



# Davenport House Museum Volunteer Newsletter



April 2023

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## Augustus Ranaway!

A Reward of \$20 will be paid to apprehend and lodge in a safe imprisonment within this State, or \$50 if out of it, and give suitable information of the same, to the subscriber, or to his agents in Savannah, Messrs Bulloch & Dunwoody, so as he may obtain the negro lad named Augustus, [or August,] late the property of Oran Byrd, sold on the 1<sup>st</sup> inst. by the Sheriff of Chatham county, under a foreclosure of a Mortgage, as the property of said Byrd, to satisfy Eleazer Early – the said boy is well known in Savannah by many who frequent the Hotel while kept by the said Byrd. He is about 5 feet, 5 or 6 inches high, slim made, rather a light black, of the age 19 or 20 years, having a thin visage with large ringworm upon his throat, and a scar on the right and outside at the small of his leg, occasioned by a recent sore, and it is believed he has also a scar between his thumb and fore finger of his left hand, said boy was originally from Charleston, South Carolina, where he has a mother, and it is probable, should he reach there, he will be loitering around the premises or neighborhood of his former mistress, Mrs. Byrd, who is still in Charleston, or if still in Savannah, he may avail himself of a ticket given him on the day of sale to pass him to Mr. Shelman's Boarding House, which is to be considered of no effect. All persons are cautioned in harboring said negro upon their peril.

JAMES SMITH,  
Seden near Darien,  
McIntosh City.

*Savannah Daily Republican.* April 4, 1823

**Fatal Accident.** – Mr. Edward Barnard was killed on Wednesday last by acci-

idental discharge of his gun, while out shooting in the neighborhood of his residence on Skidaway Island. He mentioned that he was going to hunt rabbit, and from his not returning when expected in the discovery of his lifeless body with a gun lying beside it. *Savannah Daily Republican.* April 5, 1823.

## COMMUNICATED

MR. BLANCHARD has had a performance on the *slack wire* and *tight rope* for two evenings past, and I am sorry to say has not met with that encouragement which the amusements are calculated to obtain. The *balance* and *feats* of strength displayed by Master George are truly worthy of being seen, and the tight rope dancing by Mrs. B. we expect to surpass any other exhibited in this city. We understand that he is a gentleman who has a large family without any other means of support – this is a plea that has never failed with the Savannahians – and as To-Morrow is his last evening of performance we hope he may be gratified by beholding a crowded audience.

*Savannah Daily Republican.* April 12, 1823.

## Superior Ice Creams.

SUSAN JACKSON has the honor to inform her friends and the public, that she will commence making the above delicious article (for the Season,) in her very best stile To-Morrow. The Creams will be ready from 3 o'clock every afternoon until 10 at night every day, (Sunday's excepted).



Families supplied as usual. *Georgian.* April 14, 1823.

## Twenty Annual Exhibition

John C. Lege respectfully informs the Ladies of Savannah, that his annual Ball will take place (weather permitting) on Thursday Evening, 17<sup>th</sup> inst. at his Assembly Ball Room, when will be executed by his Pupils a variety of Fancy Dances, etc.

Ladies who have received Season Tickets to the Practicing Balls, are particularly invited to attend.

After the Exhibition, the Ladies and Gentlemen visitors are informed that a Cotillion party will commence.

Price of Admission for Gentlemen one Dollar. Door to be open at half past 6 o'clock, Ball to commence at half past 7. *Georgian.* April 15, 1823.

After several days of extremely warm weather, the earth was refreshed and the air purified yesterday afternoon by a copious shower, accompanied by hail, thunder and lightning. A house near Spring Hill Bridge, in the suburbs of the city, was struck by lightning, and a person named Cashman killed. The fluid entered the roof, and in its course did some damage to the building. Seven persons were in the house at the time – none of whom were injured, except the unfortunate individual we have mentioned, who had only time to exclaim "I am struck," when he was stretched a livid corpse.

The roof of the jail was also struck, but received no injury than the other displacing of some of the slates. No further injury, we believe, was done by the wind, which was high, than the breaking of a number of limbs of the Pride of India Trees.

*Georgian.* April 24, 1823.

**DAVENPORT HOUSE CALENDAR**

**April 2023**

**Saturday, April 1 at 8 a.m. – *Early Bird's Discovering 1820s Savannah Walking Tours***

**Monday, April 3 from 8 to 9:45 a.m. – Special Walking Tour/ Iowa State – City Planning Students**  
- **All Day** – Preservation Center closed.

**Wednesday, April 5 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. – Road Scholars/Urban Slavery**  
- **3:30 p.m.** – Tour with Special Hospitality

**Thursday, April 6 at 9:30 a.m. – Monthly Maintenance Review**  
- **5:15 p.m.** - Madeira/motor coach tour

**Friday, April 7 at 5:15 p.m. - Madeira/motor coach tour**

**Saturday, April 8 at 8 a.m. – *Early Bird's Discovering 1820s Savannah Walking Tours with house tour (Sold Out)***

**Thursday, April 13 at 5:15 p.m. - Madeira/motor coach**

**Friday, April 14 at 5:15 p.m. - Madeira/motor coach**

**Saturday, April 15 at 8 a.m. – *Early Bird's Discovering 1820s Savannah Walking Tours***  
- **4 to 7 p.m.** - Garden ceremony

**Tuesday, April 18 at 9:30 a.m. – Collections Committee**  
- **11 a.m.** - Davenport House Committee

**Wednesday, April 19 at 3 p.m. – Anna Hunter program at The Learning Center (Credle to present)**

**Thursday, April 20 at 5:15 p.m. - Madeira/motor coach**

**Friday, April 21 from 3 to 4 – wedding rehearsal**

- **at 5:15 p.m.** - Madeira/motor coach

**Saturday, April 22 at 8 a.m. - *Early Bird's Discovering 1820s Savannah Walking Tours***

- **4 to 7 p.m.** – Garden ceremony

**Monday, April 24 at 4:15 p.m. – Interpretation Discussion/ Subcommittee**

**Wednesday, April 26 at 9 a.m. - Road Scholars/Urban Slavery**

**Thursday, April 27 at 5:15 p.m. - Madeira/motor coach**

**Friday, April 28 at 5:15 p.m. - Madeira/motor coach**

**Saturday, April 29 at 8 a.m. – *Early Bird's Discovering 1820s Savannah Walking Tours***  
- **2 p.m.** – Garden ceremony

**ADDITIONAL BOOKED TOURS IN APRIL— DAYTIME HOURS:**

**Saturday, April 1 at 10:45 a.m./25p and 11:45 a.m./25p**

**Wednesday, April 12 at noon**

**Thursday, April 13 at 11 a.m./20p, 3 p.m./20p**

**Tuesday, April 18 at 2:30 p.m./40p**

**Thursday, April 20 at 11:15 a.m. /50p**

**Tuesday, April 25 at 10:45 a.m./20p, 11:30/20p and 4 p.m./30p**

**Friday, April 28 at 10 a.m./38p and 1:30 p.m./52p**

**SHOP NEWS:**

See the fun assortment of spring gifts!

**DOCENT NEWS:**

- **Ron Baker:** Ron comes to us from Illinois every year just after Christmas and stays for two months. He says things like, “Thank you for letting me come here.” And “Thank you for letting me do this (give

tours).” He brings delight to the January doldrums, and we miss him already. He headed home in late March.



Angela Kimball, Ron Baker, Sheena Fulkerson, Lisa Holbert

- **Full-fledged docent:** Susan **Brigman** gave her evaluation tour to Sheena in late March and is now a full-fledge docent. She is a former high school American history teacher. We are grateful to have her.

- **Docents in Training:** Four docents completed the classroom portion of docent training in March. We look forward to their being up and running!

- **Busy season:** Please know that we need each of you particularly in this busy season. Thank you for all you do for the DH!

**SOUTH EDVENTURE/ROAD SCHOLARS /URBAN SLAVERY**

The DH's specialized tour on Urban Slavery with Road Scholars/Edventures continues in April and May. The schedule is:

**Wednesday, April 5 at 9 a.m. - Steve Whiteway, Dan Massey, Carole Massey**

**Wednesday, April 26 at 9 a.m. - John Sorel, Deb Walsh, Dan Massey**

**Wednesday, May 17 at 9 a.m. - Steve Whiteway, Dan Massey, Carole Massey**





**MADEIRA MOTOR COACH:**

**Spring Series/ Dates:** A motor coach will arrive at 5:15 p.m. for each booking. Groups will vary in size.

**SCHEDULE:**

**Thursday, April 6 at 5:15pm** – 26 max people. **Docents:** Steve Whiteway, Lisa Holbert Kathy Conroy. **Servers:** Grace Hodges/Caeley

**Friday, April 7 at 5:15pm** – 44 max people. **Docents:** Roger Smith, John Sorel, Katherine Owens, Bob Strand. **Server:** Grace Hodges

**Friday, April 14 at 5:15pm** – 44 max people. **Docents:** John Sorel, Gena Fausel, Karen Haloran, Jamie Credle. **Servers:** Grace Hodges, Michelle Rockhill

**Thursday, April 20 at 5:15pm** – 26 max people. **Docents:** Lisa Holbert, Katherine Owens, Kathy Conroy. **Servers:** Grace Hodges/Caeley Jones

**Friday, April 21 at 5:15 p.m.** – 44 max people. **Docents:** Roger Smith, John Sorel, Don Starr, Jamie Credle. **Servers:** Grace Hodges, Michelle Rockhill

**Thursday, April 27** - 26 max people. **Docents:** Lisa Holbert, Katherine Owens, Jamie Credle. **Servers:** Grace Hodges, Michelle Rockhill

**Friday, April 28** – 44 max people. **Docents:** Steve Whiteway, Rog-

er Smith, John Sorel, Gena Fausel. **Servers:** Grace Hodges  
**Thursday, May 4** - 26 max people. **Docents:** Steve Whiteway, Lisa Holbert, Jamie Credle. **Servers:** Grace Hodges, Michelle Rockhill  
**Friday, May 5** – 44 max people. **Docents:** John Sorel, Don Starr, Carole Massey, Dan Massey. **Server:** Grace Hodges

**JUNIOR INTERPRETERS**

- **SUMMER JUNIOR INTERPRETER PROGRAM:** The DH will offer its Summer Junior Interpreter Program on Thursday evenings June 15 through July 27 from 6 to 8 p.m. The program is open to high school students who express an interest. If you know of a young person who may like to participate, please let Jamie know. Places are filling up fast.

**WORTH MENTIONING:**

- **Map Conservation:** The map which usually hangs in the office is being copied. A facsimile should be back in its place very soon.

- **Teas in March: *Tea at the Davenport*** went well thanks to a willing group of performers and bakers. Thank you to the bakers – **Heidi Arndt, Mary Lou Brewton, Caroline Holder, Barb Stahl and Deb Walsh.** Our performers were **Claire Beriault, Jamie Credle, Jeff Freeman, Anne Hagan, Molly Hall, Madison Kennedy, Raleigh Marcell, Lizzie Rogers, Jan Vach, and Jill Wert.** Intern **Caeley Jones** assisted with the Tea program in March and will help again in May. The next series of teas will begin on May 3! There are 8 tea presentations planned for the month. We will send out the request for bakers and per-

formers in mid-April. It is a big job, and we would love help.

- **DH Friends:** A second DH Annual Appeal letter will be sent out to DH community members who did not respond to the first in hopes each will want to make a financial stake in the Museum they care about. Please donate if you can at whatever amount you feel comfortable.



**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**

**Nadine Arndt**

**DH: How did you come to be associat-**

**ed with the Davenport House?**

**Nadine:** Looking back, I realize that my move from Southern California really started after I saw the film *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. I was struck by the ethereal beauty of Savannah’s trees and squares and was determined to visit the city someday. I knew then that, if I ever moved to the South, Savannah would be the only place. When Covid hit, I retired (finally) from my job as a professor of English, so I was no longer tied to work. When my daughter moved here from Texas and fell in love with the place, I decided to make the move in August of 2021. It finally happened in November 2021. After getting acclimated to my new home in Richmond Hill, I decided that I needed to get involved with my community by volunteering for animal or adult literacy programs. I asked for suggestions from my HOA Facebook group, and Sheena Fulkerson responded immediately with an invitation to become a docent at Davenport House Museum. The opportunity to work in a museum surpassed all of my expectations. A training class



was about to begin, and I didn't have to think twice about signing on.

**DH: What do you do outside of the DH?**

**Nadine:** Being retired, I now have time to pursue activities that I couldn't do while teaching full-time. I now can read books for myself, not just to prepare for my classes. I read voraciously, continued my Covid obsession with jigsaw puzzles, crochet, and actually joined a gym (please don't ask how often I actually go.). I also do some writing when my muse shows up. I live in a lovely little community, and I have had the pleasure of becoming friends with some of neighbors.

**DH: What is your favorite thing about the Davenport House?**

**Nadine:** I love that we have license to have frank and honest discussions about the horrors of slavery. I expected that I might get some push-back from some of the guests, but just the opposite has happened. Every tour group has expressed their sadness and disdain for the cruelty of the institution. They are usually stunned when they see enslaved workers listed in the household assets inventory. They are shocked that the workers, who had served the family for years, were going to be sold, just like the furniture. I think being in the house makes the enslaved workers' lives, and their inhumane quality of life, more real. Sharing their story makes me feel like I might be helping them to understand the human suffering that slavery entailed.

**DH: What's the most unusual thing that has ever happened to you at the DH?**

**Nadine:** On my maiden flight as a tour guide, one group included a visiting professor of international affairs from Ukraine. He was the first of his group to arrive, so we had a few minutes to chat about the crisis in his homeland. The pain in his eyes as he

talked about it was heartbreaking. I could see that he was getting emotional, so I was relieved when some other group members started drifting into the room.

**DH: How long have you been in Savannah?**

**Nadine:** I moved here about fifteen months ago. I actually live in Richmond Hill, but I still consider myself to be a Savannah resident. (Savannah?) My friends had never heard of Richmond Hill, but they sure knew a lot about Savannah.

**DH:** What is your favorite thing to do in Savannah?

**Nadine:** Exploring the neighborhoods and the squares. I love that there is so much history in this city and that it has preserved its unique character. And then there is the food! Savannah knows how to make a meal memorable. I also love the fact that I live near rivers. In southern California, our river was cemented top to bottom and was usually empty.

**DH: What are your plans for your future?**

**Nadine:** Staying alive. I will be taking a cruise to Norway and Iceland this summer; that is about as far as my future

plans go at the moment. My family on my mother's side all came from

Norway, so I will be ticking off another item on my bucket list.



## A LOOK AT THE DH GUEST REGISTER

**During the month of March 2023,** the Davenport House Museum saw visitors from 42 states and 8 countries. International visitors came from Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, Guatemala, Germany, Norway, and Sweden. Interesting hometown names included Hot Springs Valley, AR; Stonington, CT; Freeburg, IL; Webster City, IA; Plaucheville, LA; Old Orchard Beach, ME; Granby, MA; Falcon Heights, MN; Vermilion, OH; Bucyrus, OH; Stewartstown, PA; Lincoln, RI; Pleasant View, TN; Mechanicsville, VA; Chehalis, WA; Maple Valley, WA; Ripon, WI.

### **How did they hear about the DH:**

Internet (Google, Savannah Tour Pass, Facebook); Trolley Tours (Old Town Trolley); Tour Guides (Andrew Low House, Ringling Museum); Brochures; Friends; Concierge (Marriott, Ballastone Inn, Mansion on Forsythe); Walk By; Guide Books (AAA); Relatives; Repeat Visitors; Maps; Television (PBS); Visitor Center; Magazine; Advertisement.

### **Visitor Comments:**

"Loved the history." "Excellent."  
"Wonderful tour." "Beautiful house. Excellent tour." "Wow!" "Amazing."  
"Five stars." "Outstanding!" "Lovely!"  
"Awesome tour." "Marty made the house come to life!" "Nice tour! Loved it, thanks." "Great tour guide!"  
"Excellent tour with Dan."  
"Fascinating house." "Lillian was an amazing guide!" "Great guide! Awesome tour!" "Thank you for being so welcoming!" "Excellent! Thanks, Steve!" "Amazing tour. Sheena was very informative!" "A wonderful place and people." "Educational." "Really great tour and guide." "Gabrielle was an excellent tour guide." "Maya was great!"

**Item related for food on the Estate  
Inventory of Isaiah Davenport/1828.**

1 sett dining tables	12.
1 mahogany tea table	4.
12 silver table spoons, 1 ladle, 12 tablepoons & 1 pair sugar tongs	68.
1 fine china teasett	50.
4 doz. cut and plain wineglasses	7.
2 doz. cut and plain tumblers	5.
1 pair salts	.25
4 blue fruit dishes	1.25
2 doz. fruit plates	2.
1 sett ivory handle knives and forks 52 pieces	15.
1 pair decanter slides	.50
1 doz. buckhorn knives and forks	1.50
1 sofa & tea table	30.
1 table sett Liverpool ware kitchen furniture	10.
1 shotgun & belt	25.75
3 pair decanters and 1 high chair	6.25
2 cows & 1 calf	15.
1 grindstone & 2 steel lamps	2.50
5 half worn table clothes	2.50
1 doz. candle moulds & 6 case bottles	1.00

***COME WALK WITH JAMIE***

***Early Bird's Walking Tour:  
Discovering 1820s  
Savannah – Architecture of the  
New Nation***

**Saturdays in April 2023**

**DATES:** April 15, 22, 29

**TIME:** 8 a.m.

**ADMISSION:** \$21.Plus tax.  
Walk-ins welcome.

**PROGRAM LENGTH:** 100 minutes.

**DISTANCE OF WALK:** 2.5 miles  
See what survives of the 1820s Savannah. Beginning at the Davenport House Museum (1820) participants will walk by some of the finest examples of preservation in the city and learn about what no longer remains. Coffee and treats in the Davenport House garden will follow.



## Davenport Era Foodways



On occasion we are asked to present a tour with a special focus. In March we received a call from Wesleyan College wanting to know if we could do a “foodways tour.” We figured we should give it *a go* since we have been thinking about the topic in piece meal fashion for years. What follows is a compilation from a variety of sources on the topic.

The group will gather in the Kennedy Pharmacy for greetings and an introduction to the DH mission and household. Following this, they will enter the property through the lane gate having been .

**WORKING YARD** - This was the working yard which included a wood pile, privy, carriage house, horse shed, as well area for workspace for the multitude of tasks required for daily life, most particularly facilitating the nourishment for the 20 or so people who lived in the house and on the property. The enslaved members of the household would be in this area constantly which was surrounded by a wall which among other things was intended to keep them in.

Much effort and exertion went into food acquisition, preparation, presentation and clean up within the household with most of that effort directed to the white occupants’ needs and desires.

There is much we do not know. For instance, we do not know what, where or when the enslaved workers ate while living at the Davenport House. We know approximately where, when and on what the Davenports ate and what and how they ate based on general historical documentation.

**What and who was in the yard:**

Before the sun came up the enslaved workers were beginning their day in the above ground basement and in this working yard.

**Wood:** Keeping the fireplaces stocked and ready to function for the day was a vital task. There needed to be wood available for the cooking hearth as well as for the fireplaces used to heat water for cleaning, laundry and bathing (not to mention the fireplaces required wood for heating the house in winter.)



**Chores:** Animals needed to be fed.

The cows needed to be milked.

Early morning was the time to churn butter before the heat of the day.

There was a constant round of cleaning of food preparation implements, linens, soiled clothes, etc.

**PRIVY AREA AND ARCHAEOLOGY:**

Archaeology conducted in 2014 – 2015 revealed the location of the privy.

Much information was discovered about the foodways of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century dwellers on the site including:

- **Ceramics and vessels** used for preparing, serving and storing food.

- **Types of meat consumed:**

The excavation yielded 1,166 bone specimens representing 19 individual animals.

Most of the meat consumed was from domesticated animals “as opposed to wild mammals, fish, and birds.”

These included cows, goats and pigs, as well as chickens and eggs. There are remnants of turkey, catfish, perch, two species of turtle.

“The animal bones at the Davenport House are a mix of both the meatier and lower yield elements of domestic animals. . . . This mix likely represents the distinctively different the diets of upper class Davenports and the enslaved African Americans living on the lot.”

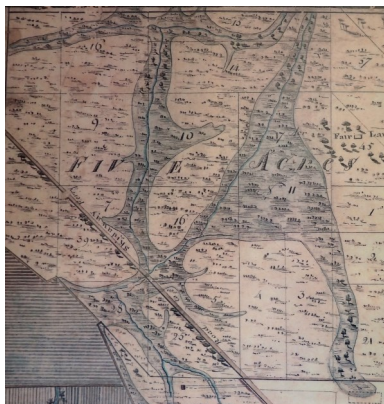
- **Grains:** “Analyses indicates consumption and/or discard of baked goods (wheat grass, ryegrass, or barley grass), the use of condiments such as a celery seeds, the eating of plants in the mustard family, and the eating and/or drinking of mint or mint tea.”

**BASEMENT:**

Visual Aid on Urban Living: 1813 Map of Savannah – note/locate Port/Savannah River, Five Acres, City Common, Rice Fields

The docent will use the map to discuss the DH as a townhouse in a planned city noting that space was at a premium. On urban lots there was little space for vegetable gardens. Herbs may have been grown in the yard, but otherwise vegetables were grown in the area called “Five

Acres” or they were purchased from the market or from “sellers of small wares.”



Animal/cows may have grazed in the City Common.



**As a port city,** goods including food items – cheese, lard, meats, wines, etc. -- came in through the Savannah River.

**As a market city,** all types of food stuffs from the countryside were available to Savannahians. Fish and shellfish from local waterways were brought to town to be sold. The sellers of these items were often enslaved people or farmers living a distance from town, who did business in the market or in the street. For much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a market in Ellis Square.

**Market:**

A touchstone: “*almost the whole of the purchasing and selling of edible articles for domestic consumption [is] transacted by . . . [African Americans – enslaved or*

free people of color]” Richard Wade.

*Here [Savannah] almost every eatable thing can be found. Vegetables fresh from the garden are sold the year round. All kinds of fish, both shell and finny, may be had there; birds of all kinds, both tame and wild, and the most delicious tropical fruits, as well as those which are brought from old countries. People travel a great distance for the purpose of buying and selling in the market.”* Emily Burke, 1850.

One historical reference notes at the market in Savannah there was “. . . for sale live poultry, fish, oysters, shrimp, crabs, and everything else that comes out of the water. . . [as well as] vegetables, dressed meat of all kinds, dressed poultry, and everything else that could not find a place elsewhere.” Hardee.

“The space outside of this railing was used for the parking of country carts . . . Many of these carts came from a distance of fifty miles or more, and were two days and a night on the way. They brought to market all kinds of country produce, such as eggs, dressed poultry, small dressed hogs, sausages, jerked or dried beef, venison, wild turkeys, wild ducks, partridges, doves, and other good things too numerous to mention. . . . sold from the carts where they were parked outside of the railing.” Hardee.

- **Hours:** The Market was open “at the rising of the Sun” at which it was “free for all persons to expose to the same of respective commodities.” From 11/1 to 4/1 (winter to early spring) the Market closed at 10 a.m. From 4/1 to 11/1 (late spring through the fall) the Market closed at 9 a.m. except Sundays when from 4/1 to 11/1 it closed at 8 a.m. and 11/1 to 4/1 it closed at 9 a.m.



We are not aware of who did the shopping in this household but this quote gives an idea of how it might have been done: “My master Stephen usually went to market each day to procure meat for the dinner for the family, and always purchased a shin of beef. Jack accompanied him with the market basket to fetch home what he brought. The richest pan of the soup was consumed by the family, and the remainder, consisting of the lean meat, and the shin, and coarse pieces remaining on the bones, were then left for us in the kitchen.” Fox Genovese.

In a world before refrigeration, knowing what was in season and available was important.

“Without refrigerated transport and storage, the spoilage and contamination of milk, meat, fish and vegetables, particularly during torrid American summers, became a chronic problem.” Larson.

Cooks and households were constrained by the limits of food preservation with common practices being “. . . the underground storage of root crops, drying, smoking and salting.” Larson.

“Most city dwellers, like farm families, still ate barreled salt pork and beef during most of the year, with fresh meat and early vegetables an occasional luxury.” Larson.

### **North East Room/Beginning of the Day:**

One wonders what the morning meal would have been.

“Adults and children alike occasionally drank milk from a cup or glass but more often took it in a bowl with bread sops or corn mush.” Larson.

Breakfast food in cookery books includes bread, biscuits, muffins, waffles.

### **STORAGE ROOMS:**

“. . . she [white mistress] did carefully dole out the ingredients for which she was personally responsible.” Fox Genovese.

### **COOK – INGREDIENTS:**

“After receiving the ingredients, the cook began preparing dinner, the main meal of the day. Some cooks had one or more assistants—either cooks in training or people too young or old for other work—to help prepare vegetables, pluck chickens, or turn the spit, but the cook herself was responsible for orchestrating the meal and sending dishes to the dining room. Cooks often prepare a second meal for themselves, their families, and other slaves, which they ate when they could.” Carlisle.

A description of foodstuff on a southern plantation: “Flour and whiskey were purchased by the barrel, sugar by the barrel or hogshead, fancy sugar by the loaf, and coffee by the sack; chickens, when raised in insufficient numbers to serve the needs of the household, were purchased and slaughtered by the dozens; hundreds of pounds of pork and hams were smoked and dispensed. . . .” Fox Genovese.

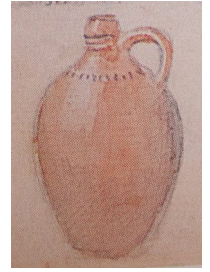
### **Open storage:**

This area was for storage of food required for meals which the cook had ready access.

Barrels of flour (grains – wheat, rye), bags of rice, barrels of salted meats, barrels of potatoes, fresh items – vegetables, fruits, keg of lard, barrel of vinegar

### **Locked storage:**

Expensive and rare items were stored in a locked storage area. These items included sugar, coffee, tea, wines, spices, exotic fare such as olives, anchovies, cheese, figs, raisins, currants, etc.



### **KITCHEN AND FOOD PREP SPACE:**

Generally throughout the day, most household work revolved around food.

This was preparation space for Davenport household meals. It also served as an indoor gathering area for the enslaved household. Additionally it was a sleeping space for some of the enslaved laborers once the day’s required labor was done.

Meals that were prepared in this kitchen were a fusion of African, European, and Indigenous traditions, using local ingredients as well as imported items. Some foods like yams, okra, benne, and rice were introduced to this country from Africa as a direct result of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and are now hallmarks of Lowcountry cuisine.

Gullah Geechee food stuffs: Rice, yams, okra, benne. One-pot meals. Deep fried foods.

Indigenous foods included quash, pumpkins, tomato, muscadine, blackberries, etc.

Mrs. Davenport may have used cookbooks published for early 19<sup>th</sup> century housewives.

### **Fireplaces & Cooking:**

There are twelve fireplaces in the Davenport House. There are four fireplaces in the above ground basement. The largest one is in the southwestern por-



tion of the space and was for cooking. The others were for warming the space and for boiling water – to clean or bath.

In the American South the cooking hearth had not changed much since the colonial period and manning the station required fortitude and stamina. The adult female enslaved chef owned by Davenport was Bella who was assisted by Mary. Their work was supplemented by that of their children who began training as domestic enslaved workers before they reached the age of ten.

“A cook might begin her work by building a good-sized fire on the hearth, but once the logs had burned to coals, she moved these burned embers around, adding carefully selected pieces of wood as needed to produce different kinds of heat, burners on a stove; a gridiron set over a pile of coals could be used for boiling; a pan set over coals on a trivet could be used for frying; and coals could be piled over and under a Dutch oven for baking.” Carlyle.

“Both cook and mistress knew what wood and what type of fire was needed for a certain dish, for instance. The labor-intensive aspects – grinding, chopping, kneading, pounding—were handled by African American slaves.” Crump.

At this time, we cannot identify if the Davenports had an oven. Because of this, we assume they used a Dutch oven to bake. Bread, as well as grains, flour, and meal, could be purchased from professional bakers in the port city including P. Brasch, who ran a Bake House on Broughton Street.

**Kitchen equipment:** “Typically, the fireplace was outfitted with a crane, from which hung a kettle, a pot, and perhaps an additional large water kettle with a spigot so that hot water might always be at hand for cooking and cleaning. All of these could be raised or lowered to suit the heat. Universal utensils of iron, brass, copper, or tin included chafing dishes, dripping pans, frying pans, kettles, sauces pans, patty pans, skimmers, stew pans and toasters.

Wealthy families owned a good many nonessential amenities, such as cake pans, ice-cream molds, fish kettles, and wafer irons, and a greater proportion of all their kitchen wares were crafted of copper. Whether iron or copper, all these pots and pans were heavy and cumbersome, and the requisite stooping, bending, lifting, and carrying were not only muscle-building but hazardous. Dismal indeed was the life of a[an enslaved] cook in early America. Not only was she subjected to the danger of the flames, ‘the deleterious vapours and penitential exhalations of the charcoal,’ the glare of the scorching fire, ‘and the smoke so baneful to the eyes and complexion.’ But she must live in the midst of these dangers.” Crump.

“Slaveholding women visited the kitchen and supervised its denizens, but did not linger. Slave women primarily worked in the kitchens of oth-

ers, preparing food of others, although at least some slave cooks took much more pride in the kitchen than their mistress did.” Fox Genovese.



The route of the food would have been up the internal stairs to the first floor dining room which is the first room on the right.

Let’s enter the house through the front door noticing the shotgun by the front door. It could have been used for hunting, as well as for protection.

#### **DRAWING ROOM:**

If you entered the house as a guest of the white household, you might be shown into the Drawing Room which was a place for special occasions – entertainment, celebrations as well as funerals.

#### **Alcohol consumption:**

At holiday time, the sideboard would display a glittering array of cutglass wine glasses and a punch bowl containing a celebratory beverage such as Regents punch, Chatham Artillery Punch, Cherry Bounce, Eggnog, and/or Syllabub, Cordials.

The early 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time of excessive alcohol consumption. “Drink was everywhere in the social world of early nineteenth century America – first as a taken-for-granted presence and only later as a serious and divisive problem. ‘Liquor at that time,’ recalled the carpenter Elbridge





Boyden, 'was used as commonly as the food we ate.'" Larson.

"As the nineteenth century dawned, . . . Relatively heavy and frequent drinking, with the very American preference of hard liquor, had become common throughout the nation. In fact, the period from the 1790s to the early 1830s was probably the heaviest drinking era in the nation's history. Consumption estimates tell the story, dramatically: From an annual average of 5.8 gallons of absolute alcohol per capita (for people aged fifteen or older) in 1790, mean absolute alcohol intake rose to 7.1 gallons a year by 1810 and, with minor fluctuations, remained at about the level until at least 1830."

Lender and Martin,

As advertised in the newspaper, Savannahians drank "Rye whiskey," "peach brandy," "Newark cider," "Irish whiskey," "Jamaica rum," "Madeira," "Philadelphia Gin," "Malaga wine," "Champagne wine," "Muscat wine," "Bordeaux Claret," "French cordial," "Holland gin," "Ale," "W.I. rum," "New Orleans rum," "Cherry Brandy," "Cognac," "Newark Cider," "Rutenburg gin," "NE rum," "current wine," "Sautern," "Martinique cordial."

### Tea ritual:

The space was also where late afternoon tea took place. Without question the Davenports enjoyed tea as Isaiah Davenport's estate inventory

lists: 1 mahogany tea table \$4.00, 12 silver table spoons, 1 ladle, 12 tea-spoons & 1 pair sugar tongs \$68.00, 1 fine china teasett \$50.00, 2 doz fruit dishes \$2.00, 5 halfworn table cloths 5.00.

Tea would have taken place after the evening meal and would have involved the white family and their friends. The concept of a "high tea" did not yet exist.

### MORNING ROOM:

"The mistress of the household – assumed the mantle of ruling lady . . . All other women of the household were subordinate to her. As symbol of her station, she carried the keys to the storerooms and domestic outbuildings." Fox Genovese.

It was in this room that Mrs. Davenport managed the house and directed the enslaved workers as to her wishes. She oversaw the food, clothing and shelter for the 20 people who lived here.

This is where she met with the cook/Bella and housekeeper/Mary and instructed them on what she wanted for the day; what she wanted from the market; and, which one of the enslaved household workers was to perform which duties. Daily she went downstairs to the basement to measure the necessary daily supplies from the locked storage.

If Mrs. Davenport desired executing dishes from a cookbook similar to this one for a special celebration, she would supervise Bella and read the recipe to her.

"While the mistress was occupied managing the household, the cook was busy preparing an average of four meals a day: breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper." Deetz.

"Half after eight the bell rings for breakfast . . . breakfast till 9:30, dinner bell at commonly 2:30, often 3 but never before 2! After dinner is over, which in common if we have not company, is about half after three . . . supper is 8:30 or at 9.' This schedule outlines the cook's routine, beginning at daybreak and ending well after nightfall." [Philip Fithian, the Carter family tutor – dining schedule at Virginia's Nomini Hall Plantation] Deetz.

We understand that meals may be taken throughout the house and that the dining room had a variety of other uses than dining. Mrs. Davenport may have taken breakfast in this room.

### DINING ROOM:

It was in the dining rooms of the American South that the mythology of "southern hospitality" was born. The room provided the theater for status, including well-crafted furniture including a mahogany table which reflected your face, a sideboard for the display of spirits and beautifully arranged food, a cabinet for display of serving pieces. Linens and candles dressed and lit the space.

On special occasions the room provide a reputation building display of glassware, cutlery, and dishes, not to mention the food and the service.

Working in this space was labor intensive. For a meal, enslaved workers, first cleaned the space and then put the table together which was generally stored up against the wall. Linens were put out, the table set, food prepared, brought up, and served. At the end of the meal, the process was to be reversed and everything put back in its place.

"Before the guests arrived, the domestics set out the dining table, sideboard,

and serving tables. "Eliza Farrar. 1837.

Dinner was at 2: "My master would always, when the weather was bad, order me to drive the horse and chaise to the office, and carry him home to dinner, precisely at two o'clock." Wm. Grimes.

"Servants held plates for carvers and served vegetables, sauces, and drinks." Eliza Farrar. 1837.

"During the first course, guests might be offered water, port, and ginger beer as well as light wines." Eliza Farrar. 1837.

"After dinner the host proffered cordials, in addition to claret and Madeira." Eliza Farrar. 1837.

"A dinner, well performed by all the actors in it, is very fatiguing, and, as it generally occupies three hours or more, most persons are glad to go away when it is fairly done." Eliza Farrar. 1837

WPA quote from a former enslaved worker noted the work involved: "[I had] to fan the flies off the table while the white folks eat and to tote the dishes to the kitchen." Fox Genovese.

"Behind every meal and in the shadow of every mistress was an enslaved cook who was responsible for creating these lavish dinners. These cooks existed within a complex social space created by racialized and gendered ideologies and fueled by the mistress's domestic needs. This environment, similar to a stage, relied on props and actors, on the performance of domestic rituals, and on stringent social class mores. The relationship was built on status roles, negotiation, and the constant of violence. The frontstage behavior was that seen by the guests, and it depended on the mistress's performance as hostess supreme. The

backstage behavior was what happened before the guests arrived, behind the kitchen door and often between the mistress and cook." Deetz.

"[Mrs. Wardrobe] confirms what I have before heard of the active part they take in kitchen and other menial duties. The other day, for instance, in Savannah we drove past a house where there had been a great dinner on the preceding day, and thru the windows saw the ladies, with their white aprons on, busy washing up the glasses and tea-cups." Mrs. Fulton's Tavern, 24 Miles South of Savannah, March 13, 1828. Letters of Mrs. Basil Hall.

"Within the big house, slave girls received their first introduction to the conditions of their future lives." Fox Genovese.

". . . [Enslaved domestic workers were] introduced to their working lives by their own mothers. . . ." Fox Genovese.

#### OFFICE:

This room was a masculine room of business.

While day-to-day management of the household (the private sphere) was handled by Sarah Davenport, financial matters including paying household accounts would be handled through Isaiah Davenport.

There is so much to know, so much to learn and so much that cannot be known about foodways in the 1820s. We will keep researching the topic and inform you about what we learn. There is more to come.

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