

“Peopling” the Plantation: Gleanings from the Philip Ludwell Lee Ledger & Related Documents

About the Ledger

The ledger, which is in the collection of Duke University, contains Philip Ludwell Lee’s accounts from June 1762 until May 1776, along with some later notations about how the accounts were being settled after his death in 1775. Philip’s clerk used double-entry bookkeeping, entering each financial transaction as a debit and credit to keep track of the overall balance for each account. The ledger seems to have been written in its entirety by a single clerk. Merchandise, services, and provisions—sold or provided—were recorded as a debit on the left side of the page for the customer’s account, using “Dr” for debtor. Any payments made to offset the debits appear as credit, or contra, using “Cr” for creditor, on the right side. Ideally, when the books were balanced, the debits and credits would be equal. However, very few of Philip Ludwell Lee’s accounts were balanced, or settled, when he died. Some of the customers are noted as “dead,” “poor & insolvent” or “runaway with no effects”—meaning that their debts were never paid. Others have notes that the accounts were turned over to Philip’s steward, John Omohundro, to collect them as best he could. In fact, there is a separate list at the end of the ledger that names individuals and the amount of their debts that Omohundro was to collect. Philip Richard Fendall, who married Lee’s widow Elizabeth in 1780, was probably anxious to settle the estate’s debts so the estate could be divided among Col. Phil’s heirs.

During the 1760s and 70s, this book was likely one of three books used by Philip Ludwell Lee to record financial transactions. Unlike a “waste book,” which recorded daily financial transactions, or a “day or memorandum book,” in which notes and information regarding formal and informal transactions were kept as reminders, the ledger kept each customer’s account separate. Some businesses kept separate laborers’ books, but Philip’s hired and indentured laborers’ accounts were kept alongside his other business records. The ledger at Duke University, albeit incomplete, is the only surviving ledger in a series that would have kept by the Stratford Lees to record their business transactions. The duPont Library has a microfilm copy of the ledger to use for research purposes.

Philip’s ledger reveals complex relationships between him and the varied individuals who made purchases from his store, bred their mares to his stallion Dotterel, and who were provided with wages paid in plantation commodities, such as beef, pork and fabrics for making clothes. At times Philip’s business functioned as a bank; some individuals even received loans of cash (in British pounds). Some debts were paid in tobacco, a few paid in cash, and several were settled by reimbursement of an equivalent value of goods. A few of the individuals who were related to Philip Ludwell Lee [and later Philip Fendall¹, who was a cousin] had their debts written off; those accounts were not given to Omohundro to collect.

¹ Philip Richard Fendall, a lawyer and descendant of Philip Lee of Maryland, married Philip Ludwell Lee’s widow Elizabeth in 1780; he lived at Stratford and managed the estate until the Lee-Fendall House in Alexandria was completed around 1785. During his tenure, the house at Stratford was home to Fendall and wife Elizabeth, Elizabeth’s two daughters Matilda and Flora, and, after 1782, Matilda’s husband Henry Lee III. Elizabeth’s only son and youngest child, Philip Ludwell Lee II, had died in 1779, before the remarriage of his mother.

To help interpret Col. Phil's ledger, documents such as the estate administrator's accounts covering 1775 through 1781 and his probate inventory taken in 1776 have proved invaluable. Other research materials, including *Virginia Gazette* ads for runaway indentured servants, Dotterel's stud services, and the sale of a ship on the stocks, allow us to understand the wide scope of Philip's entrepreneurial activities. Richard Henry Lee's memorandum book gives us some clues to occupations of several individuals listed in Phil's ledger, as do William Lee's letter books in Stratford's collection.

Philip Ludwell Lee as an entrepreneur

To Col. Phil, Stratford was not only his home, but his business. At one point, he wrote his brother William, a London merchant, asking if he could find him a young English schoolboy for indenture as clerk. Thomas Lee, Phil's father, had employed several young boys as clerks in his offices and, as they got older, had set them up with land in Virginia. William had reluctantly performed the duties of clerk for Phil from 1755 to 1758 before setting out for England.² We don't know if Col. Phil ever received an indentured clerk from his brother, but someone whose name is unknown recorded all of the transactions in the ledger.

The Stores

Philip Ludwell Lee had two separate stores; one called the Stratford Landing Store, which provided goods for restocking and repairing ships, and another closer to the main house complex that carried commodities for sale or provision to the surrounding community, including neighbors, hired and indentured white laborers, overseers and, not very often, slaves. The store at Stratford Landing was likely closed after the hurricane of 1769 hit the wharf area and destroyed most of the buildings; there would have been little traffic at the wharf because, after 1769, the inspection station was moved to "Persimon" [Persimmon] Point on Currioman Bay—another part of Phil's expansive property.

While one can be sure that the Landing Store was adjacent to the wharf, the exact whereabouts of the other store is unknown. A building, such as the one situated between the southwest outbuilding and coach house, or a room on the lower floor of the main house, are possible locations for the "Store" in Phil's probate inventory. There was no need for a heated space in the store because the building could be locked until a certain commodity was needed; a plantation store was not constantly manned. The store contained many items that were mentioned in Phil's ledger: buttons, hats, stockings, pans, sugar and fabric, along with scales to weigh some of the goods. It is possible that some goods for sale or distribution were even stored in the "brick rooms" on the lower floor of the main house; in 1776 the Wet Store contained a good supply of rum and brandy, a large quantity of bar iron, lead and glass, while the Fat Store housed casks and other unnamed supplies simply listed as "lumber." The New House listed in the probate inventory kept a large supply of salt and leather—two commodities that featured prominently in

² Thomas Lee's will instructed the guardians of his youngest children "if necessary to bind them to any profession or Trade, soe that they may Learn to get their living honestly." Philip Ludwell kept William at Stratford and taught him all he had learned of plantation management and the tobacco trade. William Lee served as his brother's clerk-steward and "principal manager of his whole Estate" according to *Letters of William Lee 1766-1783* by Worthington C. Ford, Vol. 3 (1891), p. 878.

Phil's ledger. Unfortunately, we don't know exactly where the New House was located, but it could possibly have been the frame structure in the West Yard.³

Horsebreeding

Friends, as well as family and acquaintances, were obviously eager to breed their mares to Col. Phil's racehorse Dotterel, which he purchased in England in 1766. They were charged a £3 stud fee for a single season although the cost advertised in *The Virginia Gazette* was £6. Dotterel won local races according to diarist Philip Fithian,⁴ but Phil was probably unaware that his horse's breeding and performance in England was less than stellar. Stud fees amounted to a large part of the debts that steward Omohundro had to collect in 1783. It appears that Dotterel was sold in 1775, after Elizabeth Lee's advertisement for his sale appeared in the *Gazette*, since there are no later entries about the stallion in the estate administrator accounts. At Phil's death there were twenty horses at Stratford, with Dotterel the most valuable and worth £100.

Textile production and sales

Stratford not only produced textiles throughout the years of the Revolution, but it's clear that weavers were busy in the 1760s as well. Irish weaver Florence O'Driscoll [male] was active here in 1770-2 and administrators' accounts record him working in 1774-5; O'Driscoll was provided with a weekly allowance of foodstuffs that included wheat, sugar, rum, salt, mutton, fish, cider, pork and beef...his allotment of beef was sometimes listed as "Irish" beef. The ledger shows a debit of flax to Mary Connelly, and accounts show that O'Driscoll was provided 430 lbs. of hemp in stalks. Flax and hemp were both grown at Stratford for making linen cloth.⁵

Both O'Driscoll and Alexander Anton show up in administrators' accounts as paid weavers in 1776, along with William Gray and a Mrs. [Thomas] Rigg [Wrigg]. Anton continued to be paid in 1777. The estate purchased a flax wheel, 2 spinning wheels and 4 pairs of cards. William Gray was paid for weaving until 1779, as well as for furnishing new shickles [shuttles] and for repairing cards. During the same time period, the estate paid carpenter William Claxton for two weaving looms, loom templates, a tape loom, and making a frame and fixing a window in the weaving house...and also for weaving. Although not listed on any inventory, Stratford's weaving house was probably a building bustling with activity during the time leading up to the American Revolution; one possibility for the location of the weaving house would be the southwest outbuilding.⁶

³ Douglas W. Sanford, *Landscape Archaeology at Stratford: 1995 Field School Season*. The 18 x 50-foot building, first examined by archaeologists in the 1930s, does not represent a dwelling, given that it didn't have a chimney. The field school findings suggest that the structure was built after 1760 and its destruction occurred most likely after 1780 or 90. The artifact assemblage indicated that the building was not domestic one, nor a craft shop, but could have been an unheated greenhouse or storage building.

⁴ *Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774* (1943). Fithian recorded on January 8, 1774, that Robert Carter's son Bob brought news from the previous day at Stratford of a "Race between Mr [Lee's] and Colonels [Robert Carter] Horses—that they run a Mile, & that Dottrell belonging to Mr [Lee] won the Race."

⁵ John G. Jones, *Analysis of Pollen from Stratford Hall Pond, Virginia*, 2006. This study by Samantha M. Krause, University of Mary Washington, confirms the presence of hemp pollen.

⁶ A weaving house would have needed to be large enough for looms, spinning wheels, and other equipment involved in the process of making cloth. It would need adequate light and heat. Philip Ludwell Lee's 1776 probate inventory includes a housekeeping room, in which 2 spinning wheels were listed. Some of the functions of this room could have possibly been relocated after Phil's death to a building called the weaving house, as the names and uses for many of the outbuildings changed over time. The period of the American Revolution seems (1775-1781) to have

The cloth produced by these weavers was probably used for clothing the enslaved population as well as indentured workers at Stratford. This cloth was often referred to as “negro cloth.” Philip Ludwell Lee had to provide clothing for roughly 120 slaves working on the Stratford home farm and Upper Clifts quarter, including livery for his uniformed coachman, postillions and certain house slaves like his personal manservant and waiter Sawney.⁷ A skilled weaver could produce an abundance of fabric quickly, but the processing of raw materials such as cotton and flax into thread required more intensive—and much slower—work. It’s likely that various slaves were trained for the preliminary duties of washing, carding and spinning. One of Phil’s paid weavers, William Gray, taught two of the Stratford slaves (unnamed) to weave, so both black and white weavers would have occupied the weaving house at Stratford.

The textiles in Philip Ludwell Lee’s ledger include mostly inexpensive fabrics purchased from local Scottish merchants as well as his merchant brother William in London: oznaburg, white cotton, red cotton, Irish linen, bas Irish linen, Yorkshire cloth, fine white linen no. 165, gambic, whited bas linen, broad cloth (blue, claret, green), bas rolls, German linen, fearnaught, Scotch bas linen, grey cloth, dowlas, Prince’s [or princess] linen, kersey, red frieze, check linen, coarse bas cloth, green fine shalloon, whited bas sheeting, best oznaburg, check linen, green Paris Shagg, Devonshire Kersey, drab Kersey, Gambic linen, shalloon, and various types of thread for sewing. Overseers and hired workers purchased these materials, along with sewing necessities, to either make their own clothes (some had wives who could have made clothes for the family) or for tailor Thomas Shadrick to make articles of clothes for them. Shadrick also made suits of “negro clothes” for the enslaved community. It is probable that some enslaved women were also taught to sew and mend clothes worn by Stratford’s large slave population.

From 1766 to 1772, a slave named Monkey, a carpenter by trade who was also a skilled cobbler, provided shoes for the workers at Stratford as well as shoes that were sold from the store. Ten-year-old Monkey⁸ was purchased by Thomas Lee in 1732, and he did carpentry jobs and made shoes until his old age; Monkey, age 60, was still at Stratford when the 1782 slave list was compiled. He was still performing a variety of woodworking jobs as late as 1786, according to Richard Henry Lee’s memorandum book. That year Monkey laid the floor boards in Richard Henry’s new barn at Chantilly. Although Monkey lived at Stratford and had to travel several miles to work at Chantilly, Richard Henry often wrote complaints about the slave’s tardiness in his book.⁹ Shipwrights were always wearing out shoes because of one of the shipbuilding processes called “stoving,” where planks were heated in wet sand above a kiln so they could

been a particularly busy time for weavers at Stratford. Around the turn of the century, Henry Lee III’s insurance documents refer to the southwest outbuilding as a work shop or servant’s hall.

⁷ ALS Philip Ludwell Lee to Hannah Lee Corbin, December 22, n.y. complains that Sawney ran away, his clothes with him, and that “the yellow coat he w[ore] it is not long since it was made” and “it is now full of holes.” Sawney was Phil’s personal slave as well as his waiter at the table.

⁸ Most of the jockeys in the 18th century were black. Often jockeys, both black and white, were referred to as Monkey, possibly because of their diminutive form and agility. It’s a possibility—but not proven fact—that the slave called Monkey may have ridden racehorses for Philip Ludwell Lee. The discussion of this slave name can be found at <http://www.ealymaysartworks.com/news/art-narratives-in-focus/281-legend-of-the-black-jockey-when-monkey-simon-dealt-defeat-to-old-hickory-himself-president-andrew-jackson>

⁹ Richard Henry Lee’s memorandum book entries for June 5, 1786, “Monkey didn’t come to work until 11 o'clock” and for June 10, 1786, when Monkey arrived for work at noon. In June 1786, Monkey worked on the barn for 13 days.

bend, caused shoes to wear out quickly; walking across the heated wet sand deteriorated the leather. Accounts for both Joshua Merrie and William Speake list multiple pairs of shoes and quantities of upper and sole leather. A tannery located somewhere at Stratford would have supplied the leather goods; skins listed in various documents include beef hides, grass beef hides, calf skins, horse skins, dog skins, hog skins and cat skins. Slaves would be involved in the butchering and subsequent tanning processes.

Shipbuilding, Shipping & Stocking for Voyages

In Thomas Lee's 1758 probate inventory, there were no vessels listed except for an "old petiauger," which was a type of two-masted shallop better suited for river travel than sea voyages. A petiauger was considered a sturdy, long-lived vessel, often accommodating up to two dozen passengers; similar vessels were often converted into "pleasure barges," such as the one described by Carter Lee as having been used by Philip Ludwell Lee for entertaining. Thomas Lee had previously owned ships, usually in partnership with other investors. However, his son Philip Ludwell had greater ambitions: to build, provision, and manage his own ships carrying cargoes to England and Barbadoes.

The ledger account of Captain Millikin, which covers 1761-1763, shows that he received large quantities of beef, sometimes 400 pounds or more—both fresh and salted—for stocking the snow¹⁰ *Mary* for voyage. Naval Office records for the South Potomac show that the *Mary*, headed for Barbadoes with a cargo of plank, barrel hoops, staves and headings, flour, shingles, etc., was still owned by Philip Ludwell Lee in 1764. The snow, a French "prize" ship captured in the French & Indian War, was a square-rigged, six-sailed vessel of 90 tons burthen, with a ten-man crew—a good sized ship for trading a miscellaneous cargo for rum. Richard Graham's account in 1762 for the sloop *Philippa*, which traded in Barbadoes, received provisions of pork for a voyage; since no amount was debited, it appears that Lee either owned, or had part ownership of, the sloop. Not only did Col. Phil provide meat rations for ships docking at the Stratford landing, he encouraged Col. George Fairfax in 1760 to send to Stratford for his "sea store"—stating that he could not "find a garden below with such plenty & variety for that purpose."¹¹

Planning to build a larger ship for sending cargoes to England, Philip hired shipwright Joshua Merrie, whose ledger account ran from September 1767 to April 1769. Merrie received a weekly allowance of meat and wheat, plus a quart of brandy. He purchased goods such as fabric, shoes, hose, and a woman's hat from Eastern Shore [he may have been married or purchased the hat for a sister]. There's no further mention of Merrie in any later Stratford accounts, but either he or the subsequently hired shipwrights likely trained Stratford slaves Osman [Osmond] and Edmund as ship carpenters. Those two enslaved carpenters had the highest values (£120 and £110) in the 1782 slave inventory and probably learned their trade before age twenty; both enslaved ship carpenters reappear in Richard Henry Lee's 1794 probate inventory with values of £75 and £100,

¹⁰ A snow was the largest of all the old two-masted vessels; the snow evolved from larger 3-masted ships. It was ideal for coastal trading. A brig, which evolved from the smaller brigantine, was a larger ship requiring a larger crew and was often used as a warship as well as merchant vessel. See appendix C.

¹¹ ALS from Philip Ludwell Lee to Col. George Fairfax, 28 April 1760; Fitzhugh Lee Papers, Alderman Library, University of Virginia

respectively. Edmund and Osman probably lived at the Hollis's Marsh Quarter, which was part of Phil's property rented by his brother Richard Henry and close to the abandoned shipyard on Nomini where they had formerly worked.

The great hurricane of September 1769¹² may have damaged some of Merrie's work in the shipyard since he left an unfinished vessel on the stocks. William Speake, a married shipwright with a long-running account in Phil's ledger, must have continued the shipbuilding work from 1769 to 1772¹³; he was provided large quantities beef, pork, wheat, brandy, and cider, so possibly he was receiving food supplies for a number of persons, including slaves, living near the shipyard. In 1772 Speake's account listed a debit of 25 lbs. iron and work for making an anchor, which was probably made of iron and wood at that period. A blacksmith at Stratford, possibly a member of the enslaved community, would have fabricated the anchor for Phil's ship. However, the ship remained unfinished in 1772.

What was Lee to do with an unfinished large ship in his shipyard and no master shipwright to supervise his skilled enslaved ship carpenters Edmund and Osman? Phil had even planned to build more vessels if his trading ventures made him a profit. David Galloway, a Northumberland County merchant, suggested that Col. Phil hire Spencer Carter, a talented shipwright from the same county, to finish the work in progress. Col. Phil and Galloway had to write several letters to shipwright Spencer Carter—including the promise of a plantation and good houses to live in—to convince him to come to Stratford.¹⁴ Carter resumed work on the brigantine in March 1773 and, by late 1775—around the time of Col. Phil's death—the ship was completed. The brig was advertised for sale in the *Virginia Gazette: A NEW Brig, Burthen about 115 Tons, now on the Stocks and ready for launching. Her upper Timbers are altogether of Black Walnut, Cedar, Locust, and Mulberry. The Terms of Sale will be made known to any Person inclining to purchase, by applying to the Steward at Stratford, the seat of the late Hon. Philip Ludwell Lee, Esq; in Westmoreland County.* The ship was still on the stocks when Phil's probate inventory was taken in 1776; Phil's widow Elizabeth advertised its sale in 1775 and again on September 1, 1777 at the shipyard. Although there was a boat at the Stratford wharf in 1776, there was another boat, in addition to the brig, at Phil's shipyard "in Nominy" [Nomini]...a more protected bay at the eastern end of Stratford. [See Appendix B for map of Nomini Bay area]

In 1776, Phil's store goods included 397 yards of sail cloth. Some of that stock must have been used the same year, since £45..3..1 worth of "sundry pieces of Duck" were furnished the "Navy in Potomack."

¹² Often described as the "Great Gust," the devastating hurricane that came up the Chesapeake Bay around September 8, 1769, ruined tobacco and other crops, and damaged most of the wharves, ships, mills and houses in the area. ALS Philip Ludwell Lee to William Lee, dated 6 October 1769: "...this will be a bad year the gust a month ago such as never was here has destroyed ¾ of the Tob[acc]o..."

¹³ ALS Philip Ludwell Lee to Spencer Carter, dated January 18, 1773, in which Phil writes that in December "the man's time was out & that if you came up on Rec^t of my letter you might have the place on proper terms..." The previous shipwright, William Speake, was evidently contracted, or indentured, to work for a specified length of time.

¹⁴ Westmoreland County court records show a legal case, Spencer Carter vs Lee's Administrators, dated July 31, 1786, where Carter sued Philip Ludwell Lee's estate for £300 for goods, wares, merchandise, work and labor, plus damages; the court ruled in August 1788 that Carter was to be paid £235..16..11.

Tobacco Inspection Station & Purchases of Tobacco

Not only did Philip Ludwell Lee grow tobacco for profit, his clout as a member of the Virginia Council enabled him to erect tobacco inspection stations and warehouses on his property—ventures that made him extra money. Col. Phil's public tobacco inspection station¹⁵, erected at Stratford Landing in 1759, and other buildings, such as the warehouse, store and mill near the Stratford Landing wharf, were either damaged or destroyed by the great hurricane of 1769. The inspection station at Stratford was discontinued by the Virginia General Assembly in November 1769 and the Landing Store likely closed at the same time because of the lack of ship traffic. By October 1770 a new tobacco inspection station was to be erected at Persimon Point, Phil's property on Currioman Bay.¹⁶ That meant that, before October 1, Phil had to build "strong, close and substantial houses" large enough to contain eighty hogsheads of tobacco. Phil received ten pence for every hogshead of tobacco received and inspected for warehouse rental. The tobacco inspector (Nominy and Persimon Point were put under one inspection) for the station at Persimon Point was paid thirty pounds per year. Phil was fortunate to have inherited the bulk of his father's land, since he was also collecting rent for an inspection station and warehouse at the falls of the Potomac.

Philip Ludwell Lee's ledger recorded purchases of tobacco from neighboring planters in the Northern Neck, including his brother Richard Henry and John Augustine Washington at Wakefield. Presumably, this tobacco was needed to help fill a cargo bound for England. Each hogshead was numbered, weighed, inspected and marked with the owner's special shipping mark as well as the name of the inspection station. When farmers brought their tobacco to be inspected, the inspector would remove all bad tobacco from the hogsheads, which were wooden barrels made to a specific legal size and contained around 1,000 pounds (often more) of tobacco each. The inspector would issue the farmer a tobacco crop note for the amount of good tobacco in each hogshead. That crop note could be used as currency to buy goods at local plantation stores. Ledger entries record payments in tobacco that included the original tobacco owner's initials (usually incorporated in his mark), number of the hogshead, gross weight (both hogshead and contents), tare weight (hogshead only), and final net weight of tobacco passing inspection.¹⁷

Ironworks

Philip Ludwell Lee also held the mortgage on an ironworks in northern Virginia near Great Falls. After John Semple defaulted on payments in the 1760s, Phil became the owner of the works at Occoquan; the works were finally sold by Phil's heirs in 1788.¹⁸ In Phil's ledger, Benjamin Weeks was provided with 600 lbs. bar iron in 1770; this and other distributions of bar iron could possibly reflect Semple's attempt to pay Phil in iron rather than cash sterling. Throughout this

¹⁵ Edward Sanford and Richard Muse were appointed as tobacco inspectors at the Stratford Landing warehouse by the House of Burgesses.

¹⁶ Henings, *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 8, p.320.

¹⁷ See Appendix A, facsimile of Richard Henry Lee ledger page showing tobacco marks and weights on the Contra side.

¹⁸ Court records show a lengthy suit against Semple's heirs; copies of documents are available in the duPont Library's photocopy files. Henry Lee III purchased certain parts of the iron works, land which also became involved in a court suit.

period Phil would have easy access to supplies of iron for shipbuilding and other trades that required it.

Overseers

Farming activities at Philip Ludwell Lee's various quarters—the home farm, the Clifts and Hollis's Marsh¹⁹—were all managed by overseers. Overseers attended to the welfare and discipline of enslaved workers, managed livestock and equipment, and supervised daily work. Sometimes a principal overseer supervised other overseers, who helped manage the laborers. For the most part, Stratford overseers were provided with housing and were paid in crop shares, ranging from 1/15th to 1/8th of the crop produced. In many instances in Phil's ledger, purchases made by overseers from the plantation's store, were paid in credit against their share of the crop. Overseer's contracts were usually renewed annually; the estimated tenure of a Stratford home farm overseer was about 5 ½ years, probably longer than the average overseer stayed in one place.²⁰ The overseers' finances were handled by Stratford's main overseer/steward, John Omohundro, Jr., who may have worked here as early as 1757 and held his position until 1783...nearly twenty-five years. Omohundro would have been a highly trusted employee of Philip Ludwell Lee and was responsible in the handling of money. He collected rents, paid tax levies for the overseers and negroes living at each quarter, and traveled to Phil's outlying properties (upper Potomac River near the Falls) for business and elsewhere to handle legal transactions. Omohundro (c.1712-c.1795) must have been successful because he owned slaves.
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Thomas Pritchard (a Stratford overseer mentioned in Landon Carter's diary—sometimes spelled Pritchett) who unsuccessfully tried to carry out Phil's wish to modernize his slave force by using carts and plows, died in May 1762. Pritchard worked at Stratford from 1756 to 1762, too early to be included in the ledger. He was from a local family and his mother was a Muse from Westmoreland County; Pritchard typified most of the overseers who followed him.

Like Pritchard, most of Philip Ludwell Lee's overseers appear to be men who already resided in the area, were married, and were younger sons who could not expect to inherit land; for the most part, they were trustworthy neighbors whose families had resided in Westmoreland for decades. They are exceptions to the stereotypical overseer who was unmarried and didn't remain long in the position. Most of Stratford's overseers remained in the area after leaving their overseer's position. Some of them even owned land and slaves.

Overseers named in Phil's ledger, with years of service documented, include:

James Russell (1760-1771) *

Thomas Oliff (1773-78) *

¹⁹ Now a part of Stratford Harbour development, Hollis's Marsh has been also known as Hallow's, or Hallowe's Marsh, and was named for John Hallows, who patented the property in 1650. Hallows, like his neighboring patentee Nathaniel Pope, resided in the colony of Maryland before moving to the Virginia side of the Potomac River. Most Lee correspondence just refers to the property as the "Marsh," and many of the slaves who resided there were referred to as "Marsh [slave name]" to distinguish them from slaves residing on other farms.

²⁰ Douglas W. Sanford and Andrew P. Wilkins, "Fitting Overseers into the picture: a spatial analysis of the Oval Site," paper presented at the Society for Historical Archaeology Annual Conference, 2015, p.8.

²¹ A 1782 Westmoreland County court document lists all slave owners in the county and the number of their slaves; Omohundro owned two slaves.

John South (1759-1777) (b.c.1689-1783) related to the Sanford family; had shares at both Upper Clifts and Hallowes marsh [profits were divided among 9 sharers in 1771]

Robert Sanford (1771-1776) *

Ben[jamin] Dodd (b.c. 1706-d. after 1785) (worked at Stratford 1769-1776) weaver by trade *

Sanford Muse (1773-1782) related to Sanford family; worked at Upper Clifts farm

James Hunter (1775-1780) *

Benjamin Hackney (1775-1780) at Upper Clifts – later became Westmoreland County jailor

Samuel Carter [possible overseer] (1780-82)

* indicates probably at Stratford home farm

Philip Ludwell Lee would have had at least two main overseers—one for Stratford and one for the Upper Clifts quarter. His brother Richard Henry Lee, who rented the 500-acre Chantilly property from Phil, also managed the overseer for Hallowes Marsh quarter which fell on part of his rented land. These overseers were provided with food commodities, such as wheat, salt, beef, etc. while they purchased items such as fabrics and spirits.

Indentured White Workers

Although some of the skilled workers at Stratford were indentured, none of them is listed as indentured in the ledger; their indentured status was identified by clues in the ledger and in other documents. Philip Ludwell Lee had at least three indentured servants in the late 1760s, possibly more. Two—butcher George Taylor (1767) and coachman Thomas Bentley (1769)—ran away after serving about a year or less of their contracts. There is no record of their capture and return even though Phil advertised in *The Maryland Gazette* for English-born Bentley, who had agreed to serve him for four years. William Carr, who served Philip between 1767 and 1769, also ran away; his occupation was not listed. Their accounts in Philip's ledger indicated that they left "no effects"—nothing by which their debits could be credited. Indentured workers during this period, especially in the Northern Neck and Westmoreland County, were often convicts who had been transported from English jails; however, we don't know for sure if these servants had ever been imprisoned. However, it is not surprising that they ran away from forced labor; many times their living conditions were not much better than those of enslaved workers.

Occupations of Some White Workers Employed at Stratford prior to the American Revolution

A number of skilled workers had accounts in Philip Ludwell Lee's ledger. Some of their occupations were given and others can be determined from clues in the ledger entries. Many of these whites worked alongside of slaves, who were either helpers being trained to take over a craft or already skilled in a trade. Some of the slaves in the 1782 slave inventory for Stratford were listed as being skilled in the same occupations at those listed below, showing that slave labor was gradually replacing that of white workers after the Revolution; Billy and Phil were blacksmiths, Anthony was a gardener, and Congo was a bricklayer. Most of the slaves listed in 1782 learned and practiced these skills at an early age, making them too young to have been trained by the white laborers listed below. The dates given for the workers are based on their allotments or purchasing activities in the plantation ledger. Some of them may have been indentured, or contracted, but this information is not given in the ledger.

Thomas Carter, gardener, worked 1766-1771, purchased fabrics, his debt was not collected because he died

John Smith, blacksmith, 1773 furnished with foodstuffs and rum

John Taite, herdsman and possible overseer's assistant, worked 1770-1774, was married, purchased goods, in 1771 and 1773 furnished with large quantities of pork; some calves died in his care; listed as dead and insolvent

William Stafford, possibly cobbler – 1764-5, 1771 received salt, beef, leather, awl blades – was not paid wages so must have worked in exchange for lodging and food

Thomas Shadrick, tailor– 1762-66, 1771, 1774, received large quantities of beef, salt, corn, pork; purchased large quantities of wool; Shadrick was still making clothes in 1785, and Suck and Jenny, two slaves from the Marsh quarter, were hired out to him for the year; Suck and Jenny were possibly seamstresses²²

Job Wigley, Jr., brick & stonemason – fall 1770 to winter 1771 provided with foodstuffs [also later in the mid-1770s he was paid for bricklaying at the mills, garden walls and house; he also rented property from Phil]²³

Also listed was John Barker, a jobber, who purchased brandy and fabric in 1767. A jobber was a person who was paid to do general work “by the job.” In other words, Barker was a handyman who did all sorts of work as needed.

Renting Plantation Properties to Tenants

From Philip Ludwell Lee's ledger and estate records, it is apparent that he found it necessary, or profitable, to rent out portions of his property. Tenants from 1775 to 1781 included: Edward Muse, Elize Minor, John Walker, Jr.,* James Bryant, William Goodman, John Watkins, Peter Walker, John Turberville, Richard Henry Lee* [for Chantilly property], Mrs. Hunter, Richard Jenkins Jr.*, William Jenkins, Benjamin Weaver, Charles Collins, Richard Hall*, Job Wigley Jr.*, William Mathews, Mr. Lawson, William Dodd, Edward Tapscot, Thomas Haydon, Benjamin Hackney [overseer], William Claxton and John Moxley. The persons listed did not all rent land at the same time, so they could have rented a tenancy after another renter gave it up or was evicted. Many times these tenanted properties were small landholdings purchased from owners who had already constructed a house and other buildings on the properties. Some tenants, such as Job Wigley, Jr. , became owners of properties adjoining Lee landholdings. The

²² Richard Henry Lee's memorandum book indicated that Suck and Jenny were hired out for 1000 and 505 pounds of tobacco, respectively, for one year to Thomas Shadrick.

²³ Wigley may have worked on the early stages of rebuilding Stratford's gristmill, for which construction continued until at least 1786. It is not clear what “house” Wigley worked on, whether it was a house possibly connected with the garden, such as the house over the burial vault or the octagon building, or the main house itself. The time frame lends itself to the idea that the house over the vault may have been constructed following the death of Philip Ludwell Lee in 1775, since his remains are not known to be elsewhere. The bones excavated from the burial vault were given to a Lee descendant who paid for the excavation in 1937; the current location of the bones is unknown.

incentive of being provided with land and a house, such as the plantation offered to shipwright Spencer Carter, would have helped Phil attract workers with the skills he needed. [* listed in Philip Ludwell Lee's ledger]

Hiring Out of Skilled Slaves/Selling Services and Materials produced with Enslaved Labor

Stratford plantation furnished Joseph Robinson with plank, nails, and lime as well as the cost of the carpenters and the laborers who plastered and whitewashed in 1770. Congo was an enslaved Stratford bricklayer who was also mentioned as a whitewasher by Richard Henry Lee, so he was probably one of the slaves rented out to Robinson. Female slaves were sometimes hired out to keep house and cook for overseers. Matilda Lee even loaned young female slaves to relatives; we know this from Richard Henry Lee's memorandum book and from a newspaper ad describing one of them who ran away.²⁴ Evidently, carpenters were in demand; Phil had his carpenters transported to various areas of the county when they were not needed at Stratford. Enslaved carpenters, such as Harry, worked at other sites, including Chantilly, for weeks at a time.

Timbering & Sales/Wood Products

In 1769 attorney Richard Parker received 274 feet of oak plank, indicating that Stratford timber was being harvested for sale many years before Henry Lee III sold timber to the builder of the first White House. To cut the large amount of plank and boards needed to build Phil's ships, inspection station, plantation buildings, and for heating and cooking in the many houses on Phil's extended property, Stratford would have required a good number of enslaved sawyers to fell trees, pit saw them into usable sizes and haul the wood. A sawmill would have been needed near the shipyard, and probably another one would have been closer to the plantation where wooden products, such as barrel staves and headers, were cut to send to Barbadoes and to fill ships to England when the tobacco supply was scant. Stratford forests supplied the black walnut, cedar, locust, mulberry and oak needed for shipbuilding, as well as poplar planks listed in the ledger.

Diet of a Typical Stratford Worker

The economy of Stratford depended on a food supply to feed all of the plantation's inhabitants—Phil's family, indentured and hired white workers, and the enslaved laborers and their overseers at remote locations. Wheat, corn, rye, fresh or salted beef and pork, mutton and fish are some of the commodities produced at Stratford that formed the basic diet of many who lived here. In 1776, Stratford's home farm had a flock of nearly 100 sheep and there were more sheep, over 60 hogs, and nearly 100 head of cattle at the Upper Clifts farm. Nineteen hogs were at the mill, where waste grain from milling would have been used to fatten them. An additional 76 head of cattle, 36 hogs and 24 sheep were listed in the inventory, possibly located at Hollis's Marsh quarter. Since most of the food allotments were pork and beef, most of the sheep would have been kept for wool production, and not eaten. Some of the grains were already ground,

²⁴ Grace, enslaved daughter of Abraham and Letty at the Marsh, was loaned by Matilda Lee to her relative, Miss Nancy Taylor of Fredericksburg, on November 8, 1781; in October 1789 a Fredericksburg newspaper advertised a runaway slave girl named Harriett, also likely from the Marsh, who was loaned to Miss Taylor and ran away, presumably trying to get back to Stratford.

indicating that Stratford's gristmill was operating during the years prior to the American Revolution.

A few of the hired, skilled workers received allotments of rum (imported from the West Indies), and cider and brandy (both produced locally), but, in most cases, these beverages had to be purchased. White workers and slaves received basic food items as part of their weekly allowance, or allotment, and, in many cases, wages of Stratford's white laborers were paid with food and housing. While Phil boasted about the quantity and variety of vegetables in Stratford's garden, his slaves, overseers and hired workers likely supplemented their rations by raising their own gardens, fishing and hunting.

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