

## APPENDIX B

### John Ham Inventory, 1798

#### Introduction

When John Ham, owner of the Laws Farm, died, an inventory was made of his possessions. This was a standard practice in England, the English colonies, and the early United States, and thousands of inventories survive. These documents are an important source of information about everyday life in Colonial and early National times. They record many items that rarely survive in the ground to be excavated by archaeologists, such as clothing, wooden furniture, and bed linens. The monetary values are also very interesting, since they show that some objects of great importance to archaeologists, especially ceramics, were not highly valued by the people who used them. The inventory for John Ham is particularly detailed, recording items such as barrels, pails, and leather that many recorders would have lumped together as "lumber." (In this period the word "lumber" meant simply "junk.") The great detail with which the livestock were inventoried, down to the color in some cases, shows how important they were, and how precise a vocabulary for describing them these farmers possessed. The large amount of stored food on hand, including 50 bushels of corn, 1,342 pounds of bacon, and a barrel of vinegar, reminds us how much refrigeration has changed our lives.

John Ham was a very wealthy man, as this inventory shows. The larger part of his wealth was invested in items intended to produce more wealth, including large numbers of livestock, large quantities of tools, and eleven slaves. An adult slave was valued at 30 to 50 pounds, three to five times as much as a mule and twice as much as a good horse, so they were very valuable indeed. John Ham's slaves made up a third of the total value of his estate. Ham also purchased luxury goods. His furnishings were particularly impressive, including many pieces of mahogany and walnut. He had two precious watches, one gold and one silver, and a set of silver spoons. He owned enough books to need two bookcases, including a large Bible worth 3 pounds, as well as a carriage for summer travel and a new sleigh for the winter. He owned all the equipment necessary for partaking in the new rituals of tea and coffee, which were an essential part of the eighteenth century "culture of respectability" (Walsh 1992)—a tea kettle, a tea table, a coffee mill, and a coffee pot—and he kept a store of coffee and sugar on hand.

The values in the inventory are English pounds (£), shillings (s) and pence (d), which most Americans preferred to the new and untried U.S. dollar. In the English system twelve pence made one shilling, and twenty shillings made one pound.

**An Inventory of the Goods and Chattels of John Ham Dec'd. Appraised by us the Subscribers this Eleventh Day of June One Thousand Seven Hundred & Ninety Eight.**

		£	s	d
Wearing Apparel		10	10	0
5 No Horn'd Cows & 4 Calves	@ 90/-	22	10	0
5 Horn's Cows & Calves	90/-	22	10	0
1 Stear & Heifer	40/-	4	0	0
1 Black Cow		4	0	0
5 Heifers	45/-	11	5	0
5 Do. & Stear	45/-	13	10	0
1 Small Heifer & Stear	30/-	3	0	0
3 Cows	90/-	13	10	0
1 No Horn'd Stear & Horned Red Do.	90/-	9	0	0
1 Yoke of Oxen		15	0	0
2 Small Heifers	30/-	3	9	0
1 Yoke of Oxen		13	10	0
1 Yoke of Ditto		12	0	0
1 Brindle Bull		3	15	0
5 Cows	80/-	20	0	0
2 Black Stears	80/-	8	0	0
1 Three Years old Heifer & 1 Two Year old Ditto	45/-	4	10	0
1 Brindle Yearling		1	10	0
6 Milch Cows	80/-	24	0	0
7 Ditto & Calves	100/-	35	0	0
1 Bay Mare & Yearling Mule		7	10	0
4 Mules	£10	40	0	0
1 Grey Mare		12	10	0
1 Two Year old Bay Colt		15	0	0
1 Small Sorrel Mare		22	10	0
1 Large Black Mare		15	0	0
1 Large Bay Ditto		1	0	0
1 Ditto Ditto		22	10	0
1 Young Colt		7	10	0
50 Head of Sheep large & small	10/-	25	0	0
1 Black Sow & 4 pigs		1	15	0
1 Spotted Sow & 4 pigs		2	0	0
26 Head of Hogs beside the above		19	10	0
35 Head of Geese & Goslings		1	6	0
1 Dutch Fan		3	0	0
3 Hogsheads & 3 Barrels		1	5	0

1 pair of old Cart Wheels & Body		1	5	0
3 Hogsheads & 7 Barrels		0	15	0
1 Barrel & Some Shad		0	15	0
1 Ditto & Red Paint		0	15	0
1 Soap Cask 10/- & 3 old Kegs 3/-		0	13	0
1 Barrel & a little Salt		0	7	6
1 Hogshead half full of Vinegar		1	15	0
2 Hogsheads 15/- & 1 Barrel 7/6		1	2	6
1 Barrel of Soap		1	10	0
1 Barrel & Keg		0	10	0
50 Bushels Corn	@ 3/-	7	10	0
1 Carriage		22	10	0
1 New Sleigh		3	0	0
1 Plow & Geers		2	5	0
1 Ox Cart & Yoke		8	0	0
1 large Harrow		1	10	0
1 old Plough		1	0	0
2 Grubbing Hoes		0	12	6
5 Hoes		0	12	6
1 Spade, Axes, Scythe & Briar Hook		1	0	0
Geers & Chain		0	13	6
1 Pair of Wedges & Ox Chain Ditto		1	1	0
3 Dutch Ovens		1	2	6
3 old pots & Griddle 10/- Big pot & hooks 15/-		1	5	0
2 Pots & hooks 12/6 - Skillet Tea Kettle & Sauce pan 11/3		1	3	9
a Lot of Old Petwer & Earthen ware	3/-	0	15	0
2 Frying pans 7/6 - old warming pan & Brass Kettle 30/-		1	17	6
4 Pails & 2 Tubs 15/- 2 old tables & 2 chests 15/-		1	10	0
1 Big wheel 7/6 - 4 pottracks 30/- & 2 saws 33/7		3	11	3
1 Small Ditto 5s Andirons & Tongs 25/- old cupboard 5/-		1	15	0
2 Saddles 60/- old pail & mortar 7/6 - old Bedstead 2/6		3	10	0
2 odd chairs 3/- flesh fork 2/6 5 sicles & Chisel 7/-		0	12	6
1 Bridle 7/6 old Plough & 2 Swingletrees 10/- & 3 Plough Bridles 3/-		1	0	6
1342# Bacon 1342/- & 80# of Beef 80/-		71	2	0
1 Share & 2 Colters & Screws		2	5	0
1 Bed Bedstead & Furniture with window Curtains		10	0	0
2 Beds Bedsteads & Furniture		11	0	0
1 Coffee Mill 7/6 Small Book Case 10/-		0	17	6
1 Small red Table 2/6 - 2 cases 15/- & 2 Trunks 22/6		2	0	0
Leather 18/9 Candles 20/- Coffe & Sugar 23/9		3	2	6
1 Demijohn 7/6 Sundries in the Store Room 7/6		0	15	0

15 Yds Cloth @2/6 Basket & Hatchet 2/6	4	5	0
7 Old Chairs 7/6 Cradle 7/6	0	14	6
Sundry old Books 18/9 Spools Thread @ 52/6	3	11	3
Desk and Book Case 200/- & Books in do. 50/-	12	10	0
2 Guns 25/- Small Table & Basket & small Chair 7/6	1	12	6
6 Mahogany Chairs	4	10	0
6 Windsor Chairs 45/- & Couch 45/-	4	10	0
1 Tea Table 25/- Dressing do. 30/- Beaureau 50/-	5	5	0
2 Tables 45/- Case of Drawers 100/-	7	5	0
Andirons Shovel & Tongs 30/- Chain Galss & delph ware 25/-	6	2	6
Looking Glass 60/- Razor Case & Razors 7/6			
1 Bedstead & furniture	9	0	0
1 Stout Walnut Table 52/6 & Mahogany do. 15/-	3	7	6
1 Pine Table 7/6 & Walnut Drawers 45/-	2	12	6
3 Arm Chairs 20/- & 8 Old Chairs 30/-	2	10	0
3 waiters 25/- Hand & Flat Irons 22/6	2	7	6
Plates 8/6 Bowl 5/- Tumblers Coffee pot & bowl 8/-	1	1	6
1 Jug 2/6 Coffe pot 2/6 - 3 Candlesticks 7/6 dish 2/6 funnels 2/-	0	17	0
Sundries 4s Knives & forks 20/-	1	4	0
1 Jug of Lard 40/- Milk pans and pots 15/- and Sole leather 7/6	3	2	6
Flour & Barrel 40/- Rye do. & 2 Bbls 40/-	4	0	0
3 Kegs 11/3 Salt, Barrel & Keg 8/3	0	19	6
Lots of Lumber & 48 1/2# Sole Leather	1	4	4
Steelyards 11/3 Codfish 3/- & Pr. Traces 2/4	0	16	7
1 Couch, Table, Reel & Chest	0	10	0
1 Negro Child Mariah, Hannah's daughter	*	7	6
60# of wool @ 2/0	6	0	0
298 feet of Plank 13/0 hnd.	1	18	9
Sugar Tongs, Spoons & China Mug	1	10	0
1 Silver Watch	8	5	0
1 Negro Man Jacob to Serve One Year	12	10	0
1 Negro Woman Betty	40	0	0

Amount Carried Forward	£ 787	3	10
John Ham's Legacy			
Clock 22L 10s & Pint Silver Can 10L	32	10	0
Silver Spoons 5L & Soup Ladle 3L	8	0	0
Negro Tom	50	0	0
Sulkey 10L & Large Bible 3L	13	0	0
Gold Watch	11	5	0
1 Young Horse (Shark)	15	0	0
	£ 129	15	0
Margaret Stout's Legacy			
Negro Betty 40L & Negro Jim 40L	80	0	0
Ann Ham's Legacy			
Negro Hannah for Ten Years	30	0	0
Negro Jean	30	0	0
	£ 60	0	0
Charles Ham's Legacy			
Negro Caleb	50	0	0
Susan Ham's Legacy			
Negro Violet 30L & Mary 30L	60	0	0
Alexander Ham's Legacy			
Negro Prince	20	0	0
Benjamin Ham's Legacy			
Negro Enos	18	15	0
	£ 1205	13s	10d

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