



Desk and Bookcase, ca. 1797, cat. no. 51

*John Shaw*

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Cabinetmaker of Annapolis

WILLIAM VOSS ELDER III AND LU BARTLETT

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

17. Pafenuse, pp. 257-262.
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28. Peter Force Collection, Maryland Journal B, No. 1, folio 92.
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35. Edith Russister Bevan, "Thomas Jefferson in Annapolis, November 25, 1783-May 11, 1784," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, June 1946, p. 122.
36. Courtesy Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum Library, Joseph Downs Manuscript Collection, No. 97870.
37. Charles Coleman Sellers, "Charles Willson Peale: With Patron and Populace," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, May 1969, p. 26.
38. Peter Force Collection, Maryland Journal B, No. 2, folio 420.
39. Chancery Court Papers 1819, Folder No. 2, Hall of Records, Annapolis.
40. Maryland State Papers, Series A, Box No. 54, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Item No. 51, Peter Force Collection, Maryland Journal B, No. 2, folio 444.
41. Maryland State Papers, Series A, Box No. 54, Item No. 3, Maryland State Papers, Series A, Box No. 60, Item No. 3, Peter Force Collection, Maryland Journal B, No. 1, folio 55.
42. Treasurer of the Western Shore (Journal of Accounts), 1788-1789, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folio 72.
43. Executive Department, Proceedings of the Governor and Council, 1788-1791, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folio 351.
44. John Work Garrett Collections, Special Collections Division, Milton S. Eisenhower Library, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.
45. Maryland State Papers, Series Z, Scharf Papers, Box No. 80, Item No. 70.
46. John Work Garrett Collections.
47. Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1793-1798, folio 209, General Assembly (Senate Proceedings), 1793-1798, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folio 148.
48. Maryland State Papers, Series Z, Scharf Papers, Box No. 80, Item No. 27, Treasurer of the Western Shore (Journal of Accounts), 1797-1801, folio 48.
49. Maryland State Papers, Series Z, Scharf Papers, Box No. 80, Item No. 170.
50. Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1791-1798, folios 325-326.
51. Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1799-1807, folios 427-428. In 1794 the Governor and Council requested a person to procure eighty Windsor chairs and eighty small desks for the House of Delegates. *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Delegates of the State of Maryland*, November Session 1794, M 48, Hall of Records, Annapolis, p. 111.
52. Treasurer of the Western Shore (Journal of Accounts), 1803-1806, folio 38, Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1807-1813, folio 21.
53. Maryland State Papers, Series Z, Scharf Papers, Box No. 83, Item No. 42 B.
54. Chancery Court Papers 3620, Folder No. 3.
55. Vertical file, "Ogle," manuscripts division, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.
56. Annapolis Records, 1785-1930, No. 7, folios 197, 231, Annapolis Records, 1786-1807, No. 12, folio 174.
57. St. Anne's Parish (Annapolis), Vestry Records, 1767-1818.
58. *Poems by the Late Doctor John Shaw* (Philadelphia: Edward Earle, Baltimore: Edward J. Coale, 1810), p. 1, on deposit at the Hall of Records, Annapolis.
59. Shaw Family Bible, G 461, on deposit from Historic Annapolis, Inc., at the Hall of Records, Annapolis.
60. St. John's Matriculation Book, 1789-1860, Hall of Records, Annapolis. This book is on microfilm, M 1289-133, at St. John's College, Annapolis.
61. *Poems by the Late Doctor John Shaw*, p. 95.
62. See John Shaw's Will in the Appendix of this catalogue.
63. Shaw Family Bible.
64. Shaw Family Bible.
65. See John Shaw's Will.
66. Chancery Court (Chancery Record), 1841, No. 157, Part 3, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folio 473.
67. Shaw Family Bible.

## Cabinetmaking in Shaw's Annapolis

In Annapolis as elsewhere in America during the eighteenth century, the apprenticeship system served as the major vehicle for the transmission of technical skills among craftsmen with the result that regional designs and forms were perpetuated and construction techniques shared.

The Orphans Court in Annapolis was in charge of all indentures in Maryland before 1786 when an "Act Respecting Apprentices," passed by the General Assembly, empowered the county courts to administer the apprenticeship of orphans as a means for their support and education. According to the same act, a parent could bind out his own child on reasonable terms, for any time not longer than his minority.<sup>1</sup> In Maryland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, more apprentices were bound out to craftsmen than to any other occupation.

Apprenticeship entailed a formal contract to exchange work for education, goods, and clothing. A master taught the apprentice a trade such as cabinetmaking, and while providing him with lodging, sustenance, and basic education, expected that he would reciprocate by preserving the master's trade secrets, safeguarding his property, and by leading a moral life. However, as the many complaints filed with the courts regarding runaways testify, apprentices were not always reliable. For example, John Shaw, Archibald Chisholm, and Gilbert Middleton advertised in the *Maryland Gazette* on June 20, 1776, for three runaway apprentices: Richard Carrington, John Ferguson, and Henry Pratt (see fig. 10).

In addition to advertisements, court records provide what other little information we have on the apprentices of John Shaw. Alexander Ramsburg was bound February 11, 1778, as an apprentice to Shaw "to be brought up to the business and to be taught the Trade of Cabinet making also to cause him to be taught to read and write, and to learn to Cypher as far as the Rule of three, and also to pay him Six pounds Currency at the Expiration of his time of Servitude. . . ." When she was a child of nine, Jane Lewis was bound to Shaw as a seamstress for a period of sixteen years. Others known to have been in his service include William Thomas Ross, apprenticed in 1784, who later became a chair and cabinetmaker in his own shop on Church Street.<sup>2</sup>

Washington Tuck was bound to Shaw in 1798 "to be taught the Trade of a Cabinet Maker and Joiner," Shaw agreeing "to find him in

Sufficient Meat, Drink, Washing, Lodging and Cloathing, and to cause him to be taught Reading, Writing and Arithmetic as far as the Rule of Three...<sup>70</sup> Henry Lusby was bound to Shaw to learn the trade of cabinetmaker two months before his seventeenth birthday.<sup>71</sup> Jonathan Weedon "put himself...with the consent of his Uncle and Guardian Richard Weedon Junr...voluntarily and of his free will and accord...apprentice to John Shaw Cabinet Maker, Carpenter and Joiner" until he became twenty-one in 1811.<sup>72</sup> We can assume that Shaw's son George also learned cabinetmaking in his father's shop, whether formally bound or not.

While nothing more has been uncovered about Ramsburg, or the runaways Carrington, Ferguson, and Pratt, Henry Lusby worked as a journeyman for the cabinetmaking firm of Priestley and Minsky in Baltimore following his apprenticeship with Shaw.<sup>73</sup> A James Lusby, possibly a relative of Henry, joined William Tuck in a cabinetmaking shop in Annapolis that was dissolved in 1801 according to an announcement in the *Maryland Gazette* of that year, October 15. Tuck carried on his business alone until joining forces with his brother Washington Tuck. In 1807 they received a commission from the State to furnish "twenty one convenient writing Desks" for the House of Delegates for which they received partial payment on December 12, 1807.<sup>74</sup> Washington Tuck carried on the supervision and maintenance of the State House after Shaw's retirement. James Lusby with a new partner, Robert Davis, was to be employed at the same time to "fit up the Senate Chamber, by repairing the Desks and Chairs now out of Repair and make as many new ones as may be necessary to complete the number of fifteen..."<sup>75</sup> Of Jonathan Weedon's career, little is known although he may have continued to work in Shaw's shop, perhaps helping to furnish and to repair the Land Office, a commission Shaw was given in 1811. In any case, he is doubtless the same Jonathan Weedon who witnessed Shaw's last will and testament in 1820.

In addition to apprentices, other craftsmen who are known to have worked in Shaw's shop include Joshua Collins, a turner and musical instrument maker, a Mr. Kennedy from Baltimore who advertised in the *Maryland Gazette* for May 27, 1802, that he would receive orders for carving at Shaw's, and George Smith, a carver and gilder who also advertised while working in Shaw's establishment that burnishing in gold was one of his skills (*Maryland Gazette*, September 18, 1800).

Ledgers of Annapolis merchants are another source for names of craftsmen in related trades. Washington Tuck, Shaw's former apprentice, is recorded in 1807 in Randall and Dobbin's accounts as the purchaser, with the cabinetmaker John Ross, of lumber. William Coc also appears in Randall and Dobbin's books as a carpenter/joiner working first for Shaw, and then for Isaac Holland. Thomas Hewitt, a cabinetmaker and carpenter from whom Shaw rented his first shop, appears in the same firm's accounts as do Lusby and Davis. Other names listed there include William Alexander, Joshua Botts, Thomas Brown, William Glover, Frederick Grammar, William Slicer, and William Taylor, all of whom Shaw is known to have been associated with in some capacity. It is possible that some of them worked with him as journeymen at some time.<sup>76</sup>

From the relatively large number of surviving pieces of furniture labeled or attributed to Shaw, it would seem that the total output of

**FIFTEEN POUNDS REWARD**

Annapolis, June 12, 1776.  
**R**AN away last night from the subscriber, the following English servant man, viz.

**JOHN FERGUSON** (who frequently went by the name of FOX, from the colour of his hair, at being very tall). About 20 years of age; 5 feet 6 inches high, thin visage, dressed with the double coat; had on and took with him, when he went away, a new pair of check breeches, one shalberg jacket, one shalberg ditto, two pair of shalberg trousers, and a half worn blue hat lined with green silk, and had a green ribbon round the crown.

**MINKY PRATT**, about 20 years of age, who runs for the set of crockery, a little plaid with the small part. Short black hair, very thin visage; had on and took with him, when he went away, one white cloth jacket, one shalberg ditto, two check ditto, one pair of shalberg trousers, a new pair of pumps, and an old cap hat.

**RICHARD CARRINGTON**, about 25 years of age, by trade a cabinet-maker, about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, very much plaid with the small part. Single in his shoulder, short light coloured hair, very talkative when in liquor; had on and took with him, when he went away, a short brown cloth coat lined with white muslin, one shalberg coat, one shalberg jacket, one pair of shalberg trousers, two brown shalberg ditto; he also took with him a silver-mounted canteen with a white bone bill, the blade very dull and badly polished, and the scabbard half rotten.

There was also taken from the Dock the same night, a yellow brown **BOAT**, about 24 feet long, with black boards and gunwales, one double in the middle, no hatch, and the sails but indistinct; the five still much larger than the rest, all the sails put much too long, the property of Gilbert Middleton, one of the subscribers; and it is reported that they were off in the boat, as John Ferguson's property was in her as a hand. It is probable that they may quit the boat and put for distant parts from hand to hand, knowing that such a search commenced throughout the country.

Whoever takes up said servants and returns them and the boat, so that the owners may get them again, shall be entitled to the above reward, or if the owners only are taken and brought home, or secured so that the owners may get them again, shall receive ten pounds, or in proportion for any of them, or five pounds for securing the boat, and reasonable charges if brought home, paid by

**GILBERT MIDDLETON,**  
 of  
**SHAW & CHISHOLM.**

Fig. 10. This advertisement, placed in the *Maryland Gazette*, June 20, 1776, by Gilbert Middleton, John Shaw, and Archibald Chisholm for the return of three runaway apprentices, indicates that Shaw and Chisholm had a cabinetmaking alliance with Middleton. Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore

Just received from LONDON, by the WILKINS and MARY, Captain LEONARD, and to be sold by the Subscriber,  
**TURN DRESSING GLASSES**, with drawers, oval and square; sewing ditto, without drawers; double and single; hand and caddis; bifocal balls; inclination tables; dice boxes and dice.  
 JOHN SHAW.  
 Annapolis, December 9, 1791.

Fig. 11. Advertisement, *Maryland Gazette*, December 15, 1791. Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore

his shop must have been sizeable, and would have necessitated the employment of journeymen or other experienced cabinetmakers to help fill orders. While no account books have been discovered to document shop practices, it is likely that the men worked on a piecework basis, and also constructed individual pieces of furniture, under Shaw's direction or on their own, which conformed to the design standards of the shop. The Shaw labels inscribed with script initials and dates probably indicate the journeymen or apprentices who actually made the particular pieces on which the labels are affixed. Combinations of initials found on the labels are: / A, I B, T B, I H, H T, W T, and I / A / W. The initials W T may refer to William rather than Washington Tuck since they often appear with the date 1797, and Washington began his apprenticeship with Shaw in 1798. One of the State House desk labels is inscribed *Wash Tuck*. William is also known to have been making furniture in Annapolis during this period. That he worked for Shaw, however, is conjectural at this time.

Because there was apparently a large, and doubtless constantly changing, group of craftsmen working in the shop at any one time, and perhaps more than one man working on each piece of furniture, attempts to correlate details of construction techniques with any set of initials on the labels have proved fruitless. Shaw must have set standards for the design and dimensions of certain furniture forms and their components in order that they could be produced in quantity and combined in various ways to produce the finished product. He may also have made templates for the designs of pediments, table tops, and legs. In addition to the use of such primary woods as mahogany and walnut, tulip poplar, yellow pine, and white oak were most frequently employed as secondary woods.

John Shaw's development as a cabinetmaker followed established tradition. An apprenticeship, perhaps to his carpenter father, in Glasgow can be presumed. Then, after working as a journeyman, he joined with a partner to set up a shop in which apprentices were taken on. Soon he was advertising, in addition to his own wares, other lines of merchandise, often imported items (see fig. 11). As the demand for his furniture grew, he had to employ journeymen to help fill orders. Increasingly he became an entrepreneur as well as a merchant-craftsman, laying out capital for lumber, inlays, veneers, stains, varnishes, and hardware for use in his shop, and expanding into a storeroom and warehouse.

He was responsible for the standards set in his shop and the designs used, determining style, form, and ornament and supervising the overall production. Whether or not he actually had a hand in physically producing it, each piece carried his label and would establish his reputation in the community. While he may have worked on the more important commissions himself, his diverse activities in business, politics, and community affairs may have left him little time to devote to cabinetmaking in the later years of his career. Probably the majority of pieces bearing the Shaw label were produced by his workmen, and were part of the large stock of ready-made furniture on hand in his warehouse. The shop may also have produced custom-made furniture that would have been more expensive.

Some of the various types of furniture Shaw's shop produced is indicated in a *Maryland Gazette* advertisement for March 1, 1804:

The subscriber has ready made, and for SALE, at his house, near the Strand-house, the following:—MAHOGANY desks, desk and book-case, bureaus, wardrobes, secretaries, side boards, dining, breakfast, and card tables, drawing room and easy chairs, sofas, bedsteads of different kinds, bason stands, . . . and sundry other articles for house-keeping, which will be disposed of on very moderate terms for cash, or the usual credit.

In addition to the forms mentioned above, Shaw also made both side and armchairs with transitional modified shieldbacks, side chairs with carved shieldbacks, tent, field, and mahogany high post bedsteads, huntboards, sideboards, Pembroke or breakfast tables, tea tables, cellarettes (which Shaw called "coolers"), dining tables, chests of straight front drawers, easy chairs, card tables with either straight or shaped tops, bookcases, dressing tables, crib-bedsteads and cradles, billiard tables, and tall cases for clocks.

These forms were for the most part based on English prototypes transmitted to America by pattern books as well as by examples of imported furniture. Shaw may well have owned a copy of *The Gentleman's Cabinet-Maker's Director* published by Thomas Chippendale in London in several editions from 1754 to 1762. He must also have had access to *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide* by George Hepplewhite (London, 1788, 1789, 1794), and may have been influenced by English publications on architecture such as those of Batty Langley, James Gibbs, or Isaac Ware, all of which are known to have been available in Annapolis during the late eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Shaw's furniture clearly shows the influence of *The London Cabinet Book of Prices* published in London in 1788. While Shaw may have been influenced by the price guides published in Philadelphia and Baltimore, it seems more likely that he continued to follow English design sources more closely.

Most of Shaw's furniture is in the transitional mode between Chippendale and Federal styles. The few surviving Annapolis-made pieces from earlier in the century are relatively high-style, richly carved, and echoing in form and ornament the flamboyant rococo designs of Philadelphia or England. But by the time Shaw began to make furniture, a trend toward less ornate furniture of the plain, neat sort Charles Carroll admired had set in.

Shaw's earliest work reflects this change. It is simple but elegant in outline, with a conspicuous lack of carved ornament. The basically rectilinear form relies on the beauty of highly figured wood and carefully worked out proportions. In addition to simple stringing and geometric shapes, Shaw utilized a limited variety of inlaid pictorial motifs, usually paterae, shells, flowers, leaves, and eagles set into veneered fields defined with crossbanding or outline stringing. The inlaid motifs highlight rather than overpower his furniture. The precise effect obtained by crisply defined molded edges is further enhanced by slim tapering legs and shallow bodies. Contrasts in light and dark achieved through the placement of inlaid ornament impart a sense of movement as does the skillful use of highly figured veneers. Shaw adapted the spade foot, a form introduced by Hepplewhite and Robert and James Adam, to his own specifications by rounding and shaping the sides so that the foot is neither squat and flattened nor sharp and attenuated as in other interpretations of the design. In case pieces

which have a full drawer section to the floor, Shaw often employs flaring French bracket, ogee bracket, or well-modeled straight bracket feet which serve to lighten the whole.

Standardized production of all these elements enabled Shaw's and Shaw and Chisholm's shops to produce furniture in quantity that nevertheless was individual in character and of high quality. Diversity was achieved by varying the basic forms and vocabulary of ornament from piece to piece. Other than pairs of tables or sets of chairs, no two pieces of furniture have been found that are exactly alike, although they may share similar construction or ornamental elements.

Of John Shaw's sometime partner, Archibald Chisholm, not much is known. Both men worked as estate appraisers, arranging for estate sales ordered by the courts and selling the contents at public auction. The descriptions of furniture and other items in various inventories of the time are illuminating in that they reveal contemporary terminology for specific types of furniture and also indicate relative values.<sup>11</sup>

In April 1795 Shaw and Chisholm appraised the estate of the Annapolis hotelkeeper George Washington Mann. Among the furniture forms they mention are: a mahogany double chest of drawers; a small chest of drawers, also mahogany; mahogany chamber tables; a walnut night table; walnut breakfast tables; round pillar and claw tables; mahogany chairs, dining tables, card tables, field and high post bedsteads.<sup>12</sup>

An inventory of the estate of Thomas Hyde, a local tanner, which was appraised by Shaw in 1795 makes particular mention of a "Tent Bedstead" with the notation that "This Article, John Shaw, when appraising it, observed was one of the last Pieces of Work he did for Mr Hyde."<sup>13</sup> No beds have been found which can be ascribed to Shaw, although he is known to have made them in great numbers.

An advertisement for a lottery in the *Maryland Gazette* in June 1792, to be held at Chisholm's shop and house on Church Street, lists seventeen furniture forms presumably either made by him or stock on hand; the inclusion of prices gives an interesting insight into the comparative cost of these items. Chisholm also advertised that he repaired and tuned harpsichords, spinets, and pianofortes, and appears to have sustained an interest in musical instruments throughout his life (*Maryland Gazette*, March 24, 1780).

Chisholm married Elizabeth Waters in 1777. In 1793 he joined her brother William, who had been working in Georgetown, in a cabinet-making partnership. They advertised in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Daily Advertiser* on June 14, 1793, that they "having contracted to deliver a considerable quantity of Cabinet-Work, in a short time, will give great encouragement to two or three Journeymen Cabinet and Chair Makers, at their Manufactory, in Annapolis. . . ." The word "manufactory" suggests the production of cabinetwork on a large scale, with the concomitant need to hire additional craftsmen to fill the demand.

Chisholm retired soon after this and sold his house and shop, according to the *Maryland Gazette* of September 25, 1794 (see fig. 12), and moved to his farm on the West River, Anne Arundel County, where he died on February 7, 1810.

**For S A L E.**  
The subscriber offers for SALE the following property in the city of Annapolis, to wit:  
**T**HIS HOUSE and LOT where he now lives, in School Street, and three houses fronting on Church Street; a lot of 4½ acres of land on the hill outside of the city, on which is a wind-mill, Bait, Cuck-shoot, hen-house, and a small dwelling house, with a large garden joined to it; the whole of the improvements a small saw, and the whole of the lot enclosed with a post and rail fence. For terms apply to  
**ARCHIBALD CHISHOLM.**  
Annapolis, September 25, 1794.

Fig. 12. Advertisement, *Maryland Gazette*, September 25, 1794. Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.

LU BARTLETT

1. General Assembly (Recorded Laws), T.B.H. No. B, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folios 114-117.
2. Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Orphans Court Proceedings), 1777-1816, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folios 11, 28-29.
3. Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Orphans Court Proceedings), 1797-1805, folio 31.
4. Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Orphans Court Proceedings), 1795-1811, folio 170.
5. Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Receipts and Indentures), 1796-1817, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folio 97.
6. Municipal Archives, City of Baltimore, Bureau of Legislative Reference, ms. 1805 (1864), Feb. 15, 1816.
7. Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1799-1807, Hall of Records, Annapolis, folio 427; Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1807-1813, folio 16.
8. Executive Department, Proceedings of the Council, 1799-1807, folio 428.
9. Randall and Dobbin Account Book, 1798-1807, ms. 679, manuscripts division, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.
10. Rosamond Randall Berne and John Henry Scarff, *William Buckland, 1734-1774: Architect of Virginia and Maryland* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1958), pp. 149, 150.
11. One such inventory was done by John Shaw and William Goldsmith on June 3, 1798, for the estate of John Stewart. Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Original Inventories), Box No. 33, Folder No. 45, Hall of Records, Annapolis.
12. Anne Arundel County Register of Wills (Original Inventories), Box No. 33, Folder No. 3.
13. Chancery Court Papers 4226, Hall of Records, Annapolis.

## John Shaw's Annapolis

John Shaw arrived in Annapolis in or around 1763, a young man of eighteen, son of a carpenter and trained as a cabinet-maker in the Scottish city of Glasgow.<sup>1</sup> To date we know no reason for his emigration to America or to Maryland. However, the Maryland tobacco trade had established strong commercial ties between Annapolis and Glasgow, and Shaw may have had a connection, family or otherwise, that prompted his move to Annapolis.

Annapolis in 1763, though a prosperous colonial town, was not so fertile a field for entering the cabinetmaking trade as would have been the more populous Philadelphia and New York to the north or Charleston to the south. The population of Annapolis in 1763 numbered just over one thousand persons.<sup>2</sup> As the colonial capital in a plantation society, it served as the seat of government, legal center, and entrepôt for the export of such local commodities as grain, lumber, and tobacco, and the import of a plethora of English-made goods.

Primarily because of its central location within the province, the small settlement on the Severn River called Arundelton had become in 1694 the new capital of Maryland, replacing St. Mary's City at the southern tip of the colony. Under the leadership of a new royal governor, Sir Francis Nicholson, the development and laying out of the town was both imaginative and innovative. Derived from Sir Christopher Wren's grand design for a new London after the great fire of 1666, Nicholson's street plan was radial in form (see fig. 1). On the highest elevation overlooking the harbor, on two circles somewhat apart, were to be built the State House and the Anglican church. From these two focal points radiated the principal streets of the town.

If John Shaw did indeed arrive in Annapolis Harbor directly from Glasgow or some other British port, his first impression of Annapolis would have been that it seemed more a garden village than a center of government, law, and trade. The ramshackle second State House of 1704, eventually to be demolished in 1772, and the first St. Anne's Church, also built in 1704 (see fig. 13), would have appeared in the distance slightly elevated above the buildings between them and the harbor. In addition to a radial plan, Nicholson had also predetermined where his citizenry should live and work. To the north of the town, removed from the harbor, an area later called Bloomsbury Square was laid out in lots for craftsmen and small tradesmen. The waterfront was reserved for the offices, warehouses, ropewalks, and customhouses