness, and humaneness should and do prevail over avarice, selfishness, and disdain for the racial
Other. The upshot is that slavery can only end in tragedy, while love can overcome all adversity and ethnic boundaries. *Inkle and Yarico* brought to the stage current tensions over modernity and slavery in a socially acceptable discursive space: the theatre. Sheet music of the songs from the opera was sold to consumers and therefore brought this discursiveness into the parlor. The libretto of *Inkle and Yarico* was also available for sale, but the Carters do not appear to have owned it. The published version of the vocal score in the Shirley collection includes the three-movement overture and the songs, but no dialogue. If one were unfamiliar with the plot, it would be difficult to ascertain it from the songs alone. However, the Carters were undoubtedly familiar with the story from Steele’s *Spectator* or other sources, even if they had not seen *Inkle and Yarico* performed.

The collection of books from Shirley includes several editions of *The Spectator*, including one translated into French.

Charles Carter of Shirley had supported the American Revolution. Yet in the Early Republic, as republicanism found its shape, slaveholders such as the Carters found themselves in an incongruous position. In a new nation espousing even a limited form of egalitarianism, slavery was out of place and some slaveholders recognized this. Charles’ uncle, Robert Carter III, eventually freed his slaves – a drastic and financially devastating decision. Charles’ son Robert was so distressed by slavery that he abandoned his responsibilities of becoming his father’s heir, left his young children (whose mother had just died), and went to Paris to become a doctor. The significance of these decisions, so firmly against established expectations of southern society, cannot be overemphasized.

Robert (of Shirley), who was raised by his parents to inherit the wealth and

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responsibilities of Shirley, was strongly against slaveholding, but what might his father have felt? Charles was born and bred an elite planter who may have been inured to slaveholding, yet as the world around him changed and evolved, might not he too have evolved? The fact that sheet music for *Inkle and Yarico* and Giordani’s *Six Canzonets* existed under his roof suggests that he was at least aware of the moral, ethical, and humanitarian problems inherent in slavery and of the changing cultural landscape. The presence of this music at Shirley – in its physical form as sheet music, and in its aural form produced through music performance – demonstrates that the Carters were engaged with these issues.

Another type of music in the Shirley collection that points to uneasiness with the direction taken by the new nation is that which represents British unease with the French Revolution. The fairly obscure secular cantata *The Royal Orphan’s Dream* (1793) is one of these works. "A Favorite Cantata, for the Harp, Piano forte or harpsichord Composed by Mr. Hook,"45 with text by William Palmer, Esquire, is a two-movement cantata for voice, two violins, and keyboard. Stylistically this cantata is unique in the collection: it is the only work that is mostly in a minor key. The first movement includes several tempo changes, each marked either *adagio* or *andantino*. The second movement is marked “Andantino, poco lento e Sempre Piano” (relatively slow and always soft). Both the minor key and the slow, solemn tempos set a somber, melancholy mood that is unlike the majority of the music in the collection, which is cheerful, upbeat, and often humorous.

This work conveys grief over the French monarchs, sympathy for their orphaned children, and hope that a French king will be restored. After having just witnessed and

45 SPC 114/6.
taken part in a successful revolution to sever relations with a king, the Carters owned
sheet music reflecting a common British sentiment – let’s not let what’s happening in
France happen in England! Although the British were able to recognize some
dissatisfaction with their constitution, they were in no rage to do away with their
monarchy.\(^{46}\) Perhaps as elite and wealthy slaveholding planters the Carters felt more
symbolically akin to the French monarch than to the implied equality they now shared
with those below them on the social ladder.

The first movement of *The Royal Orphan’s Dream*, “Hark thro’ the Bosom of the
troubled Air,” begins with an extended instrumental introduction (a page and a half long).
The text is set in short phrases, interspersed with melodic instrumental lines.

Hark thro’ the Bosom of the troubled Air. What shrieks bespeak the frantic Fiend
despair. While mournfull Misery with her hollow Moan, Hangs on the helpless
suff’rers dying groan. Is yonder Phantom my Slain Fathers Sprite? Mark how it
wanders midst the gloom of Night. Does my poor Mothers tender spirit dwell
amidst the horrors of this dreary Cell? Hark! What fond accents meet my list’ning
Ear. What Soothing notes, of love and watchfull care.\(^{47}\)

In this movement, the “slain father” is Louis XVI, beheaded in January 1793, and the
“poor mother” is Marie Antoinette, guillotined in October 1793. The “dreary cell” alludes
to the imprisonment of the orphaned royal children, who are listening in fear to shrieks
and moans until “fond accents” soothe them. These “soothing notes of love and watchfull
care” lull the children into sleep, hence the second movement begins:

Lull’d in the Bosom of Repose, Consume poor Babes the Midnight Hour, while
soft Oblivion soothes your woes, and misery owns Sweet Slumbers Pow’r, The
Rage that rears th’assassins Arm, Could not destroy, th’immortal Soul, Nor
Patriot tenderness disarm nor fond Parental love Controul. Within the walls of this

\(^{46}\) See, Emsley, *Britain and the French Revolution*; Mori, *Britain in the Age of The
French Revolution*.

\(^{47}\) SPC, 114/6.
rude cell, where fear and Pallid Murder roam, our airy spirits long will dwell
t’avert the orphans threaten’d doom. And yet when mad rebellions o’er, And
lawless anarchy is fled, May Patriot love, the Crown restore, again to deck a
Louis’s Head.48

The royal orphans find solace in sleep, while the spirits of their parents (musically
represented by the violin parts) protect them from “threaten’d doom.” The dream of the
royal orphans, therefore, is that the “mad rebellion” will cease and the monarchy will be
restored.

The musical selections Inkle and Yarico and The Royal Orphan’s Dream suggest
that while the Carters had been in favor of severing ties with Britain, they were also
uncomfortable with the implications of establishing a system of governance that
interfered with the socioeconomic and cultural hierarchy over which they had been
accustomed to presiding. Once liberty from the (financial) oppressions of Britain had
been achieved, the set of ideals under which the Revolution had been fought became
problematic for elites.

The semi-public parlor, as a stage for the performance of status, would have been
a perfect place to safely engage with morally or politically charged issues. Couching the
issue of slavery within a commonplace leisure activity such as music allowed the
problem to be brought into the open without actually confronting it, particularly if women
were the ones performing it.

Conclusions

The practice of domestic music making in England and America became
entrenched during the eighteenth century and led to the parlor music traditions of the

48 SPC, 114/6. (italics mine)
nineteenth century. As music making in the home became more popular and as the growing middle class stimulated the so-called consumer revolution of the eighteenth century the business of music printing boomed. The popularity and cachet of owning a keyboard instrument that developed in the eighteenth century, and the musical genres that arose for home amusement led the way to nineteenth-century domestic music making.

The parlor in elite eighteenth-century Virginia was a stage on which cultural identity was constituted, defined, and redefined: cultural presentations of identity – both an individual’s identity and the group identity to which that individual belonged – were “performances” in the sense that Erving Goffman describes. Elite identity, wealth, taste, and education were being “performed” through the practice of music making in late eighteenth-century Virginia. Music making – a suitable, fashionable, leisure activity – on the parlor “stage” was an act that allowed participants to perform and experience gentility, taste, and status, and unconsciously engage with tensions latent in the world of the Early Republic.

The Carters’ music consumption spoke of the family’s affluence and position in society, and adherence to fashion. But music in an elite Chesapeake home contributed more than a display of affluence, it provided an opportunity for a multilayered, multivalent performance.

49 Goffman, The Presentation of Self, passim.
APPENDIX

**Eighteenth-Century Sheet Music in the Shirley Plantation Collection**
**Listed by Date**

N.B. - These dates represent the earliest possible year in which each work became available from the printer/publisher responsible for the edition in the Shirley Collection. The collection box/folder number is given in parenthesis, followed by a brief description of the work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Composer(s)</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td><em>The Recruiting Sergeant</em></td>
<td>Charles Dibdin</td>
<td>comic opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td><em>Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord</em></td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>keyboard w/vln or fl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>“The Anacreontic Song”</td>
<td></td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td><em>Six Sonatas for the Piano Forte</em></td>
<td>Venanzio Rauzzini</td>
<td>keyboard w/vln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>“The Disconsolate Sailor”</td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>“The Tobacco Box or a Soldier’s Pledge of Love”</td>
<td></td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td><em>The Farmer</em></td>
<td>William Shield</td>
<td>comic opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Inkle &amp; Yarico”</td>
<td>Samuel Arnold</td>
<td>comic opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Simphonie Pour le Clavecin</em></td>
<td>J. F. Sterkel</td>
<td>keyboard w/vln &amp; vc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td><em>Twelve Ballads</em> [by various composers, see below]</td>
<td></td>
<td>collection of songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>“The Lass of Richmond Hill”</td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Whilst Happy in my Native Land”</td>
<td></td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Two Rondos</em></td>
<td>Giovanni Paisiello</td>
<td>solo keyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Ma Charmante Petit Fille”</td>
<td>John Moulds</td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Twelve Songs set to Music by William Jackson of Exeter</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>collection of songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>songs with keyboard accompaniment and misc. instrumental parts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td><em>The Surrender of Calais</em></td>
<td>Samuel Arnold</td>
<td>stage work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td><em>Caernarvon Castle</em></td>
<td>Thomas Attwood</td>
<td>secular cantata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Royal Orphan’s Dream</em></td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>secular cantata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Mountaineers</em></td>
<td>Samuel Arnold</td>
<td>comic opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Little Waist Defended”</td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td><em>The Cherokee</em></td>
<td>Stephen Storace</td>
<td>comic opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The British Fair with Three Times Three”</td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>“Then Say my Sweet Girl Can You Love Me”</td>
<td>James Hook</td>
<td>popular song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Favorite German Hymn with Variations”</td>
<td>Ignace Pleyel</td>
<td>solo keyboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Henry’s Cottage Maid”</td>
<td>Ignace Pleyel</td>
<td>popular song with accompaniment for “Corni in A, Flauti, Violin 1, violin 2, Viola, Basso, cembalo”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Love &amp; Money or the Fair Caledonian</em></td>
<td>Samuel Arnold</td>
<td>comic opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets for the Voice</em></td>
<td>Tommaso Giordani</td>
<td>collection of songs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Second Set of Scots Songs adapted by Robert Bremner (114/12); collection of popular songs (first printed in 1770)

“Kate of Dover” by James Hook (115/1); popular song

“Oh Happy Tawny Moor” (from the Mountaineers) by Samuel Arnold (115/1); popular song

“The Engagement” by R. Burbridge (115/1); popular song

1798 – “Tink a Tink” By G. Nezot (114/4); keyboard solo

1800 – “A Prey to Tender Anguish” set by F. J. Haydn (114/4); popular song

Date of this printing unknown or questionable:

1790-1795? – Eight Sonatas for the Piano-forte...Selected & arrang’d from the Works of Mr. Ignace Pleyel by Mr. Lachnith (115/4); keyboard w/vln

“As Late on the Banks of Old Thames” by “Mr. Reeve” (114/1); popular song

The Duchess of York’s Minuet and Six Favorite New Dances (114/6);

collection of instrumental dance music, including instructions for each dance

“Be Gone Dull Care” (114/6); popular song

Unidentified fragment of a keyboard tutorial (114/8)

Fragments of miscellaneous works from a large set of formerly bound sheet music (114/17) including: “Sonata II” by Thomas Haigh for solo keyboard; “Scottish Air” (Rondo) by Haigh; “The Fowler: A Favorite Air Extracted from...the Zauberflote Composed by Mozart.”

“General Doyles New March” (115/1); solo keyboard

Eighteenth-Century Sheet Music in the Shirley Plantation Collection
Listed by Genre

Accompanied Keyboard Sonatas (Keyboard with secondary flute or violin)

• Simphonie Pour le Clavecin, 1787. Includes violin and cello parts. (114/13)

• Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord by James Hook, 1775. (114/15)

• Six Sonatas for the Piano Forte by Venanzio Rauzzini, 1781. (114/16)

• Eight Sonatas for the Piano-forte...Selected & arrang’d from the Works of Mr. Ignace Pleyel by Mr. Lachnith, 1790-1795(?). (115/4)

Works for Solo Keyboard

• Two Rondos by Giovanni Paisiello, 1790. (114/4)

• “Tink a Tink” By G. Nezot, 1798. (114/4)

• “The Favorite German Hymn with Variations” by Ignace Pleyel, 1795. (114/6)

• Fragments of miscellaneous works from a large set of formerly bound sheet music (114/17) including: “Sonata II” by Thomas Haigh for solo keyboard; “Scottish Air” (Rondo) by Haigh; “The Fowler: A Favorite Air Extracted from...the Zauberflote Composed by Mozart.”

• “General Doyles New March” (115/1)
Single Ballads and Popular Songs

- “The Anacreontic Song,” 1780. (114/1)
- “As Late on the Banks of Old Thames” by “Mr. Reeve” (114/1)
- “The Lass of Richmond Hill” by James Hook, 1790. (114/1)
- “The British Fair with Three Times Three” by James Hook, 1794. (114/1)
- “Then Say my Sweet Girl Can You Love Me” by James Hook, 1795. (114/1)
- “Whilst Happy in my Native Land,” 1790. (114/1)
- “A Prey to Tender Anguish” set by F. J. Haydn, 1800. (114/4)
- “Be Gone Dull Care” (114/6)
- “Henry’s Cottage Maid” by Ignace Pleyel, 1795. (114/6)
- “Kate of Dover” by James Hook, 1795. (115/1)
- “Oh Happy Tawny Moor” (from the Mountaineers) by Samuel Arnold, 1795. (115/1)
- “The Engagement” by R. Burbridge, 1795. (115/1)
- “Ma Charmante Petit Fille” by John Moulds, 1790. (115/1)
- “The Little Waist Defended” by James Hook, 1793. (115/1)
- “The Disconsolate Sailor” by James Hook, 1784. (115/1)
- “The Tobacco Box or a Soldier’s Pledge of Love,” 1785. (115/1)

Collections of Songs

- A Second Set of Scots Songs adapted by Robert Bremner, 1795. (114/12)
- Six Canzonets for the Voice by Tommaso Giordani, 1795. (114/14)
- Twelve Songs set to Music by William Jackson, 1790. [Each song calls for a different instrumentation] (115/2)
- Twelve Ballads, 1789. [A compilation of songs by different composers, including Sarti, Anfossi, Kozeluch, Haydn, Sterkel, Pleyel, Sacchini, Davaux & Paesiello, “adapted to English words with an accompaniment for a Piano Forte or Harpsichord.”] (115/3)

Comic Operas and other Stage Works

- The Cherokee by Stephen Storace, 1794. (114/2)
- Caernarvon Castle by Thomas Attwood, 1793. (114/3)
- The Farmer by William Shield, 1787. (114/5)
- The Royal Orphan’s Dream by James Hook, 1793. (114/6)
- Inkle & Yarico by Samuel Arnold, 1787. (114/7)
- Love & Money or the Fair Caledonian by Samuel Arnold, 1795. (114/9)
- The Mountaineers by Samuel Arnold, 1793. (114/10)
- The Recruiting Sergeant by Charles Dibdin, 1770. (114/11)
- The Surrender of Calais by Samuel Arnold, 1791. (114/18)

Dance Music

- The Duchess of York’s Minuet and Six Favorite New Dances (114/6)

Keyboard Tutorial

- Unidentified fragment of a keyboard tutorial (114/8)
Timeline of dates relevant to the occupation of the current great house at Shirley Plantation:

- 1723 – Elizabeth Hill marries John Carter (son of Robert “King” Carter)
- 1723 – (circa) great house built by John Carter
- 1742 – John Carter Dies
- 1752 – Elizabeth Hill Carter remarries; she and 2nd husband (Bowler Cocke) live at Shirley
- 1771 – Elizabeth & Bowler Cocke die; Charles Carter inherits and renovates Shirley; lives there with 2nd wife (Anne) until 1806
- 1803 – Charles writes will and intends Shirley for his son Robert; Robert’s wife, Mary Nelson, dies
- 1805 – Robert dies; Robert’s orphaned children split their time between Shirley and the Nelson home in Yorktown until grown; Charles insures that his property will now pass to one of Robert’s children (Hill Carter)
- 1806 – Charles Carter dies; Shirley passes to Hill Carter (ten years old)
- 1806 – thru 1816 – Shirley under guardianship of Hill’s uncles Bernard and Williams; this is a period of dubious record keeping
- 1809 – Anne Carter dies
- 1810 – Many household items are sold by Hill’s uncles
- 1816 – Hill Carter “takes possession” – begins a new era

Charles Carter’s children (from both marriages*)
That Lived to Adulthood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Date Born</th>
<th>Age in 1785</th>
<th>Age in 1790</th>
<th>Age in 1795</th>
<th>Age in 1800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE</td>
<td>(b. 1761)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARY WALKER</td>
<td>(b. 1763)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELIZABETH</td>
<td>(b. 1764)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHARLES</td>
<td>(b. 1766)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDWARD</td>
<td>(b. 1767)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNE HILL</td>
<td>(b. 1773)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERT (inherits Shirley)</td>
<td>(b. 1774)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td>(b. 1777)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATHERINE SPOTSWOOD</td>
<td>(b. 1778)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>BERNARD MOORE</td>
<td>(b. 1780)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMS</td>
<td>(b. 1782)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILDRED</td>
<td>(b. 1786)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUCY</td>
<td>(b. 1789)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM FITZHUGH</td>
<td>(b. 1791)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Those above the blank row in the table are from Charles’ first wife, Mary Walker Carter, and those below are from his second wife, Anne Butler Moore Carter.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary

*Shirley Plantation Collection, 1650-1989.* Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, J. D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, Special Collections. [References to the collection are abbreviated SPC, followed by the container number/folder number (for example: SPC 114/1)]


Secondary


Molnar, John W. “Art Music in Colonial Virginia.” In Simkins, Art and Music in the South, 63-93.


VITA

Sarah Gentry Glosson

Sarah Gentry Glosson was born in May 1976 in Toronto, Canada. She holds a B.A. with a concentration in Music from the College of William and Mary (1998) where she explored Anthropology, Ethnomusicology, Music History, and Music Performance. As an active performer, Ms. Glosson specializes in historical performance of baroque music on viola da gamba and baroque ‘cello. She has worked in education, conducting youth orchestras and teaching music at the Appomattox Regional Governor’s School.

Ms. Glosson began graduate work in American Studies in the fall of 2005 and has developed interests in cultural studies, public history, performance studies, and interdisciplinary explorations of the meaning of music in culture. Ms. Glosson lives in Williamsburg with her family.