

MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

**WICK HOUSE
FURNISHING STUDY**



JULY 1971

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FURNISHING STUDY**

by

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FOREWORD

According to the Resource Study Proposal that authorized the preparation of this furnishing study, the Wick House served as the quarters of Major General Arthur St. Clair during the winter encampment of 1779-80. "A comprehensive study is needed to determine the furnishings of the 18th century farm house, especially during its use as military quarters. This study will serve as the basis for a definitive furnishing plan for this key point of interpretation." The furnishing plan should be based in both past studies and more recent knowledge.

In 1936, after the Wick House was restored, Historical Technician Vernon G. Setser and Junior Historian Lloyd W. Biebigheiser prepared a report on the furnishings of the house. It was put together as a tentative and suggestive guide for plans to furnish the house as a colonial home of the period of the American Revolution. The report contained the best sources of information available, which were the property inventories of Henry and Mary Wick, and for comparative purposes, a number of inventories of Morris County residents of the same period. Also included were photographs of New England furniture because these were more readily available and also because the Wicks were of New England origin, a fact that was conspicuously reflected in the architectural style of the house.

All of the household possessions of the Wicks have disappeared, with the possible exception of a desk now located in the historical museum at the Washington's Headquarters. The Wick House, therefore, was furnished in the 1930's with authentic pieces of the period, none of which had been used by the family.

Mainly because of lack of new source material, the present report is intended only to supplement that of 1936. Certain basic and general information has been added in order to make the property inventories more meaningful and relevant to farm life. As prepared, the report provides certain data that will be useful for appraising the suitability of some of the existing house furnishings. It also provides a wider range of options and alternatives for the selection of new pieces, or the deletion of others, or for the addition of certain museum features that would eliminate the antiquarian appearance of the existing furnishing arrangement.

This report does not include furnishings that have to do with the use of the house "as military quarters" by General St. Clair

because, with the exception of a label reference on a map, we have not found any other information about the subject.

Park Superintendent Stephen H. Lewis, Historians Bruce W. Stewart and Diana F. Skiles, and other park employees were very helpful during my visit to Morristown. Barry MacKintosh proofread the manuscript and Mis^sDebra Mason typed it. My sincere thanks to them.

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I. The Wicks and Their House

A. The Wicks

It is necessary to have some knowledge of the living and housing conditions of the Wicks in order to understand the furniture that went into the house. These conditions, to a great extent, determined the needs that the family had to meet. The personal tastes and personalities of the homestead owners were, undoubtedly, reflected by the family background and in the architectural features of the house. Unfortunately, little is known about the family background, the construction of the house, and the Wicks' social status in the farming community of Morristown. What follows is a brief sketch of what we know.

Henry Wick was born in 1707 on that part of Long Island which was settled by emigrants from Connecticut. In 1725 he married Mary Cooper. Both the Wicks and the Coopers were New Englanders, since they had lived in Suffolk County--Southampton and Easthampton--for about two generations. Suffolk County was under the jurisdiction of Connecticut until 1674, when the settlements passed to New York. In 1737 the Wicks were living near Bridge Hampton, Long Island.

Henry Wick and his father-in-law, Nathan Cooper, purchased 1,114 acres of land in 1746 on the Passaic River near Morristown, a fine farming country. Two years later Cooper released his shares to Wick, then recorded as a resident of Morristown. Later purchases brought the Wick tract up to over 1,400 acres of timber land.^{1a}

The Wicks had two sons--Henry and James--and three daughters--Mary, Phebe, and Tempe. Born in 1758, Tempe was, most probably, the only child born in the Wick house of Jockey Hollow. All the children got married in Morristown, with the exception of James, who was a bachelor. Tempe got married after the Revolution. Henry, Jr., who had two children, became insane, and "exceedingly troublesome

1a. Morris County Deeds, H-122, May 31, 1746, and B-142, August 10, 1748, Morris County Court House, Morristown; Francis E. Woodruff, Fordwick, England; Southampton, Long Island, Elizabethtown-Westfield, New Jersey (Morristown, The Jerseyman Press, 1905), Part III, pp. 124-27, 144-45.

and expensive" in his lifetime. There were eight grandchildren in the Wick family, who undoubtedly visited the house frequently.²

Outside of the fact that the Wicks appeared to have been a respectable and hospitable family, there is nothing outstanding that distinguished them from other homesteaders of the area. Henry Wick was an ordinary Morris County farmer, probably somewhat more prosperous than the average, judging by the size of the farm. He seems to have been active during the Revolution. During the winter encampment of 1779-80 at Morristown, Wick was absent from home, serving with a company of Morris County cavalry. He "did good service in the war and engaged in at least one sharp fight, though frequently detailed as guard for Gov. Livingston and the Privy Council." No information has been found about the use of the house as quarters³ or headquarters of Major General St. Clair during the encampment.

Like the largest portion of the population of New Jersey, the Wicks were engaged in farming. Although they had an unusually large homestead, most of the Wick land was classified as unimproved, that is, not cultivated. How prosperous the Wicks were as farmers is not known; the County ratable records do not throw any light at all on this subject. Not much more than one hundred acres was the most common agricultural unit in New Jersey. This was self-sufficient, and could conveniently be operated by a single family. There were, however, exceptions to this generalized picture. The average farmer raised a great variety of crops, most of which were consumed within his own family. Winter wheat was the leading cash crop of the province and in many areas it was grown for the market. Corn, rye, oats, buckwheat, barley, and flax, as well as common vegetables and such fruits as apples, peaches, berries, and plums were standard crops. Most farms had horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, and poultry. It was the rare farmer who did not make a meal of his own buckwheat, boiled cabbage, or

2. Wills of Henry and Mary Wick, 1781 and 1786, Morris County Court House, lib. 22, p. 239, and B-144, Morristown; Woodruff, pp. 221-23.

3. Andrew M. Sherman, "The Wick House and Its Historical Environment," American Historical Magazine, IV, No.3 (May 1909), 257; Edmund D. Halsey, History of Morris County, New Jersey (New York, W.W. Numdsell and Company, 1882), p. 35. The Rochefontaine map of January 16, 1780, identifies a building on the Wick's house site as "Mjr Genl St Clair's Quarters." (Library of Congress). This is the only evidence available on that subject.

salt pork; or dress in his own home-spun wool or linen; or wear shoes cut from his own leather; or drink his own applejack and peach brandy.⁴

B. The House

No description of the Wick house has been found in the many eighteenth century documents dealing with the 1776-77 and 1779-80 winter encampments. It has been generally assumed that Nathan Cooper and Henry Wick, or the latter, built the house around 1750. According to a secondary source, while most of the houses in Morris County at that time were small and constructed of logs, the Wick house was an oak frame structure, and of unusual dimensions compared with the cramped quarters of the average log house. What they built was a house that expressed very strongly their New England background.⁵ It was a story-and-a-half cottage with a huge chimney stack in the center. This style of house was anchored to ground by the chimney which stood opposite to the front door and emerged through the ridge line of the pitched roof. Besides serving the kitchen and the two front room fireplaces, the chimney dictated the location of the rooms.⁶

During 1934-35 the house was restored by the National Park Service following what was believed to be the original architectural features. It is nearly square in plan. Entering through the front door which faces southward, one comes into an entry hallway in front of which are a closet on the left and the attic stairway on the right. Back of the closet and stairway is the front of the central brick chimney. Turning to the right from the hallway, one passes into the east chamber that was the ordinary family room, and to the left of the hallway into the

4. Jas. Obul to Nathanael Greene, November 23, 1779, Greene Papers, American Philosophical Society; Map of Israel Ludlow, 1795, Morristown Public Library; Richard P. McCormick, New Jersey from Colony to State, 1609-1789. New Jersey Historical Series (Princeton, 1964), I, 87-88.

5. Sherman, p. 252.

6. Joseph F. Tuttle, "Washington and Morristown during the winters of 1776-77 and 1779-80," Harpers Monthly Magazine, No. CV (February 1859), XVIII, 298; "The Second Encampment at and near Morristown, 1779-80," The New Jersey Historical Magazine (June 1871); Sherman, pp. 252-53.

west chamber which was the main parlor. A door from the family room and another from the parlor lead into the kitchen, which is about two-thirds the length of the house. East of the kitchen there is a small pantry and a small chamber, the latter having the entrance through the family room. West of the kitchen there is another chamber, about half the size of the main parlor, traditionally identified as Tempe's bedroom.

The fireplaces of the kitchen, main parlor, and family room all belong to the one brick stack in the center of the house. The fireplaces of the front rooms are small, and that of the kitchen very shallow and lacks an oven. They have only a very simple trim, with no mantel shelf; there is paneling above the fireplaces.

Rough ceiling beams are exposed in all the rooms; the room walls are sheathed horizontally on the outside, with partitions constructed of vertical boards.

There are no room partitions in the attic. A stone cellar under the eastern part of the house has the bulkhead entrance on the southeast.

North of the house are found several outbuildings typical of colonial homesteads, like barns, smoke house, and a well; a fenced herb garden is located at the east of the house.^{6a}

6a. See floor plan, last page of the report.

II. Wick House Inventories

Henry Wick died on December 21, 1780, willing his property to his wife Mary. Upon her death in 1787, the property was divided among her children, the main part of the homestead going to the youngest daughter Tempe, including "movable" property like farm animals and farming utensils, household furniture, and wearing apparel.

There are two inventories of the original household equipment which complement each other. That of the personal property of Henry Wick, prepared in 1781 after his death, is a very short list of items; Mary Wick's inventory, dated 1787, is more detailed, comprehensive, and significant. Like so many other inventories of the period, those of the Wicks do not suggest any idea of types and styles of furniture. They just contain an abbreviated list of the number of pieces and the estimated value of each item; occasionally one finds a descriptive word by the property appraiser. Although the inventories list all the furniture on hand, other members of the family may have owned pieces not listed in them. The inventories do not tell where the different pieces were located, but the general location of most of them is quite obvious. Some pieces could have been located or used in several places.

A furnishing study for the house of a self-sufficient homestead like the Wick's perforce must take into consideration everything that went into the complex of buildings that formed the farm. To a great extent the farm economy determined the nature and number of many of the furnishing pieces. Home industries, home life, and all kinds of typical farm activities were reflected in the character of many of the furnitures and gave a definite aim or direction to the needs of the homestead owners.

We reproduce below the inventories of Henry and Mary Wick, in two columns, broken down roughly into several categories that suggest the general location of the different pieces. We include also farm products, animals, and farm equipment because these items impart certain meaning and are relevant to everything that went into the house. Items on the left column pertain to Henry Wick and on the right to Mary Wick.⁷

7. Morris County Courthouse, Morristown.

1. Kitchen-pantry

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 brass kettle | 1 pair of hand bellows |
| pots and kettles | 1 grid iron |
| trammels | 1 toast iron and spit |
| andirons | 2 pair of old tongs and shovels |
| pails and tongs | 1 pair of andirons |
| gridling irons | 2 trammels |
| bellows | 1 frying pan |
| 1 case of bottles | 2 iron kettles |
| milk room furniture | 3 iron pots |
| bidle and seive [sic] | 1 iron and copper teakettle |
| 1 gun | 3 pewter basins |
| | 4 small bowls |
| | 2 tea pots |
| | 1 coffee pot |
| | 1 tea canister |
| | 1 grater |
| | 1 case of 11 bottles |
| | 1 churn |
| | 2 smoothing irons |
| | 1 old case without bottles |
| | 1 iron candlestick |
| | 1 musket |

2. Dining-living room

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| pewter sundry | 8 pewter plates |
| 4 tables 9 chairs very poor | 3 old pewter platters |
| 1 desk | 4 earthen platters |
| | 24 earthen plates |
| | 16 common chairs |
| | 1 breakfast table |
| | 2 old tables |
| | 1 old desk |
| | 1 stand |
| | books |

3. Bedrooms

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3 beds and bedding | 1 chest |
| 1 case with drawers | 1 old case of drawers |
| 1 looking glass | 1 warming pan |
| 4 chests | 1 looking glass |
| | 2 chests |
| | 2 feather beds and beddings |
| | 2 bedsteads |
| | 5 blankets |
| | 1 rug |
| | 2 brass candlesticks |

4. Personal effects

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1 watch | 1 old silver watch |
| men's clothes | women wearing apparel |

5. Sewing-weaving

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 loom and tackling | 1 loom |
| wheels and reels | a quantity of lining |
| | 1 guillwheel and swift |
| | 1 small spinning wheel |
| | 1 large wheel |
| | 1 old lape loom |
| | 13 fleeces of wool |

6. Farm equipment-tools

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ox cart old | 1 ox cart |
| 1 riding chair | 1 riding chair and harness |
| 3 saddles and 2 bridles | 1 hunting saddle |
| 2 plows and gears and chains | 1 ox sled |
| 1 harrow | 1 winnowing mill |
| 2 axes | 2 pitch forks |
| 1 old scythe | 2 rakes |
| 1 steel trap | 1 garden spade |
| 1 grind stone | 1 grind stone |
| 2 pair stybyards | 1 log chain |
| 2 hand saws | 1 beattle and 2 wedges |
| old casks | 1 narrow ax |
| 6 empty casks | 1 hand saw |
| 1 chest lumber, iron & tools | 1 nail hammer |
| 1 yoke of oxen | 2 hetchels |
| | 2 pair steelyards |
| | 1 square |
| | 2 augers |
| | 1 bridle |
| | 1 lamp |
| | 2 seives [sic] |
| | 45 old casks |
| | a quaniity of cedar shingles |
| | 1 fauthorn [?] |
| | 1 yoke of oxen |
| | 1 yoke, of 3 year old steers |

7. Farm animals

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 5 cows | 1 pied cow |
| 2 calves yearlings | 1 red cow |
| 4 horses | 1 black cow |
| 1 colt | 1 red heifer |
| 5 sheep | 1 black and white cow |
| 1 hog | 1 red bracklefaced cow |
| 1 calf | 1 white heifer |
| | 1 red whitefaced cow |
| | 1 brindle heifer 2 yrs. old |
| | 1 bull 2 yrs. old |
| | 1 brindle steer 2 yrs. old |
| | 4 yearlings |
| | 6 young calves |
| | 1 white horse |
| | 1 sorrel mare |
| | 1 bay colt |
| | 13 steers |
| | 2 grown swine |
| | 2 pigs |
| | 12 bee hives |
| | 44 geese young and old |
| | 3 old turkeys a several young ones |
| | a number of Dung Hill Fowls |

8. Farm products-foods-drinks

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4 bushels corn | quantities of hay, oats, flax, |
| 8 bushels wheat | corn, wheat, buckwheat and rye |
| 1 1/2 bushels buckwheat | patches of potatoes, corn, flax, |
| 4 barrels cider | oats, and a field of rye. |
| 1 barrel whisky | 1 barrel of pork |
| | 1 small cask of vinegar |
| | 3 casks of soap |
| | 1 meal chest |
| | 1 lye tub |
| | a part of matheglin [?] in a barrel |

Many household goods, perhaps because they were taken for granted or were not considered valuable by the appraisers, were not listed in the inventories. Others, like men's clothes, women's wearing apparel, milk room furniture, pewter sundry, are too general, and need some explanation. The items in the Wicks' inventories can be supplemented with a checklist of common household goods found in 17 inventories of estates belonging to residents of Morris County, including Morristown and nearby towns; the resumé of the items selected, reproduced as an appendix at the end of this report, is broken down into the same general categories used for the Wicks' inventories.

III. Farmhouse Furnishings

It would be physically impossible to accommodate in the Wick House all the furnishing pieces recommended or indirectly suggested in this report. To select a complete set of domestic furnishings for a colonial farmhouse in an accurate way is extremely difficult. As far as the house is concerned, the existing furnishings are quite adequate, but there is ample room for improvement. Some of the things needed are perhaps unobtainable, but most of them are feasible.

As a whole, what the house needs most is a feeling of being lived in and used. This sense of being lived in is not imparted because each room has a nice package of artifacts too neatly arranged and clean, with objects reflecting everyday things missing. From the point of view of interpretation, the house cannot stand alone. The furnishing plan should include also the cellar, attic and the outbuildings, some of which have disappeared.

In the chapter that follows, we discuss briefly some aspects of homestead life and everyday things. They will provide a general frame of reference for adding daily-life relevance to the existing furnishings.

A. Kitchen, or Common Room

Daily life in a homestead like the Wicks' centered in the fireplace of the kitchen, which in reality was the common room. Since the kitchen was the largest room of the house it needed a large fire to keep it warm in winter. The kitchen served many purposes. All the household gathered in the kitchen where the big fire was burning. Around the fireplace the meals were cooked and most of them eaten, friends were entertained, and almost all the indoor tasks done, including spinning, soap and candle making, and many others related to home industries.

Although the southeast room of the Wick House was most probably used as a combination of formal common or living-dining room, the Wicks, following the tradition of many New England families, undoubtedly used the kitchen as the common room. Even when a farmhouse had a dining room in those days, it was

used only on very special occasions; the kitchen remained the living center of the house. In a house with three fireplaces, it would have been difficult to maintain the three of them burning at the same time during winter.

Henry Wick's inventory refers to four tables and nine chairs, and Mrs. Wick's to two old tables and sixteen common chairs. At least a table and some chairs must have been located in the kitchen. In a farmer's kitchen were also commonly found benches and stools, homemade and quite crude.

A farm kitchen did not contain the domestic conveniences of closets; household articles were hung around the fireplace and distributed about the walls and even hung on wooden pegs driven into the beams of the low-studded ceiling.

B. Pantry and Cupboard

Every kitchen of the period had a pantry, whether it was large or small. It is impossible to tell or enumerate everything that was found in a small pantry like that of the Wicks, but a general description of a common pantry is as follows: There was the sink, made either of soapstone, stone or wood; water was brought in from the outside pump or spring. Light and air came through one window. Shelves were built on three sides of the room, some enclosed at the lower part and some with cupboards in the upper part. Quite often there was a shelf near the window used as a work table. Wooden bowls, milk pans, earthen crocks, jars and pitchers were placed in the cupboards underneath the shelves; on the shelves above were stored the baking dishes of tin and earthen ware, baking ingredients and odd boxes of all sizes. Spices, small quantities of sugar, meal and powdered herbs were kept in the round and oval boxes. Tin and wooden boxes held the sets of spices, each small box marked with the name of the spice. By the sink hung the ladles and dippers, with long and short handles, and of all shapes and sizes. Gourds were often used. At hand were the pantry tools, either hanging or in drawers, such as the rolling pin, chopping knife, scoops, mashers,

8. William Chauncey Langdon, Everyday Things in American Life, 1607-1776 (New York, Charles Scribner's sons, 1939), pp. 18-19.

spatulas, lemon squeezer, pie crimper, apple parer. A mortar and pestle stood on the top shelf and a bucket or two under the sink with water from the well.⁹

Rarely was found a kitchen without a pine cupboard, with open shelves above and cupboards below, sometimes with doors on both the upper and lower parts enclosing the shelves; sometimes drawers were added between these two compartments with a projecting shelf which served as a place on which to work. This type of cupboard held the things that did not belong in the pantry, as everyday dishes of glass, wood, pewter and earthenware, the tea and coffee pots, the tea canister, and the knives, forks and spoons for the kitchen table.¹⁰

C. Milk Room Furniture

Henry and Mary Wick's inventories mention milk room furniture and a churn. When the family of a homestead was small or poor, the kitchen and pantry served the purpose of a milk room. Here were found the butter churn, cheese-press, the racks for the buckets, and the cheese closet. This closet was an open cupboard of three or four shelves with a frame for the door. Over the frame was tacked cheesecloth to let in air and keep out the dust and the cheese fly. Making butter and cheese was an almost daily affair of the milk room.

Milk was poured into keelers, which were very shallow staved tubs, and set for cream in the cellar or milk room. Cream was kept in a tub until a necessary amount was ready for making butter. This was called a sour-cream tub.

Butter churns ranged in size from 15 to 24 inches. They varied in their construction, but the most commonly known was the staved and hooped, high and slender tub. This type had a cover which was set into the churn, with a hole through which the plunger worked. The plunger was a long handle with crossed pieces of wood at the end with a hole in each of the four ends.

9. The tools stored in the pantry at the present time would be more appropriate in one of the outbuildings, as furnishings for a workshop.

10. Mary Early Gould, Early American Wooden Ware (Massachusetts, The Pond--Ekberg Company, 1942), pp. 59-61, 81-89, 174-78.

Butter was taken out of the churn with scoops and put into a wooden tray and worked with paddles until it was free from water. Whatever butter was not needed for home use was packed for market, for selling or for bartering.

Butter was not made during the hot summer months because the family supply of this commodity was large enough to last until fall. During the summer months cheeses were made, and the task was a hard one, requiring daily attention.¹¹

D. Kitchen Equipment and Wares

Fireplace and kitchen equipment included numerous wrought iron items, some of which were mentioned in the Wicks' inventories. Some of the standard iron pieces were spits, skewers, hooks, flat-irons, skillets, trammels, poker, toasters, waffle irons, pie lifters, trivets, shovels, tongs, andirons, long-handled meat forks, spoons, cranes, or sways, pots, pans, kettles and storage vessels.

Although not mentioned directly in the inventories, many tin and woodenware pieces were found in the period kitchens.

Woodenware used were of different categories, according to their use: utensils for preparing and cooking foods, containers for storing food, and utensils for eating. There were the trough for kneading the bread, paddle for stirring the dough, and long wooden knife for cutting the dough into loaves. Wooden peels, or shovels, were used to put the bread into the oven and to remove it when baked. Milking and buttermaking required many wooden articles including the pail for milking, keelers, cream skimmer, sour-cream tub, butter churn, scoop for taking the butter out of the churn, the butter-working tray and paddles, and butter molds and prints. Churns were made of both pottery and wood.

Tin served as a substitute for silver and plate in the homes of the less affluent and in rural districts. Tinware included a wide variety of items for the hearth, pantry, and for lighting. Spits, gridirons, corn poppers, coffee bean roasters, and covered pans to carry embers, are examples of hearth tinware. Plate warmers covered plates of wood set on the hearth. Tin coffee pots were of various sizes and shapes. Dairy equipment

11. Ibid., pp. 60-61, 81-89.

included milk pans, milk cans, butter churns, and cream whippers. Of the simple utilitarian tinware can be mentioned dippers, scoops, strainers, sifters, chopping knives, cottage cheese molds, and graters. There were also tin boxes of various sizes, candlesticks, lamps, and lanterns.¹²

E. Cooking Methods

In the Wicks' kitchen the preparation of food and the diet habits were not different from those of other nearby homesteads. Foods were boiled, roasted, or broiled on an open hearth. Baking was done in a brick oven built into the fireplace.¹³

For boiling, the housewife had an iron crane fastened into the chimney on one side of the fireplace. Kettles of many sizes and shapes, and pots were hung on this crane by pot-hooks or trammels. The crane could be swung out into the room to hang the pots and kettles on it and swing them back over the fire, and out again to take the food off when it was cooked. Lids on the pots and kettles economized heat and made the water boil harder. The trammels could be lengthened or shortened to accommodate the height of the fire and the size of the kettle. There was always a supply of hot water on the crane or lug pole for cooking and other household purposes.

The housewife used a spit for roasting before the open fire. This was a sharp iron rod which she stuck through the meat and supported in front of the fire on two forked uprights. By a handle on one end of the spit someone could turn the meat continuously so that it was cooked evenly on all sides. A pan underneath caught the juice of the meat and the drippings for the gravy.

There were a great many other varieties of cooking and roasting utensils for the fireplace, most of which have been mentioned before. The gridirons were legged stands with grating,

12. Katharine M. McClinton, The Complete Book of American Country Antiques (New York, Coward-McCann, Inc., 1967), pp. 15-22, 39-44.

13. When the Wick House was restored, no brick oven--undoubtedly an original feature--was included. Baking, therefore, has to be assumed now to have been done in a so-called Dutch oven.

square in shape, oblong and even round. The round ones revolved so that the dish of food resting on it could be exposed to the fire on all sides; the trivet was the very long-legged stand, commonly made of iron; the iron toaster, made also in many shapes and sizes, was hand wrought and very artistically made; its long handle swung on a hinge so that the bread could toast on both sides. Another common fireplace piece was the waffle iron. Like all the implements which were thrust over the coals, this too had a handle.¹⁴

F. Food and Diet

There was no lack of food in the Wicks' house, as the inventories show in part, since the farm was self-sufficient. As for crops, corn ranked first in importance, followed by wheat, rye, oats, and buckweat. Potatoes were a staple, as were cabbages, beans, and Indian corn. Like other farmers of the region, the Wicks had an orchard where they could raise apples, cherries, plums, peaches, pears, and mulberries. A familiar picture of the kitchen was the drying poles suspended from loft beams above the fireplace. From these hung peaches, apples, seed corn, strings of sausages, red peppers, and herbs for medicinal use, all according to their season. Most of the year the drying poles were full.

Corn, usually ground into meal, was the principal food, supplemented by meat and vegetables. Meats were smoked, dried, pickled, or salted to preserve them for future use; fruits, herbs, and vegetables were pickled or preserved in large pottery jars. Herbs from the nearby garden were "stewed," or steeped in pottery containers to provide preservatives, seasoning, and medicinal extracts. Yeast, essential for bread, was also home-cultured in such pots.

Some imported goodies too could be found in the kitchen. Spices, condiments, salad oil, almonds, walnuts, raisins, dried currants, nutmegs, lemons, and cloves were imported from England, the West Indies, and the Mediterranean countries. Coffee, tea, and cocoa came from England. Spices and coffee were ground at home.

14. Langdon, pp. 20-22; Gould, pp. 41-48; Henry J. Kauffman, Early American Ironware (Vermont, Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1967), pp. 64-65.

The Wicks' table was well supplied with ham, bacon, and smoked meats. Delicious, juicy, and tender hams were usually hung in rows from the ceiling timbers of the coal cellar. Their rich flavor was obtained by being cured in the fragrant smoke of burning hickory and oak. Occasionally fresh meat was had. Like any other farmer, Henry Wick also hunted to supplement the daily diet of other meats, and to obtain animal hides for making clothes and household furnishings. In every house there was a fowling piece, powder flasks, shot bags, ramrods, and the like.

Solid substantial food was also found on the Wicks' table: poultry, eggs, and cheese. Hot breads were popular; brown bread was made of corn meal and rye, mixed with water, and baked in the brick oven. A finer bread was made by using corn meal, rye meal, yeast, and water. Next to corn meal puddings, bread was the mainstay of the family. Yeast, kept in earthen jars, was handed down from one generation to another. Short cakes, made with buttermilk and baked on a griddle, were in daily demand, and pies also.

Apples, which apparently the Wicks had in abundance, supplied their table in many ways--pies, butter, sauce, cider for drinking and vinegar for cooking. Apple sauce was flavored with molasses, apple molasses, maple sugar molasses, or cider. Cider was the common drink and bequeathing barrels of it in wills was as common as leaving furniture or household supplies. Every family made its own cider; apples were plentiful and the process of making apple pomace and pressing it between racks was not difficult. Cider was used at the table and also taken to the field in kegs; vinegar was made from the inferior apples. Thus an orchard of apples provided raw fruit, apple butter and apple sauce, cider for drinking, and vinegar for cooking and preserving. Apparently the Wicks made their own rum too.

For sweetening purposes molasses and maple sugar were commonly used. Boiling was the only form of sterilization possible, and cellars and spring houses were the only means of keeping liquids cool.¹⁵

15. Now closed, the cellar of the Wick House could be opened and furnished as a place to store certain kinds of foods and for cooling liquids. Andrew D. Mellick, Jr., The Story of an Old Farm (Sommerville, New Jersey, 1889), pp. 236-38; Gould, pp. 63-69, 77-81; Harry B. Weiss, Life in Early New Jersey,

G. Dining-Living Room

As stated before, the southeast room of the Wicks was most probably used as a combination of dining-living room; traditionally it was referred to as the living room. Both as a dining and a living room, it was not generally used as often as the kitchen.

Meals were commonly served in pewter platters, dishes, and basins and spooned into individual wooden bowls or trenchers, or eaten directly from the common supply.

In ordinary homes the tableware was usually wood or pewter, but especially pewter throughout the eighteenth century. Together with tables, chairs and one stand, the Wicks' inventories included pewter and earthen plates and platters, and "pewter sundry." Since pewter could not be put on the fireplace because it would melt, its use was limited to fairly cool foods on the table. Pewter sundry could have been some of the following: trays and porringers of all kinds, saltcellars, sugar bowls, tankards, pitchers, mugs, spoons, and vases.

Mrs. Wick's inventory refers to books, which no doubt were found in the dining-living room, next to the desk. Books commonly found in a farmhouse were the Bible, psalmbook, hymn book, and books on farming, spelling, geography, astrology, and the like.

Other items that could have been found in the room were drinking glasses, ink horn, pewter ink stand, table cloth, frame pictures, almanacs, cupboard, candlestick, fireplace equipment, writing paper, pencil case, and an easy chair.

H. Bedrooms

Traditionally, the southwest room of the house has been considered as that of the Wicks, and the small room on the northwest as Tempe's. The small room between the pantry and the northeast corner of the dining-living room could have been used as a combination of spare bedroom and sewing room. We simply do not know.

The New Jersey Historical Series Vol. 26, (Princeton, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 5, 10-11, 41-42; Extract from American Newspapers (Paterson, N.J., 1903), Vol. II, 1778, pp. 444, 520; Vol. IX, 1772-73, pp. 101, 229; Edwin Tunis, Colonial Living (New York, The World Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 108-09, 136-37.

16. For information on pewter see Tunis, p. 136; Langdon, p. 174.

Henry Wick's inventory lists 3 beds and bedding and Mrs. Wick's 2 feather beds and beddings and 2 bedsteads. A bedstead was the frame or furniture part while the beds referred to the mattresses. Beddings could have meant pillows, pillow cases, blankets, linen and woolen sheets, coverlets, and bolsters. As the Wicks' inventories show, there were also one case with drawers, one looking glass, chests, one warming pan, a rug, and two candlesticks. Chests were both practical and centers of sentiment. It was the trunk where linen was kept. In the bedrooms were generally found towels, washing basins, chamber pots, window curtains, chairs, and a clock.

Most attics, besides being places to hang herbs and corn that could not be stored in the outside buildings, were used also as sleeping quarters, depending on the circumstances. In attics were found also bedding, pillows and feather beds suspended from clotheslines, furniture, chests and trunks that had accumulated, often from generation to generation.¹⁷

I. Personal Effects

Personal effects, especially wearing apparel, formed a very important part of the bedroom furnishings. The best clothing hung from wooden pegs in the wall. A silver watch, "men cloth" and "women apparel" are the only effects mentioned in the Wick inventories. At the present time the bedrooms have no personal effects, thus imparting the appearance of never having being slept in.

For men, the standard dress of the period consisted of breeches fastened by silver or brass buckles below the knee, long woolen stockings held up by fancy garters, linen shirts, cowhide shoes, brass-buttoned coats with skirts halfway to the knees, sometimes a wig, a broad-brimmed beaver or woolen felt hat, and, for winter, a great coat. For daily wear, buckskin, leather, homespun and worsted fabrics were common.

17. Tunis, p. 110; Langdon, pp. 27-30; Gould, p. 62; Luke Vincent Lockwood, Colonial Furniture in America (New York, 1926), II, 243. The attic of the Wick House is now closed and unfurnished.

Women wore a petticoat and short gown, with a kerchief pinned over the shoulders, linen stockings, heavy shoes, light and heavy coats. Hanging on pegs driven in the room walls could also be seen overgowns and outer garments. They were generally made of tow, flannel and linsey-woolsey. Shortgowns were made of kersey, calamanco and homespun and the frocks and outer garments of gay fabrics, the names of some of which are obsolete. There were in use taffeta, beaver, French tabby, milinet, moreen, grosset, Holland linen, bombazine, and calico, besides satins, silks, and velvets.

Work clothes were made from native cloth, spun, woven, and dyed in the house, from wool and flax. It was considered an honor to wear homemade apparel. Carding, spinning, weaving, and knitting were common employments of both the common people and the ladies of fashion. Tow was often used for work trousers and skirts. Jackets and trousers were made of deerskin and leather was often used for heavy work clothes. Skins and furs of wild animals provided materials for caps, gloves, moccasins, and mufflers.

Men sometimes wore long hair braided into pigtails. "Hives" referred to the crownless hats worn by women. Some of the women's shoes had wooden heels. During hot weather, women wore only one petticoat and a short cotton gown. Little jewelry was used except finger rings and necklaces, earrings and fancy shoe buckles. In rainy weather, men wore oilcloth capes and women a protective petticoat called a weather skirt. By 1766 French dress was coming into fashion and every woman wore a little hoop.

Other personal items of the period were shoes, stockings, beaver, castor and wool hats, horn and ivory combs, silver shoe and knee buckles, brass shoe buckles, watches and trinkets chains, jewellers brilliants, garnets, hair cloths, steel snuffers, snuff-boxes, shaving powder, shoe brushes, cloths brushes, razors, hankerchiefs, knee garters, flannel vests, men's and women's gloves, Castile soap, plug tobacco, and playing cards.¹⁸

18. Weiss, pp. 31-34; Mellick, pp. 241-42; Sherman, pp.100-01; Extracts from American Newspapers, Vol. III and others for lists of cloths, linen, and different personal effects.

J. Sewing Furnishings

Homespun activities were steady work with the colonial women. As stated before, the small room north of the dining-living room could have been used as a combination of spare bedroom and sewing room. Some of the equipment was actually used in the kitchen, or perhaps even in the dining-living room. Besides the common items listed in the Wicks' inventories, others furnishings needed to illustrate the sewing and weaving industry would include some elements of the following: cloths and linens of all kinds and colors, sewing threads of different colors, including silk, pins, sharp and square pointed needles, scissors, buttons, thimbles, flax, tow yarn, wool, woolen yarn, and the like.

19. Information is scattered in the various volumes of Extracts from American Newspapers, advertising goods of country stores.

IV. Furnishing Sources of Supply

A. Do It Yourself

A brief discussion about the various sources of supply available to the residents of the Morristown community provides another clue to the possible nature of the furnishings of the Wick family.

On the self-sufficient American farm in colonial days, the general rule was "do it yourself!" Besides cultivating the fields and caring for his livestock, the farmer was master of many skills in order to keep everything about him in good repair, and to provide tools, equipment, and furniture for his homestead. Simple iron work was done right on the farm, like making rails, repairing wagons, fixing farm gear, and mending house hardware. A farmer often had to do his own carpentry in making repairs and building sheds. A table, a chair with plain vertical slats in its back, and some simple wooden kitchen wares could be achieved at home by a clever and smart farmer.

Some farmers were adept as blacksmiths, carpenters, tanners, shoemakers, brewers, weavers, merchants, tailors, coopers, butchers, and the like, and were able to provide for their own house needs. If there is an important general aspect of farm life reflected in the property inventories and wills of Morris County homesteaders, it is that the farmers were jacks-of-all-trades. Henry Wick was not an exception.²⁰

There were no idlers in the farmer's family. The colonial housewife had many daily chores to perform besides her many other tasks. Most of the material for clothing, bed linens, table linens, curtains, and upholstery was made of the native wool, flax, and cotton spun and woven into cloth in almost every home. Linen thread was woven into sheets and table cloths. The process of cleaning, hackling, and sorting the flax, as well as the final spinning and weaving, was done by the housewife. The girls helped to prepare meals, carded and spun, wove wool and flax, sewed clothes, made soap, candles, butter, cheese, preserved fruits, worked in the garden, milked the cows, smoothed and washed the clothes, and continued in unending work.

20. Weiss, p. 9.

Every farmer had a patch of flax which, after being cured and properly dressed, was spun and woven into cloth and bleached in the sun. The tow--the coarser part of the flax--was used for ropes and harness, and a portion of it was spun and woven into a coarser cloth for men's wear. This cloth was dyed with a preparation of butternut bark, which gave it a peculiar shade of brown.²¹

B. Local and Outside Artisans

Colonial society was served by a host of skilled craftsmen whose specialized abilities were highly regarded. Blacksmiths, farriers, wheelwrights, carpenters, millers, shoemakers, printers, masons, cabinetmakers, weavers, tanners and bakers--each serving a small area--became increasingly important as the economy matured.

These artisans served the needs of the country dweller. Carpenters made the wooden parts of his tools, hewed the oak logs needed to build a house, dressed the surfaces with an adz, and cut the timbers to length with a crosscut saw; joiners put in window frames, built stairs, made paneling, and frequently put together simple furniture, such as chests and boxes.

Although most of his work was horseshoeing, the blacksmith made the necessary metal parts of all types of working tools, like the hoe, the ax, the shovel, and the plowshare. He produced objects for the fireplace and cooking equipment, such as andirons, cranes, fire tongs, poker, hand shovels, trammels, trivets, gridirons, toasters, pothooks, small game spits, skillets, skewer holds, and others. Hardware for doors and windows, and nails were hand-hammered on the anvil.

Barrels, tubs, and pails were used in great quantities in the farm and in the house for storage of many different products--flour, cornmeal, cider, maple syrup, salt meat, and fish. When

21. Katherine M. McClinton, The Complete Book of American Country Antiques (New York, Coward McCann, Inc., 1967), p. 133; Weiss, p. 37; Andrew M. Sherman, Historic Morristown (Morristown, 1905) pp. 100-01.

possible the farmer bought the barrels and tubs from the town cooper. He could, however, hollow out a tree trunk to use for storage.

Nearly every community had its chair and cabinetmakers who made country furniture. These craftsmen, using a few simple tools, made the furniture in their home, of hard woods cut on their own or nearby farms. With the growth of substantial towns and the generally increased prosperity of the eighteenth century came the demand for more and better furniture. This encouraged the establishment of cabinetmakers' shops in the cities, most of which were devoted to the copying of imported pieces. They copied freely the designs of imported furniture, combining English influence with distinctly American execution.²² In country districts carpenters and joiners, in order to produce inexpensive substitutes for mahogany furniture, used local woods like cherry, maple, pine and fruitwood. They simplified the designs of imported models, leaving off all costly carving and other trimmings.²³

Before the Revolution there were also traveling craftsmen who provided various specialized services for the farm families. They made candles, chair seats, tombstones, and performed carpenters' work, coopers' work, and many more chores.

In the nearby cities of New York and Philadelphia, craftsmen from abroad set shops to supply services for those who could afford them, most of whom advertised in the newspapers of the period. There were carpenters, joiners, clock makers, painters, printers, cutlers, stonecutters, needleworkers, builders, artists, bookbinders, hairdressers, jewelers, masons, furniture makers, gunsmiths, saddlers, braziers, potters, metal workers, coach makers, pewterers, upholsterers, silversmiths, goldsmiths, miniaturists, engravers, and others.²⁴

22. McClintock, pp. 8-9, 91-92; Kauffman, p. 63; Henry Lionel Williams, Country Furniture of Early America (New York, A. S. Barnes, 1963), pp. 11-12; Early Furniture made in New Jersey, 1690-1870. The Newark Museum Association (Newark, 1958), p. 2.

23. Nancy McClelland, Furnishing the Colonial and Federal House (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1936), p. 35.

24. Weiss, pp. 37, 39.

C. Importation

During the eighteenth century, people who could afford certain luxuries combined in their homes both furniture of local manufacture and imported pieces from England or other colonies. Wooden furniture imported from England formed a very small proportion of what was used in New England. Since New England was self-supporting in the field of wooden ware, these colonies were able to export considerable quantity of that class of goods to other colonies. New England joiners and cabinetmakers were numerous and expert, and consequently their furniture found a ready market in the south. During these times also many articles for the home such as glass-ware, porcelain, wall paper, clocks, books, fabrics, hardware, musical instruments, jewelry, paintings, and candy were imported from England for sale, though native industries were springing up.²⁵

D. Public Sales

Another source of supply for household goods were public sales of pieces advertised in newspapers of New Jersey. For instance, in 1779 the house furnishings of Eunice Horton, deceased, and from Chatham, near Morristown, were advertised for sale and listed as follows:

Kitchen Furniture-washing tubs, waste casks, andirons, shovel and tongs, trammels, iron pots, iron and brass kettles, pewter basons, porringers and spoons, knives and forks, bakepan, frying pan, griddle, gridiron, smoothing-irons, teakettles, copper coffepot, pewter teapot, stone jugs and pots, earthen platters, plates and cups of different sizes; tin kettle, bleaching pot, pans, half gallon and quart measures, several tables and stands, chest of drawers, spinning wheels, wool cards, cotton cards, wheat griddle, baskets of different sizes, water pails, skillets, ladles, keelers, pitchers, pepper-boxes, queen's ware and stone plates, stone butter-pots, warming-pan, a beautiful set of china teacups and saucers, tea-pots, sugar-cups. Many other household goods were also for sale.²⁶

25. Esther Singleton, The Furniture of Our Forefathers (New York, Doubleday, Page and Company, 1901), II, 315; Weiss, p. 39.
26. Extracts from American Newspapers III, 1779, 228, 271.

E. Peddlers

Besides itinerant workmen, peddlers were vital to the farm community. On foot and on horseback, the peddlers visited the homesteads to exchange their goods for cash or farm products that could be carried away with them, like wheat, rye, and flax, or goods made in the house. When the peddler arrived in the house, the family surrounded him and waited for him to spread his wares, which included combs, gold sleeve buttons, leather shoelaces, socks, woodenware, knives, cotton and silk goods, suspenders, garters, mitts, handkerchiefs, stockings, primers, chapbooks, and others, which came from Philadelphia or New England. He also carried shirts, coats, breeches, and tobacco. Many of the articles he sold, at least before 1750, were homemade. Among the books he peddled were religious, and of spelling and geography, along with little ones on astrology, palmistry, farming, jokes, and others. From time to time he carried other articles, such as shawls, hats, baskets, pottery, tinware, brooms, patent medicines, scissors, pins, thread, candles, small tools, rabbit skins and furs, goose feathers, and rags. He also brought news and gossip to the isolated homesteads.²⁷

F. General or Country Stores

With the improving of means of transportation, the peddler declined in importance since the rural family was more easily supplied with manufactured goods in the town or cross-roads store. Barter continued through the eighteenth century as an important form of trade. In the country stores the farmer~~s~~ exchanged not only his products but also his wife's butter, cheese, and homespun for the food and other items he needed and could not make or readily procure. The store's merchandise included groceries, hardware, household equipment, and toys, as well as clothing for men, women and children. Indeed the goods included almost everything from buttons and bows to rat traps. In the country store the storekeeper tempted the local farmers' wives to unseemly extravagance with his great stock of imported calicoes, silk, and bombazines, and supplies of tea, coffee, spices, and sweetmeats for injecting a note of luxury into drab colonial menus. Colonial stores offered their customers, for cash and usually in exchange for produce, an astonishing variety of goods.²⁸

27. McClintock, p. 10; Weiss, pp. 112-13.

28. Weiss, p. 113; McClintock, pp. 91-92.

There were many stores in Morristown and nearby towns that advertised their products in the newspapers of New Jersey. One of the typical stores of Morristown--G. Duyckinck--listed items that were sold only for cash, and others by way of barter for any kind of produce "for family use." In lieu of cash it accepted "gammons, wheat, smoked-beef, neats' tongues (salt or pickled), pork or beef, flour, corn, Indian meal, bar iron, boards of any kind, fence rails or parts." Besides a complete assortment of medicines and drugs, and cloths and linens, the stores provided much of what, was needed in the way of household goods. Some of the items used in the lists are obsolete, especially those concerning cloths and linens, but a fairly representative list of items can be obtained from newspaper advertisements. What follows is a brief list of items from four stores of Morristown in 1779, broken down into general categories related to their use:

Kitchen-pantry: japanned wares--servers, waiters, trays, and bread baskets; glassware--decanters sorted, gallons and half gallons, quarts, pints and half pints, wine, cider and beer glasses, case bottles, and doctors; special bottles; mahogany ware--servers, waiters, trays; gauze aprons; plane irons; Philadelphia earthenware; iron pots and kettles; brass flour and pepper boxes; brass mortars and pestles.

Personal effects: jewellers stone assortment; watch trinkets; watch chains; gauze handkerchiefs; worsted and hemp stockings; penknives; stay laces; Castile soap; horn combs; crooked and coarse combs; shoe brushes; Barcelona handkerchiefs; fine ivory and horn combs; razors; shoes; stockings; beaver, castor and wool hats; pipes; spectacles; silver shoe and knee buckles; brass shoe buckles; steel snuffers; snuff boxes; shaving powder; buckle and ring stones, and garnets.

Sewing-weaving: painters, limmers, and dyers colors; cloth coloured sewing silks; fine white thread; white lace; black edging; Dutch lace; assorted London and French sharp and square pointed needles; scissors; metal buttons; Mohair buttons; cloths and linens; thimbles; hat linings; sleeve buttons.

Dining-living: wine glasses; ink powder; malt and painted table cloth; knives and forks; china dishes sorted of different patterns and sizes; pewter ink chest; steel pencil cases; ink powder.

Many other miscellaneous articles were also sold.²⁹

Other stores of the same year advertised articles like beds and bedding, dining and tea tables, chairs, desks, book cases, mahogany tables, and the like.³⁰

29. Extracts from American Newspapers, III, 5-6, 18, 20, 59, 80, 405.

30. New Jersey Journal, Vol. III, No. LXII.

APPENDIX

Household goods of Morris County residents

Kitchen-pantry

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| hand irons | pails |
| tongs | bottles |
| andirons | earthen pots |
| gridirons | iron pots |
| trammels | stone pots |
| trivet | stone jugs |
| shovel | trays |
| toasting iron | baskets |
| skillet | bake trough |
| griddle [sic] | brass skimmer |
| flesh fork | ladle |
| water pot | fork |
| tin basin | bowls |
| tin pans | chopping knife |
| tin quart | pil pan |
| tin funnel | toasting iron |
| tin seive [sic] | salt mortar |
| pewter basins | salt cellar |
| pewter pots | churn |
| pewter teapots | cheese press |
| pewter funnel | cupboard |
| kettles- iron, brass, tin | smoothing iron |
| candle stand | pistol |
| guns | lantern |

2. Dining-living room

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| tin cups | Bible |
| pewter platter | Psalm book |
| pewter plate | Hymn book |
| pewter spoons | calendar |
| pewter dishes | earthen plates |
| drinking glass | desk |
| ink horn | stand |
| pewter ink stand | table |
| table cloth | leather-back chair |
| chairs-windsor (1) | easy chair |

3. Bedrooms

dresser
trunk
Chaff. Bed and bedding (2)
Hannahs Bed (1)
Trundle Bedstead (1)
pillows
linen sheets
towels
window curtains
looking glass
plain blankets
coverlids
clock

low chest
case of drawers
Kayles Bed (1)
Christians Bed (1)
feather bed
pillow cases
woolen sheets
warming pan
chamber pot
Kersey blankets
bolsters
candlestick

4. Personal effects

Coat
watch coats
hat
boots
stockings
handkerchiefs
jackets

vest
breeches
shoes
shirts-flannel, linen
razor
worsted combs
pocket compass

5. Sewing-weaving

loom and tackling
tow yarn
quilt wheel and swift
woolen wheel
linen

linsey in loom
spinning wheel
wool
woolen yarn
flax

6. Tools

hand saw
auger
axes
cross-cut saw
hammer
nails
shoemaker tools
sheep shears

drawing knife
chisel
grindstone
trowel
picks
bench of tools
scythes

In different storage vessels were amounts of tow, fish, pork, beef, flower, meat, cider, rum, soap, hog fat, butter, lye, sauce, milk, vinegar, corn, flax, seed, rye flower, and wheat.⁷

7. Deeds, Morris County Court House; the inventories cover the years 1768-1787.

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WICK HOUSE FLOOR PLAN

