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THE ELLIOTTS OF PHILADELPHIA:

Emphasis on the Looking Glass Trade, 1755-1810

by

Mary Ellen Hayward

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the  
University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in  
Early American Culture.

June, 1971

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## PREFACE

It has long been a matter of contention whether John Elliott, Sr., actually made the looking glasses that he sold in Philadelphia between 1756 and 1776. In this paper I will attempt to prove that Elliott imported almost all of the looking glasses bearing his label and that these looking glasses were made in England. This conclusion is based primarily on the microscopic analysis of wood samples taken from the frames of labeled Elliott looking glasses and from the frames of looking glasses labeled by English makers. Documentary and stylistic evidence further substantiates the scientific findings. I also hope to prove that John Elliott, Sr., was a cabinetmaker in Leicester, England, before he came to Philadelphia in 1753 and that he practiced the cabinetmaking trade in Philadelphia until about 1758, when he concluded that the importation of looking glasses was a more profitable business.

Before I began this project little was known about the life and career of John Elliott, Jr. In this paper I will discuss his various business activities, his involvement in Quaker charities, and his role as a looking glass dealer in Philadelphia between 1784 and 1810. Microscopic analysis of wood samples taken from looking glasses labeled by John Elliott, Jr., indicate that they were made in America. Further evidence supporting an American origin appears on three of Elliott's

labels, which state that he sold "Looking Glasses of American Manufacture." Whether John Elliott, Jr., actually made these looking glasses in his own shop or obtained them from a local manufactory is still a matter of conjecture.

The impetus for this study of the looking glass trades of John Elliott, Sr. and Jr., came from Mr. John J. Evans, Honorary Librarian of the Decorative Arts Photographic Collection of the Winterthur Museum. Mr. Evans has long been interested in the provenance of labeled Elliott looking glasses and has been collecting photographs and wood samples from labeled pieces for the last several years. Naturally, his file of documented Elliott looking glasses has been invaluable to me, as have been his long considered opinions regarding the true nature of the Elliotts' business activities.

It would have been impossible to reach any conclusions regarding the provenance of labeled Elliott looking glasses without the expert aid of Gordon Saltar of the Winterthur Museum. Over the years Mr. Saltar has developed techniques for the identification of wood species through microscopic analysis. His identification of the types of woods found in the frames of labeled American looking glasses and in the frames of English-made looking glasses was essential to the development of this study. He was very generous with his time in analyzing the many samples I brought to him and in discussing the characteristics of the species of concern to me.

I also owe a great deal to Judith Coolidge Hughes who lent me

five extraordinary notebooks containing photographs of labeled Elliott looking glasses as well as other contemporary examples accumulated by her over the years. It is Mrs. Hughes's belief that many of the looking glasses known today in America were actually imported from Northern Europe in the eighteenth century. Although I cannot wholly subscribe to her opinions, Mrs. Hughes's discussions of her theories with me led to an investigation of the importation of looking glasses from Northern Europe into Philadelphia in the eighteenth century. The results of this phase of the study are to be found in Chapter V.

My most grateful thanks go to my advisor, Nancy Goyne Evans, Registrar of the Winterthur Museum. She kindly shared her own research with me and gave me valuable manuscript references to John Elliott, Sr. and Jr., and to the looking glass trade in Philadelphia. She also laboriously read, re-read, corrected, and criticized my manuscript, despite her own time-consuming commitments at the museum. I also want to thank Benno M. Forman, Research Fellow and Teaching Associate at the Winterthur Museum, for taking such an interest in my project and giving me many references to the provenance of woods used in cabinetmaking in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Many people have been kind enough to allow me to take wood samples from their labeled Elliott looking glasses. My thanks go to Mrs. T. Van C. Phillips and the late Mr. Phillips, of West Chester, Pennsylvania; Mrs. Donald F. Carpenter, of Mendenhall, Pennsylvania; Mr. Horace Hotchkiss, Curator of the Corbit-Sharp House in Odessa, Delaware; and, Mr. Travis Cox, Director of the Chester County Historical Society,

West Chester, Pennsylvania. Mr. H. Parrot Bacot, Director of the Anglo-American Art Museum at Louisiana State University, kindly sent me a photograph of the labeled Elliott looking glass in the Museum's collection and a wood sample from its frame. Mrs. G. Dallas Coons sent samples that she had taken from looking glasses attributed to Elliott and illustrated in the catalogue published by the Valentine Museum of Richmond, Virginia, entitled Charles Navis: Tastemaker. Mrs. William D. Hershey, Curator at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia sent samples from the labeled Elliott looking glass in their collection, and Mr. Raymond Shepard, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, provided samples from the labeled looking glasses at his institution. I also want to thank Miss Wendy Cooper, a Winterthur Fellow, for taking samples from the two labeled Elliott looking glasses originally purchased by Nicholas Brown & Company of Providence and now in the collection of Mr. Norman Herreshoff of Bristol, Rhode Island.

For the ease of the reader, eighteenth-century punctuation has been modernized in the quoted passages.

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper concerns the activities of John Elliott, Sr. and Jr., of Philadelphia. It explores the nature of the looking glass trade in that city between 1755 and 1810 and emphasizes the part the Elliotts played in that trade. The introductory paragraphs will summarize previous writings on the Elliotts and discuss the evolution of scholarly attitudes toward the looking glass trade in Colonial and Federal America.

The Centennial Exposition of 1876 focused the attention of Americans on "antiques," or the artifacts of their forefathers. During the four decades that followed, enthusiasm for things American was concentrated in the hands of a small group of wealthy collectors and antiquarians--men and women such as Dr. Irving Whitehall Lyon, Luke Vincent Lockwood, H. Eugene Bolles, Edwin Atlee Barber, Esther Singleton, and Mrs. Watson Webb. With the opening of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1924, an interest in the American arts filtered down from the very wealthy to collectors of more moderate means. In January, 1922, Antiques magazine brought out its first issue, appealing to the tastes of this newly expanding group. Within a year the looking glasses of "John Elliott of Philadelphia" were being discussed in its pages.

The January, 1923, issue illustrates a photograph of a looking

glass label bearing the name "John Elliott," which is accompanied by this description:

Chippendale mirror, pine veneered with mahogany, original glass and label of manufacturer (reproduced herewith) \$140.<sup>1</sup>

The looking glass had been sold at the auction of the Margolis collection. The label states that Elliott's shop was in South Front Street.

By June of the same year the publication of this label had led to the discovery of three new labels, which were discussed in the "Editor's Attic" of Antiques. Two of these proved to be identical to each other yet different from the label on the Margolis glass. A transcription of the English text of the two similar labels is reproduced in the note and states that Elliott's shop location was Walnut Street. The third label had been used by "John Elliott & Sons"; the title and extensive text led the Editor to assume that Elliott had "taken his sons into partnership with him and that the variety of his wares" had "undergone further expansion." The two "Walnut Street" labels were correctly assumed to be of the earliest date because they advertised the most limited supply of goods. The note ended with the Editor's query, "Can some Philadelphian now supply dates?"<sup>2</sup>

Elliott scholarship advanced a step further in January, 1924, when the "Editor's Attic" published a note entitled, "John Elliott Acquires Chronology." Mr. Clarence W. Brazer of Philadelphia wrote to report that after searching through copies of the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser from 1730 to 1768 and the American Weekly Mercury from 1730 to 1758, he had found two advertisements of John Elliott, one for 1758 and another for 1768.

He had also found references to a John Elliott in the Philadelphia directories for 1785 and 1799. Supplementing this information Mr. T. Van C. Phillips of Westtown, Pennsylvania, sent in photographs of a looking glass in his collection that was labeled by Elliott and bore the inscription: "N 1741 H Sharpless." Mr. Phillips had bought the looking glass from descendants of Nathan and Hannah Sharpless; the year "1741" was the marriage date of the couple. Another Elliott label appeared on a looking glass that carried a slip of paper under its backboard reading, "This glass was bo't in 1779." Through the compilation of the above information, John Elliott's activity was "established" as beginning as early as 1741 and continuing as late as 1799. At this point it was suspected that perhaps there were two John Elliotts, father and son, and that the son had continued the trade of his father into the late eighteenth century. This idea was corroborated by the text of a label on another looking glass owned by Mr. Phillips that bore the heading, "John Elliott, Jun<sup>r</sup>." The widespread interest in the Elliotts that had now been generated in the pages of the "Editor's Attic" was explained by the Editor in the following way:

Elliott was a believer in advertising. He labelled his pieces with legends that stuck firmly in place. No other dealer of his time has been so clearly traceable.<sup>4</sup>

To this day John Elliott, Sr., has remained one of the best known American craftsman of the eighteenth century.

In 1924 Alfred Coxe Prime published the first scholarly and definitive study of the Elliotts' activities in the April issue of the Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin. Prime obtained the bulk of his information

from a careful study of Pennsylvania newspapers in the period 1750 to 1785. From the many advertisements of John Elliott that he found, he was able to establish a chronology of the Elliotts' various shop locations and the probable dates of occupation. With this information the known labeled Elliott looking glasses could be approximately dated by comparing shop locations on the labels with locations and dates in the advertisements. Prime's research proved the existence of a John Elliott, Sr. and Jr., and permitted separation of the earliest labels of John, Jr., from those of his father. Prime also researched the history of the Elliott family in Philadelphia through an investigation of the probate material on file in the Registry of Wills and the deeds in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds. He established the birth and death dates of John Elliott, father and son, and identified the other occupations of both Elliotts: the cabinetmaking trade of John Elliott, Sr., and the paint, brush, and drug business of John, Jr.

Because of his knowledge of the advertisements, Prime was hesitant to claim that labeled Elliott looking glasses were of American manufacture. Prime quoted such key phrases from these notices as: "Imported in the Hanover, Capt. Falconer, and other vessels from London." <sup>5</sup> For some reason, probably the desire of Americans to derive pride from things of American origin, several later scholars ignored the published texts of Elliott's advertisements and chose to believe that labeled Elliott looking glasses were of American origin.

Although Wallace Nutting did not mention Elliott specifically in the "looking glass" section of Furniture Treasury, his general ideas

concerning the looking glass trade in America probably were influenced by Prime's article. Amid the many pages of photographs of looking glasses, Nutting included the following short paragraph:

As to looking-glasses in general it is sometimes difficult to determine whether they are English or American. The styles also were much the same. It would be impossible, however, to secure a fine and elegant collection of American looking-glasses covering the various periods. In the notations made, it has been thought best not to be too specific regarding origins, partly owing to the difficulty of making an authoritative statement. 6

Herbert Cescinsky also hesitated to distinguish between English and American looking glasses. He wrote in English and American Furniture:

The early Georgian wall mirrors, of mahogany or walnut, with carved and gilt surround and inside enrichment, were often extensively copied in America, and so faithfully that it is often extremely difficult to distinguish between the work of the Eastern States and the English originals, especially when, in the latter, the frame was surmounted by an eagle. 7

Cescinsky's notation under the section "American Craftsmen" testifies to the scarcity of known labeled Elliott looking glasses in 1927. He wrote that Elliott's principal trade appeared to "have been in small pivoted dressing glasses on box bases, with drawers, of which several, with his label have been found, also one or two wall mirrors." 8

Two books appeared in the mid-1930's that were more scholarly and thorough in their treatment of American antique furniture than any previous writings. These were William M. Hornor's Blue Book: Philadelphia Furniture and Edgar G. Miller's American Antique Furniture. Both authors discussed the work of John Elliott in detail, but each

showed a very different bias.

Hornor's attitude toward Elliott's work is well illustrated by the following excerpt from his book:

The frequently expressed doubts as to the Philadelphia origin of certain looking glasses which are known to have hung in the Georgian residences of this vicinity logically confuse collectors. Then too, the incessant advertising of John Elliott and of James Reynolds--who, though both were experienced artificers, nevertheless bragged of their fresh "importations"--cast implications and aspersions upon their abilities. Elliott and Reynolds have bequeathed numerous fine labelled, signed, and documented specimens that are not in the least perplexing. Every one of their output examined is Philadelphian, and was undoubtedly made in their workshops. 9

Miller, on the other hand, summarized his section on the looking glasses of the Elliotts with the words:

It should be borne in mind that the label may indicate either that Elliott, or his successors, made the mirror, or that they repaired it or that they sold it as an importer or dealer. 10

Perhaps Hornor had a reason for ignoring the evidence presented by the Elliott advertisements. He did not believe that the simple fretwork frames seen on labeled Elliott looking glasses could have been made in England during the period that produced the elegant rococo designs published by Matthias Lock and Thomas Chippendale and the later "classical" style furnishings introduced by Robert Adam. He expressed this view as follows:

In the case of the moulded and fretted frames, it is reasonable to suppose that at the time they were sold in Philadelphia they were not current in England if indeed they were available for the export trade. 11

Miller agreed with Hornor on this point:

In the period of about 1755-1785 the fashionable style of mirror was that of Chippendale; but the Elliott fretwork mirrors were plain and inexpensive and naturally continued to be made for those who did not wish to buy the more elegant pieces. The fretwork mirrors were made in practically the same design by the members of the Elliott family from about 1753 to 1809, a long period which exceeds the periods of the styles of Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite, and some years of the style of Sheraton. 12

Hornor's idea that the "plain and inexpensive" looking glasses found in America must be of local origin because they were so unlike contemporary English designs found wide acceptance in the years following publication of his Blue Book.

Another idea presented by Hornor in the Blue Book and accepted as fact by scholars and collectors without further analysis was his assertion that John Elliott, Sr., was a practicing cabinetmaker:

John Elliott, who came to Philadelphia in 1753, having learned the trade in London, established himself as a cabinetmaker at Fourth and Chesnut Streets. Three years in America were sufficient to instill the atmosphere of Quaker Philadelphia into his handicraft. His known productions follow all the "rules" of the Philadelphia School. 13

Hornor continued by enumerating all the furniture that Elliott had made, kindly supplying photographs of the more important pieces. It is true that two of Elliott's bills for furniture exist: one to Edward Shippen, Jr., in 1754 and one to Charles Norris in 1758. It is not viable, however, to attribute a piece of furniture to a cabinetmaker merely on the basis of its resemblance to a written description and/or its descent in a particular family. Unfortunately, Hornor's attributions

were readily accepted by collectors, dealers, and scholars, and there exists today a large group of so-called "John Elliott" furniture, of which not one piece can actually be documented to the hand or shop of John Elliott, Sr., of Philadelphia.

Although he was a respected antiquarian and scholar, Joseph Downs accepted Hornor's ideas concerning the range of John Elliott's activities and lent to them further credibility by incorporating them into his book, American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods. He illustrated a set of walnut stools owned by the Winterthur Museum, which Hornor had attributed to Elliott. The caption reads:

Philadelphia, 1755-56/ Made by John Elliott/ . . . one of a set of four . . . . The stools were originally made for Charles Norris and later were used at Stenton in Germantown. 14

Downs did not deny the developing myth ascribing American origin to a number of labeled Elliott looking glasses. In amplifying Plate 254 he wrote, ". . . there is some evidence that some of his labeled frames were Philadelphia <sup>15</sup> made." Further commentary on Elliott accompanying Plate 255 noted: "he advertised that he made and imported looking glasses; in this one the hard-pine carcass and backboards <sup>16</sup> suggest a domestic origin." In fact, the majority of the looking glasses from the Winterthur collection illustrated by Downs are labeled "American." He made almost no mention of the secondary woods used in the frames.

The description by Ethel Hall Bjercoe of the activities of John Elliott, Sr., illustrates the impact that Downs's acceptance of



Hornor's ideas regarding Elliott had in the scholarly community. Under the entry for Elliott in The Cabinetmakers of America she writes:

. . . Downs states there is evidence that some of his [Elliott's] labeled mirrors were Philadelphia made, (See Downs No. 254) . . . . At the Winterthur Museum, Delaware, there is a set of four walnut stools made by Elliott with shell carving typical of Philadelphia work but with pad feet (Downs No. 294); also a walnut side chair made in 1755-65 (Downs No. 122) tentatively attributed to Elliott since it is similar to chairs made for Charles Norris. 17

Helen Comstock also chose to follow the path that Downs had trod. In American Furniture she writes:

Although he [Elliott] is known for furniture made for Edward Shippen, Jr., and Charles Norris, he is remembered chiefly as a maker of looking glasses. Since his label states that he imported and sold English looking glasses, a label alone is not proof that the mirror on which it appears is American. However, Downs says in American Furniture (No. 254) that there is evidence that some of the labeled mirrors were made in Philadelphia . . . 18

In the caption under a photograph of a labeled Elliott looking glass owned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art and bearing the third type label used by John Elliott, Sr., Miss Comstock writes, "Although Elliott, the most important Philadelphia maker, sold imported mirrors, as well as his own, this one is considered to be his work." 19 By 1964, however, in her new book The Looking Glass in America, 1700-1825, Miss Comstock was more equivocal in her statement:

Could a great number of glasses have been made in America in the colonial period? Evidently not. . . . John Elliott . . . was an importer of English looking glasses and also a maker of glasses and a cabinetmaker. Elliott's label appears on many styles of mirrors, and he may have made, and imported all types . . . . 20

Not long after Helen Comstock wrote the above text, Charles  
 21  
 Montgomery published American Furniture: The Federal Period. In 1966  
 he was just beginning to have an important tool at his disposal--the  
 microscopic analysis of wood samples taken from antique furniture.  
 Here was the kind of tool Hornor had hoped to find thirty years  
 earlier when he had written in 1935 concerning the looking glass  
 dilemma, "Some reliable tradition or contemporary letter will have to  
 22  
 solve this quandry." As early as the 1950's Gordon Saltar had begun  
 working at the Winterthur Museum as a Conservator. He undertook the  
 laborious task of establishing criteria for identification of the  
 various kinds of woods found in antique furniture by means of  
 microscopic analysis. The process of wood "microanalysis" is complex,  
 since individual specimens must be identified on the basis of certain  
 combinations of characteristics or the lack of certain of these  
 factors. As he was working out methods of microscopic identification,  
 Gordon Saltar examined the secondary woods of most of the looking  
 glasses in the Museum's collection. Samples were taken only from those  
 parts of the frames that could not be replacements; the backboard or  
 bracing pieces were carefully avoided. The results of the microscopic  
 analysis were at first surprising. The majority of the looking glasses  
 owned by the Museum that Downs had assumed to be of American origin  
 showed the use of spruce as a secondary wood (see Downs, Plates 263  
 and 265). There is little record of the use of spruce in furniture  
 made in America. From this evidence Charles Montgomery and Gordon  
 Saltar reached the conclusion that these looking glasses had been  
 made in England. That they were quite elaborate in decoration added

strength to this theory. The looking glasses in the Winterthur Museum labeled by John Elliott, Sr., also showed the use of spruce as a secondary wood (see Downs, Plates 254, 255, and 266).

Additional work on the Elliotts was carried out by Mr. and Mrs. John J. Evans, who became Honorary Librarians of the Decorative Arts Photographic Collection at the Winterthur Museum in the early 1960's. As Mr. Evans expanded the resources of the Photographic Collection, he managed to obtain wood samples from labeled Elliott looking glasses in other museums and in private collections. Almost every analysis of a wood sample from a looking glass labeled by John Elliott, Sr., showed the use of spruce as a secondary wood. Looking glasses bearing the label of John, Jr., revealed the use of American white pine as a secondary wood.

Both Charles Montgomery and John Evans realized that the scientific data derived from wood analysis corroborated what Prime had said about the looking glass business of John Elliott as long ago as 1924. Prime had pointed out that Elliott's advertisements indicated his looking glasses were imported from England. Now in 1966 the use of the microscope had proven that looking glasses bearing the label of John Elliott, Sr., were made of the same type of wood as those known to be of English origin. Furthermore, Prime had mentioned that the labels used by John, Jr., stated that he sold "Looking Glasses of American Manufacture." The use of American white pine in the looking glasses to which these labels are attached corroborates this statement.

In American Furniture: The Federal Period Charles Montgomery

destroyed the myth of an American origin for looking glasses of the period preceding the Revolutionary War. Writing on the technique of microscopic analysis he explains:

During the past few years, the secondary woods of many mirrors found in America have been analyzed. The results lead one to the inescapable conclusion that, although a substantial number of looking glass frames were made in the country after 1790, most of those used here before that time were made abroad. 23

In his captions accompanying individual illustrations of looking glasses in the Museum's collection, Montgomery writes that the use of spruce and scots pine in looking glass frames suggests a European origin, while the use of American white pine indicates an American origin. After considering both the types of wood used and the stylistic attributes, he labels the various looking glasses in the Museum dating from the Federal period as "probably English," "Philadelphia," "Massachusetts," "New York," or "American."

There has been some discussion in recent years regarding the possibility that a large number of looking glasses imported into America were made in Northern Europe instead of England. This paper will discuss this theory as it applies to the looking glass trade in Philadelphia.

In the July, 1962, issue of Antiques, Judith Coolidge Hughes published an article concerning the origin of "courting mirrors." Contrary to the previous belief that these small mirrors were Oriental

in origin, Mrs. Hughes stated her opinion that they actually were made  
<sup>24</sup>  
 in Northern Europe. In June, 1966, Mrs. Hughes wrote another article  
 for the same magazine in which she discussed and illustrated a variety  
 of unusual eighteenth-century looking glasses that had long histories  
 of American ownership. She believed that these were of North European  
 origin, because there were fragments of pages printed in German under  
<sup>25</sup>  
 their backboards or glued to their frames. After publication of the  
 article, microscopic analyses made on the secondary woods used in these  
 glasses and in the courting mirrors indicated the use of spruce and/or  
 scots pine. Considering this information in conjunction with evidence  
 gained from eighteenth-century advertisements, Mrs. Hughes concluded  
 privately that Northern Europe had been engaged in an extensive export  
 trade in looking glasses. She further decided that many of the glasses  
 presumed to be English or American in origin actually had been produced  
 in North Europe. This theory explained the "non-English" appearance of  
 many looking glasses found in America.

Mrs. Hughes's work led her to an interest in the careers of the  
 Elliotts of Philadelphia, which culminated in another article for  
<sup>26</sup>  
Antiques, "The Labels of John Elliott Jr." Naturally, her belief that  
 many looking glasses found in America came originally from Northern  
 Europe extended to the glasses sold by the Elliotts. At this stage in  
 her research Mrs. Hughes did not feel sufficiently confident to assert  
 her theory publicly. She discussed it with Charles Montgomery, who  
 urged her to continue work on the subject and to research primary  
 source material of the period. Mrs. Hughes kindly and generously

passed this part of the task along to me.

After nearly a year of studying the Elliotts of Philadelphia, the author has concluded that the looking glasses sold by John Elliott, Sr., were produced in England and not in Northern Europe. On the other hand, there is strong evidence indicating that a large number of looking glasses imported from Germany and Holland were sold in Philadelphia during the period 1750-1795. This paper will present documentation concerning the origin of labeled Elliott looking glasses with some additional reference to the looking glasses of Northern Europe. The determination of the full extent and nature of the North European looking glass trade will have to await further research.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

- <sup>1</sup>"Auction Notes," Antiques, III (January, 1923), p. 43.
- <sup>2</sup>"The Editor's Attic," Antiques, III (June, 1923), p. 258.
- <sup>3</sup>"The Editor's Attic," Antiques, V (January, 1924), p. 11.
- <sup>4</sup>"The Editor's Attic," Antiques, V (January, 1924), p. 12.
- <sup>5</sup>Alfred Coxe Prime, "John Elliott, Cabinetmaker and Looking-Glass Maker of Philadelphia," The Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin, XIX (April, 1924), pp. 127-40.
- <sup>6</sup>Wallace Nutting, Furniture Treasury (Framingham, Massachusetts: Old America Company, 1928), II, Nos. 2892-93.
- <sup>7</sup>Herbert Cescinsky and George Leland Hunter, English and American Furniture (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1929), p. 256.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 305.
- <sup>9</sup>William M. Hornor, Blue Book: Philadelphia Furniture (Philadelphia, 1935), p. 276.
- <sup>10</sup>Edgar G. Miller, Jr., American Antique Furniture (Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1937), II, p. 632.
- <sup>11</sup>Hornor, p. 276.
- <sup>12</sup>Miller, p. 632.
- <sup>13</sup>Hornor, p. 202.
- <sup>14</sup>Joseph Downs, American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods (New York: The Viking Press, 1952), Plate 294.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., Plate 254.
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid., Plate 255.

<sup>17</sup>Ethel Hall Bjerkoe, The Cabinetmakers of America (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1957), p. 89.

<sup>18</sup>Helen Comstock, American Furniture (New York: The Viking Press, 1962), p. 132.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>20</sup>Helen Comstock, The Looking Glass in America (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), pp. 10, 56.

<sup>21</sup>Charles F. Montgomery, American Furniture: The Federal Period (New York: The Viking Press, 1966).

<sup>22</sup>Hornor, p. 276.

<sup>23</sup>Montgomery, p. 255.

<sup>24</sup>Judith Coolidge Hughes, "Courting Mirrors: Another European Export Product?", Antiques, LXXXII (July, 1962), pp. 68-71.

<sup>25</sup>Judith Coolidge Hughes, "North European Export Mirrors: The Evidence and Some Suggestions," Antiques, LXXXIX (June, 1966), pp. 856-61.

<sup>26</sup>Judith Coolidge Hughes, "The Labels of John Elliott, Jr.," Antiques, XCI (April, 1967), pp. 514-17.



## CHAPTER I

### JOHN ELLIOTT, SENIOR: QUAKER CRAFTSMAN AND LOOKING GLASS DEALER

In April, 1753, John Elliott of Leicester, England, sailed from Liverpool for Philadelphia. With him were his wife, Annabella, and his five children, ranging in age from thirteen to two years. The Elliotts took up residence in Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. A few months after their arrival another child was born.<sup>1</sup> In less than a year John Elliott was working as a cabinetmaker for the Shippens,<sup>2</sup> one of the first families of the city. Within three years of residence he had embarked on his well-known career as a looking glass dealer.<sup>3</sup>

John Elliott was born August 8, 1713, in Bolton, England, the son of John Elliott of Manton, Rutland County, and Hannah Fish Elliott of Keythorp Lodge, Leicestershire.<sup>4</sup> John Elliott and Hannah Fish had been married in Leicester in May, 1710,<sup>5</sup> and had moved to Bolton soon afterwards, perhaps to be near John's sister, who had previously married a Claypoole of Bolton.<sup>6</sup> John Elliott died in March, 1713, leaving two infant daughters and a wife in her fourth month of pregnancy.<sup>7</sup> Hannah probably returned to Leicester soon after the birth of John, her third child and only son. The Elliott

family apparently remained in Leicester, because both of the daughters<sup>8</sup> married in Leicester. Sometime during the mid-1730's, perhaps 1737, the young John Elliott married Annabella Bonnyman, the daughter of Commodore Thomas Bonnyman of London. Because Annabella's father had died when she was a child, she had lived with her maternal grandfather, Dr. John Bate, on his estate near Ashford, Kent.<sup>9</sup> John Elliott brought his bride back to Leicester to live in the family home, which they inhabited until their departure for Philadelphia. John and Annabella's grandson Caleb Cresson of Philadelphia described this house in 1815 on a visit to Leicester as an "ancient mansion . . . rough cast . . . with two gable ends to the street, connected<sup>10</sup> by a long building between them." Actually the house was of average size with a front footage of thirty-seven feet. It was located in High Street, one of the principal mercantile streets of<sup>11</sup> Leicester.

A John Elliott of Leicester was "made free" on May 2, 1740. He had been indentured to the cabinetmaker Jehu Sutton. Upon his freedom he soon took on an apprentice himself, who was made free in<sup>12</sup> March, 1747. It is probable that this John Elliott, cabinetmaker of Leicester, is the same John Elliott of Leicester who emigrated to Philadelphia in 1753 and billed Edward Shippen for furniture in<sup>13</sup> the following year. Since the Elliott house in Leicester is known to have been used as a cabinetmaking and upholstery shop in the late eighteenth century, it may well have been set up as such when John<sup>14</sup> Elliott of Philadelphia inhabited it. The confusion in the

correlation of the two John Elliotts of Leicester is the date terminating Elliott's indenture. If the 1713 birth date for John Elliott of Philadelphia is correct, he would have been twenty-six years of age in 1740, rather old to have just completed a first apprenticeship. A second problem involves his marriage of the mid-1730's. Most apprenticeship indentures prohibited the marriage of an apprentice until completion of the period of servitude.

It is possible that John Elliott of Philadelphia served a regular apprenticeship (usually encompassing the period between fourteen and twenty-one years of age) in the cabinetmaking trade in London and then served a shorter, second indenture in Leicester. He seems to have spent some time in London, because immediately upon his arrival in Philadelphia he advertised that he was skilled in the "newest London method" of hanging house bells.<sup>15</sup> Before his marriage his wife Annabella had lived in Kent, the county adjoining London, and Elliott could have met her while serving an apprenticeship in that city. During this period London was a busy center of craft training and as such there was frequently a surplus of journeyman manpower. Perhaps, faced with this situation and that of an insufficiency of funds to set up as a master in London, Elliott determined to seek his fortune in his home county. If, upon returning to Leicester as a young journeyman with a bride, he did not readily find employment, he could have indentured himself for a specified period to a master craftsman. In this manner he would have been assured of a secure living for his family and the master would have

gained a steady worker for a continuous period of time. Elliott may have been "made free" from a journeyman's indenture of this type in 1740. On the other hand, he may have served a second, shorter apprenticeship in a related trade.

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By 1751 John Elliott had five children to support.

Undoubtedly, he was not as successful in the cabinetmaking trade in Leicester as he had hoped to be. Perhaps his thoughts turned at this time to Philadelphia, America's major Quaker settlement. As a Quaker himself, he could easily have learned from other Friends that craftsmen of all types were needed in this rapidly developing center of commerce. As a cabinetmaker skilled in the latest "London methods," he could hope to find a ready market for his services in the new city. Elliott may also have been attracted by the idea of living in a community where his religion was shared by many and Quakers were not considered a dissenting sect. Once he had made his decision to start life anew in Philadelphia, Elliott took steps to insure his acceptance among Philadelphia Quakers. On February 21, 1753, he obtained a certificate from the Leicester Monthly Meeting transferring his membership to the Monthly Meeting in Philadelphia, where  
17  
he was received June 29, 1753.

Elliott's first employment in Philadelphia involved cabinet-making and bell-hanging. In February, 1754, less than a year after his arrival in Philadelphia, Elliott completed what may have been his first important commission--"a square Walnut Dining table"

priced at £ 2..15..0 for Edward Shippen. A month later Elliott  
 "mended and worked over anew" another dining table for the same  
 client and delivered eight new walnut chairs with "Carved Claw, and  
 Knee, open back." The set of chairs cost Shippen £ 12..16..0, and  
 the worsted damask for the chair seats added an additional £ 1..10..0  
 to the bill. In March Elliott also charged Shippen four shillings  
 for fixing the "parlour" bell. The last recorded furniture order  
 completed for Shippen was an "Easy Chair" delivered in August, 1754.  
 The frame with "Carved Claw and Knee" cost £ 1..16..0. Elliott  
 charged another £ 5..4..11 to the account for "Makeing up," or  
 upholstering, the chair. The outer covering consisted of seven and  
 one-fourths yards of worsted damask trimmed with eighteen yards of  
 lace. The frame was stuffed with six pounds of curled hair held in  
 place by two and one-half yards of "chinea," three and one-half yards  
 of "hessings," four and one-half yards of osnabrug, tacks, and cord.<sup>18</sup>  
 The cushion, made of skins filled with four pounds of feathers, was  
 supported on the girt webbing of the chair bottom. It cost an  
 additional seven shillings to "fix on" the brass casters and screws.<sup>19</sup>  
 Elliott probably supplied most of the items needed for "makeing up"  
 Shippen's chair from his own stock of imported merchandise. In an  
 advertisement in the Pennsylvania Gazette for June 17, 1756, he  
 indicated that he had just received from London "threads" and  
 textiles in "fine worsted patterns."<sup>20</sup> Probably, he bought the  
 feathers and curled hair from another merchant or from country  
 tradesmen who sold their farm products in the city.

Elliott apparently made the easy chair and the eight walnut side chairs in a modified "Chippendale" style. He had been in England only months before and could easily have seen chairs in the new fashion. Undoubtedly, he helped to introduce the Chippendale style into Philadelphia. Although some furniture in the new taste had probably been imported from London before Elliott's arrival in Philadelphia, he brought with him the knowledge of craft techniques and design necessary to establish the new styles in his adopted city. It was not until after Elliott had made chairs with an "open back" for Edward Shippen, one of the city's most influential and style-conscious residents, that Thomas Chippendale published The Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director in London.

Edward Shippen must have been pleased with Elliott's work. He probably recommended him to his neighbor Charles Norris, who was finishing his house at the corner of Chestnut and Fifth Streets. In the three years between March, 1755 and 1758, John Elliott kept a running account of services rendered to Norris (Fig. 1). These included joinery work, bell hanging, furniture production and repair, and various mechanical tasks. The bill for this three year period includes the following joinery work: making eleven sets of window cornices, four sets of bed cornices, a pair of steps, and a shelf; "fixing up" four bed testers and twenty sets of window cornices; framing four window blinds; mending the steps; and, setting in three desk locks. Elliott used some twelve "hundred of tacks" priced at three pence the hundred to "fix up Sundry Goods" and to "fix

# Charles Norris, Jr.

March 1, 1758

To John Elliott

1.	1 lb. a Walnut Table for the Office with two Drawers	2.00
2.	1 lb. 2 Pkts of Windows for Glass "Rome"	1.00
3.	1 lb. 2 Pkts of Glass for Dr. Room	1.00
4.	1 lb. 2 Pkts of Glass for Dr. Room	1.00
5.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Cornice	1.00
6.	1 lb. a Gum Bedstead with Ropes, Ropes	1.16
7.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
8.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	0.20
9.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	0.15
10.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
11.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
12.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
13.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
14.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
15.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
16.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
17.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
18.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
19.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
20.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
21.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
22.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
23.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
24.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
25.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
26.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
27.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
28.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
29.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00
30.	1 lb. 1 Pkt of Red Corn	1.00

Bill of John Elliott, Sr., to Charles Norris, a running account kept between March, 1755, and March, 1758. Original document in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

FIGURE 1

account  
ent in the

6.	To a Map and Handle	---	6
7.	To facing up 2 Bed Rooms, 7 plates of Windows Corn: & Mado	---	8. 3
11.	To facing up 1 Window Blind	---	1. 10. --
21.	To a pair of Glass Wf. 2 Mado 1 P.	---	10. 6
	To facing up 2 Bed Rooms Mado	---	2. --
28.	To 1 set of Bed Cornice	---	8. --
29.	To a shelf of facing up	---	1. --
	To 2 hours of facing up 1 P. facing up sundry goods 2 P.	---	2. 6
3.	To a bed tree	---	1. --
7.	To a shelf of bed cornice	---	8. 6
8.	To a shelf of bed cornice	---	1. 3
11.	To facing up a bed cornice	---	1. --
15.	To a shelf of Windows Corn:	---	1. 4. --
14.	To a bed tree	---	1. --
22.	To a shelf of facing up 1 P. - 1 shelf of facing up 1 P.	---	1. 7
23.	To facing up the Jack, altering the Multiplying Wheel, 2 new Pulleys &c.	---	10. --
30.	To a Walnut Dining Table	---	2. 5. --
June 27.	To doing a shelf of the Jack	---	1. 1
Nov. 15.	To mending a Corner Chair	---	1. 6
Nov. 12.	To facing up 1 plate of Windows Corn: & Mado on 2 Bed Rooms	---	8. 6
Nov. 3.	To 3. Mado, 1 P. Glass	---	4. 11. --
Nov. 11.	To 1 of the best sort of Guarded Desk Locks & Mado on	---	10. --
Nov. 3.	To mending a Corner Chair	---	6
Nov. 13.	To facing up a looking glass	---	2. 6
Nov. 8.	To a frame for a glass of facing in	---	1. 18. --
9.	To facing up 1 Window Curtain	---	4. --
Dec. 1.	To facing the Bell to the Street Door	---	2. 6
7.	To a large Walnut Chair, with shell at the top from 50 Pence	---	8. 2. --
	Carried Over	---	77. 16. --



Brought Over

1756	June 26	To 2 Walnut Dining Tables	6. 10. -
	Same	To 4 Walnut Chairs	6. 4. -
1757	June 11	To an addition to, & repairing the fly sheet	9. 7. -
	June 1	To 6 new pins, putting together & mending the Matted, lying at the head of the bed	2. 3. -
	Nov 1	To a bill by in a chair frame & repairing up	2. 6. -
1758	June 25	To mending the stretchers of an elbow chair	1. 2. 8
	Nov 11	To mending the 2 chairs	1. -
	15	To taking out & repairing the feet of an easy chair	1. -
			2. 6. -
			99. - 9
			16. 18. -
			<u>152. 2. 9</u>

C<sup>d</sup> by Cash of Lib. 11. 18. 18. of broken looking glass 7/

Philad. April 1. 1758. Recd of Charles Morris Forty ship pounds Eighteen  
 shillings In full of the above & all other Accts to that date.

1758. 18. 0

John Elliott

FIGURE 1 (contd.)

up" the numerous bed and window cornices mentioned in the bill. As a bell-hanger, Elliott fitted up eight rooms in the house with bells and installed another at the street entrance, <sup>21</sup> using cranks and wires instead of the usual pullies and ropes because he had found <sup>22</sup> that the former were "not liable to be put out of order." His knowledge of the mechanisms of house bells led Elliott to work on clock jacks, as well. He noted charges in Norris's account on three different occasions for "doing a Jobb at the Jack," which he had initially installed.

The Norris bill also concerns Elliott as a maker of fine furniture. He charged Norris for cabinetwork at various times between the years 1755 and 1758:

a Walnut Table for the Office with two Drawers	E 2.. 5..0	
a Bedstead	1..15..0	
a Walnut Dining Table	2.. 5..0	
6 large Walnut Chairs, with Shell at the top front and knee	8.. 2..0	
2 Walnut Dining Tables	6..10..0	
4 Walnut Stools	5.. 4..0	
4 Walnut Elbow Chairs	9.. 0..0	
mending 2 Corner Chairs	0.. 2..0	
mending the Stretcher of an Elbow Chair	0.. 1..0	
taking out and refixing the feet of an Easy Chair	0.. 2..6	23

Elliott could have been merely the supplier of these pieces; however, the record of his furniture repairs for Norris indicates that he himself practiced the cabinetmaking trade. In June, October, and December, 1756, Elliott advertised in the Pennsylvania Gazette as a <sup>24</sup> "Cabinetmaker." The knowledge of these two facts makes it possible to believe that Elliott actually produced the furniture itemized in

the Norris and Shippen bills. Nevertheless, it is not viable to connect the items described in the bills with actual pieces of furniture, even if they descended in the Norris or Shippen families, because Elliott left no label or other proof of craftsmanship to identify the supposed pieces from his hand.

There is, however, a large body of furniture attributed to Elliott. Of this group four walnut stools at the Winterthur Museum, illustrated in Joseph Downs, American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods, Plate 294, have the most reliable documentation to support an attribution.<sup>25</sup> Elliott billed Charles Norris for four walnut stools in 1756. Norris's daughter Deborah married George Logan in 1781 and went to live at Stenton. Because the Winterthur stools came down in the Logan family, Hornor believed them to be the ones made by Elliott for Charles Norris. He assumed that Debby Logan inherited all of her father's furniture and that after his death it was moved to Stenton.<sup>26</sup> The stools, however, bear no label or other identifying marks, and there is no way to directly relate them to John Elliott.

The other pieces of furniture attributed to Elliott were ascribed to him on the basis of the descriptions of furniture in the Shippen and Norris bills. Antiquarians and curators believed Elliott to be the maker of chairs with "Carved Claw, and Knee, open back," or chairs with "shell at the top front and knee" merely because he billed Shippen and Norris for walnut chairs described in this manner.<sup>27</sup>

An easy chair has been called an Elliott piece simply because Elliott<sup>28</sup> made an easy chair for Shippen with "Carved Claw and Knee"; an armchair has been attributed to Elliott because of similarities with<sup>29</sup> the chairs described in the Norris bill. Even more farfetched is the attribution of two dressing tables to Elliott merely because they<sup>30</sup> have carved shells. In the late Colonial period there were many successful cabinetmakers in Philadelphia. William Savery, Thomas Affleck, Jonathan Gostelowe, Thomas Tufft, James Gillingham, and Benjamin Randolph all made chairs in styles originally derived from Chippendale's design books or from English imports and characterized by "Carved Claw, and Knee, open back." Likewise, there were many chairs made in Philadelphia with "Shell at the top front and Knee." If Elliott's construction methods or carving style were known, it might be possible to attribute pieces of furniture to his hand. As yet, however, no piece of furniture has been definitely identified as being made by Elliott.

The arrangement of the Norris bill suggests that Elliott worked for Charles Norris at his new home almost daily from April through July, 1755. By the end of the year Elliott seems to have finished his work at the house. It was during July and August, 1756, that Elliott supplied Norris with most of the furniture mentioned above. Three charges made in the following year were of a mechanic nature, while three charges made in 1758 were for mending furniture<sup>31</sup> and for fixing "the steps."

Elliott's career as a looking glass dealer is first documented in the Norris bill. Norris purchased three mahogany pier glasses in December, 1755. The price of £ 44..11..0 reflects their elaborate character, especially when compared to the walnut dining tables made in the next year at a cost of £ 3..5..0 apiece. The first evidence of Elliott's activities in looking glass repair dates from this time, as well. He charged Norris £ 0..2..6 for "refixing a Looking-glass" and £ 1..18..0 for a "frame for a Glass and fixing it in" during the spring of 1756.<sup>32</sup> These items coincide nicely with the text of Elliott's first known advertisement, which appeared in June in the Pennsylvania Gazette. In this public notice Elliott advertised:

A Neat assortment of looking glasses, viz. Piers, sconces and dressing glasses . . . Imported in the London, Capt<sup>n</sup> Peter Reve, and to be sold by John Elliott, Cabinet-maker, In Chestnut-street, the Corner of Fourth-Street . . .

He further stated that he was able to "new quicksilver" and "frame" looking glasses and that he supplied "people with new glasses to their own frames."<sup>33</sup> In his next known advertisement, appearing in October, Elliott notified the public that he gave "ready money for broken looking glasses."<sup>34</sup> Evidently Charles Norris in his Quaker frugality had saved just such a glass, for in April, 1758, Elliott paid him seven shillings for "6 Bitts of broken Looking Glass."<sup>35</sup>

John Elliott's career as a cabinetmaker in Philadelphia seems to have lasted only a short time. He probably found the looking glass business more profitable and certainly there was less competition

than in the cabinetmaking trade. Only three of John Elliott's advertisements are known in which he designates himself a "Cabinet-maker," those of June, October, and December, 1756.<sup>36</sup> An advertisement of September, 1757 (presumably the first advertisement following that of December, 1756), gave notice that Elliott was selling goods "just imported from London" at his "Looking-glass Store, In Chestnut-street the corner of Fourth street."<sup>37</sup> In the interim he had substituted the title "Looking-glass Store" for "Cabinet-maker." Perhaps in keeping with his voluntary retirement from the cabinetmaking business, Elliott's advertisements no longer mention the sale of "joiners and sadlers furniture, &c."<sup>38</sup> In fact, in the September advertisement and in a similar one in November of the same year, Elliott informed the public that he had on hand "some Joiners and Sadlers Furniture," which he planned to sell "cheap for ready Money."<sup>39</sup> He evidently was giving up all aspects of his furniture business.

Elliott now turned his attention to the pursuit of the looking glass trade. He became a specialist in the sale of imported looking glasses of various types and in framing and "new quick-silvering" customer's old glasses. Throughout this period he advertised that his goods were obtained from London and consistently mentioned the name of the ship in which they had been imported. As his business increased, Elliott expanded his inventory to the extent that in May, 1765, he could advertise that he had "the greatest Choice in Town, as good in Quality as can be imported."<sup>40</sup>

During the years he was in business Elliott offered the widest variety of looking glasses of any dealer in Philadelphia. His general stock consisted of a full range of ornamental and utilitarian pieces, including: pier glasses, in mahogany and walnut frames, carved, gilt, and plain; scone glasses, in plain, gilt, and japanned frames; dressing glasses; swinging glasses (or glasses hung between two uprights); shaving glasses; hanging glasses; pocket glasses; painted frame glasses; coach and chariot glasses; and, glasses for bookcase doors. The looking glasses he sold ranged in price from <sup>41</sup> "One Shilling to Fifteen Pounds, and Upwards," but the majority of the individual items in his stock probably cost between one and ten pounds. In November, 1761, Samuel Emlen, a Philadelphia Quaker merchant, bought a looking glass from Elliott at a cost of £ 6..15..0. <sup>42</sup> Almost a year later he purchased a scone glass for £ 6..12..0. Another Philadelphia merchant and fellow Quaker, John Reynell, patronized Elliott in 1762. His account book lists the following items purchased from Elliott's shop:

1 Mahog <sup>y</sup> Scone glass gilt Edge and shell	£ 7..18..0
2 D <sup>o</sup> with Birds, side pieces, &c. at 10..9	20..18..0
a Case and packing D <sup>o</sup>	0.. 7..6

The scone glasses were packed in a case because Reynell had purchased <sup>43</sup> them for customers in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Apparently Elliott did a good deal of wholesale business of this nature; he invariably advertised that he sold goods both at "Wholesale and Retail" prices. Levi Hollingsworth and Zebulon Rudolph, Philadelphia merchants

engaged in a brisk trade with the tidewater areas, bought a "Mahog<sup>y</sup>  
 Sconce Glass gilt edge" from Elliott in November, 1767, for £ 3..10..0  
 to send to Rudolph's father, Tobias, a merchant at Head of Elk,  
 Maryland. Tobias Rudolph was in turn acting as agent for a private  
 customer of the Chesapeake Bay area. Additional purchases made at  
 the same time included a "Glass with a head" for £ 0..16..6, a  
 mahogany tea board costing £ 0..8..6, and a "bottleboard" priced at  
 £ 0..2..0. In 1768 the partnership called on Elliott again in behalf  
 of Tobias Rudolph to put a "new Glass in a frame" and to frame "the  
 broken glass."<sup>44</sup>

A note concerning lost merchandise that appeared in the  
Pennsylvania Gazette in July, 1767, provides further insight into  
 the range of items sold by Elliott. He explained to the public that  
 "two Looking Glasses, 28 Inches long and 16 Inches wide, in plain  
 Mohogony Frames, and a round Mohogony Tea Board, 11 Inches over, were  
 by Mistake put on board a Shallop at Stamper's Wharf" the twenty-  
 seventh of the previous month. He requested the return of his property  
 by "the Person's who [had] said Goods" and promised that they would  
 be "handsomely rewarded for their Trouble." He further asked that if  
 "said Goods should not be returned as desired, but offered to Sale,"  
 that those approached should "stop them, and return them safe" for  
 which they should "receive Eight Dollars reward."<sup>45</sup>

Because Elliott's stock was more or less constant over a  
 period of nineteen years, it can be assumed that he ordered his goods



in advance from London and sold them on his own risk in Philadelphia. His two alternatives would have been either to run the business on a consignment basis for a London merchant or manufacturing house or to buy his goods at auction in Philadelphia after their arrival. The latter method of business was often followed by fellow tradesmen, especially small-scale shopkeepers, to judge from the advertisements of auctioneers in Philadelphia newspapers of the period. A dealer such as Elliott might advertise goods imported in a particular ship, while in the same newspaper an auctioneer might announce an auction of sundry goods lately imported in the same ship. If Elliott had bought his goods at auction in Philadelphia he probably could not have afforded to sell the same goods at "wholesale" price as he often advertised. If he had worked on a consignment basis for a London house, it would have been unnecessary to advertise goods at extremely low prices in order to clear out old stock; he could have sent the goods back to the consigner in exchange for more saleable items.

Sometime during the four months between November, 1757, and March, 1758, John Elliott decided to mark the location of his looking glass store in Chestnut Street with a signboard displaying a "Bell and Looking-Glass." <sup>46</sup> Presumably the bell and looking glass pictured on the signboard followed in design the cut of a bell and looking glass used in Elliott's newspaper advertisements (Fig.2). An illiterate customer could then always locate Elliott's shop by matching the signboard with the cut in the advertisement, which, apparently had been made especially for Elliott and came to be identified with



Just imported in the Mary and Elizabeth, Captain Sparks, and other vessels from London, and to be sold wholesale and retail,  
By **JOHN ELLIOTT**,  
At his Looking-glass store, the sign of the Bell and Looking-glass, in Walnut-street, near Third-street; also at the Three Brooms, in Second-street, between Market and Arch streets,  
**A** VERY large, neat and genteel assortment of looking-glasses, consisting of common sconces and piers, plain and with gilding, pediment sconces and piers, japanned sconces, gilt and white carved ditto, chimney glasses, dressing ditto, with drawers, swinging ditto, hanging ditto, with and without heads, shaving and pocket ditto, coach and chariot ditto, ditto for book-case doors, &c. also mahogany and buok tea chests, tea and bottle boards, tinfoyle, brass and leather castors, bed ditto, &c.  
N. B. Old glasses new quicksilvered, and framed, as usual.

PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE  
10/20/1768



Imported from London, and to be sold by  
**JOHN ELLIOTT, Cabinet-maker**  
In Chestnut-street, the Corner of Fourth-street,  
**A** Neat assortment of looking glasses, viz. Piers, sconces and dressing glasses, jointers and sealers furniture &c. Fine worked patterns for jockers, thread and cotton stockings. Looking glasses new quicksilvered, or framed, in the newest manner. He supplies people with new glasses to their own frames, and gives ready money for broken looking-glasses, and completely fixes up house bells and cabin bells in the neatest and most convenient manner as done at London, with cranks and wires, which are not liable to be put out of order, as those done with pulleys.  
N. B. Said Elliott has on hand a few books, intituled, Second Thoughts concerning War.

PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE  
12/30/1756



**JOHN ELLIOTT,**  
Has Removed  
His LOOKING GLASS STORE,  
From the Corner of Chestnut and Fourth Streets to Walnut Street, the third Door below Third Street, near the Land Office, and has imported in the Philadelphia Packet, Capt. Badden and other Ships from London  
**A** VERY large and neat Assortment of Looking-Glasses, consisting of Chimney Glasses, Pier and Sconce Glasses of most sizes and of Shinn's Dressing Glasses, Shaving Glasses, painted, iron'd and Pocket Glasses, Mahogany Tea Trays with neat cut Borders, teapots and plain Tea Boards and Waiters, Bottle Boards, China Dish Stands, Mahogany Tea Chests, &c.  
He also new quicksilvered and frames old Glasses, and supplies People with new Glasses to their own Frames.

PENNA. JOURNAL  
7/15/1762

Just imported from London, and to be sold by  
**JOHN ELLIOTT,**  
At his looking-glass store, the sign of the Bell and looking-glass in Chestnut-Street Philadelphia.  
**A** Neat assortment of looking-glasses, viz. Piers, sconces, dressing-glasses, twingers, pocket-glasses, ink and sand bottles with brass covers. He also new quicksilvered and frames old glasses, and supplies people with new glass to their own frames.

PENNA. JOURNAL  
3/23/1758



**A** CONSIDERABLE Assortment of handiwork, Pier and Sconce Glasses, a large choice of neat Dressing Glasses, together with a great number of smaller sizes, very fit for country stores and shopkeepers, to be sold wholesale and retail, on the lowest terms, by  
**John Elliott,**  
At his Looking-glass store, in Walnut-street.  
As he intends declining the importation of Looking-glasses in future, and purposes to sell the house he lives in, which is properly fitted up for carrying on the Looking-glass business, particularly for quicksilvering, which art, with all other instructions necessary for carrying on said trade, he is willing to communicate to any person who may purchase said house, and the remaining stock on hand, which he will sell very low to such a purchaser. N. B. It hath been a noted and good-acquainted store for looking-glasses near 14 years.  
Also to be lett or sold (and may be entered on the join ind.) A commodious three-story house adjoining.

PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE  
5/8/1776

A selection of advertisements printed by John Elliott, Sr., in the Philadelphia newspapers, 1756-1776.

FIGURE 2

his shop. It was at this time that Elliott must have begun to use the "Chestnut Street label" (Fig. 3). Antiquarians previously have assumed that Elliott used this label from the time of his arrival in Philadelphia in 1753 or at least from the period of his first known sale of looking glasses in December, 1755. The fact that Elliott did not adopt the "Sign of the Bell and Looking-glass" to draw attention to his store in Chestnut Street until sometime between November, 1757, when he simply advertised "Elliott's Looking-glass Store, in Chestnut-<sup>47</sup> Street, the corner of Fourth-Street," and March, 1758, when he referred to it as "his Looking-glass Store, the Sign of the Bell and<sup>48</sup> Looking-glass in Chestnut-Street, Philadelphia," suggests that the label, which bears this exact phrasing, could not have been used until the signboard was in place. Therefore, it can be assumed that looking glasses bearing Elliott's Chestnut Street label and conforming to one of several standardized types were not imported from England earlier than 1758. Of course, Elliott may have also placed his new label on looking glasses that were brought to his shop for resilvering or repairing.

The Chestnut Street label states that Elliott was an importer and dealer in "all Sorts of English Looking Glasses" and adds a note concerning his activities in silvering and reframing old glasses as well as in providing customers with "new Glass to their old Frames." The lower section of the label is printed with the same information in German. Elliott, a shrewd businessman, also directed his business to the large German community in Philadelphia and to the German

settlements north of the city in Germantown and in the surrounding counties. The German on the label is of poor form; the writer either was ignorant of correct German or was writing in a local dialect. A translation of the German text reads:

[John] Elliott living in Philadelphia in Chesnut Street near the Statehouse, where a shingle is hanging to Bell and Looking Glass, has a [Store] and big supply of various English Glasses, and sells them for the lowest Price. He also makes new Quicksilver and new Frames for old Glasses, and makes new Glasses for the People's old Frames. 49

The German word for "store" is not used, but in its place is substituted "Stoor," a transliteration of the English term "store." The name "Dschan" is used instead of the proper German "Johannes." In the German text Elliott further identified his store as being near the Statehouse, so that German customers from outside the city could locate it easily. Elliott soon adopted this mode of identification in the English text of his advertisements, thus indicating the growth of his business and his efforts to appeal to an ever increasing market.

Between 1756 and 1763 most of Elliott's advertisements in the Gazette and the Journal were accompanied by a cut of a dressing glass and a bell with pull attached, indicating to the public the two trades which he followed. Although he did not advertise the repair of house bells after November, 1757, both the signboard and the cut in the advertisements indicate that he continued in that business. In fact, in 1762 Samuel Morris, a prominent Philadelphia Quaker gentleman-merchant, paid Elliott for a "bell and hanging," and in October of the same

year Samuel Emlen paid him £ 1..9..8 for a "house bell, fixing it in;

<sup>51</sup>  
2 Rooms, Cranks, &c." Benjamin Franklin considered Elliott sufficiently skilled at his trade to employ him in 1763 to hang a bell in his Orianna Street house. Elliott charged him £ 1..5..4 for the

<sup>52</sup>  
equipment and installation. Elliott's activities were versatile in these years. As in the case of most craftsmen, he would perform almost any service for which there was a financial reward. In July, 1761, for example, he repaired the coach of James Hamilton, the Governor General  
<sup>53</sup>  
of Pennsylvania.

Elliott's business as a bell-hanger in Philadelphia was challenged by Thomas Hale, "Carpenter, from London," who advertised in the Gazette in 1768 and 1769 that he undertook "the business of hanging Bells (through all the Apartments of Houses, Ships, Stores, &c.) in the most neat and lasting manner." He informed those who might be inclined to employ him that they would be "readily waited on, by applying to him, at his House, on the South side of Walnut-Street, the second Door above Fifth-Street." A large cut of a bell accompanies  
<sup>54</sup>  
his advertisements. Hale continued in the business of hanging bells after the Revolutionary War. Hill Thompson, "bell maker," worked in Philadelphia in the 1760's. His advertisement in the Gazette in January, 1765, stated that "Hill Thompson, from London, makes and hangs Bells, in the neatest Manner--those who please to employ him may find him at Mr. James Donaldson's where all Manner of Brass foundery  
<sup>55</sup>  
is done." The most interesting of Elliott's competitors in the bell-hanging business was Alexander Smith, a man of great self-confidence.

Smith, "late of London," was located "at the Sign of the Lock, Jack and Bell, between Walnut and Spruce-Streets a little below the Bridge."

In April, 1773, he notified the public that he continued "to make, mend, and clean all sorts of Jacks" and that he also hung "Bells, after the newest, best and neatest manner." Because Smith had "worked in some of the first Shops in London," he flattered himself that he was able "to give satisfaction." He further promised his customers that they could "depend upon having their work done with fidelity and dispatch."

Evidently intending to slur the abilities of Elliott and the others, Smith went on to say that "as the making and mending of Jacks, and hanging of Bells has as yet been imperfectly performed in this place" he felt confident "that a little experience of his performance," would gain him "the friendship of his employers," which would be always

"acknowledged with gratitude."<sup>56</sup> In 1770 John Cadwalader chose Smith to supply him with two "jacks" for his new home, one of which weighed over two hundred and fifty pounds. Smith also provided and hung the house bells needed by Cadwalader.<sup>57</sup>

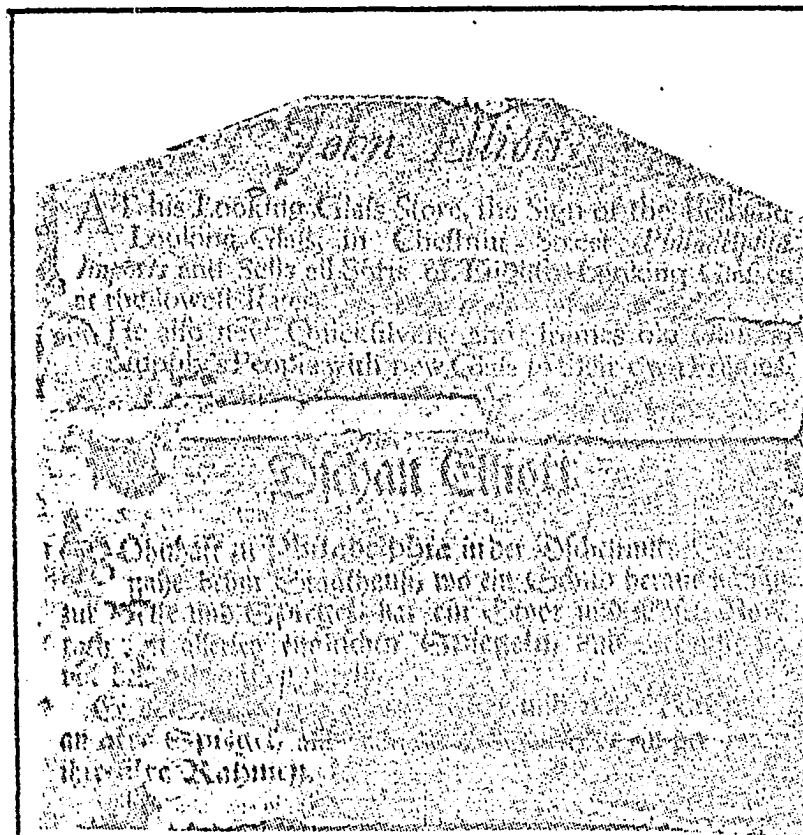
Elliott first advertised mahogany tea chests for sale in March,<sup>58</sup> 1758. In the years that followed he kept a stock of chests continually on hand. By March, 1761, he was selling "a large assortment of Mahogany tea Boards and Waiters, both scalloped and plain, likewise China Dish Stands and Bottle Boards."<sup>59</sup> These goods were imported from London in the same ships in which Elliott imported his looking glasses. As already noted, the firm of Hollingsworth and Rudolph bought a mahogany tea board for £ 0..8..6 and a bottleboard for £ 0..10..6 from

Elliott in November, 1767. Until his retirement about 1776, Elliott carried large numbers of mahogany tea trays, boards, and chests and advertised them as frequently as he did his supply of looking glasses.

Elliott opened a second store in Market Street between Front and Water Streets sometime between November, 1759, and June, 1760. He advertised the same merchandise for sale at this store in June, 1760, as was being offered simultaneously at his Chestnut Street store.<sup>60</sup> This is the only mention of the new store in Elliott's known advertisements. It probably closed within a year or two. Since his son John, Jr., was twenty years old in 1760, it is probable that he managed this store for his father.

Slightly more than two years later in July, 1762, John Elliott moved his looking glass store from the corner of Chestnut and Fourth Streets to Walnut Street "the third door below Third Street."<sup>61</sup> He had bought this property in 1761.<sup>62</sup> Here, too, the "Sign of the Bell and Looking-glass" was hung outside to direct customers to the right location. Naturally, after this move Elliott had to have new labels printed. While this was being done he used his old Chestnut Street labels--erasing the word "Chesnut" and handwriting in its place the word "Walnut" (Fig. 4). Looking glasses that bear these reworked labels should be dated 1762 or shortly thereafter, as it can be assumed that Elliott had new "Walnut Street" labels printed by the time his supply of Chestnut Street labels was exhausted.

Two printed Walnut Street labels are known (Figs. 5, 6). They



The Chestnut Street label used by John Elliott, Sr., between c. 1758 and c. 1762.

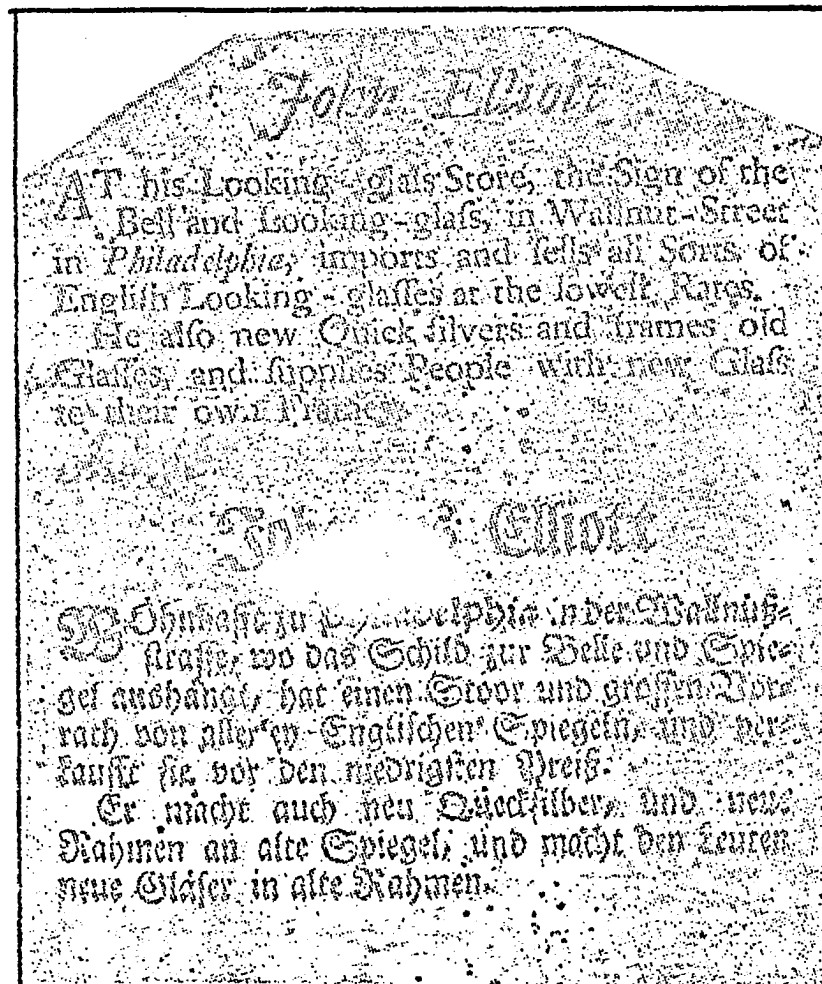
FIGURE 3



The Chestnut Street label with "Walnut" handwritten over the erased word "Chestnut" used by John Elliott, Sr., between c. 1762 and c. 1763 (or until his supply of Chestnut Street labels was exhausted).

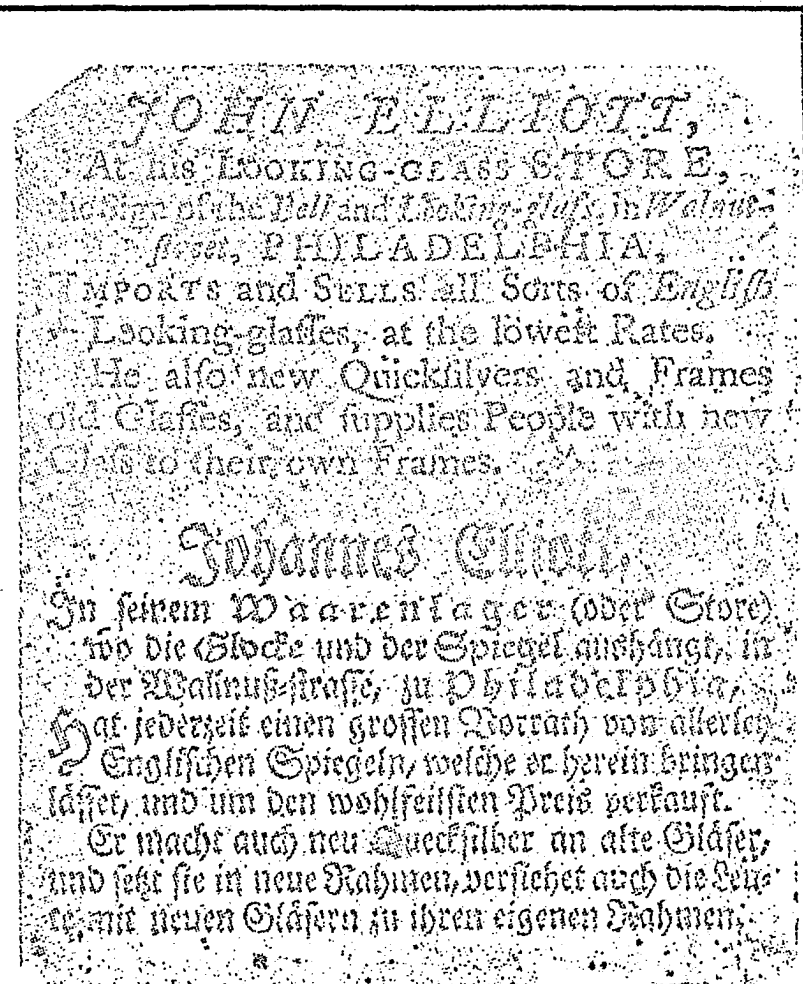
FIGURE 4





The first Walnut Street label used by John Elliott, Sr., from c. 1762 until it was replaced by the second Walnut Street label.

FIGURE 5



The second Walnut Street label used after 1762 and possibly as late as 1784 when Elliott sold his Walnut Street property.

FIGURE 6

probably were used in chronological sequence (Appendix A). The one generally believed to have been the first to be used has its English text arranged in seven lines, all in lower case type (except for the word "Philadelphia" which is in italics), and uses the spelling "Wallnut" for the street location (Fig.5). The second label has the English text arranged in eight lines, with lower and upper case type and italics mixed to give a more sophisticated effect and to emphasize the essential words in the label (Fig.6). The German text of the first Walnut Street label retains the use of the word "Stoor" for "store," as in the Chestnut Street label, whereas in Walnut Street label II Elliott substituted the German word "Waarenlager" for the transliterated term "Stoor." Both labels show the correct German form of John as "Johannes." The German text of Walnut Street label I is nearly identical in content to the German text of the Chestnut Street label; the German text of label II is entirely different from the preceding examples. Undoubtedly, Elliott had become aware of the benefits of using another language correctly. Apparently his dissatisfaction with the first Walnut Street label was great enough to prod him into taking steps both to eliminate the errors in the German text and to correct the spelling of the word "Walnut." There is no way of knowing exactly when Walnut Street label I was replaced by II. Therefore, all looking glasses which bear a Walnut Street label can only be said to have been imported between about 1763 and 1774, at which time Elliott was forced to cease importations because of Pennsylvania's ratification of the non-importation proposals of the first Continental Congress.

It seems reasonable to assume that Elliott moved from Chestnut to Walnut Streets to gain additional space for an expanding business. It is probably no coincidence that in November, 1762, he advertised that his stock now included "the most compleat Assortment of Looking-<sup>63</sup>Glasses at any Time heretofore imported." Judging from his advertisements, Elliott's business continued to expand until about 1765, when he seems to have experienced a slight recession in his trade. It was at this time that colonists who were angry over the Sugar Act and the impending Stamp Act made a major effort to boycott British goods. As he dealt in English merchandise, Elliott's business was bound to suffer. Between September, 1757, when he first began advertising his "Looking-glass Store," and November, 1762, just after his move to Walnut Street, Elliott advertised in the Philadelphia newspapers on an average of three times a year. However, this was reduced to twice a year in 1763 and 1765; and in 1764 he advertised only once. The tone of Elliott's 1765 advertisements hints at unfavorable business conditions. The text of his statement to the public is as follows:

Imported in the Philadelphia Packet, Captain Budden, and other Ships from London, and to be sold by John Elliott. at his Looking-glass Store . . . a Very neat and general assortment of Looking-glasses, which he continues to sell exceeding low for Cash. And as the Looking-glass Trade in its several Branches is the primary business he engages in, all Persons who please to favour him with their Custom, may depend on meeting with the greatest Choice in Town, and as good in Quality as can be imported. <sup>64</sup>

Elliott had never before advertised the cheapness of his prices; in fact, during 1761 he had bragged that he carried looking glasses from one shilling to fifteen pounds and upwards in price. It is significant

that the advertisement quoted above, which appeared twice in the Pennsylvania Gazette, was the last Elliott advertisement to appear in the Philadelphia newspapers for almost three years. According to manuscript records, Elliott's prices after 1765 seem to have been about half what they had been in the early 1760's. In November, 1767, he sold a "Mahog<sup>y</sup> Sconce Glass gilt Edge" for £ 3..10..0 to the firm of Hollingsworth and Rudolph, whereas, in 1762 Samuel Emlen had paid Elliott £ 6..12..0 for a sconce glass similarly described. Although it is impossible to determine the relative quality and size of these glasses, the fifty percent difference in price does seem to indicate that in 1767 prices were depressed and Elliott suffered from a decline in trade.

It is probably significant that when Elliott began advertising again, in May, 1768, he described his stock more modestly than in any previous period:

A Very large neat and general assortment of looking glasses and a large assortment of coach and chariot glasses. 65

This is the first mention that Elliott's stock included coach and chariot glasses. He probably hoped to widen his range of customers and increase his volume of business. He continued to "new Quicksilver" and frame old glasses and to supply customers "with new glass to their own frames," as noted both in his advertisements and his bill of April, 1768, to Hollingsworth and Rudolph. 66

In May, 1768, Elliott announced for a second time the opening

of an auxiliary store. It was known as "The Three Brushes" and was located in Second Street between Market and Arch Streets. Here the customer could obtain the same goods as those advertised at the Walnut Street store. At first the new store was run jointly by John Elliott, Jr., and a man named Stapleton, probably a partner, but later<sup>67</sup> it was run solely by John Elliott, Jr. The primary stock of the store consisted of brushes and painter's colors. In 1768 the younger Elliott sold looking glasses for his father at this location while John<sup>68</sup> Elliott, Sr., was visiting relatives in England.

The three advertisements of John Elliott, Sr., that appeared between October, 1768, and the following January refer to "The Three Brushes" and show a stock much increased over that of the previous months. Undoubtedly, Elliott had brought goods back with him from England. His selection of looking glasses was perhaps larger and more varied than at any previous time:

Common sconces and piers, plain and with gilding,  
pediment sconces and piers, japanned sconces, gilt  
and white carved ditto, chimney glasses, dressing  
ditto, with drawers, swinging ditto, hanging ditto,  
with and without heads, shaving and pocket ditto,  
coach and chariot ditto, ditto for bookcase doors, &c.  
also mahogany and book tea chests, tea and bottle boards,  
tinfoyle, brass and leather castors, bed ditto, &c. 69

Despite the seeming variety of Elliott's stock, he was called upon to supply only two looking glasses when John Cadwalader furnished his new house in Second Street in 1770. One of the glasses cost £ 3..4..0,<sup>70</sup> the other was priced at £ 3..13..0. Obviously, these were relatively plain and modest pieces. Cadwalader bought most of his looking glasses

from James Reynolds. These were much more expensive and from their description more fashionable than those bought from Elliott. Reynolds supplied Cadwalader with two oval glasses having "Carv'd and Burnish Gold Frames" for £ 21..10..0 and £ 16..0..0, respectively. Other purchases at the time included a looking glass in a "Carv'd and Burnish Gold Frame" for £ 26..0..0 and a pier glass of "party [parcel] Gold" for £ 10..10..0.<sup>71</sup>

Elliott did not advertise in the Philadelphia newspapers between January, 1769, and May, 1776. More than likely he refrained from focusing attention on his importations of looking glasses because of the increasing friction between the Colonies and Great Britain during this period. Townshend's proposed duties on glass, white and red lead, painter's colors, paper, and tea became effective on November 20, 1767, but opposition in Philadelphia did not coalesce until March, 1769, when a committee of merchants in Philadelphia resolved that all orders for British goods should be cancelled unless shipped before April 1 of that year and that no British or foreign goods should be imported after that date until the duties were repealed.<sup>72</sup> At a meeting on the second of August the committee further decided that all goods which arrived from Great Britain on consignment or had been ordered after February 6, 1769, should be sent back immediately.<sup>73</sup> The non-importation agreement was in effect until September 29, 1770, when the London Packet sailed from Philadelphia with orders for English goods.<sup>74</sup> Statistics show that the agreement was well enforced in Philadelphia during this period. British imports into the city dropped from £ 441,829 in 1768 to £ 204,978 in 1769 and £ 134,881 in

1770. The value of goods imported into Philadelphia in 1770 was the lowest in the Colonies, a further drop from the previous year when importations were the second lowest in value, second only to those of New York City.<sup>75</sup> After Lord North's repeal of the Townshend duties (excepting those on tea) in March, 1770, there was a period of relative normalcy and commercial prosperity in Philadelphia until enactment of the Tea Act in late 1773 and the ensuing Boston Port Act of May, 1774. The non-importation agreements adopted by the first Continental Congress, or the Continental Association, became effective December 1,<sup>76</sup> 1774. From that date until the end of the War no goods whatever were to be imported from the British Isles, either directly or indirectly, into Philadelphia. Importations into the city fell from £ 625,652 in 1774 to £ 1,366 in 1775.<sup>77</sup>

Elliott had been able to advertise British goods as late as January, 1769, because Philadelphia had lagged behind her sister colonies in adopting a non-importation agreement. There had been a meeting of merchants in the city as early as March 26, 1768, to act on the proposals of Boston merchants to form a non-importation league, but the proposals were not well received in Philadelphia. The agreement deadline passed and the project still lagged. Finally action was taken on March 10, 1769, prohibiting importation of British goods unless shipped by April 1, 1769.<sup>78</sup> Judging by the absence of advertisements, it can be assumed that Elliott did not order any such goods after receiving a shipment in the Mary and Elizabeth in October, 1768. In this period he had other business matters with which to concern himself.

Americans were so enraged at the revenue producing tactics of the British in passing the Townshend duties that schemes were devised throughout the Colonies for the production of goods hitherto imported from Great Britain. The duties on glass products aroused a number of Philadelphians to initiate projects for local manufacture of glass. The Colonists had always relied upon Great Britain to supply glasswares; the expense of raw materials and the lack of technical knowledge had previously deterred colonials from attempting its production.

There were three serious essays in the glass-making business in Philadelphia between 1769 and 1772; John Elliott and his associates conducted the last and most successful of these. The first glass company apparently began operations in early 1769. In July of that year Jacob Barge, Jacob Morgan in Market Street, James White in Front Street, and Jacob Reno in Second Street solicited for "Broken Flint Glass," which they offered to buy for "two pence per pound." The glass was "intended again to be worked up . . . at a new Glass-House." The partners hoped that "all Lovers of American Manufactory" would "save, collect, and send such broken Glass" to them, so as to encourage the success of their venture. The firm was proud to remind its customers that there were "No Duties" on their glassware. A month later another advertisement appeared for a glass works in Philadelphia. Although the subscriber Richard Wistar is not mentioned in the advertisement quoted above, the Market Street address given in both notices indicates that the glass works concerned were one and the same. Wistar's notice reads:



Made at the Subscriber's Glass-Works, to be sold at his house in Market Street, opposite the Meal-Market, either wholesale or retail Between 3 and 4 hundred Boxes of Window Glass, consisting of the common sizes, Where also may be had, most sorts of bottles . . . . As the above mentioned glass is of American manufactory, it is consequently clear of the duties the Americans so justly compalin of, and at present it seems peculiarly the interest of America to encourage her own manufactories, more especially those upon which duties have been imposed for the sole purpose of raising a revenue. 80

His words clearly evoke the political tensions of the times. Although the Townshend duties on glass were removed in early 1770, the first Philadelphia glass works apparently was successful enough to encourage imitation.

In October, 1771, land for a second glass works was sold to Robert Towers and Joseph Leacock, who shortly thereafter offered the  
81  
"highest prices for broken flint glass and alkaline salts." The partners, however, had no real involvement in the glass business; Towers was a skinner and Leacock a watchmaker. They soon decided to sell their "Glass-House" to a group with more capital to invest in the business, more know-how, and more personal concern in the success of the operation. On November 5, 1772, Towers and Leacock sold for £ 400 to

John Elliott, Sr., merchant, John Elliott, Jr., brush-maker, Isaac Gray, merchant, and Samuel Elliott, tanner a certain lot or piece of ground situate in the Town of Richmond on the river Delaware in the Northern Liberties of the city of Philadelphia, on which said Towers and Leacock, built and erected a Convenient Glass-House, Furnace and other Improvements thereon, and possessed of divers Materials and utensils necessary for carrying on the Glass Manufactory, together with All the aforesaid Glass House, Furnace, Melting

Potts, Grinding Mill, Mill Gear, Together also with the pans, Plates, Kettles, Moulds, pipes, Riddles, Sieves and Clay as well as all the other utensils and materials whatsoever belonging to the Glass Manufactory particularly mentioned in an Inventory or Schedule. 82

The operation was to be a family affair; Isaac Gray had become Elliott's son-in-law on June 12, 1771, when he married Elliott's second daughter,  
83  
Mary. Prior to becoming involved in the glass works, Isaac Gray was a wine and spirits merchant in Philadelphia. Between April and June, 1769, he had advertised in the Pennsylvania Gazette:

Philadelphia bottled Beer and Cyder, for exportation or home Consumption, sold by Issac Gray, at his Warehouse in Chestnut-Street, near Strawberry Alley. He also sells old Jamaica spirits, bottled claret and red port, Madeira, Mountain and Lisbon wines, in bottles or Otherwise, Geneva, London bottled Porter, Cheshire and Gloucester cheese, coffee, chocolate, spices, double and single refined loaf and lump sugars.

He also mentioned that he bought and sold beer bottles "by the dozen  
84  
and gross." Gray may have become involved in the Elliott family glass works to provide bottles for his beer.

By January, 1773, the Elliotts were "ready to receive and execute orders for any kinds or Quantities of White or Green Glass." They did not doubt that they could "render satisfaction both ~~as~~  
85  
cheaper, than that imported from Great Britain." They received orders and sold glass at Elliott's house in Walnut Street, at the house of John Elliott, Jr., in Market Street, and at Gray's house in Chestnut Street. The glass works apparently was short of skilled workmen, for

the firm advertised that "two persons who understand the blowing of  
 86  
 glass, may have good encouragement by applying" to them.

The "Philadelphia Glass Works" with its "Furnace, Melting Potts, Grinding Mill, Mill Gear," etc., was a curiosity to Philadelphians. They flocked to the new works in Kensington in such numbers the Elliotts had to notify the public in 1773 that "as they have already experienced an inconvenience from the great resort of people to the works, they find it necessary to admit none but purchasers to the value  
 87  
 of five shillings each." The five shilling purchase did not effectively decrease the number of visitors, however. In February, 1775, the glass works gave notice that the Proprietors were "unwilling to deprive such as are desirous of seeing the factory, from the gratification of their curiosity," but at the same time found "it necessary to endeavor, in some measure, to save the works from the disadvantage which must and does actually arise from the great resort of spectators." They hoped, therefore, that no one would "take umbrage at the sum of two  
 88  
 shillings for each person's admittance,--expected at the gate . . . ." The glass works had obviously become quite a tourist attraction.

Although the duties on glass products coming from Great Britain had been dropped in 1770, the Elliotts hoped that Philadelphians would patronize a local manufactory. In his advertisement of March, 1773, Issac Gray offered "white and green Glass Wares" for sale by the Philadelphia Glass Works. These he "allowed to be equal in quality to those imported from Great Britain." He hoped that the local citizenry would support this early attempt at colonial self-sufficiency

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and "give the preference to Goods manufactured by their fellow citizens," whereby they would be "likely to receive again the money they expend,"<sup>89</sup> which it was "in vain to expect when sent beyond the sea." His words well describe the attitude of many Colonials toward the disadvantages of economic dependence on Great Britain. Within two years Thomas Paine's arguments in favor of political independence would adopt this line of reasoning.

The Philadelphia Glass Works had opened a "Warehouse" in the city by February, 1775, when Elliott advertised "The American Glass Ware House . . . For the Sale of Glass Ware made at Kensington . . . a few doors above Market street, at the West side of Second street." The wares sold there were varied and numerous--quite an impressive accomplishment for two years' operation. Shopkeepers "and others in town or country" could be supplied with a long list of articles, "either cut or plain," and "in general as cheap, and some much cheaper than those imported," including:

Decanters from one gallon to half a pint; wine glasses of various sorts; tumblers of all sizes, bottles for cases &c. flint or other beer glasses; basons, cans of all sizes, candlesticks and sockets, confectioners glasses, cyder glasses, canisters, bitter bottles, bird cisterns and boxes, candle shades, cruets and casters, chimney arms, cream pots, cupping glasses, dishes for sallad, &c. electric globes and cylinders, garden bells, hour glasses, ink cups, lamps for halls, streets, chambers, shops, weavers, &c. mortars and pestles, nipple shells and pipes, pyramids, pipes for tobacco, salvers of various sizes, salt cellars, sugar dishes, spice bottles, urinals, wine and water glasses, goblets, jelly glasses, jeweller's glasses, mustard pots, proof bottles, pocket bottles, syllabub glasses, sweet meat ditto, salt linings, smelling bottles, tubes for thermometers, &c. Phials of all sizes, &c. 90

The variety of goods offered is remarkable considering the short existence of the business. The Elliotts hoped to supply druggists, beer and wine merchants, apothecaries, tobacconists, grocers, and, of course, private customers.

Unfortunately, the involvement of the Elliott family in the glass business was not of long duration. In April, 1777, an advertisement appeared in the Pennsylvania Evening Post notifying the public of the sale, by public vendue, of "that fine Water Lot and Buildings thereon erected . . . commodiously situated on the river Delaware, adjoining to Kensington . . . and commonly called the Philadelphia Glass Works." The sale was to be held on the twenty-first of April at "six o'clock in the evening, at the London Coffee House." Apparently the Elliotts had not been financially successful in their venture, despite the enthusiasm of the public for the project. The notice in the Post states that the manufacturing of glassware is a business "which will undoubtedly become a capital object in the commerce of this country." The use of the future tense here is significant. Although the Philadelphia Glass Works had not been able to produce glass profitably for a local market, Philadelphians, in the midst of a war for their independence, did not doubt that one day America would be able to stand on her own economically. The sale notice gives an excellent description of the glass works. It reads as follows:

The lot is one hundred and fifty feet in breadth on Bank street, and extends from thence in depth to low-water mark near two hundred feet, with the privilege of a narrow street along the water side, which, if ever requisite, will increase in value.

The buildings consist of, first the glasshouse, which is thirty eight feet in breadth, by forty-two feet in depth, built of brick, and contains the air furnace, annealing oven, &c. second, the shrow house and mixing room, containing in breadth twenty-four feet, and in depth twelve feet, built of brick, and contiguous to the above; third, a frame store house, one end whereof is brick, being about sixteen feet in breadth, by twenty-four in depth; fourth, a commodious frame dwellinghouse, containing in breadth twenty-six feet, and in depth twenty-seven feet, divided in three rooms below and three above, being well brick paved. The whole of the above buildings are covered with cedar shingles, and are in extraordinary good order. There are also a grinding mill, a good smith's shop, and several large convenient shades, a well of water with a good pump, a baking oven, &c. The lot is inclosed on all sides with a good strong fence seven feet high chiefly cedar. 91

Although the works were not sold until 1780, on the twentieth of May, 1777, another advertisement appeared in the Post for the public sale of "all the Glass Ware belonging to the late Philadelphia Glass Company, amongst which are a great variety of bottles, jars, case bottles, cut and plain decanters, retorts, cylinders, barrel, globe and common lamps, plain and silvered globes, &c." 92

In the meantime Elliott continued to import looking glasses from England. In his last known advertisement of May, 1776, he gave notice that he intended to decline the "importations of looking-glasses in the future" for he had made plans to retire. From his stock on hand he offered for sale a large assortment of looking glasses "very fit for country stores and shopkeepers, to be sold wholesale and retail on the lowest terms." 93 He found a customer in Stephen Collins, a Philadelphia Quaker merchant, who purchased looking glasses to the value of £ 169 in 1776 and resold them to John Barrell and Sons of

Boston later in the same year.

Elliott promised to communicate the secret art of quicksilvering, and "all other instructions necessary " for engaging in the looking glass trade, to the purchaser of his dwelling and shop, which was "properly fitted up for carrying on the Looking-glass business." He also offered for lease or sale "a commodious 3-story house adjoining." Evidently, at the age of sixty-three Elliott viewed the impending war between Great Britain and the Colonies as reason enough to retire from business. Naturally, with the two countries at war he could not continue to import English looking glasses, but he could have carried on his quicksilvering business or continued to supply new frames for customer's old glasses. The important point is that Elliott's primary business had always been selling imported looking glasses; when importations ceased, he became much less involved in the looking glass business.

Elliott was unable to sell his looking glass store and so retained his house in Walnut Street until 1784. His will, written in 1790, verifies that the looking glass business was never sold. Elliott left his silvering tools "and implements belonging to that business" to his son John, aged fifty-two. Elliott could afford to retire in 1776; he had been very successful in his trade during the previous twenty years. This is confirmed by the tax records. In 1775 "John Eliot, Cabinetmaker" paid £ 42 tax to the City of Philadelphia. This sum was based on his taxable property--the three story house that he owned in Walnut Street and the house adjoining for which he charged Enoch Hubert a rental fee of £ 36 a year.



comparison to the value of Elliott's property in 1775, Martin Jugiez, of the looking glass firm of Bernard and Jugiez, was taxed only £ 10. The carver Hercules Courtenay paid £ 8 in taxes, while James Reynolds, "Carver" and looking glass merchant, paid £ 12 and John Elliott, Jr., "Brushmaker," paid £ 14. Several craftsmen paid higher taxes than Elliott. They, too, owned their own houses but, like Elliott, only leased the land on which they were built. William Savery, "Chair-maker," paid £ 54 tax and Benjamin Randolph, "Carver," paid £ 76. The gentleman-merchant Benjamin Franklin owned property that was taxed at £ 150 per annum.

Little is known about John Elliott's activities from the time of the sale of the Philadelphia Glass Works in 1780 until his death in 1791 at the age of seventy-seven. In 1784 he was referred to in the deed concerning the sale of his Walnut Street property as a "Cabinet-maker," indicating that he was still known in Philadelphia by his early vocation at this late date. However, by this time Elliott must have been fully retired from any form of business. From April, 1779, until his death in August, 1791, Elliott and his wife lived with their son John. After Elliott's death John reimbursed himself to the amount of £ 736 from his father's estate for the cost of twelve years "boarding and washing, &c." for his parents. John continued to support his mother until her death in 1797 at a cost of about £ 100 a year. Undoubtedly, John Elliott, Sr., had been ill for some time before his death. In his will dated May 31, 1790, he wrote that he was "infirm in Body, but thro' the Lord's Mercy favoured with Sound Mind and Memory."

The signature on the will is extremely shaky. His physical condition must have deteriorated even further just before his death, for in August, 1791, his son paid an individual named H. Myers for shaving his father for the previous four months. Doctor Benjamin Rush visited Elliott in his last illness, for which he made a charge of fifteen shillings. The family doctor, however, was J. Pfeiffer, who received seven pounds for his attendance on Elliott throughout his illness. The cost of medicines needed by Elliott during this period amounted to £ 51; they probably were supplied by John, Jr., a druggist. When Elliott died on August 1, 1791, he was buried in a red cedar coffin provided by the firm of Kite and Letchworth for £ 7. Funeral expenses of £ 2..2..8 were paid to A. and S. Ashbridges.

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John Elliott was a devout Quaker and passed on his reverence for his religion to his children. In Leicester he was a member of the Leicester Monthly Meeting and upon moving to Philadelphia had his membership transferred to the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. The one time that he journeyed abroad, in 1768, he obtained a certificate from the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting that would allow him to attend Meeting anywhere in England. In his will Elliott asked his son Samuel, then residing on Elliott's Maryland plantation, to join with his wife in an "effectual Manumission of all the poor Negro Slaves held in Bondage by them." It was Elliott's hope that his son "would do all in his power to prevail upon his Wife by gentle and prudent means to comply with this Christian Duty," in which he trusted they would "find satisfaction and Peace to their Minds, and the Lords Blessing which is above

all things to be valued." Other Philadelphia craftsmen, such as James Reynolds, owned slaves and indentured servants, but Elliott disapproved highly of any form of human servitude. The Elliotts must have conveyed to their children the strong feeling they had for the Quaker Meeting. Their son John became an important member of the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings and was repeatedly involved with Quaker-supported charities.

When John Elliott stated in his last advertisement of 1776 that his store "hath been a noted and good accustomed store for looking  
104  
glasses near 14 years," he actually had been in business twenty years--six years at the Chestnut Street store and fourteen years at the Walnut Street location. Elliott's business had been profitable enough over the years to allow him to buy several pieces of real estate and to put "Monies . . . at Interest" in bonds and mortgages. At the time of his death he owned a plantation in Chester County, Pennsylvania, a tract of land in Berks County, and a plantation in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The latter was left to his son Samuel and evidently was of substantial size as it required a number of slaves to run it. The Chester County plantation was sold to Robert Comfort, who in April, 1795, paid John Elliott, Jr., £ 200 toward the purchase price. In June, 1797, at the time John Elliott, Jr., prepared the inventory of his father's estate, about £ 1390 was still out at interest in  
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bonds and mortgages.

By the terms of his will John Elliott left all his "house lots, Goods, Apparel, Plate, Books, and Cash" and "all the produce and profits

of the other parts of my Estate real and personal" to Annabella his

106 wife. After her death in 1797 the estate was appraised by John, Jr.,

at £ 3270, not including the value of the Maryland plantation left to

107 Samuel in 1791. Although the late 1790's was an inflationary period,

an estate exceeding £ 3000 was substantial in comparison to the value

108 of most contemporary craftsmen's estates. In 1795, for instance,

James Reynold's estate was assessed for tax purposes at only £ 154;

in 1797 the dwelling of John Eckstein, "Gentleman," was assessed at

109 £ 3200. The conclusions to be drawn are that John Elliott was highly

successful in his looking glass business in Philadelphia, and, as will

be shown, he passed this success on to his son John, who also was active

in the looking glass trade until his death in 1810.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup>John W. Jordan, Colonial Families of Philadelphia (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911), II, pp. 1637-38.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum (Winterthur, Delaware), Bill from John Elliott to Edward Shippen (1754), Photostat 1149. Cited hereafter as DMMC.

<sup>3</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 17, 1756. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>4</sup>Jordan, p. 1636.

<sup>5</sup>Letter from Mr. G.A. Chinnery, Keeper of Archives at the Leicester Museums, New Walk, Leicester, England, to Mary Ellen Hayward, November 18, 1970.

<sup>6</sup>Municipal Archives of Philadelphia, Office of the Register of Wills, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791. Cited hereafter as ORW.

<sup>7</sup>Jordan, p. 1636.

<sup>8</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791.

<sup>9</sup>Jordan, p. 1636.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 1636-37.

<sup>11</sup>Letter from Mr. G.A. Chinnery to Mary Ellen Hayward, November 18, 1970.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>DMMC, Bill from John Elliott to Edward Shippen (1754), Photostat 1149.

<sup>14</sup>Letter from Mr. G.A. Chinnery to Mary Ellen Hayward, November 18, 1970.

<sup>15</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 17, 1756.

<sup>16</sup>Jordan, p. 1638.

<sup>17</sup>William Wade Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of Quaker Genealogy (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1938), II, p. 514.

<sup>18</sup>"Chinea," or Chiné, is a fabric in which the pattern is produced by the printing, painting, or irregularly dyeing of either or both of the warp and weft threads before weaving. The pattern appears after the cloth is woven. Chiné is characterized by a fuzziness of design.

<sup>19</sup>DMMC, Bill from John Elliott to Edward Shippen (1754), Photostat 1149.

<sup>20</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 17, 1756.

<sup>21</sup>Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Bill from John Elliott to Charles Norris (1755-58) MS, Norris of Fairhill MSS, Family Accounts (1740-73), Vol. I. Cited hereafter as HSP.

<sup>22</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, October 7, 1756.

<sup>23</sup>HSP, Bill from John Elliott to Charles Norris (1755-58) MS, Norris of Fairhill MSS, Family Accounts (1740-73), Vol. I.

<sup>24</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 17, 1756, October 7, 1756, and December 30, 1756.

<sup>25</sup>Joseph Downs, American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods (New York: The Viking Press, 1952), Plate 294.

<sup>26</sup>William M. Hornor, Blue Book: Philadelphia Furniture (Philadelphia, 1935), p. 199.

<sup>27</sup>Advertisement of Herbert Schiffer, Antiques, LXXVIII (October, 1960), p. 325; Hornor, Plate 68.

<sup>28</sup>This chair is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Catalogue number 25-32-1.

<sup>29</sup>Advertisement of I. Winick, Antiques, XXX (December, 1936), p. 257.

<sup>30</sup>Advertisement of Fred J. Johnston, Antiques, XL (November, 1941), p. 310; Hornor, Plate 66.

<sup>31</sup>HSP, Bill from John Elliott to Charles Norris (1755-58) MS, Norris of Fairhill MSS, Family Accounts (1740-73), Vol. I.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 17, 1756.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., October 7, 1756.

<sup>35</sup>HSP, Bill from John Elliott to Charles Norris (1755-58) MS, Norris of Fairhill MSS, Family Accounts (1740-73), Vol. I.

<sup>36</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 17, 1756, October 7, 1756, and December 30, 1756.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1757.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., April 6, 1758.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1757 and November 10, 1757.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., May 9, 1765.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., March 5, 1761.

<sup>42</sup>HSP, Samuel Emlen Daybook (1751-67) MS, pp. 122, 131. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goyne Evans.

<sup>43</sup>DMC, Account Book of John Reynell (1760-76) MS, p. 116.

<sup>44</sup>HSP, Hollingsworth MSS, Business Papers, Vol. VII, Box 1758-73.

<sup>45</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, July 2, 1767.

<sup>46</sup>Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser (Philadelphia), March 23, 1758. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>47</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, November 10, 1757.

<sup>48</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, March 23, 1758.

<sup>49</sup>Translation by Herr Doktor Kurt Schmidt of the Eastern State Hospital, Williamsburg, Virginia. Courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg.

<sup>50</sup>HSP, Harrold E. Gillingham, "Early Cabinetmakers of Philadelphia" (typescript), Harrold E. Gillingham Collection.

<sup>51</sup>HSP, Samuel Emlen Daybook (1751-67) MS, p. 134.

<sup>52</sup>American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Benjamin Franklin Accounts of Receipts and Expenditures and Memorandum Book (1757-76) MS, p. 13. Cited hereafter as APS.

<sup>53</sup>HSP, Day Book of James Hamilton (1753-83) MS, James Hamilton Papers (1732-83), Vol. XIII.

<sup>54</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, January 12, 1769.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., January 17, 1765.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., April 28, 1773.

<sup>57</sup>Nicholas B. Wainwright, Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1964), pp. 18-19.

<sup>58</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, March 23, 1758.

<sup>59</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, March 5, 1761.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., June 19, 1760.

<sup>61</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, July 15, 1762.

<sup>62</sup>The deed for the purchase reads: "Joseph Marriott to John Elliott, Indenture made first day of October, 1761, between Joseph Marriott of the City of Philadelphia Tanner and John Elliott of the said city Cabinetmaker . . . Joseph Marriott doth grant, bargain, sell alien enfeoff, release, and confirm unto the said John Elliott, his heirs and assigns, a certain piece of ground situate on the North side of Walnut Street Between the second and third streets from Delaware in the said City." Municipal Archives of Philadelphia, Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Deed Book D-37, pp. 16-17.

<sup>63</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, November 11, 1762.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., May 9, 1765.

<sup>65</sup>Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser (Philadelphia), May 16, 1768. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>66</sup>On April 6, 1758, Elliott charged Hollingsworth and Rudolph £ 2..14..0 for putting a new glass in a frame and nine shillings for "framing the broken glass." HSP, Hollingsworth MSS, Business Papers, Vol. VIII, Box 1758-73.

<sup>67</sup>Pennsylvania Chronicle, September 5, 1768.

<sup>68</sup>On May 27, 1768, John Elliott, Sr., was granted a certificate from the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting to the Monthly Meeting in Leicester or elsewhere in Great Britain. Hinshaw, p. 514.



<sup>69</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, October 20, 1768; Pennsylvania Chronicle, November 28, 1768; Pennsylvania Gazette, January 19, 1769.

<sup>70</sup>Wainwright, p. 35.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>72</sup>Arthur Meier Schlesinger, The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 96, 128-30.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 425.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 535.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>79</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, July 15, 1769.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., August 10, 1769.

<sup>81</sup>William M. Hornor, "The Diverse Activities of John Elliott," International Studio, XCIII (August, 1929), p. 25.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>Hinshaw, p. 514.

<sup>84</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, April 13, 1769.

<sup>85</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, January 27, 1773.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Pennsylvania Packet (Philadelphia), February 27, 1775. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., March 22, 1773.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., February 27, 1775.

<sup>91</sup>Pennsylvania Evening Post (Philadelphia), April 15, 1777.  
As quoted in Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, Decorative Arts  
Photographic Collection, Prime Cards File. Cited hereafter as Prime  
Cards.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., May 20, 1777. As quoted in Prime Cards.

<sup>93</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, May 8, 1776.

<sup>94</sup>Library of Congress, Stephen Collins Papers MSS, Accounts,  
Box 13. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goynes Evans.

<sup>95</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, May 8, 1776.

<sup>96</sup>The deed for the sale of Elliott's property reads: "John  
Elliott and ux to Godfrey Gebler, Indenture made the third day of  
March, 1784, between John Elliott of the City of Philadelphia,  
Cabinetmaker, and his wife Annabella and Godfrey Gebler of the City,  
Blacksmith . . . John Elliott does grant, bargain, sell alien enfeoff,  
release, and confirm unto the said Godfrey Gebler and his heirs a  
certain three story brick Messuage or tenement and kitchen and lot on  
a piece of ground situate on the North side of Walnut Street between the  
second and third streets from the river Delaware in the said City of  
Philadelphia." Municipal Archives of Philadelphia, Office of the  
Recorder of Deeds, Deed Book D-35, pp. 440-45.

<sup>97</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791.

<sup>98</sup>Municipal Archives of Philadelphia, City Archives, Constable  
Return Duplicate, City (1775) MS. Cited hereafter as CA.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>ORW, Estate of John Elliott in Account with John Elliott, Jr.,  
Executor, May 21, 1798.

<sup>101</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791.

<sup>102</sup>ORW, Estate of John Elliott in Account with John Elliott, Jr.,  
Executor, May 21, 1798.

<sup>103</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791.

<sup>104</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, May 8, 1776.

<sup>105</sup>ORW, Estate of John Elliott in Account with John Elliott, Jr.,  
Executor, May 21, 1798.

<sup>106</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791.

<sup>107</sup>ORW, Estate of John Elliott in Account with John Elliott, Jr., Executor, May 21, 1798.

<sup>108</sup>Between 1792 and 1795 the dwelling of John Elliott, Jr., was assessed for tax purposes at an average of £ 1450 per annum and his horse at an average of £ 20 per annum. Between 1796 and 1799 the dwelling was assessed at £ 4000 per annum and the horse at £ 100 per annum. CA, Tax Assessors Ledger, Walnut Ward (1791-99) MS.

<sup>109</sup>CA, Tax Assessors Ledger, North Ward (1791-99) MS.

## CHAPTER II

### JOHN ELLIOTT, JUNIOR: QUAKER APOTHECARY AND LOOKING GLASS DEALER

John Elliott, Jr., was born in Leicester, England, in 1739. When he emigrated with his parents to Philadelphia in 1753, he was thirteen years old.<sup>1</sup> At the outset of this study little was known about John Elliott, Jr., except what could be learned or inferred from his two known advertisements of 1784 and 1785 in the Pennsylvania Gazette and the labels which he attached to looking glasses sold in his shop. Actually, Elliott's career was much less oriented toward the looking glass business than has previously been assumed. He was the "popular apothecary of the neighborhood"<sup>2</sup> in addition to being a brushmaker and "color" merchant. An important and heretofore unknown aspect of Elliott's life is the significant role he played after the Revolutionary War in the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings. In his business and his personal life John Elliott, Jr., was a "quaker Gentleman of kindly and winning manner."<sup>3</sup>

#### Part I: Commercial Activities

The first commercial activity in which John Elliott, Jr., engaged probably was that of assisting his father in his looking glass store in Chestnut Street. In June, 1760, the elder Elliott

advertised a second looking glass store in Market Street between Front and Water Streets, where he stocked the same looking glasses as could be purchased at his Chestnut Street store. As John Elliott, Jr., was<sup>4</sup> twenty years old in June, 1760, it is reasonable to assume that he helped his father run the new Market Street store. Strangely enough, this store was never mentioned again in an Elliott advertisement. It<sup>4</sup> apparently passed out of existence within less than a year. After its closing young Elliott probably went to work for his father at the latter's new location in Walnut Street.

The activities of John Elliott, Jr., cannot actually be documented until September, 1768. At this time he and a partner named Stapleton advertised in the Pennsylvania Gazette as "Brushmakers"<sup>5</sup> at a store located in Second Street and titled "The Three Brushes." The store, which probably opened in April or May of 1768, apparently was owned entirely or in part by John Elliott, Sr. In an advertisement dated May 16, 1768, he mentioned "his store lately opened in Second<sup>6</sup> Street, between Market and Arch Streets." The senior Elliott continued to refer to "The Three Brushes" in advertisements of October and November, 1768, and January, 1769; but, he never spoke of it in connection with the sale of brushes. Instead, he indicated that "The Three Brushes" stocked the same varied merchandise offered at<sup>7</sup> his Walnut Street store.

Young Elliott's advertisements of April, 1769, refer to "The Three Brushes" as "The Looking Glass Store in Second Street, between

Market and Arch Streets" but, oddly enough, do not mention either looking glasses or brushes. Instead, Elliott offered for sale other merchandise imported in the Philadelphia Packet:

An Assortment of Mens brown and white Thread ribbed Hose,  
Three-fourths, Seven-eighths, and Yard-wide Irish Linen;  
Venetian, Cloth-coloured, and black double Ruffles, &c. 8

It seems probable that John Elliott, Sr., supplied the looking glasses carried in "The Looking Glass Store in Second Street" as he had when it was called simply "The Three Brushes." A notation in John Cadwalader's receipt book provides further evidence on this point. In January, 1771, the younger Elliott signed his name in the account book acknowledging payment on his father's behalf for two looking glasses bought by Cadwalader in 1770:

1 Looking Glass	£ 3.. 4..0
1 ditto do	3..13..0
	<hr/> 6..17..0

Rec<sup>d</sup> 1st mo 24<sup>th</sup>, 1771, the above Contents in full  
for my father

John Elliott Jun<sup>r</sup> 9

John Elliott, Jr., probably learned the brushmaking business from his partner, Stapleton. In September, 1768, they advertised the following goods "imported in the Philadelphia Packet, from London":

A Neat Assortment of tooth brushes, with and without sponges, comb brushes, buckle brushes, flesh brushes, shaving boxes with brushes and perfumed soap, red Basil skins, best Russia bristles for shoemakers.

In addition, they made all of "the various sorts of brushes generally used" out of hogs-bristles and horse-hair for which they "gave ready

10  
 money." Elliott continued to "carry on the business of Brush-Making" even after Stapleton left the partnership sometime before August, 1771. At this time Elliott advertised that he had on hand "A General Assortment of Brushes, Amongst which are tooth, buckle, plate and comb-brushes, painters tools and pencils."<sup>11</sup>

During these years Elliott had several competitors in the brushmaking business in Philadelphia. John Hanna, a brushmaker whose shop was located at the corner of Chestnut and Second Streets, advertised in September, 1768, that he paid "the highest prices for Hogs Bristles." His shop was well stocked with "all sorts of Brushes, such as weavers, fullers, hatters, and tanners brushes," and his special imports from London included "a large assortment of painters brushes, such as pound brushes, &c. likewise a fine assortment of tools." Hanna solicited orders from country stores, which he promised would "be punctually attended to, on the lowest terms."<sup>12</sup> John Wilkinson of Chestnut Street likewise followed the brushmaking trade. He drew attention to the goods he had for sale by printing the text of his advertisements under a large woodcut of a hog that dominates every newspaper page on which it appears. Wilkinson was stating in pictorial form that he gave "Ready Money and best Price" for "Hogs Bristles."<sup>13</sup>

"The Three Brushes" must have continued in business only through 1770. In February, 1771, Elliott was granted a certificate from the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting to the Wilmington Meeting for the purpose of visiting his prospective bride, Margaret Harvey.<sup>14</sup>

The couple were married on April 4, 1771, when Elliott was thirty-one<sup>15</sup> years of age. The Elliotts evidently remained in Wilmington some two

months after their marriage; Mrs. Elliott was received into the<sup>16</sup>

Philadelphia Meeting on June 28, 1771. About this time Elliott moved from Second Street around the corner to a more commodious house "where Jacob Shoemaker lately dwelt" in Market Street between Second and Third<sup>17</sup> Streets, renting it from Shoemaker for £ 70 a year. The Elliotts

remained in this new home until sometime before July, 1784, when they<sup>18</sup> moved to a house in Front Street. During these thirteen years their

seven children were born; John, on January 21, 1772 (died March 28, 1772); Hannah, on February 23, 1773; Isaac, on April 7, 1775; John, on January 15, 1777; Samuel, on February 16, 1779; Daniel, on April 12, 1780; and Harvey, on January 23, 1784. All the children survived their parents except Isaac and Samuel, who died in 1793 and 1795,

<sup>19</sup>respectively. They probably were victims of the yellow fever that raged in Philadelphia during the warm months of these years.

John Elliott, Jr., was a prosperous merchant in the years before the Revolutionary War. His primary items of trade were brushes; painter's colors, drugs and medicines, window and coach glass, and looking glasses. Apparently, he did not enter the glass or color business until after Lord Townshend's duties on these goods were repealed in March, 1770. His advertisement in the August 15, 1771, issue of the Pennsylvania Gazette indicates the wide variety of goods that he stocked:

A General Assortment of Brushes, Amongst which are tooth, buckle,



plate and comb-brushes, painters tools and pencils. . . shaving-boxes, with brushes, Castile soap, Russia bristles, ditto for shoemakers, red basil skins, brass wire, seine twine, bellows, tea-chests, mahogany waiters. Looking-Glasses, and Window-Glass, of various sizes, glass for clock faces and pictures, putty, linseed oil, an assortment of Painters' colors, &c. Viz. white, red and black lead, magnes [magnet], bar lead, ivory and lamp-black, Venetian red, powder and stone oaker, Spanish brown and white, umber, verdigrease, vermillon, Prussian blue, India red, Dutch pink, brown and yellow ditto, yellow orpiment, King's yellow, flake white, shallac, drop lake, carmine, litharge smalt, leaf gold, Dutch metal, varnish, spirits of turpentine, white, red and black chalk, black lead pencils, brimstone, allom, madder, indigo, copperas, glue, isinglass, salt-petre, sagoe, pearl barley, anniseed, carraway seed, sweet oil; Hooper's, Anderson's and Lockyer's pills, Jame's fever powders, Bareman's drops, Squire's, Fraunces's, Bostock's and Daffy's elixir, Godfrey's cordial, Betton's British oil, Turlington's balsam, Hungary water, paralitic liniment, bathing spirits, ivory and pewter syringes, glister pipes, oil cloth, and an assortment of Drugs and Medicines. 20

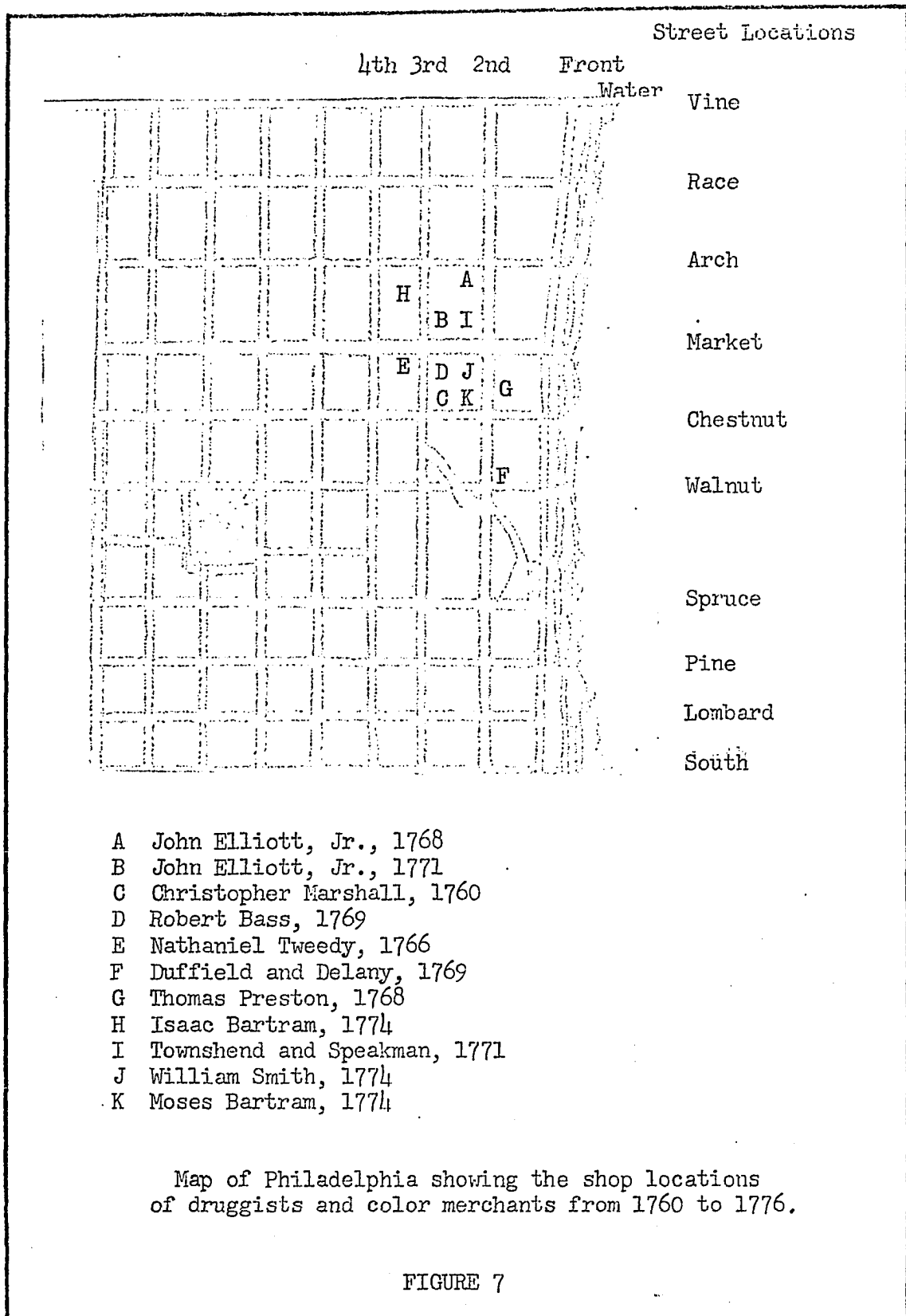
Elliott experienced strong competition in the drug, color, brush, and glass businesses throughout his career. As early as 1768 Christopher and Charles Marshall, "Druggists and Colourmen, at the old and noted store, the Sign of the Golden Ball, in Chestnut-Street," advertised "a large and general assortment of Drugs, Chymical, galenical and patent Medicines . . . also a great variety in the Colour way, dry or ground, with oils, varnishes, lackers, gold and silver leaves, frostings, brushes, tools, pencils, stone and pallet knives . . . London, Bristol and Newcastle Crown Glass of most sizes, with Diamonds, putty, &c." <sup>21</sup> Druggists commonly sold painter's colors because their preparation also required the use of a mortar and pestle or mortar and wheel. Along with the painter's colors it must have seemed natural to stock brushes. In March, 1768, and April and May of the following year Nathaniel Tweedy, "Druggist, at the Golden Eagle, near the Courthouse in Market Street," advertised in addition to a

"very large and general assortment of Drugs and Medicines just imported in the Philadelphia Packet, from London," a general "supply of paints, both ground and dry, with every article belonging to the painting business."<sup>22</sup> Robert Bass, apothecary, informed the public in May, 1773, that he had on hand "a new and fresh assortment of drugs [and] patent medicines, a variety of fine colours for portrait painting, and fine brushes."<sup>23</sup> Other druggists offering substantial competition to Elliott were Samuel Emlen, John Sparhawk, Townshend and Speakman, William Smith, Isaac and Moses Bartram, William Delany, and Thomas Preston (Fig. 7).

Thomas Preston's advertisement of December 15, 1768, itemizes a representative selection of the goods usually carried by Philadelphia druggists and apothecaries. His notice reads:

Just imported from London . . . a large and general assortment of Drugs and Medicines; among which are the following, Antimony, allom, salt petre, glauber and Epsom Salts, sago, salop, senna, saffron, and spices of all sorts, pearl barley, sulphur in flour and rolls, cream of tartar, fresh camomile flowers and juniper berries, camphire, cochineal, gentian, Jesuits bark, hartshorn shavings, white wax, rhubarb, isinglass, liquorice, spirits of salvolatile and of lavender compound, quicksilver and all kinds of mercurial and antimonial preparations, chemical oils, balsams, pills, ointments and plaisters . . . 24

A noteworthy item in this list is Jesuit's (Peruvian) bark. The substance was brought to Europe in 1640 by the Countess Cinchona of Peru because it miraculously cured fevers. Modern scientific analysis reveals that the bark in its natural form contains thirty alkaloids of quinine. It received considerable use in the seventeenth, eighteenth,



and nineteenth centuries. The reference to "chemical oils" indicates the growing importance of chemistry as a science in the eighteenth century. Chemical drugs were made from mineral salts such as antimony, mercury, and arsenic. Allom was a chemical substance used to stop bleeding, and salt-petre, or sodium nitrite, helped to reduce high blood pressure. The various pills, powders, balsams, and elixirs mentioned in Preston's and Elliott's advertisements were the so-called "patent medicines" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. James's fever powder, for instance, was originated by Dr. Robert James in London; in 1746 he took out a patent for its preparation. His formula reads, "Take of antimony, calcine it with a continual protracted heat in an earthen vessel, adding to it from time to time sufficient quantity of an animal oil and salt, boil in melted nitre and separate the powder from the nitre by dissolving it in water." <sup>26</sup> An elixir was a mildly stimulating alcohol-base tonic; a cordial, a thick medicinal wine; and, a balsam, a plaster made of sap used in the treatment of burns. Many of these patent medicines had been sold in Philadelphia for a number of years. In 1758 Samuel Emlen had advertised as just imported from London a "Fresh Parcel of the genuine Dr. Benjamin Godfrey's Cordial, . . . Turlington's Balsam, Daffy's and Bostock's Elixir, Fraunces' Female strengthening Elixir, Lockyer's Pills, &c." <sup>27</sup> The same basic terms are used for similar substances today.

Undoubtedly, Elliott's drug, color, and glass business was reduced considerably after ratification of the non-importation clauses by the Pennsylvania Assembly on December 10, 1774. Likewise, the non-

importation agreement of 1769 must have affected his trade. In March, 1769, a committee of Philadelphia merchants had agreed upon a policy to cancel all orders for British goods unless they were shipped before<sup>28</sup> the first of April. Elliott's order arrived in time to be advertised in an April issue of the Pennsylvania Chronicle.<sup>29</sup> Philadelphians were forbidden to import further goods until the Townshend duties were repealed. The majority of Quakers in Philadelphia were against this policy of enforced non-importation; in July, 1769, the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting advised Friends to have nothing to do with any non-importation measures. However, some prominent Friends had signed the<sup>30</sup> agreement and John Reynell was head of the committee of inspection. Non-importation measures were dropped after Lord North's repeal of the obnoxious duties in March, 1770. Orders began to be sent to Great<sup>31</sup> Britain as usual in September.

It is obvious that Elliott avoided mentioning that his goods were imported in his advertisements of August, 1771, and January, 1774, although it was legal for him to import British goods after October, 1770, and until December, 1774. It can be assumed that the "tooth, buckle, plate and comb brushes" as well as the "Looking Glasses and Window-Glass" and the "glass for clock-faces and pictures" and the<sup>32</sup> "Painters Colours," all advertised in 1771, and the twine, "Looking and Coach-Glasses," "Painters' Colours," "Brushes of all Sorts," and<sup>33</sup> "Drugs and Medicines," advertised in 1774, were imported goods. Elliott, however, purposely neglected to mention that fact. It seems as though he still was in sympathy with the Colonial cause but could

not afford to cease importations of British goods. Even though he could not easily obtain merchandise after December, 1774, Elliott must have continued his businesses during the war. He sold to the prominent craftsman Benjamin Randolph "1 Gal<sup>n</sup> Oil" for £ 0..7..6 in June, 1776,<sup>34</sup> and to the Philadelphia merchant Joseph Carson £ 71..12..6<sup>35</sup> worth of oil and paints in November, 1779. A few months later, in March, 1780, Stephen Girard, the well-known merchant and shipowner, purchased "4 lb. ground Spanish brown" for \$40.00, one gallon of boiled oil for \$40.00, and one-half gallon and one pint of raw oil for \$20.00.<sup>36</sup> The prices indicate the low value of Colonial currency during the war.

John Elliott, Jr., probably was not seriously involved with the looking glass trade before the end of the Revolutionary War. In October, 1771, he sold two looking glasses for £ 5..5..0 to Jonathan Zane, a Philadelphia merchant.<sup>37</sup> These glasses evidently were even plainer than the two glasses bought by John Cadwalader in 1770 from his father at a cost of £ 6..17..0. Although young Elliott carried a variety of goods in the early 1770's, he still was known primarily as a brushmaker in Philadelphia as late as 1775.<sup>38</sup> In May, 1776, John Elliott, Sr., notified the public of his intention to sell his looking glass business and along with it his knowledge of the art of quick-silvering. If John, Jr., had been actively engaged in the looking glass business at this time, his father probably would have transferred the business to him instead of offering to sell it to a stranger. As it happened, the elder Elliott could not sell his looking glass business, and after the war John Elliott, Jr., took his place as the

family looking glass dealer. It does not seem a coincidence that when the younger Elliott began advertising in the 1780's, he used almost exactly the same format as his father had employed in the 1760's.

Although Elliott did a good business in the looking glass trade in the 1780's and 1790's, it was never his primary business. In 1784 and 1785 he continued to emphasize drugs and medicines, painter's colors, and brushes in his advertisements.<sup>39</sup> The labels he used between 1784 and 1796 carry the printed words "Drugs and Medicines" in large type across the top of the label, with a notice of his stock of looking glasses, window glass, spectacles, brushes, and painter's colors printed in small type below (Fig.8). Labels printed after 1796 bear the titles "Drugs and Medicines" and "Looking Glasses" printed in equally large type (Figs. 9, 10, 11). Elliott's business career is well documented in the Philadelphia directories of the 1780's and 1790's. In the various years of its publication he is identified as follows:

1785 - Looking Glass and Medicine Merchant	
1791 - Druggist	
1793 - Looking Glass and Medicine Merchant	
1796 - Looking Glass Manufacturer and Druggist	
1803 - Looking Glass and Medical Warehouse	40

The Tax Assessor's ledger for Walnut Ward also describes Elliott's occupation as "Druggist" for the years 1787, 1789, 1793, 1796-1798,<sup>41</sup> and 1799. In 1792 he was labeled "Glassman."

John Elliott, Jr., purchased a three story house in Front Street between Chestnut and Walnut Streets in 1784, both to accomodate his large family and to provide space for a business that was destined

**JOHN ELLIOTT, JUN<sup>r</sup>.**  
*No. 60, South Front-Street, between Chestnut and Walnut-Streets,*  
**P H I L A D E L P H I A,**  
 HATH FOR SALE, A GENERAL ASSORTMENT OF  
**DRUGS AND MEDICINES,**

Sago, Pearl Barley, Oatmeal, Spices, &c. <b>LOOKING GLASSES,</b> with and without Frames; <b>WINDOW GLASS</b> of most Sizes, and large Glafs for Clocks, Samplers, &c. also, <b>COACH GLASSES;</b> <b>SPECTACLES;</b>	<b>BRUSHES</b> of most Serts; <b>PAINTERS' COLOURS,</b> both dry and mixed for Use; Boiled Oil, Spirits of Turpentine, Varnish of divers Sorts, Putty, Painters' Tools, and Camels' Hair Pencils, Leaf-Gold and Silver, Blacklead and Sand Crucibles, Pearl Ash, &c.
--	---

**N. B. LOOKING GLASSES** new Quicksilvered and Framed.

The second label used by John Elliott, Jr., between c. 1791 and c. 1796. His first label, used between c. 1784 and c. 1791, is identical to this example, except that it bears the address "on the West side of Front-Street, between Chesnut and Walnut-Streets."

FIGURE 8



**JOHN ELLIOTT,**  
*At No. 60, South Front Street, between Chestnut and Walnut Streets,*  
**PHILADELPHIA,**  
*Sells by Wholesale and Retail.*

**Looking Glasses**  
 In neat Mahogany Frames of American manufacture  
 Coach Glasses, Window Glass, Spectacles, Paint  
 ers' Colours, Oil, Varnishes, &c.  
 neral Assortment of

**Drugs and Medicines.**  
 A. D. Old Glasses new quicksilvered and framed as usual,  
 and new Glass supplied to People's old Frames.

The third label used by John Elliott, Jr., advertising "Looking Glasses of American Manufacture" and dating between c. 1796 and c. 1804.

FIGURE 9

JOHN ELLIOTT,  
 No 60, South Front Street, between Chestnut and Walnut Streets,  
 PHILADELPHIA.  
 Sells by Wholesale and Retail  
 Looking Glasses  
 In neat Mahogany Frames of American Manufacture  
 Coach Glasses, Window Glasses, Spectacles, Paint-  
 ed Colours, Oil, Varnishes, &c. &c. And a ge-  
 neral Assortment of  
 Drugs and Medicines.  
 R. Old Glasses new quicksilvered and framed as usual.  
 Glasses supplied to Peoples old Frames.

The fourth label used by John Elliott, Jr., between c. 1796 and c. 1804.

FIGURE 10

**JOHN ELLIOTT, JR.,**  
*At No. 50, South Front Street, between Clapnet and Walnut Streets,*  
**PHILADELPHIA,**  
 Sells by Wholesale and Retail.

*Looking Glasses*

In neat Mahogany Frames of American Manufacture.  
 Coach Glasses, Window Glass, Spectacles, Paint-  
 ers' Colours, Oil, Varnishes, &c. — And a ge-  
 neral Assortment of  
**Drugs and Medicines.**

N.B. Old Glasses new quicksilvered and framed as usual,  
 and new Glass supplied to People's old Frames.

The fifth label used by John Elliott, Jr., between c. 1796 and c. 1804.

FIGURE 11

to grow with post-war inflation. From this year until his death in 1810 Elliott continued to carry the diverse supplies of brushes, painter's colors, drugs and medicines, and general merchandise for which he had been known in the 1770's. In July, 1784, for instance, Elliott advertised the following wide variety of merchandise:

. . . a general assortment of Drugs and Medicines; oatmeal, Groats, Barley, Sago, Vermicelle, &c. also Painter's Colours, of the best kinds, both dry and ground. Good drying oil, spirits of turpentine, varnish, putty, glue, pearl ashes, crude tartar, and sundry sorts of dye-stuffs, borax, rotten stone, &c. Russia bristles and brushes of most sorts, camel's hair pencils, Bristol crown window glass 10x3, and other sizes, large glass for clock faces, &c.<sup>43</sup>

The majority of these goods were obtained from England because it was more economical to import them than to buy local products. The high cost of labor in America in this period raised prices considerably.

In the same advertisement Elliott specifically pointed out that he had "just imported in the ship Pigou, from London, a very neat assortment of Looking Glasses in mahogany frames, a variety of spectacles both white and green glass, and concave glasses for near sighted people."

The newly independent Philadelphians still preferred English-made looking glasses, and Elliott was happy to be able to tell his customers that they could obtain them at his shop. Following in his father's footsteps, he "new Quicksilvered and framed" old glasses and put new glass into people's old frames.<sup>44</sup> Evidently by 1784, the elder Elliott had transmitted the art of quicksilvering to his son. John, Jr., may have been using his father's silvering tools at this time, although<sup>45</sup> they were not officially his until his father's death in 1791.

Elliott again advertised his merchandise in the Philadelphia newspapers in September and October, 1785. He informed the public that he had for sale "a general assortment of Drugs and Medicines, Painter's Colours, Oil and Brushes, Window Glass, Spectacles, &c." As in 1784 he emphasized the fact that the "large Quantity of Looking Glasses in plain Mahogany Frames" on hand in the shop were "lately imported."<sup>46</sup>

The next Elliott advertisement appeared in March, 1786. He offered a "large assortment of Looking Glasses in plain Mahogany frames, Painters' Colours, Window Glass, &c. Drugs and Medicines in general, also a quantity of Holland, Blacklead Crucibles, and a large fishing Seine."<sup>47</sup> He indicated that he wanted to purchase "a quantity of linseed Oil."

The goods advertised by Elliott from 1784 to 1786 correspond well to documented purchases. In September, 1784, Elliott sold to the Philadelphia firm of Samuel Wetherill and Sons a "Barrell of Oyl, or 31½ Gallons" at £ 0..5..6 the gallon for a total of £ 8..13..3.<sup>48</sup> Wetherill and Sons were highly successful competitors in the hardware and paint business. A few months later in June, 1785, Jonathan Ferris, a Philadelphia Quaker, bought twenty-four shillings worth of lampblack from Elliott.<sup>49</sup> Late in the year 1785 and at various times throughout the next two years Stephen and John Girard, the well-known Philadelphia merchants and shipowners, bought quantities of "boiled Oil," kegs of white lead, yellow and "Spanish brown" paint, lampblack, spirits of turpentine, and paint brushes from Elliott. The goods were for use on Girard's brigs the Kitty and the Two Brothers.<sup>50</sup>

John Elliott, Jr., apparently did not advertise in the Philadelphia newspapers after 1786. His reputation as a druggist and colorman was probably so well established by that time that he did not feel it necessary. Then, too, by 1786 the name "Elliott" had been associated with the sale and repair of looking glasses in Philadelphia for twenty-eight years. Records of Elliott's activities after this date can be found in contemporary receipt and account books. In November, 1794, he sold paint to the value of £ 3..12..5 to the Reverend Robert Blackwell. Two years later Mrs. Blackwell paid eleven shillings for an unspecified purchase to Elliott's twelve year old son Harvey.<sup>51</sup>

Elliott presumably was active in the drug business in the 1790's. It was a decade during which Philadelphia experienced a series of violent yellow fever epidemics. No one knew exactly what caused the fever, how it could be prevented, or how it should be treated. Some of the various precautions to be taken were burning fires in the streets, exploding gunpowder, and dowsing oneself with vinegar. During the 1793 outbreak the druggist William Delany advertised "Aromatic Distilled Vinegar," a composition that had "received the warm approbation of the most eminent Physicians of [the] city, as a useful Prevenative against the baneful influence of the Epidemic." The vinegar was to be "applied to the temples and nose, through the medium of a Sponge," occasionally<sup>52</sup> "moistened therewith." In the hot Indian summer of 1793, after the fever had been raging for several months, Dr. Benjamin Rush announced that he had found a cure for the disease. He treated his patients by harshly purging them with mammoth doses of mercury and jalap

and by bleeding them of tremendous quantities of blood. The process attempted to drain from the body whatever vile substance caused the fever. Rush's new treatment started a violent controversy among Philadelphia's doctors and apothecaries because the recommended doses of mercury and jalap were ten times larger than those usually administered and bleeding was often prescribed up to a volume of eight pints. Many druggists in the city eagerly took up the Rush treatment and advertised "Dr. Rush's celebrated mercurial purging powder."<sup>53</sup> Doctors opposed to Rush's theories advised a mild and nutritious diet of barley and other grains in order to allow the body to fight the fever itself. During the epidemic of 1793 George Hunter, a druggist, advertised that "Sago, Barley, and Oatmeal for diet drink" would be "delivered gratis<sup>54</sup> during the present contagion, to those who are unable to pay for it." Throughout the controversy of 1793 John Elliott, Jr., was strangely silent. He probably was not even in Philadelphia during these savage months. Likewise, he did not advertise during the epidemics of the late 1790's. Undoubtedly, Elliott removed his family from the dangerous environment of Philadelphia as soon as the fever struck in an effort to protect them. It was common practice during these epidemics for those who could afford to leave the city to find temporary accommodations in the country. Elliott's eldest son, Isaac, had died, assuredly of yellow fever, in October, 1793.

Druggists, or apothecaries, in business in Philadelphia in the 1790's were not merely dispensers of drugs. Often they held the title of "Doctor of Medicine."<sup>55</sup> Until the eighteenth century apothecaries

in London were men who prepared and mixed drugs according to a physician's order. After 1721 apothecaries in that city were permitted legally to visit and prescribe for patients as well as prepare the medicines required for treatment. The apothecary gradually evolved into the medical practitioner while the chemists, who prepared mineral salts for medicinal purposes, and the druggists, who supplied the apothecaries with drugs, absorbed a considerable portion of the retail sale of drugs and medicines, formerly handled by the apothecary. <sup>56</sup>

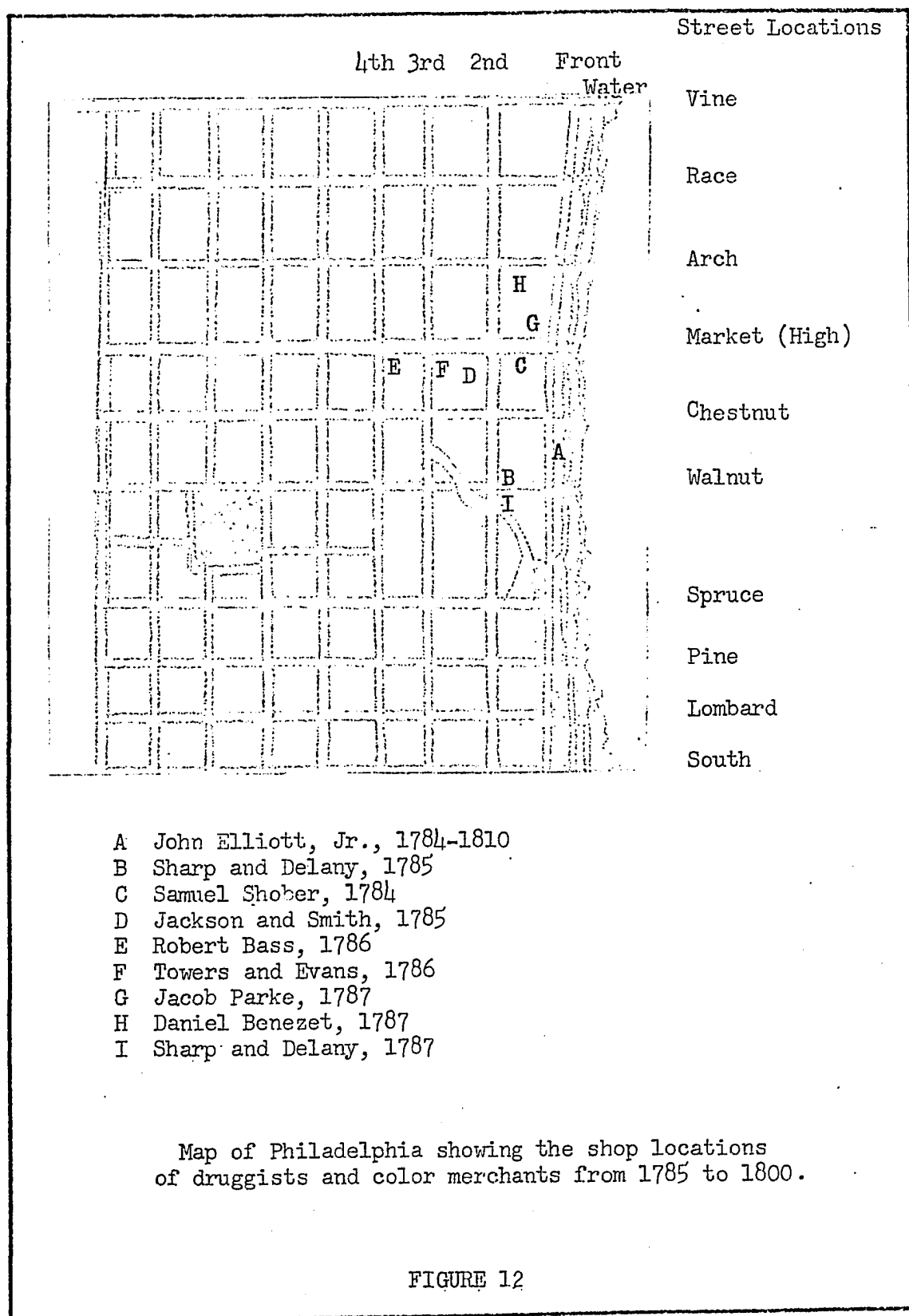
John Elliott, Jr., certainly had some understanding of medicine and he undoubtedly prescribed to his clients for their various disorders. In March, 1790, a personal friend of the Elliotts Joseph Thornton of Byberry was suffering from acute "Consumption." Elliott wrote him a long letter. In the opening paragraphs Elliott reminded his friend of the Quaker's belief in the omnipotence of God's wisdom and of the happiness gained through total submission to God's will. He then suggested the following cure:

[The Lord] can bring down to the brink of the Grave, and if he sees meet bring up again--this has sometimes been effected by very simple means. We have heard of a person who appeared to be far gone in a Consumption that was restored by the use of what is called allflower water (Cow's Urine) which is likely to be most efficacious in the Spring when their food is grass, herbs, and flowers --if art free to make the trial thou mayst take about a half a pint at a time or as much as thy stomach will bear for nine mornings together. Then leave off for a few days, and again repeat the same if thou finds it does not disagree with thee--at the same time take a tea made of Wild Carot seeds--My wife is also desirous to have thee try Indian turnip which she thinks may be of use to thee--



a teaspoonful of it in powder to be boiled in half a pint of new Milk and sweetened with honey-- Oatmeal diet has also been found serviceable in that disorder. George Gray, who keeps the lower Ferry, was a few years ago very much reduced, but after living a considerable time on little else than oatmeal food he was restored to a good state of health. 57

Elliott experienced strong competition in the drug business after the War as he had in the late 1760's and early 1770's. Former competitors, such as Robert Bass, William Delany, William Smith, and the firm of Townshend and Speakman, continued in business in the 1790's. New names appearing in advertisements of the 1790's include: Jackson and Smith; Towers and Evans; Samuel Shober; William Poyntrell; Robert Thomas; Goldthwait and Baldwin; Dr. Amos Gregg; and, George Hunter (Fig.12). One of the most colorful of the drug firms was the company of Betton and Harrison located at No. 10 South Second Street. In April, 1794, the firm conveyed to Philadelphians the good news that they had invented the "Columbian dentrifice." This "elegant composition" was offered to the public as a "most efficacious and innocent preservative for the teeth." It contained nothing that would "corrode the enamel, or give the least pain to the gums by the most frequent use." Apparently, no product of "equal virtues" had "ever yet been imported from Europe." The company offered the benefits of their invention to all classes of residents. They sold "their boxes so low as a quarter dollar each, that every class of people [might] possess themselves of so valuable an article," pointing out "the additional beauty that a good set of teeth gives to the body" and cautioning<sup>58</sup> "that a neglect of them occasions violent pains and decay." Betton



and Harrison were both chemists and druggists and advertised the following chemical drugs manufactured in their establishment: "red and white precipitates, calomel, diaphonetic antimony, golden sulphur of antimony, and sweet spirit of nitre."<sup>59</sup> In 1800 and 1801 Elliott made several purchases from the company, including "Instruments," "nitre Dulc," "Vitriol," and several grosses of "<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>oz. Green Vials."<sup>60</sup> Had the family glass venture of the 1770's been a success, he could have filled his own needs for glass containers.

Elliott was only one among many color and brush merchants in business after the war. In 1786 Robert Coe in Strawberry Alley advertised that he made brushes and carried a "general assortment of country made and imported house brushes, and such as are for shipping use." Along more specialized lines he had for sale brushes "used by the different tradesmen, such as painters, hatters, tanners, weavers, brassfounders, silversmiths, &c."<sup>61</sup> During the same period John Porter, "Brushmaker, the North side of Market Street, between Front and Second Streets," advertised a large assortment of brushes that included, in addition to the types previously mentioned, "sweeping brushes, hearth-brushes, curriers, round and angled furniture brushes, shoe brushes, bone and wood buckle brushes, mahogany, walnut, and painted clothes brushes, silk dyers and scowerers brushes."<sup>62</sup>

Competition in the color business came primarily from fellow druggists. Samuel Shober advertised painter's colors in addition to medicines and surgeon's instruments in 1784.<sup>63</sup> In the late 1780's the

drug firm of Towers and Evans often offered painter's colors, painter's brushes, camel's hair pencils, spirits of turpentine, window glass, and "crate glass of all sizes suitable for Pictures, Clock Faces, &c." <sup>64</sup>

Robert Bass inserted a notice in the Gazette in June, 1786, that he had for sale "Reeve's new invented, incomparable, Drawing Cakes, for miniature painting, in boxes of 45, 30 and 20 different shades and colours." <sup>65</sup>

Robert Thomas's stock in June, 1789, included drugs and medicines and "by the same importation . . . a large assortment of painters' colours, window glasses, &c." <sup>66</sup>

The two drug firms of Goldthwait and Baldwin and Jackson and Smith advertised painter's colors in 1793 in addition to their regular supply of drugs and medicines. <sup>67</sup>

Elliott evidently was successful in the drug, color, and looking glass business despite competition. His father had established a reputation as a respected Quaker merchant and Elliott further capitalized on the Friends' economic solidarity. In addition, the family had been in business for over three decades. Throughout the 1790's the assessments of Elliott's property for tax purposes increased consistently from year to year. Although the period was highly inflationary, the figures reveal his relative prosperity when compared to the average property valuations which ranged between £ 50 and £ 250. In 1791 Elliott's property was valued at £ 1383, in 1795 £ 1816, and in 1799 <sup>68</sup> £ 4156. During these years he managed to save enough money to buy a large piece of property comprising several farms in Wilmington, Delaware, the former home of his wife. He called the property Glenfield and was

living there at the time of his death in 1810.

Information regarding Elliott's business career in the late 1780's and 1790's is best gained from the labels that he attached to the looking glasses sold in his shop. Street numbers were not used in Philadelphia until 1791; previous to that year residents were located only by the streets they lived on and the boundaries of their block. Thus, in the Philadelphia Directory for 1785 the name of John Elliott, Jr., is listed with the address "Front Street between Chesnut and Walnut Streets."<sup>70</sup> In 1791 Elliott's house in Front Street was assigned the number "60," and in the directory of that year he appeared as "John Elliott, Jun., Druggist, 60 South Front Street."<sup>71</sup> There is one known label of John Elliott, Jr., that bears the address "on the West side of Front-Street between Chesnut and Walnut-Streets."<sup>72</sup> Assuming that he had new labels printed not long after his house was assigned the number "60," this label probably was in use from about 1784, when Elliott moved to Front Street, to 1791. The second label used by Elliott (Fig. 8) incorporates the "No. 60 South Front-Street" address; otherwise, it is identical to the first label. The second label probably was in use until about 1796. In that year Elliott's name appeared in the Philadelphia Directory with the title "Looking Glass Manufacturer and Druggist."<sup>73</sup> At about this time he probably began to use labels that advertised "Looking Glasses in neat Mahogany Frames of American Manufacture" (Figs. 9, 10, 11). These labels are almost exactly alike in text and format, but they each have a different border. The label that apparently appeared first (Fig. 9) has the same

spiral border as seen on the two earlier labels. There is no way of knowing which of the remaining two labels was printed next; in fact, these three labels advertising looking glasses of "American Manufacture" may have been used simultaneously. If they were printed in chronological sequence, it is possible that the "geometric bordered" label (Fig.11) was used last. A looking glass bearing this label has "pine-tree" shaped ears, a feature found on looking glasses carrying the later label of "John Elliott & Sons."<sup>74</sup>

In 1804 at the age of sixty-four John Elliott, Jr., took his two surviving adult sons, John, aged twenty-seven, and Daniel, aged twenty-four, into business with him. The trio adopted the business name "John Elliott & Sons." They were listed in this manner in the Philadelphia Directory of 1804 and described as the owners of a "Looking Glass and Medical Store" at No. 60 South Front Street.<sup>75</sup>

To mark the formation of the partnership Elliott had a new label printed with the heading "John Elliott & Sons (Fig.13). The merchandise advertised on this label was similar to that which Elliott had sold for the past twenty years. The label probably was in use until Elliott's death in 1810.

## Part II: Religious Activities

An important aspect of the personal life of John Elliott, Jr., was his involvement with the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings. As a devout Quaker he believed that:

**JOHN ELLIOTT & SONS,**  
 No. 50, South Front Street, between Chestnut and Walnut Streets,  
 PHILADELPHIA.

SELL BY WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.

Drugs and Medicines,  
 Window and Picture Glass, of all sizes,  
 Paints of all kinds, dry and ground in oil,  
 Linseed Oil & Varnishes,  
 Camel hair Pencils & Brushes,  
 Gold & Silver Leaf,  
 Sand Crucibles

Dye Woods, Black &c.
Logwood & Fustic,
Brazil & Mahogany,
Coppers & Alums.

ALSO,

**LOOKING GLASSES,**  
 Of all sizes, and different patterns.  
 OLD GLASSES NEW QUICKSILVERED AND REFRAMED.

\* \* \* Country Storekeepers supplied on the best terms, for cash or  
 the usual credit.

The label used by John Elliott & Sons, between  
 c. 1804 and c. 1810.

FIGURE 13

tho' the world and all things visible afford no pleasant prospects, yet in the Lords' presence there is Life, and at his right hand fulness of Joy and an abundance of pleasures for evermore to the humble resigned Soul who is so redeemed from the world as to be able to say in sincerity--'whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides Thee' This is the disposition of mind we ought all to labour after tho' it is a great attainment to arrive at such a state as to have no will of our own. 76

He ascribed to the belief that the Lord knows what is best for mankind and it is man's duty to submit to "every dispensation of his Unerring Wisdom." In his charitable works as well as his business life John Elliott practiced the kind of unselfishness required of the Quaker who would "redeem" himself from the world and commit himself "unto the Lord." He was a member of the Meeting for Sufferings, a special group of Friends established in 1756 by the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting as an executive body to represent the Yearly Meeting when it was not in session. The Meeting for Sufferings handled the charitable work of the Friends "in the world." Its members were the most concerned and active members of the Meeting. In 1793 the northwest Indian tribes, including the Iroquois, experienced great difficulty in negotiating a territorial treaty with the new Federal government. At the request of both parties involved, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting appointed five delegates from the Meeting for Sufferings to attend the conferences between the Indians and the government to ensure fair play and to encourage a conciliatory spirit. 77 The five delegates were John Elliott, William Hartshorne, Jacob Lindley, John Parrish, and William Savery. In June, 1793, the delegates sent a letter from Detroit to John Drinker,



a Friend in Philadelphia, who was to relay its contents to the Meeting for Sufferings. Apparently, the men had met at Niagara on May 27, 1793, where they attended several meetings with Friends there and distributed books among them. They journeyed on to Detroit. Here they waited for the Indians of the various tribes to collect at Sandusky, the appointed place for the preliminary conference. In the letter to Drinker the delegates described the Indians as they were passing by on their way to Sandusky and the general situation:

A large body from very remote parts appears to be collecting some of them have expressed themselves in very friendly terms and we hope the interviews we have had will help to open the way in the future progress of the business, which appears to us increasingly important and delicate--The Reports that have prevailed here for some days past of Gen<sup>l</sup> Wayne's Army having moved from Fort Washington to the Miami Plains, nearer to Sandusky, have excited jealousies among the Indians--on the whole our situation is exercising and requires Wisdom and Patience, which it is our united desire we may be favoured with . . . The People here as well as the Officers and Soldiers of the Garrison are very civil and kind to us and appear pleased with the opportunity of information respecting Friends Principles, so that we hope our being here will not be altogether useless, tho' it is trying to be thus detained. 78

Apparently the Friends' mission proved fruitless. The first conference at Sandusky was a failure. The government was willing to buy the Indians' lands, but the Indians were no longer willing to sell. Their hunting grounds were already much reduced and there was little chance for them to move westward. The second conference at Canandaigua resulted in a compromise treaty forced upon the Iroquois because of  
79  
General Anthony Wayne's victory over the Indian coalition. Because

of his involvement with the conferences, Elliott was not in Philadelphia during the yellow fever epidemic of 1793.

In 1796 Elliott became involved with another charitable effort instituted by the Meeting for Sufferings. A number of years earlier in 1790 a group of active London Friends traveling through Germany discovered a body of mystically inclined Pietists living in and around Pymont and Minden, "a simple-hearted seeking people, a seed of God hidden from the World."<sup>80</sup> During this period of Quakerism these small, mystical groups were a special interest of the mystically inclined Friends. In 1794 John Pemberton, Clerk of the Meeting for Sufferings in Philadelphia, journeyed to Holland and Germany with the intention of giving economic aid to these groups. He harbored the hope of converting them to Quakerism. Unfortunately, he died in the course of his ministry at Pymont, Germany,<sup>81</sup> where a small group of mystics had allied themselves with the Friends. Two years later a group of Philadelphia and London Friends--William Savery, David Sands, George Dillwyn, Benjamin Johnson, and William Farrer--on a religious visit to the Continent devised a proposal for the continuation of Pemberton's work in Pymont. In his travel diary Benjamin Johnson recorded a plan designed to benefit a "Number of Women belonging to the Mo: Meeting of Friends at Pymont." Five members of the Meeting of London were appointed trustees of an "Institution," a linen manufactory, created at Pymont to provide the female inhabitants with "constant employment, and better wages than they usually obtain." The London members were to raise £ 50 to reimburse the Friends in Germany and then transfer the management of the institution to Friends in Philadelphia. The men in Pymont proposed that "John Elliott, Thomas

Savery, Samuel Emlen, Jun<sup>r</sup>, and Jacob Johnson, of Philadelphia be  
 82  
 appointed agents for managing the said business."

John Elliott was particularly interested in the cause of women.. This is apparent in his will of 1810 in which he left \$300 to his daughter Hannah "in trust for the use of the Society for the Free Instruction of Female Children." The interest on the \$300 was to go to the Aimwell School. If the Society school should be dissolved, then the \$300 was to be turned over to

the Institution established under the care of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, for Pennsylvania and New Jersey and for the School Education and religious Instruction of youth in one or more Boarding Schools, the Interest thereof to be applied to the Education of young women unable to attain the benefits of that Institution unless unaided by the assistance of others. 83

The Westtown School in Westtown, Pennsylvania, founded in 1799 by the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting was such an institution; it was open to both young men and young women.

During the last years of his father's life, John Elliott, Jr., administered the elder Elliott's estate and provided for his parents' living expenses. 84 When his father died in August, 1791, John Jr., received a \$100 legacy and all of his father's "silvering tools and implements belonging to that business." His brother, Samuel, inherited their father's plantation in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The remainder of the estate went to Elliott's wife, Annabella, to be administered by her and her son John. 85 The death of his father

must have been a great sorrow for the younger John Elliott. Slightly more than a year before John had written the following lines to a friend:

The ties of nature are strong, and it is very desirable to parents to be continued with their tender offspring and near connections as it is likewise to the Church to be favoured with the company of such who have been . . . useful members of society. Therefore it must be occasion sorrow when any of them are removed from The Church Militant but as the Lord only knoweth what is best for us and will undoubtedly do right, it is our duty to submit to every dispensation of his unerring Wisdom and say 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good to him.' 86

Elliott would need to draw upon the strength of these beliefs again in October, 1793, when his eldest son, Isaac, died at the age of eighteen and again in December, 1795, when another son Samuel died at the age of sixteen.

Until his mother's death in October, 1797, Elliott administered her estate and paid for her "boarding and washing" and for "Sundries for Mother's use." In her last illness the family doctor, J. Pfeiffer, attended Mrs. Elliott. She was buried in a mahogany coffin made by the cabinetmaker John Webb. After the final accounting of his parents' estate Elliott found that £ 1193..3..7 $\frac{1}{2}$  remained to be disposed of 87 between himself and his sisters, Annabella Cresson and Mary Gray. A meager collection of household furnishings also remained:

1 Walnut Dressing Table and Candle Screen	£ 2..15..0
1 Mahogany Dressing Glass	1..13..9
1 Do Stand	0..11..3

1 Elbow Windsor Chair and Cushion	0.. 5..0
1 Bed Table -- Brass Shovel and Tongs	0..10..0
6 Pewter Plates and 1 Bason	0..12..0
1 Pine Chest, 1 Oak D <sup>o</sup> and a Closetstool	0..18..0
1 Mattras, 3 of Bed Quilt and Counterpanes	3.. 0..0
6 Blankets, 5 Sheets and 6 Pillow Cases	2..16..3
6 Silver Tea Spoons, a Strainer, and old Buckles	1..12..1
a leather Trunk and Sundries	1.. 8..0
Wearing Apparel	10..18..0
Books	4.. 5..0
	<u>31.. 4..4</u> 88

Mary Gray, who had been living with her mother and brother since 1792, apparently had received the major portion of the household goods belonging to her parents before the inventory was made. The items quoted above evidently were taken by John Elliott, Jr.; similarly described items appear in the inventory of his estate made in 1810.

The list of furniture mentioned above from the estate of John Elliott, Sr., is too fragmentary to say much about the taste of a typical Quaker craftsman. It is possible, however, to thoroughly document the taste of John Elliott, Jr., because a comprehensive inventory of his household goods was taken at the time of his death (Appendix B). His house in Front Street contained an interesting variety of furnishings which were, perhaps, typical of the prosperous Quaker who could afford certain luxuries but was loathe to throw away anything that was still usable. Walnut chairs and old-fashioned chests-of-drawers are mentioned along with expensive high-post bedsteads and hangings, a tall case clock, carpets, china, and 135 ounces of silver.

The first parlor contained the most expensive furnishings.

Hanging in the room were both a pier glass and a sconce glass. There was a carpet on the floor and twelve walnut chairs arranged about the walls. The room must have been used for formal dining and for the service of tea because it contained a dining table, a breakfast table, a tea stand, and a tea chest.

The second parlour (or dining room) had much the same type of furniture as the best parlour, though not so valuable. The most expensive piece of furniture in the room was a "Book Case" valued at \$16.00. In front of this stood a Windsor arm chair (probably the "Elbow Windsor Chair" mentioned in his father's inventory). The most valuable piece of furniture in the Elliott house was a "Clock and Case" appraised at \$30.00. It stood in the entrance hall along with a settee and a bureau.

Elliott's bedroom, probably on the second floor, was lavishly furnished. It contained a high-post bedstead with dimity hangings and matching window curtains, a carpet, a sconce looking glass, a bureau, an easy chair, a walnut arm chair, and six "hair bottom chairs." The second bedroom was also well furnished, with a high-post bedstead with muslin hangings and matching window curtains, a pier glass, a bureau, two dressing tables, three walnut chairs, and an arm chair.

The textiles of the household were listed separately in the inventory. The field bed in the third bedroom was supplied with a set of calico hangings, with matching window curtains; additional bed hangings included a suit of printed linen and a suit of green worsted.

The beds in the house were well supplied with "linnen" sheets of fine quality and expensive blankets, counterpanes, coverlets, and bedspreads. The Elliott's table was set with fine table cloths and napkins when company was expected and with coarse linens at other times. Perhaps the most interesting item in the inventory is "24 yards of pyrmont Linnen " valued at \$.60 a yard. This was cloth made by the "Linen Manufactory at Pyrmont in Germany" established in 1796 by the Friends for the purpose of aiding the female members of the Meeting at Pyrmont.

Elliott owned a large amount of silver and silver plate. The total evaluation of his silver objects was \$190.95, representing  
 89  
 135 ounces. Elliott may have had so much silver because he was related by marriage, and by a life-long friendship, to the Richardsons, Philadelphia's most famous silversmithing family. On November 3, 1810, John Elliott, III, son of John Elliott, Jr., married Mary Richardson, the daughter of Joseph Richardson, Jr., silversmith, and the grand-  
 90  
 daughter of Joseph Richardson, Sr., silversmith.

Elliott owned a plantation near Wilmington, Delaware, called Glenfield. It was here that he died in 1810. The plantation consisted of two farms, both of which produced oats, rye, wheat, corn, potatoes, apples, and hay. In October, 1810, when the estate was appraised there was \$380 worth of produce on the two farms ready for market. In addition, livestock was raised on the North Farm. The "Farm House" at Glenfield was furnished less lavishly than the Elliott's Philadelphia residence. A scone looking glass, breakfast and dining tables, and eight walnut chairs adorned the best parlor. A second

room, probably a dining room, contained dining and breakfast tables and Windsor chairs. There were three bedrooms furnished with low-post bedsteads and inexpensive bureaus and chairs.

The total valuation of goods belonging to Elliott's estate was \$2845. Included in that figure and reflecting Elliott's civic conscience were "1 Share in the Philadelphia Library," five shares in the Schuylkill Bridge, and one share in the "Water Loan,"<sup>91</sup> a loan "to introduce wholesome water from the River Schuylkill by means of steam engines to the center Square and from thence to be distributed through the city."<sup>92</sup> Elliott also had a large amount of money invested in bonds and notes. In 1810 cash assets owed to the estate amounted to \$32,640; \$30,000<sup>93</sup> of that sum had been borrowed by Elliott's sons, John and Daniel. This substantial amount possibly indicates that John and Daniel (Elliott's only surviving sons) bought their father's drug, color, and looking glass business and stock sometime before his death. Since Elliott was living at Glenfield when he died, he probably retired before 1810.

John and Daniel Elliott continued in business at the same address of No. 60 South Front Street. In the 1810 edition of the Philadelphia Directory they are listed as "John and Daniel Elliott,<sup>94</sup> Druggists and Colourmen." They likewise maintained their trade in window glass; several times during 1811 they sold "Boston window glass" to Stephen Girard for use in one of his properties in the Front and Water Street area.<sup>95</sup> The Elliotts were entirely out of the looking glass business by 1821. Daniel died in 1823, at the age of forty-three,



and John continued to run the business as a druggist with their partner and former apprentice, John Carter. The Elliott drug business passed into the hands of Carter in 1830. The firm was still thriving in the early twentieth century as the drug and chemical house of "Carter and Scattergood," the head of the firm being the son of the original  
96  
John Carter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup>John W. Jordan, Colonial Families of Philadelphia (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911), II, p. 1638.

<sup>2</sup>Abraham Ritter, Philadelphia and Her Merchants as Constituted Fifty and Seventy Years Ago (Philadelphia, 1860), p. 173.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia), June 19, 1760. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>5</sup>Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser (Philadelphia), September 12, 1768. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., May 16, 1768.

<sup>7</sup>Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser (Philadelphia), October 20, 1768. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware; Pennsylvania Chronicle, November 28, 1768; Pennsylvania Gazette, January 19, 1769.

<sup>8</sup>Pennsylvania Chronicle, April 3, 1769.

<sup>9</sup>Nicholas B. Wainwright, Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1964), p. 35.

<sup>10</sup>Pennsylvania Chronicle, September 5, 1768.

<sup>11</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, August 15, 1771.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., November 21, 1768.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., January 19, 1769.

<sup>14</sup>William Wade Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of Quaker Genealogy (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1938), II, p. 514.

<sup>15</sup>Jordan, p. 1638.

<sup>16</sup>Hinshaw, p. 514.

- <sup>17</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, August 15, 1771.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid., July 14, 1784.
- <sup>19</sup>Hinshaw, p. 514.
- <sup>20</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, August 15, 1771.
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1768.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., March 24, 1768.
- <sup>23</sup>Pennsylvania Chronicle, May 3, 1773.
- <sup>24</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, December 15, 1768.
- <sup>25</sup>C.J.S. Thompson, The Mystery and Art of the Apothecary (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1929), pp. 226-35.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 248.
- <sup>27</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, March 23, 1758.
- <sup>28</sup>Arthur Meier Schlesinger, The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1957), pp. 96, 128-30.
- <sup>29</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, April 3, 1769.
- <sup>30</sup>Schlesinger, p. 192.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, August 15, 1771.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., January 5, 1774.
- <sup>34</sup>Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection. The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum (Winterthur, Delaware), Receipt Book of Benjamin Randolph (1767-76) MS, p. 212. Cited hereafter as DMMC.
- <sup>35</sup>Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Joseph Carson Receipt Book (1778-83) MS, Vol. II. Cited hereafter as HSP.
- <sup>36</sup>American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Girard Papers, Microfilm Series II, Reel 466. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goyne Evans.
- <sup>37</sup>HSP, Receipt Book of Joel and Nathan Zane (1761-74) MS.

<sup>38</sup>Municipal Archives of Philadelphia, City Archives, Constable Return Duplicate, City (1775) MS. Cited hereafter as CA.

<sup>39</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, July 14, 1784, and September 21, 1785.

<sup>40</sup>Alfred Coxe Prime, "John Elliott, Cabinetmaker and Looking-Glass Maker," The Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin, XIX (April, 1924), p. 137.

<sup>41</sup>CA, Tax Assessors Ledger, Walnut Ward (1785-89), (1791-99) MS.

<sup>42</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, July 14, 1784.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Municipal Archives of Philadelphia, Office of the Register of Wills, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791. Cited hereafter as ORW.

<sup>46</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, September 21, 1785, and October 26, 1785.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., March 15, 1786.

<sup>48</sup>DMMC, Ledger of Samuel Wetherill and Sons (1777-88), Microfilm-187.

<sup>49</sup>Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College (Swarthmore, Pennsylvania), Account Book of John Ferris (1778-86) MS. Cited hereafter as FHL.

<sup>50</sup>American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Girard Papers, Microfilm Series II, Reel 165. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goyne Evans.

<sup>51</sup>HSP, Receipt Book of Robert Blackwell (1783-92) MS.

<sup>52</sup>Federal Gazette (Philadelphia), August 30, 1793. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>53</sup>William Delany and the two firms of Betton and Harrison and Goldthwait and Baldwin advertised Dr. Rush's powders in the Federal Gazette throughout September, 1793.

<sup>54</sup>Federal Gazette, September 6, 1798.

<sup>55</sup>Dr. Amos Gregg was referred to with this title in his advertisements in the Pennsylvania Gazette during June, 1793.

<sup>56</sup>Thompson, pp. 278-80.

<sup>57</sup>FHL, Letter from John Elliott, Jr., to Joseph Thornton at Byberry (1790) MS, James Thornton MSS.

<sup>58</sup>Federal Gazette, April 4, 1794.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1793.

<sup>60</sup>HSP, John Harrison Daybook (1800-01) MS.

<sup>61</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, April 5, 1786.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., November 2, 1785.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., September 12, 1784.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., October 24, 1787.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., June 3, 1786.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., June 3, 1789.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., various times throughout April, 1793.

<sup>68</sup>CA, Tax Assessors Ledger, Walnut Ward (1785-89), (1791-99) MS.

<sup>69</sup>Jordan, p. 1638.

<sup>70</sup>Capt. John Macpherson, Macpherson's Directory for the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1785).

<sup>71</sup>Clement Biddle, The Philadelphia Directory (Philadelphia: James R. Johnson, 1791).

<sup>72</sup>The looking glass bearing this label is in the collection of Mrs. T. Van C. Phillips.

<sup>73</sup>Thomas Stephens, Stephens' Philadelphia Directory for 1796 (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1796).

<sup>74</sup>The looking glass bearing this label is in the collection of Mr. Samuel A. Cousins.

<sup>75</sup>James Robinson, The Philadelphia Directory for 1804 (Philadelphia: John H. Oswald, 1804).

<sup>76</sup>FHL, Letter from John Elliott, Jr., to Joseph Thornton at Byberry (1790) MS, James Thornton MSS.

<sup>77</sup>Elbert Russell, The History of Quakerism (New York: Macmillan Company, 1943), p. 256.

- <sup>78</sup>FHL, Deputation of Friends to John Drinker (1793) MS.
- <sup>79</sup>Russell, p. 256.
- <sup>80</sup>Rufus M. Jones, The Later Periods of Quakerism (London: Macmillan and Company, 1921), I, pp. 237-38.
- <sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 29.
- <sup>82</sup>DMMC, Travel Diary of Benjamin Johnson (1796-97) MS.
- <sup>83</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Vol.3, p. 247, No. 103 of 1810.
- <sup>84</sup>ORW, Estate of John Elliott in Account with John Elliott, Jr., Executor, May 21, 1798.
- <sup>85</sup>ORW, Will of John Elliott, Book W, p. 199, No. 120 of 1791.
- <sup>86</sup>FHL, Letter from John Elliott, Jr., to Joseph Thornton at Byberry (1790) MS, James Thornton MSS.
- <sup>87</sup>ORW, Estate of John Elliott in Account with John Elliott, Jr., Executor, May 21, 1798.
- <sup>88</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>89</sup>DMMC, Inventory, Estate of John Elliott, Philadelphia (1810)MS.
- <sup>90</sup>Hinshaw, p. 514.
- <sup>91</sup>DMMC, Inventory, Estate of John Elliott, Philadelphia (1810) MS.
- <sup>92</sup>"Notes and Queries," Pennsylvania Magazine, XL (1916), p. 116.
- <sup>93</sup>DMMC, Inventory, Estate of John Elliott, Philadelphia (1810) MS.
- <sup>94</sup>James Robinson, The Philadelphia Directory, for 1810 (Philadelphia: William Woodhouse, 1810).
- <sup>95</sup>American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia) Girard Papers, Microfilm Series II, Reel 212. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goyne Evans.
- <sup>96</sup>Jordan, p. 1637.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LOOKING GLASS TRADE IN PHILADELPHIA, 1755-1810

#### Part I: The Dealers

John Elliott, Sr., was one of the few tradesmen who specialized in selling looking glasses in Philadelphia before 1766. His first serious competition came from the partners Nicholas Bernard and Martin Jugiez, who began advertising their looking glass store in the Philadelphia newspapers in October, 1766.

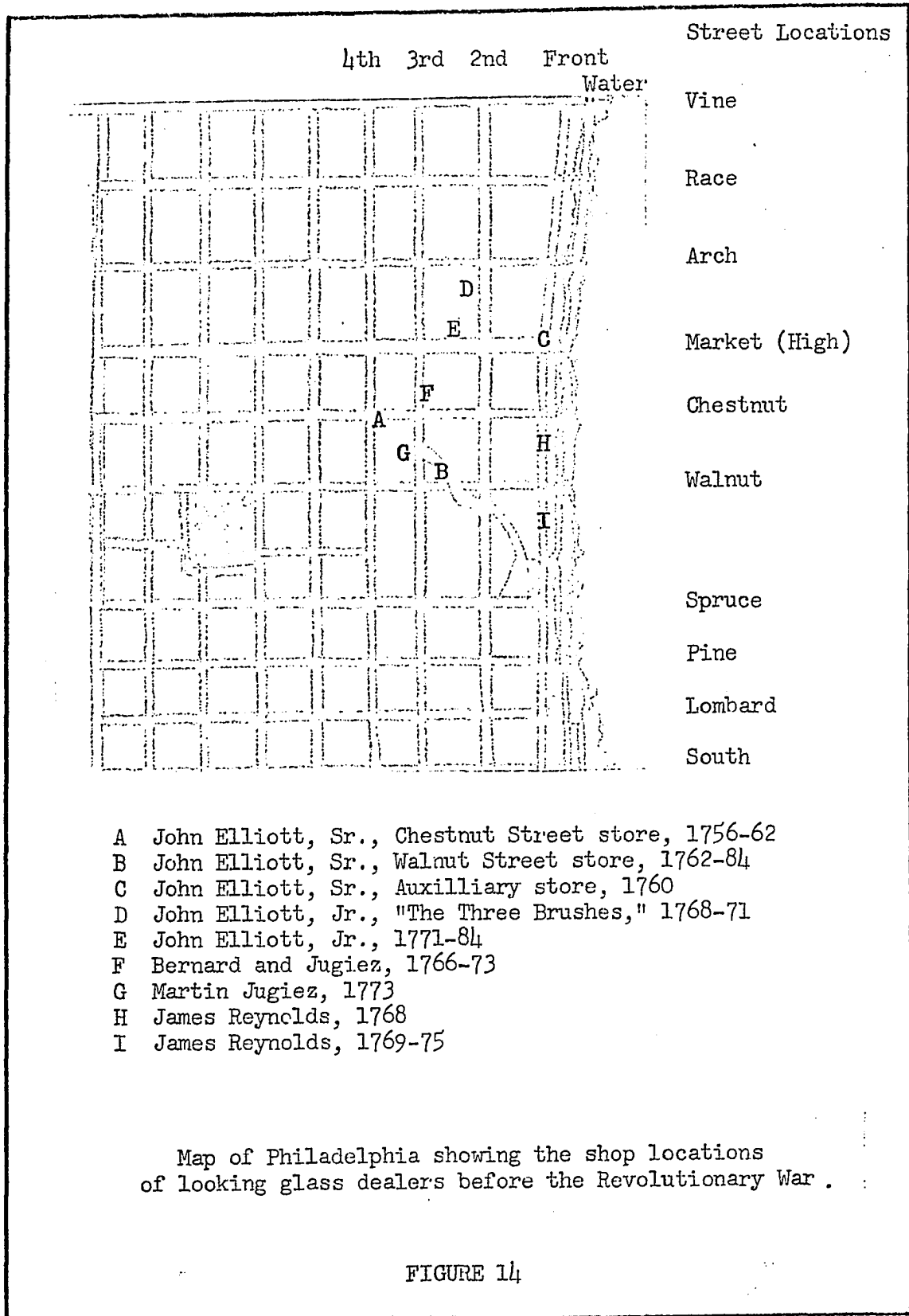
Bernard and Jugiez actually had commenced business in Philadelphia sometime before April, 1766, when they advertised a stock of looking glasses at their "Looking Glass Store in Walnut-Street, between Front and Second-Streets, Philadelphia" in the South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal.<sup>1</sup> This advertisement indicates either that the partners previously were in business in Charleston or that they hoped to sell looking glasses to Charleston merchants buying goods in Philadelphia. They did not remain in Walnut Street long; by October ninth of the same year they had changed their location to the corner of Dock and Third Streets. Bernard and Jugiez were primarily "Carvers and Gilders," who carried a "neat assortment of Looking-glasses, Sconces,<sup>2</sup> Chimney Pieces and Girandols" as a sideline to augment their income.

Within a year Elliott had another competitor in the looking glass business. Sometime before August, 1767, James Reynolds opened his looking glass store "on the Bank side of Front-street, between Walnut and Chestnut-Streets." By the end of August he had given notice in the Pennsylvania Gazette that he had "imported in the Britannia, Capt. Jeffries, from London, a neat and general assortment of Looking-Glasses." He likewise advertised painter's supplies and informed the public that he expected "by Cpt. Egdon, a much larger Quantity of Glasses . . . ." <sup>3</sup>

Reynolds concentrated his activities in the same branches of the looking glass business as Elliott. In addition, he pursued the craft of carver and gilder and sold paper hangings and papier mâché ornaments. Reynolds advertised regularly in the Philadelphia newspapers before and after the Revolutionary War. In December, 1768, he announced a change in location from "between Walnut and Chestnut Streets in Front-Street, to nearly opposite the London Coffee-House, in Front Street." <sup>4</sup> He remained at this address until about 1785 (Fig. 14).

Both Reynolds and the partners Bernard and Jugiez pursued the crafts of carving and gilding as their primary vocation. In 1770 when Samuel Powel decorated his new home in Third Street he employed Reynolds, Bernard and Jugiez, and Hercules Courtenay to do interior carving work. Powel bought picture frames and girandoles from Reynolds and engaged him to repair a looking glass. <sup>5</sup> Powel's neighbor John Cadwalader chose Reynolds to supply looking glasses for his new house in Second Street. On December 5, 1770, Reynolds billed Cadwalader for an assortment of looking glasses and more than 500 yards of carved moldings:





To a Glass 40:22 in a Carv'd Burnish Gold frame	£ 26.. 0..0
To an Oval D <sup>o</sup> 34:24 Carv'd and Burnish Gold D <sup>o</sup>	21..10..0
To a Pier Glass 36:19 h <sup>d</sup> 13 party Gold	10..10..0
To an Oval D <sup>o</sup> 30:22 Carv'd and Burnish Gold frame	16.. 0..0
To 269 y <sup>ds</sup> Border (Palmyra Scrawl) @ 1..6	20.. 3..6
To 270 y <sup>ds</sup> Border (Leaf & Reed) @ 1	13..10..2

In January of the following year Reynolds added £ 3 to the bill for carving and gilding a dressing glass and in March £ 5<sup>4</sup> for three "½ Length Picture frames in Burnish Gold." Cadwalader's total bill from Reynolds amounted to £ 173..14..1; his bill from Elliott for two looking glasses, received at the same time, was a mere £ 6..17..0.

Still another carver and gilder set up shop in Philadelphia in 1773. Gabriel Valois "from Paris, late from London" advertised in September of that year that he made and sold "girandoles and gilt borders for rooms, of a new composition, in imitation of ore moulu . . . ." He likewise made "looking-glass and picture frames" and regilded old ones.

In March of the same year Martin Jugiez advertised in the Gazette that he made "frames of any kind, to come as nearly as cheap as can be imported . . . ." This phrase provides a key to understanding the looking glass business in Philadelphia before the War. The expensive part of a looking glass was the glass plate and not the frame. Although several glass manufactories were established in Philadelphia between the years 1769 and 1772, they produced only window and bottle glass. The manufacture of looking glass plates was an expensive and complicated procedure. It involved blowing or casting the plate, grinding, polishing, and diamond-cutting, and finally,

silvering the plate to create a reflecting surface. The following description of preparing looking glass plates, written by Robert W. Symonds, explains the processes in detail:

The first operation was that of grinding which gave both sides of the glass an even surface. This was accomplished by laying the rough plate on to a table fitted with a top composed of a very fine grained 'free-stone.' To make the plate secure, it was bedded on to the stone top either in plaster of Paris or lime. Another rough plate, about half the size of the first plate, [was] taken and cemented to a wooden plank. This second plate [was] laid on to the face of the bedded plate. A Stone weight [was] placed on it, so that, when it [was] moved backwards and forwards over the surface of the plate beneath, the surfaces of both plates [would] be worn even by attrition. In order to facilitate the grinding of large plates, the upper plate was fixed to a wheel which was pushed and pulled alternately and sometimes turned round by the workmen operating it.

This process of grinding was assisted by water and sands of varying fineness. Finer sand was applied as the grinding proceeded, until powder or salt was used. As the upper plate became smooth, it was renewed by others which took its place. Small plates were ground by hand; the stone which loaded the upper plate having wooden handles affixed to its four corners. The wheel, or mill, as it was called, was used only for plates of a large size. According to a contemporary writer it was 'extremely difficult to bring the Glass to an exact Plainness,' and those plates which were not of sufficient thickness to allow of proper grinding, as well as those subject to warp, were unsatisfactory because they did not give a true reflection.

After the plate had been ground to an even surface, it still had the appearance of a piece of slate. It was then necessary for it to be polished. This operation was performed in the following manner: the glass was first bedded in plaster of Paris on a stone table top, to prevent it shifting, and the polishing was done by a small wooden block with handles at each end, the under side being covered with coarse woolen cloth. The ingredients used in polishing were

'Emery to take out the Scratches, Stobs and Bloaches:  
Then Tripple (which is Rust of old Iron) for clearing  
the Grinder's Ground: This is called Black-lapping.  
Afterwards white Putty is used, which is the Polisher's  
Finishing, and is called White-lapping.'

In order to assist the workman in the labour of polishing, the block was attached to a strong hoop of yew which was fixed to a wooden structure suspended from the ceiling. This hoop acted

as a spring and brought the block back to the same position, facilitating the action of the workman's arm. The result of the polishing was to give the glass a high lustrous surface.

The next and final process was the silvering or foliating of the plate. The following is a contemporary account of how this was carried out:

'The Plates being polished, a thin blotting Paper is spread on a Table, and sprinkled with fine Chalk; and this done, over the Paper is laid a thin Lamina, or Leaf or Foil, on which is poured Quicksilver, which is to be equally distributed over the Leaf, with a Hare's Foot, or Cotton. Over the Leaf is laid a clean Paper, and over that the Glass Plate. With the left Hand the Glass-Plate is pressed down, and with the Right the Paper is gently drawn out; which done, the Plate is covered with a thicker Paper, and loaded with a greater Weight, that the superfluous Quicksilver may be driven out, and the Foil adhere more closely to the Glass. When it is dried, the Weight is removed, and the Looking-Glass is complete.'<sup>9</sup>

In England rough glass plates were manufactured in quantity and sold to glass-grinders who ground, polished, silvered, and sometimes framed them. Frequently, the glass-grinders sold the silvered plates to carvers and gilders or cabinetmakers for framing. In Thomas Mortimer's Universal Director of 1763 there are thirteen glass-grinders<sup>10</sup> listed for London. Obviously, a glass-grinder in Philadelphia could not produce finished looking glass plates nearly as cheaply as a London craftsman, who could purchase glass plates directly from large established glass works in London. Neither was it economical for the colonial craftsman to import silvered looking glass plates and make the frame himself. The cost of labor was much less in London than in the Colonies in the mid-eighteenth century. Often the plates were prepared and framed in the same shop for exportation. Martin Jugiez admitted in 1773 that he could not make a complete looking glass (probably carved and gilt) as cheaply as it could be imported. When

the Townshend duties were in effect (from November, 1767, to March, 1779), a Philadelphia looking glass dealer paid no duty on the glass, if he imported both looking glass and frame. If he imported only the looking glass plate, he was required to pay a high duty on it. A fascinating correspondence between the Commissioner of His Majesty's Customs in America and John Swift, the Collector of Customs at the Custom House in Philadelphia, still exists among the Custom House Papers in Philadelphia. On February 13, 1768, John Swift wrote to the Commissioner in Boston regarding a problem involving duties on glass:

We have here two London vessels now discharging at this Port in which there are small quantities of Goods Subject to Duty Vizt. Glass, Paper, and Painters' Colours by the late Act. Innumerable difficulties attend collecting these Duties, some of which we beg to lay before you--one gentleman has seven cases of Looking Glasses, neither the Cockets <sup>11</sup> nor the Invoices give an account of the weight and he refuses to take the plates out of the Frames that they may be weigh'd, and neither of the Waiters know how to do it so that we have no way of finding out the weight but by guessing at it.

On March thirtieth the Commissioner replied:

In answer to your Letters of the 23d January and 13th February, we are to acquaint you that you are not to receive the Duties on Glass wrought into any kind of manufactory, such as Looking Glasses, Hour Glasses in the Frames, and Glass fixed in Coaches, Chariots, &c.<sup>12</sup>

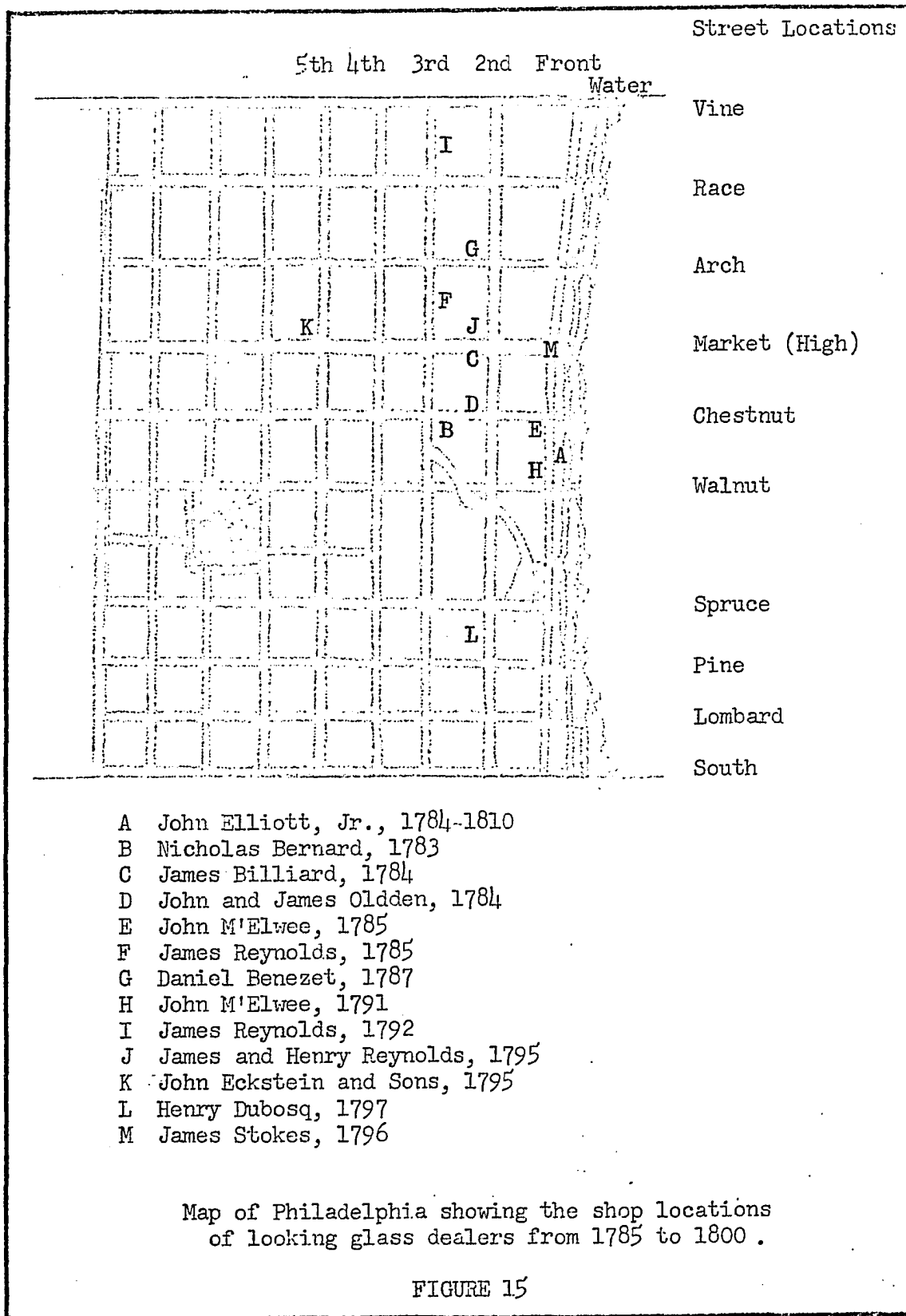
English legislators usually had sound economic reasons for their policies. The fact that looking glasses in frames were exempt from the Townshend duties indicates that Parliament did not want to discourage colonial importation of any manufactured goods, including specialty items.

There are no known advertisements by looking glass dealers in the Philadelphia newspapers during the Revolutionary War. The earliest one known after the war is that of Nicholas Bernard in the Gazette on March 5, 1783. In it he indicated that his looking glass store was still located at Dock and Third Streets. <sup>13</sup> In May, 1784, James Reynolds began to advertise again, but he was now at a different address, "The Golden Boy, near the Bunch of Grapes Tavern in Third Street." Since Reynolds could now legally import goods from places other than London, he advertised "a great variety of English, French, and Dutch Looking-<sup>14</sup> Glasses." Reynolds was not the only importer who took advantage of the American merchant's new freedom of the seas. J. Billiard advertising in the Pennsylvania Packet later that month announced that he had for sale "at the French Store, Second Street between Chesnut and Market-Streets" goods "just received from France." <sup>15</sup> Four days later John and James Oldden advertised their looking glass store "in Second Street, eight doors below Market Street." They had on hand "large <sup>16</sup> elegant oval looking glasses" imported from London and Bristol.

In July, 1784, the first postwar advertisement of John Elliott, Jr., appeared in the Gazette. He had now assumed the trade of his father, notifying the public that he had for sale a selection of imported looking glasses. He continued to carry a supply of brushes and painter's colors. Another looking glass dealer John M'Elwee set up shop in 1785 just a few doors away from Elliott in Front Street. He must have proved a formidable competitor, for he stocked the same line <sup>17</sup> of goods as Elliott.

The last important addition to the group of looking glass dealers in Philadelphia in the 1780's was Daniel Benezet. Benezet and his brother John had advertised general merchandise before the war at their store on the corner of Arch and Second Streets. In fact, in September, 1771, their advertisement ran the entire length of the first page of the Pennsylvania Gazette. After the war Benezet's large stock of goods often included "German" or "Dutch" looking glasses. Under the heading "Dutch Scythes and German Straw Knives" Benezet advertised a long list of goods, including threads, fabrics, boxes of Dresden china cups and saucers, temple spectacles, pewter table and tea spoons, buttons, pig brass, German looking glasses, and sheet brass during the spring and summer months of 1786-1788. The "German looking glasses" probably were small, inexpensive items; on the list of goods they are mentioned between "pig brass" and "sheet brass." Between October, 1787, and April, 1789, Benezet ran another advertisement with the same format shifting his proper adjectives to read: "German Scythes and Straw Knives" and "Dutch looking glasses." Undoubtedly, he was using the terms "Dutch" and "German" interchangeably.

Throughout the late 1780's and 1790's the major looking glass dealers in Philadelphia were John Elliott, Jr., James Reynolds, John and James Oldden, John M'Elwee, James Stokes, and the sons of James Reynolds--James and Henry (Fig.15). Although Elliott ceased advertising in March, 1786, his competitors advertised regularly until 1800.





## Part II: Looking Glass Styles and Provenances

A large variety of looking glasses were available to Philadelphians before the Revolutionary War. John Elliott, James Reynolds, and the partners Bernard and Jugiez imported looking glasses that ranged in style from the very plain to the highly ornamental. In February, 1768, for example, Reynolds advertised that he had just received from London "a fresh supply of very genteel, neat and plain, looking glasses."<sup>22</sup> His stock for the following October included a large assortment of elaborate looking glasses in "carved and white" or "carved and gilt frames" and in styles described as "architectural,"<sup>23</sup> "Pediment," and "mock Pediment." Elliott, likewise, carried a variety of looking glass styles priced from "One Shilling to Fifteen Pounds and upwards per glass."<sup>29</sup> One of his larger importations, that of October, 1768, consisted of "common sconces and piers, plain and with gilding, pediment sconces and piers, japanned sconces, gilt and white carved ditto. . . ."<sup>25</sup>

The looking glasses imported by the firm of Bernard and Jugiez seem to have been more fashionable than those generally carried by Elliott. The partners advertised "Girandols" for sale as early as October, 1766, and again in February, 1769. At this time they also offered "paper mache for Ceilings or for bordering rooms, plain or gilt."<sup>26</sup> They could have used these same papier mâché ornaments to decorate the carved and gilt looking glasses made in their shop; papier mâché was molded and glued to the frame to produce a relief effect and then gilded to simulate carving. Its use is associated

with "Adam" style looking glass and picture frames. Some form of applied ornament was also used by Gabriel Valois, perhaps the most stylish looking glass dealer in Philadelphia before the war. He informed the public in September, 1773, that he made and sold "girandoles and gilt borders for rooms, of a new composition, in imitation of ore moulu . . . ." He made looking glass and picture frames and regilded old ones.<sup>27</sup> Valois's familiarity with the use of ormolu indicates that he was aware of the latest English and French tastes in household furnishings.

Many of the looking glasses that James Reynolds sold were in the fashionable, Adam-influenced style. In 1770, as previously noted, he sold to John Cadwalader two expensive oval looking glasses in "Carv'd and Burnish Gold" frames. Cadwalader also purchased carved moldings in "Palmyra Scrowl" and "Leaf and Reed" patterns as borders for his formal rooms. The terms used to describe these moldings indicate that Adam's neo-classical designs were known in Philadelphia at this time. A few years later in 1775 Reynolds supplied Joseph Pemberton with a pair of carved and white oval looking glasses for<sup>28</sup> £ 20. Although Reynolds undoubtedly imported his looking glasses in the Adam style, there is no evidence to indicate that John Elliott, Sr., ever sold such glasses.

Large numbers of looking glasses in the Adam-Hepplewhite style in rectangular or oval gilded frames with graceful urns and festoons of wire and composition ornament were imported into Philadelphia after the War. In the January 29, 1784, issue of the Pennsylvania Packet

the firm of Willing, Morris, and Stanwick advertised that they would give eight dollars reward for the recovery of an Adam-style looking glass stolen out of one of their stores. The glass was described as being "large . . . with a carved and gilt oval frame, a canopy top, with festoons on the sides, and a small medallion with a blue ground in the middle." Also missing were "2 Oval Swinging Glasses with Mahogany frames and black and white string edges." <sup>29</sup> James Reynolds, never one to be behind the times, informed the public in June, 1785, that he had just received from London "a general assortment of Looking-Glasses, oval and square, in elegant carved and gilt Frames with Girandoles to match." <sup>30</sup> The firm of John and James Oldden was another that sold fashionable looking glasses. They advertised importations from London, including "large elegant oval looking glasses" in May, <sup>31</sup> 1784. In the same year both James Reynolds and James Billiard offered French looking glasses "in gilt mahogany and walnut frames." <sup>32</sup> John M'Elwee's stock of looking glasses in the Adam-Hepplewhite style in March, 1793, included looking glasses in gilt frames "elegantly ornamented in the English and French stile" and a "small Invoice of Sconces and Girandoles." <sup>33</sup> He may also have made simple looking glasses in his shop, for he notified the public in May, 1800, that he was retiring from the looking glass business and had for sale "a quantity of Composition Ornament and Moulds of every Pattern necessary for the Looking-Glass Business." <sup>34</sup> The molds probably were for composition or papier mâché ornaments of the kind used on gilded frames.

Philadelphians whose taste was less cultivated than that of customers like the Cadwaladers or the Powels could purchase looking

glasses "in ornamented and plain Mahogany frames of all the usual Sizes"  
 35  
 from James Reynolds. In 1771, just a year after supplying Cadwalader  
 with elegant carved and gilt looking glasses, Reynolds received two  
 cases of "Walnut Sconces cont<sup>g</sup> Glasses" ordered for him by William  
 Barrell, a merchant of Philadelphia, from the firm of Hayley and Hopkins,  
 factors of London. A description of the looking glasses is noted in  
 Barrell's invoice book:

#10	A case q <sup>t</sup>		
	2 Walnut Scences Gilt Edge & Shell 28:16	30/6	£ 3.. 1..0
	3 d <sup>o</sup> Plain 24:14	21/	3.. 3..0
	1 d <sup>o</sup> Edge & Shell 24:13		1.. 2..9
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Plain 20-1/2:12-1/2	16/9	1..13..6
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Edge & Shell 21:12	19/	1..18..0
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Edge only 21:12	17/9	1..15..6
	2-1/2 y <sup>ds</sup> flannel		4..6
	Case		8..6
			<u>13.. 6..9</u>
#11	A case q <sup>t</sup>		
	4 Walnut Scences Gilt Edge & Shell 17:11		2..17..0
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Edge only 16:10		1.. 2..6
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Plain 16:10		1.. 0..6
	2 d <sup>o</sup> do 14:10		0..18..0
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Edge & Shell 14:9		1.. 0..6
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Plain 14:9		0..16..6
	2 d <sup>o</sup> Edge only 12:8		0..15..0
	1-1/4 y <sup>d</sup> flannel		2..6
	Case		5..6
			<u>£8..18..0</u> 36

The adjective "Gilt Edge & Shell" indicates that these glasses were  
 similar to those sold by John Elliott, Sr. Reynold's stock of pier  
 glasses also included designs in a plain style; in 1775 he sold "a  
 large Maho<sup>y</sup> Pier Glass" to Joseph Pemberton for £ 15.<sup>37</sup> Presumably the  
 price reflects the size rather than any considerable ornamentation.

John M'Elwee, like Reynolds, did not limit his business to

fashionable items such as the "assortment of elegant French Glasses" he advertised in December, 1793. At this time he also offered a "very great variety of English glasses in gilded, ornamented, mahogany and plain frames, as usual."<sup>38</sup> John and James Oldden sold a large variety of looking glasses for every taste and pocketbook, as well. They informed the public in October, 1792, that they had just received "a large and general assortment of gilt ornamented and plain mahogany frame" looking glasses.<sup>39</sup>

The movement toward developing an American manufacture of looking glasses began in the 1790's. Actually, as early as May, 1790, John M'Elwee had advertised that he had on hand "a quantity of elegantly gilt, black and gilt, and white, carved and plain moldings, of different sizes, for looking glass and picture frames."<sup>40</sup> He apparently made frames to order from his stock of moldings. Thus, any "mechanic" with a supply of moldings, silvered looking glass plates, and a few mitering tools could put together simple looking glasses and advertise that they were "made" in his shop. The problem, however, was obtaining silvered plates.

It had not been economically feasible for colonial craftsmen to import unframed glass plates before the war. By the 1790's, however, several Philadelphia tradesmen advertised looking glass plates for sale imported from England, France, and Italy. In March, 1793, John M'Elwee informed the public that he had for sale "looking Glass and coach plates" ranging in size from "10x8 to 50x28."<sup>41</sup> The firm of Wells and

Morris advertised in the January 21, 1795, issue of the Pennsylvania Packet that they had on hand "looking Glass plates . . . 10x17, 12x18, 13x20, 13x22, 14x24" in their store at No. 135 Market Street. A few months later James and Henry Reynolds offered "Looking Glass Plates for sale, by the box or smaller quantity," and at the same time John Eckstein and Sons advertised that at their Looking Glass Warehouse, No. 323 Market Street, they had for sale "a large and elegant assortment of looking glasses in frames, and looking glass plates of all sizes and dimensions."

The last specific mention in the Philadelphia newspapers of looking glasses imported from England or Europe appears in an advertisement of John M'Elwee dated July 10, 1795. After this date the majority of dealers in Philadelphia sold American-made looking glasses. With silvered plates readily available Philadelphia carvers and gilders and cabinetmakers could produce large numbers of finished looking glasses. It is difficult to determine, however, which dealers actually made looking glasses and which merely sold glasses bought from other manufacturers.

James and Henry Reynolds and John Elliott, Jr., probably made the looking glasses sold in their shops. The Reynolds brothers advertised in November, 1794, that they would make "on the shortest notice . . . Looking Glasses, Gerandols, Stove Patterns and Picture Frames." John Elliott, Jr., is listed in the 1796 edition of the Philadelphia Directory as a "Looking-Glass Manufacturer," and Abraham Ritter in his book Philadelphia and Her Merchants as Constituted Fifty

and Seventy Years Ago wrote that Elliott was noted for "making and preparing looking-glasses for the accomodation of the public in general."<sup>48</sup> All of the known looking glasses labeled by Elliott are made of northeastern American white pine or of American white cedar. Two glasses labeled by James and Henry Reynolds and made after their move in 1795 to No. 56 Market Street are, likewise, made of American white pine.

James Stokes also attached his label to looking glasses made of this American wood,<sup>49</sup> but there is no real evidence that he actually made the items he sold. His advertisements and labels state only that he stocked looking glasses, hardware, and dry goods. John M'Elwee falls into the same category. As a general tradesman he carried a line of goods similar to those of Elliott. His advertisements indicate that he framed paintings and prints, as well as looking glasses. The glass frames, however, seem to have been confined to the simple plain or gilt molded variety used in making picture frames.

There were several looking glass manufacturers in Philadelphia prepared to supply the needs of tradesmen like Stokes and M'Elwee. The firm of John Eckstein and Sons notified the public in November, 1795, that they would "receive and execute orders on frames for looking glasses, paintings and prints, in the most elegant style, and after the newest fashion, either gilt or plain."<sup>50</sup> The names of two more manufacturers are to be found in the Philadelphia directories for 1796 and 1797; John Heitchereder, "looking-glass frame maker," is listed at "Old 7th Street"<sup>51</sup> while John Alexander, "looking glass frame maker,"

is recorded as residing at 11 Apple Tree Alley. Henry Dubosq advertised his "Looking Glass Manufactory" at No. 456 South Second Street<sup>53</sup> in 1797, and a few months later a "Looking Glass Manufactory" located at No. 197 Market Street offered its products to the public. These included "a large and Elegant Assortment of Looking Glasses in Gilt and Plain Frames, of the newest patterns." The craftsmen employed by the firm likewise performed the services of quicksilvering, polishing, and grinding old plates.<sup>54</sup>

John Elliott, Jr., did not cater to the large and varied market supplied by Reynolds, M'Elwee, and the Olddens. His advertisements of 1784-1786 mention only looking glasses "in plain Mahogany frames"; no other type of looking glass bearing his label has ever been located. James Stokes, in business between 1791 and 1811, apparently traded with the same clientele as Elliott; all of the looking glasses known to bear his label are in plain fretwork frames.

Looking glasses in simple mahogany frames were already old-fashioned when John Elliott, Sr., sold them to Philadelphians before the war. Eminent citizens anxious to imitate the current vogue in London patronized Reynolds or the partners Bernard and Jugiez and obtained from them looking glasses "of the newest patterns." Almost all of Elliott's known customers were Quakers who desired furnishings of "the best sort but plain" and who instinctively patronized a fellow Quaker merchant. "Plain" looking glasses continued to be imported from England until the late 1790's when local manufacturers undertook their fabrication. By 1810, however, simple fretwork looking glasses were



no longer a major item of trade, and the Elliotts retired from the looking glass business soon after the death of John Elliott, Jr., in that year. Although Wayne and Biddle (the successors to James Stokes) and Samuel Kennedy continued to sell plain fretwork looking glasses until about 1822, these glasses were considered extremely old-fashioned at the time. Despite this final waning of popularity, the fretwork style looking glass remained in fashion in Philadelphia longer than in any other American city. The persistence of this "folk" or traditional style for almost seventy years correlates with the lingering preference for Queen Anne and Chippendale style furnishings and the reluctance to accept styling in the "Federal" manner. It is further evidence of the fact that Philadelphia gradually slipped out of the mainstream of cultural development after the Revolutionary War.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup>South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal (Charleston), April 5, 1766. As quoted in Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, Decorative Arts Photographic Collection, Prime Cards File. Cited hereafter as Prime Cards.

<sup>2</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia), October 9, 1766. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., August 27, 1767.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., December 1, 1768.

<sup>5</sup>Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Ledger of [Samuel] Powel, [III] (1760-74) MS. Cited hereafter as HSP.

<sup>6</sup>Nicholas B. Wainwright, Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1964), pp. 35, 46.

<sup>7</sup>Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser (Philadelphia), September 8, 1773. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>8</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, March 24, 1773.

<sup>9</sup>Robert W. Symonds, "English Looking-Glass Plates and their Manufacture," The Connoisseur, XCVIII (July, 1936), pp. 9-11.

<sup>10</sup>Geoffrey Wills, English Looking Glasses (London: Country Life Limited, 1965), p. 63.

<sup>11</sup>"Cockets" refers to the certified documents given to a Colonial merchant as a warrant that his goods had been duly entered and had paid duty. Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. and C. Merriam Company, 1965).

<sup>12</sup>HSP, Custom House Papers (Philadelphia) MSS, Vol. VII, p. 876.

<sup>13</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, March 5, 1783.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1784.

<sup>15</sup>Pennsylvania Packet (Philadelphia), May 22, 1784. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>16</sup>Freemans Journal (Philadelphia), May 26, 1784. As quoted in Prime Cards.

<sup>17</sup>Capt. John Macpherson, Macpherson's Directory for the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1785).

<sup>18</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, April 6, 1769.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., September 19, 1771.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., August 8, 1787, and April 9, 1788.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., October 17, 1787.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., February 18, 1768.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1768.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., March 5, 1761.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., October 20, 1768.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., February 2, 1769.

<sup>27</sup>Pennsylvania Journal, September 8, 1773.

<sup>28</sup>HSP, Bill from James Reynolds to Joseph Pemberton (1775) MS, Pemberton Papers, Vol. XXVII, p. 90.

<sup>29</sup>Pennsylvania Packet, January 29, 1784.

<sup>30</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 15, 1785.

<sup>31</sup>Freemans Journal, May 26, 1784. As quoted in Prime Cards.

<sup>32</sup>Pennsylvania Packet, May 22, 1784; Pennsylvania Gazette, May 12, 1784.

<sup>33</sup>Pennsylvania Packet, March 5, 1793.

<sup>34</sup>Federal Gazette (Philadelphia), May 31, 1800. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>35</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, June 15, 1785.

<sup>36</sup>Nancy Ann Goyne, "Furniture Craftsmen in Philadelphia, 1760-80: Their Role in a Mercantile Society." (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1963).

<sup>37</sup>HSP, Bill from James Reynolds to Joseph Pemberton (1775) MS, Pemberton Papers, Vol. XXVII, p. 90.

<sup>38</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, December 31, 1793.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., October 9, 1792.

<sup>40</sup>Pennsylvania Packet, May 15, 1790.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., March 5, 1793.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., January 21, 1795.

<sup>43</sup>Federal Gazette, August 18, 1795.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., November 10, 1795.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., July 10, 1795.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., November 27, 1794.

<sup>47</sup>Thomas Stephens, Stephens' Philadelphia Directory for 1796 (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1796).

<sup>48</sup>Abraham Ritter, Philadelphia and Her Merchants as Constituted Fifty and Seventy Years Ago (Philadelphia, 1860), p. 173.

<sup>49</sup>Microanalyses of wood samples taken from a large number of labeled looking glasses by Elliott, Reynolds, and Stokes produced these results. The scientific findings corroborate a contemporary statement regarding the use of white pine in looking glass frames: "It [American white pine] receives gilding well, and is therefore selected for looking-glass and picture frames." Andrew Michaux, The North American Sylva (Philadelphia: J. Dobson, 1842), III, p. 162. The observations on the use of American white pine were made c. 1807.

<sup>50</sup>Federal Gazette, November 10, 1795.

<sup>51</sup>Thomas Stephens, Stephens' Philadelphia Directory for 1796 (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1796).

<sup>52</sup>William Stafford, The Philadelphia Directory for 1797 (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1797).

<sup>53</sup>Aurora (Philadelphia), November 11, 1797. As quoted in Prime Cards.

<sup>54</sup>Federal Gazette, July 6, 1798.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LABELED LOOKING GLASSES OF JOHN ELLIOTT, SR. AND JR.

#### Part I: The Origin of the Styles

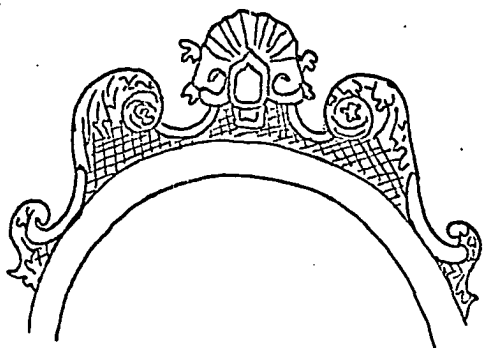
The ancestors of the "plain" fretwork looking glasses popular in Philadelphia between about 1750 and 1810 were the gilt and gesso-decorated looking glasses introduced into England by Daniel Marot in the late seventeenth century. Marot, whose designs were rooted in the French baroque of the court of Louis XIV, was very influential in bringing that style to England. His designs for furniture and looking glasses are characterized by heavy scrolls of "C" and "S" shape interlaced with foliage, festoons and pendants of fruit and flowers, shells, and masks (Fig. 16). Marot became "architect" to King William III and during his reign published several small sets of engraved furniture designs. His works were first published collectively in 1702 under the title Oeuvres du S<sup>r</sup> D. Marot.<sup>1</sup>

The influence of Marot on English looking glass and furniture design persisted well into the reign of George I (1714-1727). At this time, however, only the wealthy could afford to possess looking glasses of sophisticated design. The most popular form was the pier glass, so-called because it was designed to hang on the "pier," or solid

masonry upright between the windows of a room. The reflecting surface in these looking glasses consisted of a vertical rectangular sheet of silvered glass of the largest size the purchaser could afford with an additional smaller piece placed above it. The looking glass frame had narrow side moldings and a deep crest with a central shell, cartouche, mask, or other ornament. The shallow base often echoed the outline of the crest and repeated the central motif. Usually the surface of the frame was covered with gesso, a mixture of finely powdered marble and an adhesive, and then carved in low relief and gilded (Fig. 17).

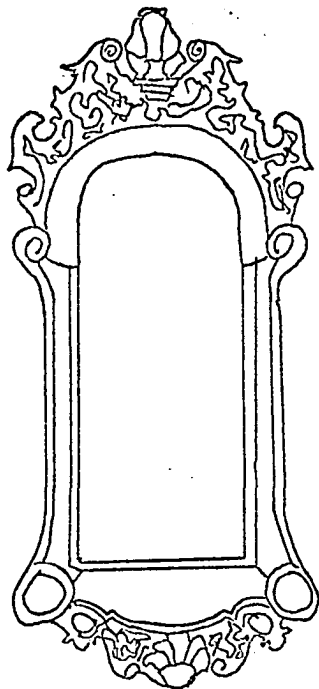
The fashion for looking glasses had grown to such an extent in England by the 1720's that craftsmen introduced a less expensive version of the popular style to capture an even greater market. The frames of these glasses were made of walnut veneered onto a carcass of inexpensive wood. The slight ornamentation consisted of a gilt and gesso molding bordering the glass and, often, a shell or eagle of the same material applied to the crest (Fig. 18). These looking glasses relied for effect on their shaped, or fretwork, outlines and on the interplay between the veneered surfaces and gilt ornament. The use of veneer permitted the production of looking glasses in larger quantities and at less expense to the purchaser than the hand-carved, gilt and gesso variety because the costs of labor and materials were reduced.

The vogue for veneered fretwork looking glasses survived among the style-conscious in England scarcely longer than a decade. By the 1730's the influence of Marot had waned in favor of the "Palladian" designs of Lord Burlington and William Kent. Kent's furniture designs,



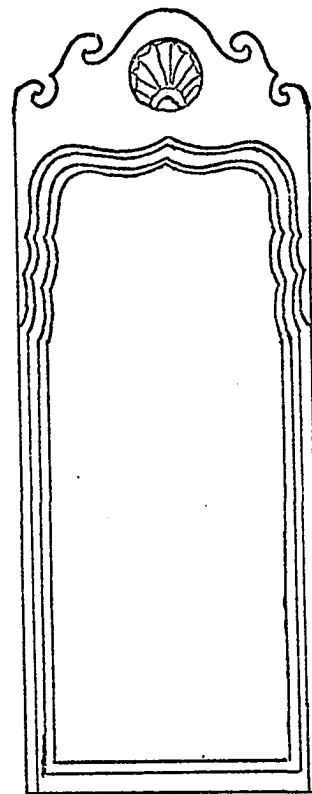
The upper portion of a looking glass designed by Daniel Marot and published in a set of engravings entitled Nouveaux Livre d'Ornements pour L'utille des Sculpteurs et Orfèvres, c. 1700.

FIGURE 16



English pier glass decorated with gilt and gesso; carved with scrolling foliage and shell ornaments. Probably one of a pair of sconces in carved and gilt frames supplied to John Mellor of Erthig in 1720. Collection of Erthig House, Denbighshire, England.

FIGURE 17



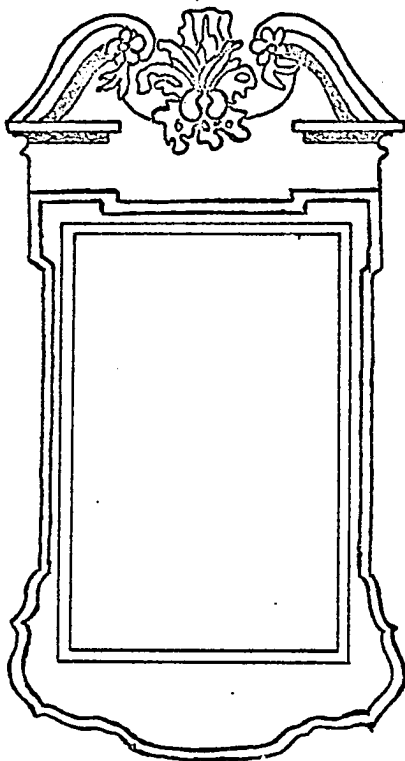
English pier glass in a frame veneered with walnut; gilt and gesso moldings and central shell. c.1725. This drawing and Fig. 17 taken from Geoffrey Wills' English Looking Glasses.

FIGURE 18

published in 1744<sup>2</sup> by John Vardy as Some Designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. William Kent, were copied by a large number of craftsmen in London. Looking glasses designed by Kent and given the appellation "architectural style" have firm outlines and a crest shaped to resemble a classical pediment (Fig. 19). Beginning about 1730 with the popularization of Kent's designs, the Marot-influenced fretwork looking glass became old-fashioned in the centers of sophisticated taste. However, fretwork-style looking glasses continued to be produced in the cities by craftsmen who hoped to appeal to a more conservative, traditional, and less affluent market. Undoubtedly, it was many years before fretwork looking glasses became unfashionable in rural areas of England.

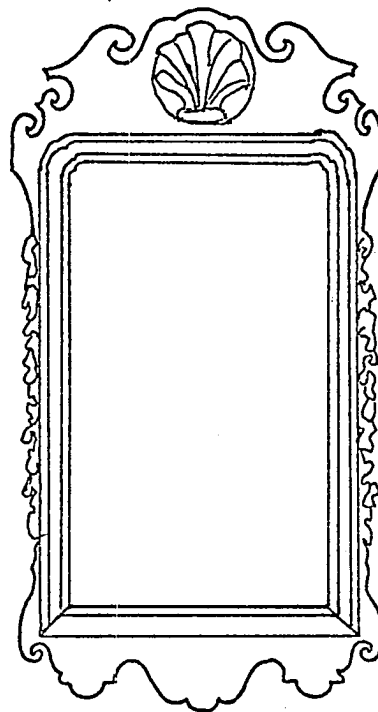
Due to a continuing demand, the production of fretwork looking glasses persisted through several generations of English looking glass makers. The Victoria and Albert Museum dates two fretwork looking glasses in their collection as "about 1750"<sup>3</sup> (Figs. 20 and 21). This places them in the same period as the most whimsical and imaginative of the designs of Matthias Lock, the first London designer to publish designs in the rococo style. The looking glasses do not show any traces of influence from contemporary rococo designs, except possible the leaf-shaped "ears" adopted in place of the earlier scroll form. A looking glass that can be more accurately dated is in the collection of David Stockwell of Wilmington, Delaware. It bears the label of Thomas Aldersey, who worked in London between 1763 and 1779 and is listed in Thomas Mortimer's Universal Director for 1763<sup>4</sup> as a "glass grinder" and "Looking Glass Maker" (Fig. 22). He, undoubtedly, made this looking





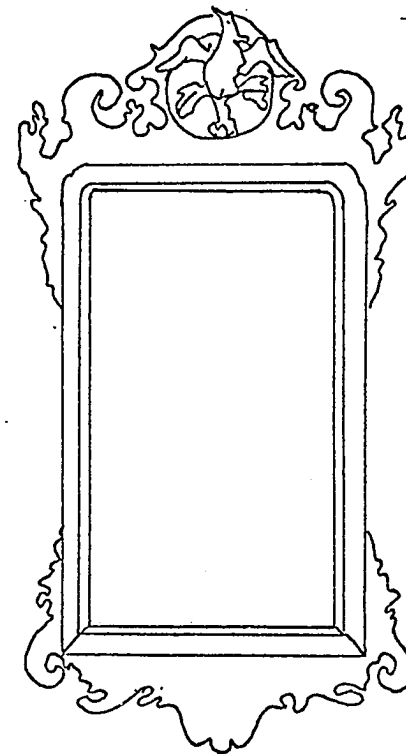
English walnut and gilt pier glass of "architectural" style, c. 1730. Drawing taken from Plate 89, Georgian Furniture, The Victoria and Albert Museum, 1947. This type of looking glass appears on the c. 1741 trade card of William Gwinnell, "Looking-Glass Maker" of London.

FIGURE 19



English pier glass in a frame veneered with mahogany with gilt and gesso moldings and central shell, c. 1750. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Drawing taken from Plate 538, F. Lewis Hinckley, A Directory of Antique Furniture.

FIGURE 20



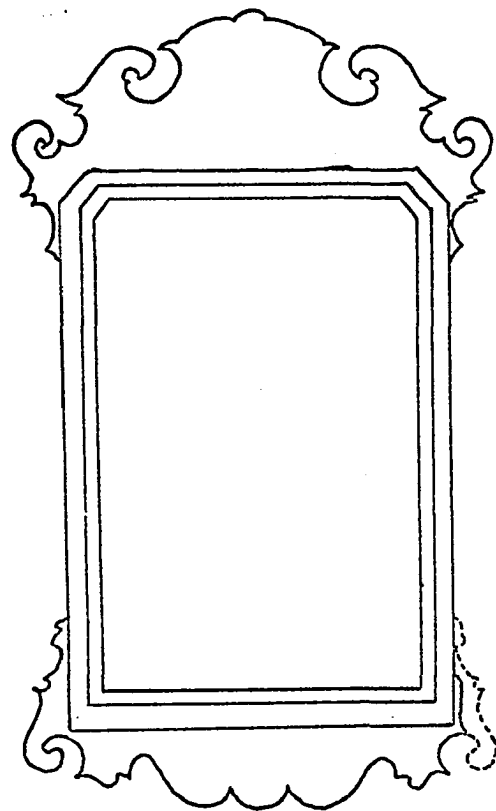
English pier glass in a frame veneered with mahogany, c. 1750. The leaf-shaped ears are similar to those seen on looking glasses labeled by John Elliott, Jr. Drawing taken from Plate 90, Georgian Furniture, The Victoria and Albert Museum, 1947.

FIGURE 21

glass in his shop. Its outline is remarkably similar to that of many of the looking glasses labeled by John Elliott, Sr., indicating a possible source of supply for that importer.

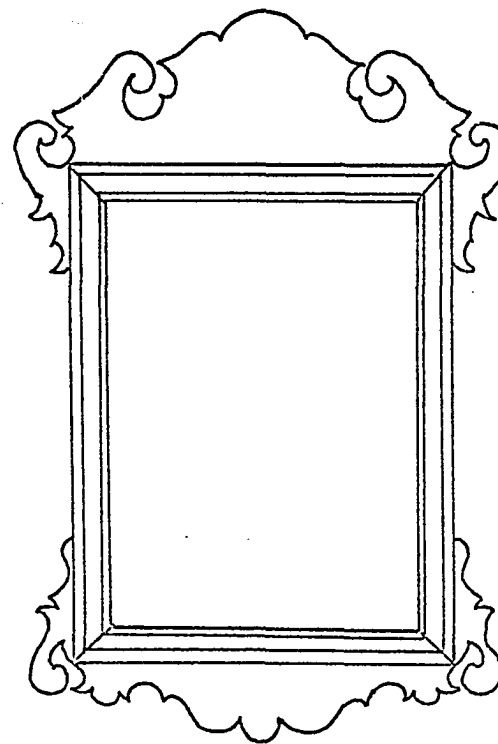
Fretwork-style looking glasses can be documented in England to as late as the end of the eighteenth century. In the collection of David Stockwell are two looking glasses made in London by the firm of George Kemp & Son, who were in business together between 1790 and 1793 (Fig. 23).<sup>5</sup> The illustrated Kemp looking glass is strikingly similar to glasses labeled by the elder Elliott; the second Kemp glass has the leaf-shaped ears so characteristic of late eighteenth-century Philadelphia-made looking glasses, such as those labeled by John Elliott, Jr. Although the work of the Kemps was contemporary with the neo-classical designs of George Hepplewhite and Thomas Sheraton, the fretwork looking glasses made in their shop are almost identical to glasses first made in the 1720's. They bear no trace of influence from the current styles of the 1790's.

Looking glasses very similar to the labeled Aldersey glass were first imported into Philadelphia in large quantities by John Elliott, Sr. Importations continued through 1774, when commerce was curtailed by the Revolutionary War. A small number of fretwork looking glasses probably were made in Philadelphia during the war years; two looking glasses bearing the last Walnut Street label used by John Elliott, Sr., have proven to be made of northeastern American white pine after microscopic examination. Although Elliott had hoped to retire in 1776, he was not able to sell his looking glass business at



Looking glass bearing the label of Thomas Aldersey of London. Aldersey worked successively at three London locations as a glass-grinder and looking glass maker between 1763 and 1779. The address printed on the label is not legible. Spruce wood veneered with mahogany.

FIGURE 22



Looking glass bearing the label of George Kemp & Son of London. The father and son are listed as partners only for the years 1790-93. Spruce wood veneered with mahogany. Both glasses in the collection of David Stockwell, Wilmington Delaware.

FIGURE 23

that time. He evidently carried on some little business during the war. It is conceivable that he either made his own looking glasses at this time or purchased glasses from a local manufacturer when imported items were no longer available. In 1784 Philadelphia looking glass dealers began importing again from England on a regular basis. Looking glasses similar to those labeled by George Kemp & Son found their way into Philadelphia in this period.

With European looking glass plates readily available to Philadelphia craftsmen in the mid-1790's, production of fretwork looking glasses similar to the labeled Aldersey and Kemp glasses began on a large scale in that city. The leaf-eared motif found on looking glasses of this period undoubtedly was copied from English examples (Fig. 21). The pine-tree motif found on looking glasses labeled by John Elliott & Sons and James Stokes, however, seems to have been more distinctly American in origin. The "Pine Tree Flag" was our first naval ensign, adopted c. 1775, and the pine tree became the emblem of the Continental Flag, used between 1775 and 1777. Thus, the original English fretwork-style looking glass, first produced in England in the 1720's, was adopted as a pattern for locally manufactured looking glasses in Philadelphia seventy-five years after its introduction into Europe. The craftsmen framing glasses in this period consciously chose to imitate the looking glasses imported in their parent's generation. Both John Elliott, Jr., and James and Henry Reynolds made fretwork-style looking glasses similar to those sold by their fathers in the 1760's.

## Part II: The Taste for "Plain" Looking Glasses

Simple fretwork looking glasses comprise ninety-four percent of the known group of looking glasses labeled by John Elliott, Sr. John Elliott, Jr.; and John Elliott & Sons apparently sold fretwork looking glasses exclusively. Evidently, the Elliotts were appealing to a limited market. It does not seem a coincidence that all of the Elliotts' documented looking glass customers--except John Cadwalader--were Quakers.

The second major Philadelphia employer of John Elliott, Sr., and his first documented looking glass customer, Charles Norris, belonged to one of the most prominent Quaker families in the city. The three looking glasses he purchased from Elliott in 1755 probably were relatively plain pieces, their large size accounting for the high price of £ 44..11..0.<sup>6</sup> Elliott's next documented customer, the Quaker merchant Samuel Emlen, purchased a looking glass at a cost of £ 6..15..0 in November, 1761, and a sconce glass worth £ 6..12..0 the following August.<sup>7</sup> The description of these glasses indicates that they were plain, fretwork looking glasses (as Fig. 24). In contrast, John Reynell, one of Philadelphia's leading Quaker merchants, purchased several relatively elaborate looking glasses from Elliott in 1762--a "Mahogany Sconce glass gilt edge and shell" for £ 7..18..0<sup>8</sup> and two sconce glasses "with Birds, side pieces" at £ 10..9..0 apiece. The glass described merely as "gilt edge and shell" probably was a fretwork example with a pierced shell in the crest and gilt moldings

bordering the glass plate (Fig. 25 or Fig. 24 with a pierced shell). The glasses with birds and side pieces presumably were in the "architectural style," or, in Elliott's terms, "pediment" looking glasses (Fig. 19). The Philadelphia mercantile firm of Francis and Relfe, acting as facotrs, made several purchases from Elliott in 1763 on behalf of Nicholas Brown and Company of Providence, Rhode Island. Although Nicholas Brown was not a Friend, his son Moses was one of the leading Quakers of Providence and acted as purchasing agent for the company. Francis and Relfe bought two looking glasses with "gilt edge and shell" at a cost of £ 9..6..0 apiece. One of these glasses still exists today; it measures 52 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height. A private collector of Bristol, Rhode Island, purchased it from descendants of the Brown family.<sup>9</sup> The Quaker merchants Levi Hollingsworth and Zebulon Rudolph apparently patronized Elliott frequently. One of their purchases made in November, 1767, was a "mahogany Sconce Glass<sup>10</sup> gilt Edge" at a cost of £ 3..10..0. Some years later in 1776, when Elliott first considered retirement from the looking glass business, another Quaker merchant Stephen Collins bought £ 169 worth of looking<sup>11</sup> glasses from him--evidently the major portion of his stock on hand.

The demand for fretwork looking glasses continued among the Quakers after the Revolutionary War. Between c. 1784 and 1796 John Elliott, Jr., imported "plain mahogany" looking glasses; after that date he manufactured English-style looking glasses in his own shop.

German customers formed another group who apparently favored

the plain, fretwork-style looking glass. Its simple form and interesting contours harmonize well with surviving examples of Pennsylvania-German furniture, as evidenced by the setting in the Kershner Parlor of the Winterthur Museum. The elder John Elliott certainly would not have continued to use the labels printed in both English and German, if members of the German community in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties had not frequented his shop.

More than likely, a third group of Elliott customers was composed of Philadelphia's middle-class residents--individuals of conservative taste and limited income. They were able to afford the "plain mahogany" looking glasses stocked by John Elliott, Sr. and Jr., which sold at prices which averaged between £ 1 and £ 5. The large number of glasses sold in Philadelphia between 1755 and 1810 provides an index to the popularity of the style in the Quaker city.

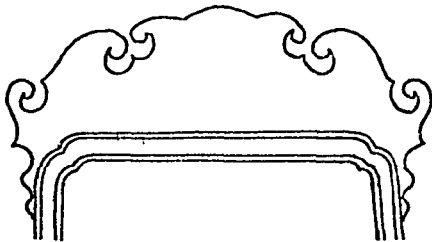
### Part III: Classification and Description

This study has been based upon the stylistic analysis of a group of one hundred looking glasses, each bearing one of the Elliott labels. The final working list was reduced to the ninety-one looking glasses that fell into specific categories. Seven of the remaining glasses proved to be out-of-character with the usual Elliott styles. They probably were resilvered or repaired by Elliott or represent a cunning modern dealer's attempt to enhance the value of his antique merchandise. Two looking glasses labeled by John Elliott, Jr., and

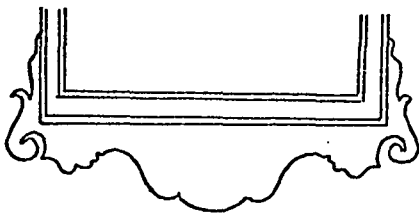
John Elliott & Sons, respectively, were likewise eliminated from the classification because their frames are simple rectangular moldings.

The ninety-one looking glasses, which form the core of this study, have been divided into categories based on stylistic attributes. Each category has been assigned a letter from "A" through "K." One category was subdivided because although looking glasses shared a major attribute, they differed in minor details.

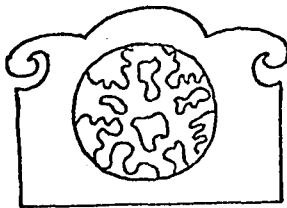
TYPE A (Fig. 24)



1. The crest is composed of three sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a large mid-section scroll
  - c. a three-lobed central section

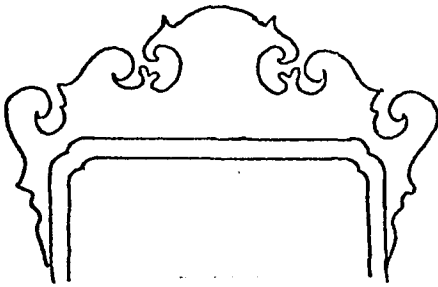


2. The base is composed of three sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a mid-section trefoil
  - c. a three-lobed central section

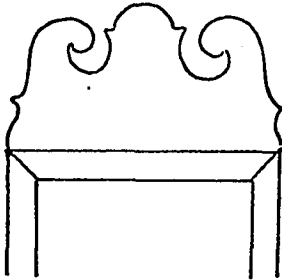


3. Certain examples have a pierced gilt and gesso shell in a circular opening in the crest.

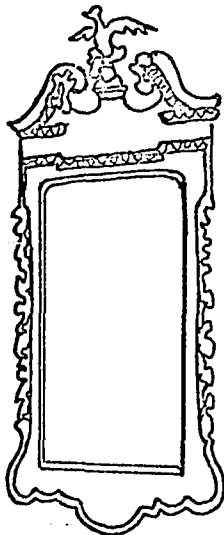


TYPE B

1. The crest is composed of four sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a mid-section winged scroll
  - c. a small two-lobed piece
  - d. a single-lobed central section with scrolled "horns"
2. The base is nearly identical to that of Type A.

TYPE C

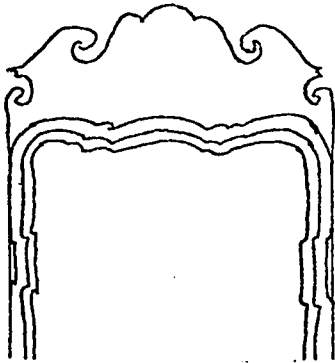
1. The crest is composed of two sections:
  - a. an outer winged scroll
  - b. a single-lobed central section with horns
2. The base is composed of a rectangular molding.

TYPE D

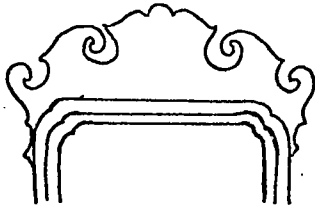
1. An "architectural style" looking glass with gilt and gesso side pieces and a phoenix or eagle perched on a central plinth.

TYPE E

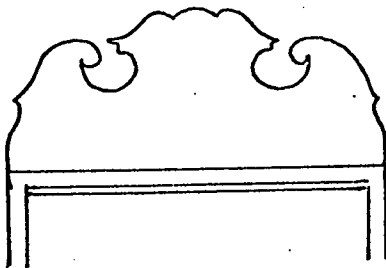
(Fig. 25)



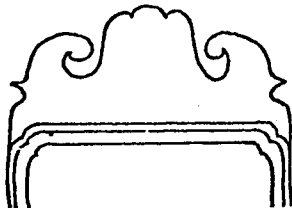
1. The crest is composed of three sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a mid-section winged scroll
  - c. a three-lobed central section
2. The base is composed of a rectangular molding.
3. Certain examples have a pierced gilt and gesso shell in a circular opening in the crest.

TYPE F

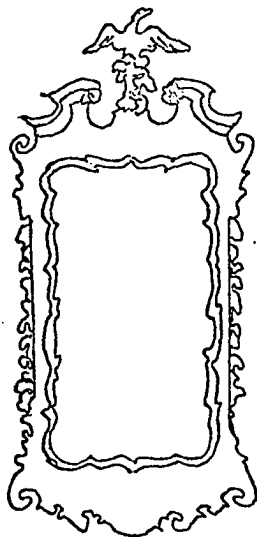
1. The crest is composed of three sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a mid-section scroll
  - c. a winged three-lobed central section
2. The base is identical to that of Type A.

TYPE F<sub>1</sub>

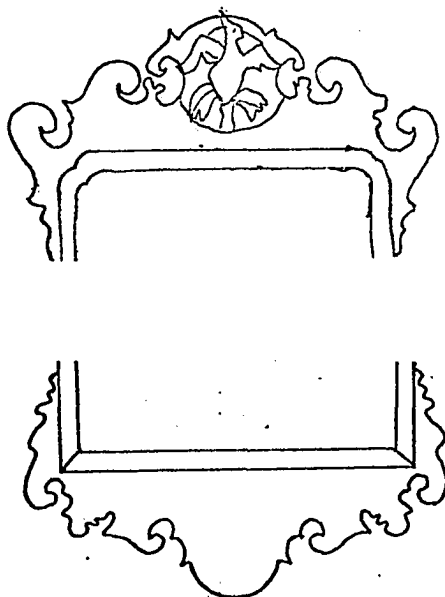
1. The crest is composed of two sections:
  - a. an outer winged scroll
  - b. a winged three-lobed central section
2. The base is composed of a rectangular molding.

TYPE F<sub>2</sub>

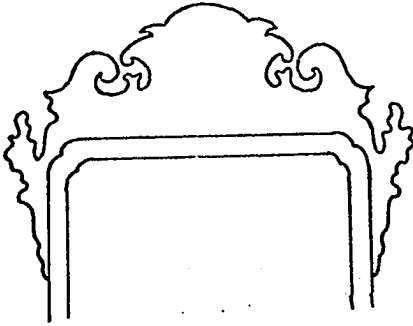
1. The crest is composed of two sections:
  - a. an outer winged scroll
  - b. a three-lobed central section
2. The base is composed of a rectangular molding.

TYPE G

1. The crest is composed of three sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll ( some examples have leaf-shaped "ears")
  - b. a mid-section winged scroll overlaid with a gilt molding terminating in gilt rosettes and streamers
  - c. a central phoenix or eagle perched on a plinth
2. The base is identical to that of Type H.
3. The looking glass is rococo in feeling with gilt and gesso side pieces and an ogee-shaped molding next to the glass.

TYPE H

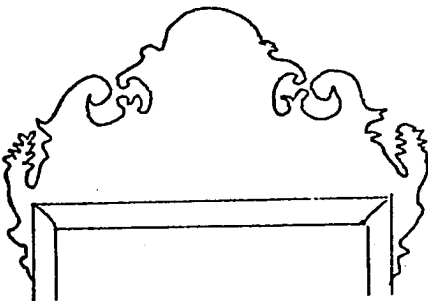
1. The crest is composed of four sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a mid-section winged scroll
  - c. a small two-lobed piece
  - d. a three-lobed central section with horns
2. The base is composed of four sections:
  - a. an outer incurving scroll
  - b. a trefoil
  - c. a winged scroll
  - d. a single-lobed central section with horns
3. Certain examples have a gilt phoenix or eagle in a circular opening in the crest.

TYPE I (Fig. 26)

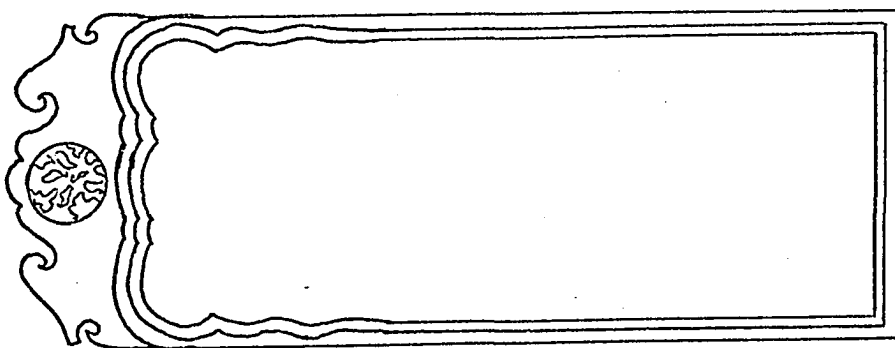
1. The crest is composed of four sections:
  - a. an outer leaf-shaped ear
  - b. a mid-section winged scroll
  - c. a small two-lobed piece
  - d. a three-lobed central section with horns
2. The base is identical to that of Type H.

TYPE J

1. The crest is identical to that of Type I.
2. The base is nearly identical to that of Type A.

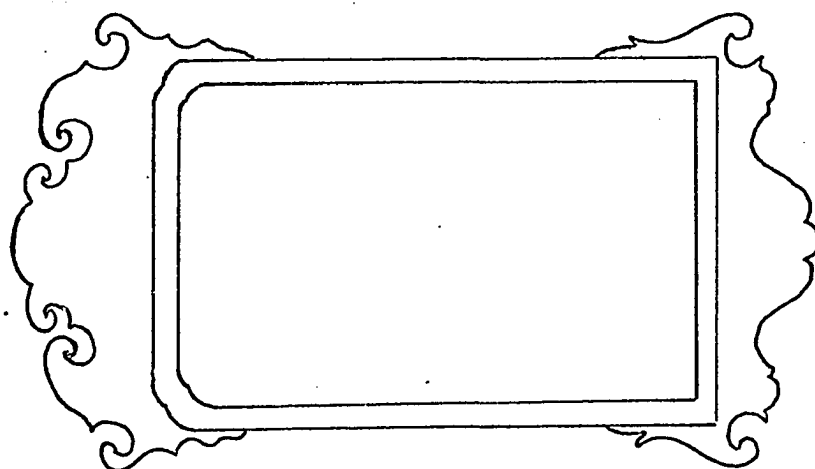
TYPE K (Fig. 27)

1. The crest is composed of four sections:
  - a. a "pine-tree" shaped ear
  - b. a mid-section winged scroll
  - c. a small two-lobed piece
  - d. a three-lobed central section with horns
2. The base is kential to that of Types H and I.



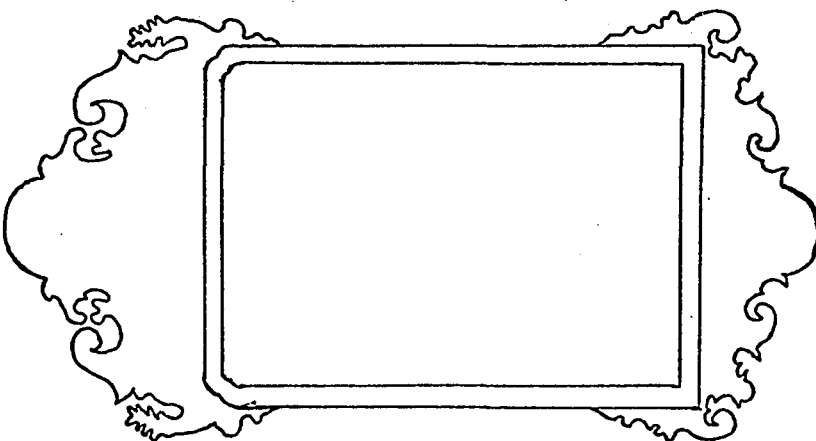
Looking glass of Type E.

FIGURE 25



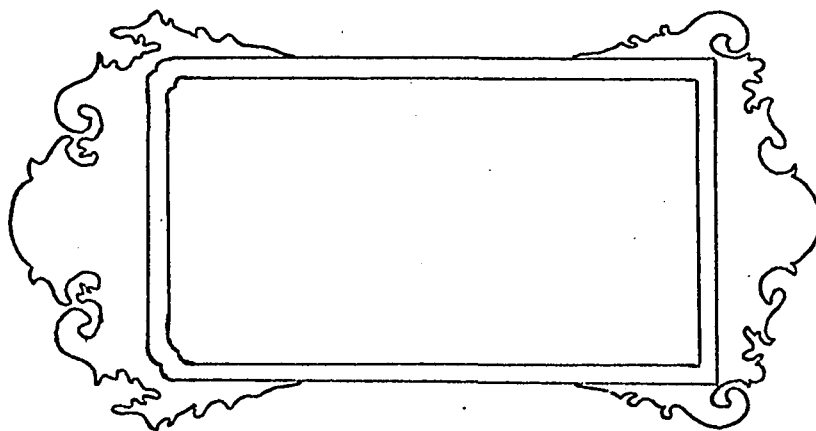
Looking glass of Type A.

FIGURE 24



Looking glass of Type K.

FIGURE 27



Looking glass of Type I.

FIGURE 26

The distribution of the various types among the known labeled looking glasses is presented in Appendix D-1. By far the most popular style was Type A, which John Elliott, Sr., sold throughout his career. About the same number of examples are found having a pierced shell in the crest as are found with plain crests. Looking glasses of Type E, the so-called Queen Anne looking glasses, were next in popularity to judge from surviving examples. Apparently, Elliott did not begin to carry looking glasses in this style until after 1762 (see Appendix D-2). It is obvious that looking glasses of Types D and G were among the most expensive that Elliott stocked. Conversely, looking glasses of Types C, F<sub>1</sub>, and F<sub>2</sub> were probably the least costly. While Type C looking glasses were carried during both the elder Elliott's Chestnut and Walnut Street residencies, Types F<sub>1</sub> and F<sub>2</sub> seem to have been imported only after 1762.

Through microanalysis a looking glass of Type H and a looking glass of Type I, both bearing the last Walnut Street label used by John Elliott, Sr., were found to be made of northeastern American white pine. Elliott himself may have made these glasses during the war years when English looking glasses could not be imported, or, he may have purchased them from a colonial manufacturer. The styles observed in the labeled looking glasses of John Elliott, Jr., and John Elliott & Sons are remarkably consistent, indicating that the later Elliotts did their own work.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup>Peter Ward-Jackson, English Furniture Designs of the Eighteenth Century (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1958), p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>John Vardy, Some Designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. William Kent (London: John Vardy, 1744).

<sup>3</sup>Catalogue: Georgian Furniture (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1947), Plate 90.

<sup>4</sup>Geoffrey Wills, English Looking Glasses (London: Country Life Limited, 1965), p. 63.

<sup>5</sup>Charles B. Wood, "Some Labeled English Looking Glasses," Antiques, XCIII (May, 1968), p. 647.

<sup>6</sup>Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Bill from John Elliott to Charles Norris (1755-58) MS, Norris of Fairhill MSS, Family Accounts (1740-73), Vol. I. Cited hereafter as HSP.

<sup>7</sup>HSP, Samuel Emlen Daybook (1751-67) MS.

<sup>8</sup>Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection. The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum (Winterthur, Delaware), Account Book of John Reynell (1760-97) MS.

<sup>9</sup>Wendy Ann Cooper, "The Furniture and Furnishings of John Brown, Merchant of Providence, 1736-1803" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1971).

<sup>10</sup>HSP, Hollingsworth MSS, Business Papers, Vol. VII, Box 1758-73.

<sup>11</sup>Library of Congress, Stephen Collins Papers MSS, Accounts, Box 13. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goyne Evans.



## CHAPTER V

### THE PROVENANCE OF LOOKING GLASSES SOLD IN PHILADELPHIA, 1755-1810

This chapter will explore the thesis that the majority of the known labeled looking glasses of John Elliott, Sr., were made in England and that all of the known labeled looking glasses of John Elliott, Jr., were made in America. These conclusions are the result of investigation into three separate areas of information--the Elliotts' advertisements and labels, the stylistic features of looking glasses labeled by Elliott and by English makers, and the microscopic analyses of wood samples taken from a representative group of labeled looking glasses.

In all of his known advertisements John Elliott, Sr., stated that the merchandise he offered for sale came from London. Each of Elliott's labels indicates that he imported and sold "all Sorts of English Looking-Glasses at the lowest Rates." In fact, in the Walnut Street label II the word "English" is printed in italics.

The stylistic similarities between a majority of the known labeled Elliott looking glasses and certain types of English-made looking glasses, such as those labeled by Thomas Aldersey and George Kemp & Son have been discussed. Early students of Philadelphia

furniture believed that because labeled Elliott looking glasses did not resemble "high-style" English glasses, they must have been made in America where tastes were "plain." It is true that English looking glasses similar to those labeled by Elliott are not often illustrated in books on English furniture or seen in English museums or historic houses. However, only a few documented examples are required to prove that looking glasses of this type were made in England in the eighteenth century. Three such examples are in the private collection of David Stockwell of Wilmington, Delaware. Charles B. Wood, III, illustrated two of these in his article "Some Labeled English Looking Glasses" in Antiques for May, 1768 (Figs. 22, 23).<sup>1</sup> Additional examples of simple fretwork looking glasses are in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Figs. 20, 21).<sup>2</sup> There are countless others in American collections, illustrated in such early works as Wallace Nutting's Furniture Treasury<sup>3</sup> and Luke Vincent Lockwood's Colonial Furniture in America.<sup>4</sup>

The results of microscopic analyses of wood samples taken from labeled Elliott looking glasses are recorded in Appendix C. Almost every frame tested that bears the label of John Elliott, Sr., was made of spruce (Genus Picea). According to Gordon Saltar, Conservator at the Winterthur Museum, spruce was seldom used as a cabinetmaking wood in America in the eighteenth century. Where, then, was it used?

In the eighteenth century spruce existed in large quantities in England, although it had not been native to the Islands since the Ice Age. The Ice Age destroyed the species there and with the thaw the

new "channel" dividing Great Britain and the Continent made it impossible for the spruce to reintroduce itself naturally. The Norway spruce, the tallest, straightest, and most beautiful variety, was brought to England during the seventeenth century by the great landowners in an attempt to beautify their estates. Once back on native soil the spruce tree re-forested Great Britain without the further aid of man. As Sir Herbert Maxwell noted in Trees: A Woodland Notebook:

The Norway spruce is not a native of the British Isles--its natural range is from the Pyrennees to Scandinavia, East to West Russia, but next to the Scots pine and the larch it is the conifer most commonly seen in British woodlands. <sup>5</sup>

The "Spruce-tree" was definitely thriving in Great Britain in 1675 when John Josselyn wrote about it in his An Account of Two Voyages to New England:

In the North East of Scotland upon the banks of Lough-argick, there hath been formerly of these trees 28 handful about at the Root and Their bodies mounted to 90 foot of height, bearing at the length 20 inches diameter. <sup>6</sup>

There have been differing opinions among scholars regarding the origin of the word "spruce." The controversy has provided further insight into the provenance and use of spruce wood in the eighteenth century. Ralph Edwards in his Shorter Dictionary of English Furniture writes:

Various forms of this word used as an equivalent for Pruce, Prussia, are found in wills from early in the fifteenth century, implying both the material and the country of origin. In the latter connection it appears to have been applied in a general sense to objects shipped from ports on the shores of the Baltic. <sup>7</sup>

In other words, spruce as a tree received its name from its country of origin, Pruce, or Prussia. Webster's Third New International Dictionary concurs in Edwards's interpretation. It gives the origin of the word "spruce" as from "Pruce," the Middle English alternative of "Prussia."<sup>8</sup> In 1915, however, Sir Herbert Maxwell wrote that it was in error to assume that "spruce" fir meant the Prussian fir merely because "spruce" was an alternative form of "Pruce" from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Instead, he believed that the tree took "its name from the sprouts, called sprossen in German, whence is distilled the essence of spruce, used in brewing sprossen-bier or spruce-beer." So the tree came to be termed in German "sprossen-fichte," translated<sup>9</sup> into the English "spruce-fir."

Regardless of the accuracy of either of the above arguments, the point has been made that spruce was native to Germany, or Prussia, long before it was used for furniture-making there in the late Middle Ages. In his Herbal, or General Historie of Plantes published in London in 1597 John Gerard wrote concerning "Picea major, the Pitch tree" that it "groweth in Greece, Italy, France, Germanie, and all the cold regions<sup>10</sup> ever into Russia." Apparently, it had not yet made its appearance in the British Isles. Spruce wood is known to have been imported from Germany into England at the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, as documented by Thomas Morton in his New English Canaan published in 1637:

Spruce, of these there are infinite store, especially in the Northerne parts of the Country and they have bin approved by workmen in England, to be more tough than those that they have

out of the east country, from whence we have them for masts  
and yards of shippes.<sup>11</sup>

Toward the end of the century John Evelyn recorded that "an incredible  
Mass of ready Money is yearly exported into the Northern Countries for  
this sole Commodity [Spruce] <sup>12</sup>."

In the eighteenth century, then, there were large quantities of  
spruce wood available both in England and in Northern Europe. In an  
article in Antiques entitled "North European Export Mirrors: The  
Evidence and Some Suggestion" Judith Coolidge Hughes expresses her  
theory that many looking glasses in American collections originally  
came from Northern Europe. <sup>13</sup> Microscopic analyses of wood samples show  
that the looking glasses illustrated in the article were made of scots  
pine and/or spruce, as were many "courting mirrors" known to Mrs. Hughes.  
German printed matter was found in the backs of several of these  
courting mirrors as well as in several of the so-called "Cape Cod"  
mirrors that are illustrated. On the basis of this evidence Mrs. Hughes  
concludes that North European looking glass makers used spruce wood in  
making frames.

The evidence regarding woods must be correlated, however, to  
facts concerning the general economic and historic condition of mid  
eighteenth-century Germany. After the Peace of Westphalia in 1648,  
Germany, or the "Holy Roman Empire," became a large autocracy composed  
of a King with nominal powers, electors, a host of principalities, and  
a certain number of autonomous imperial towns. The nine electorates--  
Bavaria, Bohemia, Saxony, Brandenburg, the Palatinate, Hanover, Mainz,

Cologne, and Trier-Coblenz--were of reasonable size, but an incredible number of small states were dismembered into numerous principalities. This process resulted in about two thousand distinct territories, some of which were only between five and ten miles in area. The Empire retained this structure until Napoleon's conquests.<sup>14</sup> Adrien Fauchier-Magnan in his The Small German Courts in the Eighteenth Century summarizes the situation well:

The plethora of small courts prevents one from observing in Germany a general intellectual and cultural development. There were only sporadic outbursts which were inevitably unstable and often abortive.<sup>15</sup>

The Thirty Years War, which ended in 1648, had so completely retarded the progress of German civilization that in 1650 Germany stood fifty years behind France in cultural and civil development. Frederick II of Prussia described this startling situation in writing to his sister in 1746:

We are emerging from barbarism and are still in our cradles. But the French have already gone a long way and are a century in advance of us in every kind of success. In the fine arts Germany is still at the period of Francois I [c.1600] . We love them, we cultivate them, foreigners transplant them here, but the soil is not yet propitious enough to produce them itself.<sup>16</sup>

The influence of French culture and tastes was widespread, especially in the northern regions of the Empire. In 1685 many French Protestant refugees had emigrated to this area, and by 1700 Berlin was referred to as a "semi-French" town.<sup>17</sup> The Duchess of Orleans, the Princess Palatine, expressed her indignation in 1720 by saying that

"today the Germans find perfection in everything which comes from

France." <sup>18</sup> A generation later, Frederick II added that "French taste dictates our furniture, our clothes, and all those trifles over which

fashion exercises its tyranny." <sup>19</sup> For over a century French taste dominated the upper levels of society in the Empire. The result was a parody of French culture, "an extravagant caricature of the luxury and elegance of Louis XIV and XV," <sup>20</sup> in combination with a degraded morality, a low level of intellectual achievement, and a tyrannic rule over an indigent and repressed populace.

In Germany in the mid-eighteenth century wages for the working classes were extremely low. According to Fauchier-Magnan

. . . middle class houses knew nothing of luxury. The furnishings were plain, mahogany didn't appear until the beginning of the nineteenth century; comfortable armchairs were unknown, chairs were upholstered in coarse material. Mirrors and carpets were rare, tableware was usually pottery and pewter.<sup>21</sup>

The goods produced for middle-class consumption were made in a traditional style. The old-fashioned craftsmen, working according to a guild system that dated from the Middle Ages, could not supply the products demanded in the new French taste. Ladies and gentlemen who preferred more sophisticated articles looked upon their work with contempt. <sup>22</sup> In view of these circumstances it does not seem possible that German craftsmen, working on a limited level of production in a politically, economically, and culturally backward country, could have produced large quantities of goods. Certainly, they could not have manufactured looking glasses on a scale to supply more than a small

segment of the middle-class market of Great Britain and the Colonies. Evidently, English craftsmen, then, were the mainstay of the trade.

The observation has been made that spruce was available in large quantities in England. Was it, however, used there for making looking glass frames? Little has been written on the subject of woods used in English cabinetmaking. Geoffrey Wills, for example, ignored the question of the secondary woods found in English looking glasses in his book on this subject.<sup>23</sup> In fact, spruce has never been mentioned as a cabinetmaking wood in any of the writings on English furniture. And yet, according to evidence collected by Gordon Saltar in analyzing the large collection of English looking glasses in the Winterthur Museum, spruce seems to have been employed exclusively as a secondary wood by looking glass makers in England.

Furthermore, Mr. Saltar analyzed wood samples taken from three looking glasses labeled by English makers and found that the frames are made of spruce. One of these is the labeled glass by Thomas Aldersey of London (Fig.22). Another is a glass from the London shop of George Kemp & Son (Fig.23). The last is a Kemp & Son glass that is not illustrated but is very similar to Fig.23, having leaf-shaped "ears" instead of scrolls.

The explanation for the apparent contradiction between the facts of microscopic analysis, which reveal that spruce was used in English looking glass frames, and the writings on the subject, which do not mention the use of spruce, may lie in a confusion among scholars



regarding the meaning of the word "deal." Ralph Edwards in his Shorter Dictionary of English Furniture defines deal as:

a sawn board, usually more than 9 inches wide and not more than 3 inches thick. The term was introduced from Low German, with the importation of such boards from Frisia and the Baltic, and as the timber grown there was usually pine or fir, the word is associated with these woods. There are two general varieties of the Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), yellow and red deal. The former appears to have been used almost exclusively in carcass work (when oak was not so used) for veneered furniture c.1660-1750, but after 1750 much of the deal used was the red variety.<sup>24</sup>

Deal was used extensively in English cabinetmaking in the eighteenth century. In 1791 William Marshall wrote in Planting and Rural Ornament that "the cabinetmaker's chief woods are mahogany and Beech, next to these follow Dutch oak (Wainscot), Deal, Elm, and lastly Walnuttree, Cherrytree, Plumbtree, Box, Holly, Yew and a variety of woods for<sup>25</sup> inlaying of cabinets." Most of these woods were imported. To quote Robert W. Symonds:

The sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries saw the best English furniture being made from one imported wood after another. Oak and fir-deal came from Norway and the Baltic, Walnut from Spain and France and later, from Virginia, mahogany from the West Indies, and satin-wood from the East and West Indies.<sup>26</sup>

Spruce wood also came from Norway (Norway spruce) and the Baltic. It is possible, then, that the terms "spruce-fir" and "fir-deal" may have been confused in the past and used to refer to the same woods. In fact, Sir Herbert Maxwell wrote in Trees: A Woodland Notebook that<sup>27</sup> "Deäl is also connected with the spruce-fir." Therefore, when scholars of English furniture write that "deal" was much used in

English cabinetmaking, they probably are referring unconsciously to the use of spruce, as well.

Although the looking glasses that John Elliott, Sr., sold were made in England, there were considerable numbers of German-made looking glasses in Philadelphia both before and after the Revolutionary War. England, of course, was closely connected with the electorate of Hanover after 1714. The free city of Hamburg, Germany's chief northern port, was contiguous with the Hanoverian domain. Thus, it was logical that England and Hamburg would engage in steady trade throughout most of the eighteenth century. According to W.H. Bruford writing in Germany in the Eighteenth Century: The Social Background of the Literary Revival, the participation of Hamburg "in the colonial trade, combined with its English connections, made it a commercial center of international importance."<sup>28</sup>

During the colonial period in America goods could be imported into the Colonies only from England or from ports south of Cape Finisterre, the westernmost tip of Spain. Products from the northern part of the Continent had to be re-shipped from England. In this manner German products found their way to the Colonies. An apparent illegal trade was also carried on by North European merchants who sent their products to agents in ports south of Cape Finisterre, to be there re-shipped to the Colonies. In October, 1761, an invoice was prepared in Amsterdam for Messrs. Anthony Bacon and Company of London "of the following Goods by Order of Mr. Tench Francis" of Philadelphia. The goods, bought in Amsterdam and billed to Francis's agents in London,

were "packed up in 14 Barrels and 7 Chests marked and numbered as in the Margin, loaded by the Ship Maria Elizabeth, Capt. Ian de Hoog" and sent to Madeira. From there they were consigned to "Mess. John and James Searle." to be "forwarded by the first opportunity to Mess. Francis and Relfe at Philadelphia." The shipment included German scythes and enameled china. Duties were paid on the goods in Amsterdam and the invoice was signed by "Herman Van Ghesel, Amsterdam." <sup>29</sup>

For the purposes of this paper, a more noteworthy shipment was made in April, 1760, from Amsterdam to Teneriffe, and from thence to Philadelphia directed to the firm of Messrs. Francis and Relfe:

Invoice of Sundry Goods Ship'd on board the Ship St Graveland Capt<sup>n</sup> Joachem Iago bound to Teneriff and Consign'd to Mr Juan Antonio de Franchy y Ponte to be there reshipped in another vessel for Philadelphia being of Acco<sup>t</sup> with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Francis and Relfe of Philadelphia by Order and Agreement of M<sup>r</sup> Tench Francis, the whole being Mark'd and N<sup>o</sup> as follows

1 Chest cont:g 100 doz German look;g Glasses		
40 Doz	@ 16sh	32.. 0..0
40 d	18sh	36.. 0..0
4d N 1 wh slidings for		
Pocket	29sh	5..16..0
4d 2	27sh	5.. 8..0
4d 3	22sh	4.. 8 0
4d 4	20sh	4.. 0..0
4d 5	18sh	3..12..0
		<u>91.. 4..0</u>

On board were other items such as Bohea and Hyson tea, German bed tickings, Cuckoo clocks, German scythes and straw cutting knives, wooden toys, gunpowder, and twenty-five chests of "Chinaware." <sup>30</sup> Francis's business via Amsterdam apparently was extensive. In July, 1762, another order was sent under the direction of Herman Van Ghesel to Francis by way of

Fayal in the Azores. The cargo on board included:

64 doz looking Glasses in gold paper	@ 22sh p. doz	70.. 8..0
33 doz D in wood case	32 d p. doz	52..16..0
1 doz for a Tryal		3.. 0..0
$\frac{1}{2}$ doz D for D	$7\frac{1}{2}$	3..15..0
$\frac{1}{2}$ doz D for D	6	3.. 0..0
$\frac{1}{2}$ doz D for D	11..8	5..14..0

In addition there were shipments of Bohea tea, reams of paper, German fiddle strings, Holland "linnings," gunpowder, burgundy, champagne, and spices.

The idea of one hundred and sixty-four looking glasses of German or Dutch origin imported into Philadelphia over a period of two years is staggering, particularly as this figure reflects only what surviving documents reveal. Tench Francis was just one of many men involved in international commerce at this time. The total value of the looking glasses imported by Francis in this period was about £ 230, with the price per glass averaging slightly less than two shillings. The conclusion seems obvious that large quantities of inexpensive, German-made looking glasses were imported into Philadelphia in the 1760's.

Complementing these accounts are contemporary records of looking glass importations into Philadelphia from London. On November 15, 1760, the firm of William Neate of London drew up an invoice for the following goods shipped in the King of Prussia to the Philadelphia mercantile house of Jones and Wistar:

15 doz looking glasses in gilt cases	3/6	£ 2..12..6
15 doz larger D	4/	3.. 0..0 32

Just nine days later another invoice was drawn up for goods shipped by Neate to Jones and Wistar on board the Indian Trader. This invoice included the following goods, listed by containers:

1	24	Looking Glasses	5d	0..10..0
2	36	D D	6d	0..18..0
3	24	D D	7d	0..14..0
4	24	D D	8d	0..16..0
5	24	D D	9d	0..18..0
6	24	D D	10d	1.. 0..0
7	24	D D	12d	1.. 4..0
8	30	D D	14d	1..15..0
9	30	D D	16d	2.. 0..0
				<u>9..19..6</u> 33

These looking glasses cost between three and one-half and sixteen shillings a dozen, or anywhere from three and one-half pennies to slightly more than a shilling each. Apparently, the least expensive glasses were the so-called "Penny Ware Looking Glasses." On Neate's invoice of November 15, 1760, he included the notation: "By Drawback on 30 doz Penny Ware Looking Glasses,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  shillings." Since the glasses sent by Neate were shipped with other goods of an apparent North European origin (Flanders bedtick, reams of paper, Russia sheeting, etc.) and as Neate claimed a drawback on the glasses, it seems reasonable to assume that these goods came from the Continent. The mention of gilt or wooden "cases" in the English and Amsterdam invoices indicates that the looking glasses probably were similar to the small "courting mirrors" discussed by Mrs. Hughes; <sup>34</sup> they may have even been pocket size. In 1761 still another London firm, Mildred and Roberts, shipped an order of "10 Doz Pocket Looking Glasses" and "10 Doz Dutch Spectacles" <sup>35</sup> to the merchants Jones and Wistar.

The prices quoted above for the looking glasses imported by Tench Francis and Jones and Wistar do not seem unreasonably low considering that the prices were wholesale and permitted the retailer a substantial margin of profit. Undoubtedly, most of the looking glasses ordered by the two merchants were small in size and relatively plain. John Elliott evidently sold looking glasses of this type, too, for he advertised that he carried glasses from "One Shilling to Fifteen Pounds and upwards per glass."<sup>36</sup>

Trade with Hamburg and Amsterdam continued during the Revolutionary War. The goods involved were mostly war supplies--gunpowder, saltpetre, muskets, guns, and textiles.<sup>37</sup> After the War trade with Hamburg was "important and prosperous" according to Peter A. Grotjan, an immigrant merchant in Philadelphia involved in the German trade in the 1790's.<sup>38</sup> Charles N. Buck, appointed Consul-General of Hamburg to the United States in 1817 and for many years one of Philadelphia's best-established merchants, wrote in his reminiscences that little intercourse had existed between Hamburg and the United States before the Declaration of Independence.<sup>39</sup> The years between 1795 and 1799, however, were very prosperous for Hamburg, particularly in the linen trade.<sup>40</sup> There are many references to American commerce with Hamburg and Amsterdam during the 1790's in the Federal Gazette. Goods received from these cities and offered for sale in Philadelphia included window glass, looking glasses, painter's colors, drugs and medicines, red and white lead, gin, German steel, sheetings, and linens. In April, 1793, for instance, one R. Bohlen offered for sale the following goods

imported in the snow Mary from Amsterdam:

German steel and frying pans, large elegant looking glasses and common ditto, Flanders bedtick, and German linens, Holland gin, and pearl barley.<sup>41</sup>

In August of the same year he advertised additional importations in  
<sup>42</sup>  
"the American Ship John, from Amsterdam."

German and Dutch looking glasses formed part of the stock of at least several Philadelphia dealers in looking glasses. In February, 1785, James Reynolds advertised "a great variety of English looking  
<sup>43</sup>  
glasses, also French and Dutch ditto." Daniel Benezet, as previously noted, offered German and Dutch looking glasses for sale on numerous occasions in the Pennsylvania Gazette. Another well-known Philadelphia looking glass firm, John and James Oldden, advertised in November, 1788, that they had "imported in the latest vessels from Hull, London, Liverpool, Bristol, and Amsterdam--a large assortment of Looking-  
<sup>44</sup>  
glasses, painters' colours, London and Bristol pewter . . . ." Of course, there is no way of knowing which of these goods came from Amsterdam. In May, 1794, however, James Reynolds was more specific. He informed the public that he had for sale "a full assortment of Looking Glasses Imported from France, England, and Germany, a great variety of styles, in carved and gold, mahogany and gold, white or  
<sup>45</sup>  
plain mahogany frames . . . ." Two years later an invoice was drawn up in Hamburg itemizing the cargo of the ship Good Friends owned by Stephen Girard and bound for Philadelphia. The cargo included drugs, quills, glass, ravenstock, woolen goods, and fifteen chests of looking glasses. Again in October, 1796, the Good Friends left Hamburg for

Philadelphia laden with two chests of looking glasses and various  
other goods.<sup>46</sup> Probably the majority of these looking glasses were  
small and plain, but it is possible that by the 1790's German craftsmen  
were capable of creating more elaborate pieces.

The theory that a large number of looking glasses sold in  
America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries came  
originally from Northern Europe will have to be explored further.  
William Wilmerding of New York City is the most likely candidate as an  
importer of German looking glasses. He emigrated from Germany to New  
York and made repeated trips to his homeland throughout his career.  
Presumably, looking glasses made in Northern Europe in this period will  
show the use of spruce as a secondary wood. Before any definite  
conclusions can be reached regarding the extent of the looking glass  
trade with Northern Europe in the Federal period, however, a great deal  
of additional research is necessary.



#### NOTES TO CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup>Charles B. Wood, "Some Labeled English Looking Glasses," Antiques, XCIII (May, 1968), pp. 647-49.

<sup>2</sup>Catalogue: Georgian Furniture (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1947), Plate 90; F. Lewis Hinckley, A Directory of Antique Furniture (New York: Bonanza Books, 1953), Plate 538.

<sup>3</sup>Wallace Nutting, Furniture Treasury (Framingham, Massachusetts: Old America Company, 1928), II, Plates 2757-3222.

<sup>4</sup>Luke Vincent Lockwood, Colonial Furniture in America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), pp. 284-99.

<sup>5</sup>Sir Herbert Maxwell, Trees: A Woodland Notebook (Glasgow: James Madehose and Sons, 1915), p. 183.

<sup>6</sup>John Josselyn, An Account of Two Voyages to New England (1675; rpt. in Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 3rd Series, III, Cambridge: E.W. Metcalf and Company, 1833), p. 256.

<sup>7</sup>Ralph Edwards, The Shorter Dictionary of English Furniture (London: Country Life Limited, 1964), pp. 483-84.

<sup>8</sup>Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. and C. Merriam Company, 1965), p. 2211.

<sup>9</sup>Maxwell, p. 188.

<sup>10</sup>John Gerard, Herbal, or General Historie of Plantes (London, 1633), p. 1354.

<sup>11</sup>Thomas Morton, New English Canaan (1597; rpt. Amsterdam: De Capo Press, 1969), p. 64.

<sup>12</sup>John Evelyn, Sylva (London: John Martyn and James Allesby for the Royal Society, 1664), p. 54.

<sup>13</sup>Judith Coolidge Hughes, "North European Export Mirrors: the Evidence and Some Suggestions," Antiques, LXXXIX (June, 1966), pp. 856-61.

<sup>14</sup>Adrien Fauchier-Magnan, The Small German Courts in the Eighteenth Century (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd, 1958), pp. 17-18.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>22</sup>Walter H. Bruford, Germany in the Eighteenth Century: The Social Background of the Literary Revival (Cambridge: The University Press, 1939), pp. 154-55.

<sup>23</sup>Geoffrey Wills, English Looking Glasses (London: Country Life Limited, 1965).

<sup>24</sup>Edwards, p. 301.

<sup>25</sup>Robert W. Symonds, Furniture Making in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century England (London: The Connoisseur, 1955), p. 31.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>27</sup>Maxwell, p. 189.

<sup>28</sup>Bruford, p. 181.

<sup>29</sup>Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Invoice Book of Tench Francis (1759-61) MS, p. 51. Cited hereafter as HSP.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>32</sup>HSP, Invoice Book of Jones and Wistar (1759-60) MS.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Judith Coolidge Hughes, "Courting Mirrors: Another European Export Product?," Antiques, LXXXII (July, 1962), pp. 68-71.

<sup>35</sup>HSP, Invoice Book of Jones and Wistar (1759-60) MS.

<sup>36</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette (Philadelphia), March 5, 1761. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>37</sup>HSP, John Ross Invoice Book (1776-79) MS; Dutilh and Wachsmuth Papers (1704-1846) MSS; Dutch West India Company Papers (1626-1824) MSS.

<sup>38</sup>HSP, Peter A. Grotjan, "Memoirs" (1774-1850) MS.

<sup>39</sup>Under British regulations the Colonies could not trade directly with ports north of Cape Finisterre.

<sup>40</sup>HSP, Charles N. Buck, Esq., "Reminiscences" (1791-1841) MS, p. 14.

<sup>41</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, various issues during April, 1793.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., various issues during August, 1793.

<sup>43</sup>Pennsylvania Packet (Philadelphia), February 11, 1785. From microfilm copy in Memorial Library, University of Delaware.

<sup>44</sup>Pennsylvania Gazette, November 10, 1785.

<sup>45</sup>Pennsylvania Packet, May 31, 1794.

<sup>46</sup>American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Girard Papers, Microfilm Series II, Reel 141. Reference courtesy of Nancy Goyne Evans.

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# APPENDIX A

## THE DATE RANGES OF THE LABELS USED BY JOHN ELLIOTT, SR. AND JR., AND JOHN ELLIOTT & SONS

Name on label	Label type	Figure number	Approximate dates
John Elliott, Sr.	Chestnut Street label: Address on label given as "Chestnut Street."	3	1758-62
John Elliott, Sr.	Chestnut Street label: "Walnut" handwritten over top of erased word "Chestnut."	4	1762-63, or until supply of Chestnut Street labels ran out.
John Elliott, Sr.	Walnut Street label I: Address on label given as "Wallnut Street."	5	1762 until time of replacement by next label.
John Elliott, Sr.	Walnut Street label II: Address on label given as "Walnut Street."	6	1763, or thereafter, until c. 1784.
John Elliott, Jr.	I: Address on label given as "on the West side of Front- Street, between Chesnut and Walnut-Streets."		1784-91
John Elliott, Jr.	II: Address on label given as "No. 60 South Front Street," otherwise identical to I.	8	1791-96

## APPENDIX A (contd.)

Name on label	Label type	Figure number	Approximate dates
John Elliott, Jr.	III: Advertises "Looking Glasses of American Manufacture"; "spiral" border.	9	1796-1804
John Elliott, Jr.	IV: Advertises "Looking Glasses of American Manufacture"; "dot" border.	10	1796-1804
John Elliott, Jr.	V: Advertises "Looking Glasses of American Manufacture"; "geometric" border.	11	1796-1804
John Elliott & Sons	Only one known label.	12	1804-1810

# APPENDIX B

## INVENTORY OF GOODS BELONGING TO THE ESTATE OF JOHN ELLIOTT, PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER 13, 1810

A transcription of the original document located in the Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, the Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum.

1 Sconce Looking Glass		\$ 13
1 Pier do		16
1 dining table \$14.	1 breakfast do \$6.	20
12 Walnut chairs \$24.	1 tea chest 1.50	25.50
1 Stand	2 foot stools	3
1 Carpet \$10	1 pair Andirons \$8	18
1 pair Shovel & tongs	1 do Bellows	1..50
1 Sconce Look <sup>g</sup> Glass \$8	1 Book Case \$16	24
1 dining table \$8	1 breakfast do \$4	12
1 Stand	1 candle screen	3
4 arm chairs	12 windsor do @80¢	12.80
1 carpet in 5 breadths		10
1 pair andirons	1 do Shovel & Tongs	5
1 Settee \$4	1 Carpet \$5	9
1 Clock & Case \$30	1 bureau N <sup>o</sup> 1 \$8	38
1 Sconce Look <sup>g</sup> Glass \$6	1 dressing do \$4	10
1 bureau N <sup>o</sup> 2 \$6..	1 bedstead & Ticking \$15	21
14 yards bed-ticking \$14	1 Matrass \$4	18
1 Walnut arm chair 2.50	6 hair bottom chairs @ 2.50	17.50
1 Easy chair \$8	1 Cabinet \$4	12
1 bed chair & table \$4	1 wash stand Bowl \$4	8
1 pair andirons \$1	1 Carpet \$11	12
1 Look <sup>g</sup> Glass (pier) \$6.50	1 dressing do \$3	9.50
1 chest of drawers \$12	1 dressing table N <sup>o</sup> 1 \$4	16
1 dressing table \$3	1 arm chair \$1	4
3 walnut chairs \$3	1 Bedstead & ticking \$12	15
1 bed \$10	1 wash stand & bowl \$1.50	11.50
1 Medicine chest 1.50	1 bureau \$8	9.50
1 Sconce Look <sup>g</sup> Glass \$3.50	2 dressing do 3.	6.50
1 Bedstead & ticking \$4	1 Bed \$12	16
1 Matrass \$5	1 Wash stand & bowl \$3	8
6 Walnut chairs @80¢	1 bedstead N <sup>o</sup> 1 \$12	16.80

1 bedstead N <sup>o</sup> 2 & ticking \$8	1 bed N <sup>o</sup> 2 \$25	\$ 33
1 bed N <sup>o</sup> 1 \$25	1 do N <sup>o</sup> 3 \$15	40
1 do N <sup>o</sup> 4 \$14	1 Couch do \$3	17
1 windsor chair \$0.50	4 blankets N <sup>o</sup> 1 @ \$1.75	7.50
3 blankets @1.50	3 do	8.50
8 do @ 75¢	3 quilted do #2.50	13.50
4 Coverlets double @3.50	4 do Single @1.50	20
1 Couch do	1 Rug	2
1 Suit dimity Curtains with Window curtains		15
1 do White Muslin		10
1 do Linnen figur <sup>d</sup>		6
1 do Green Worsted		10
1 do Calico for field bed		8
1 do do do with window curtains		15
4 plain Muslin curtains for windows		4
27½ yards towelling @40¢ \$11	3 yards tow linnen @30¢	11.90
24 yards pyrmont Linnen @60¢		14.40
1 chest of drawers \$12	1 Smaller do \$6	18
1 pair of gloves \$5	1 walnut box \$1	6
4 Cotton Sheets @1.50	7 Linnen do @2.	20
11 Linnen do	do @1.	11
4½ yards of Oil Cloth @37½¢	2 White bed quilts \$9	10.68½
3 counterpanes & bedspreads		10
1 large trunk \$2	9 Sheets @ \$2	20
9 Sheets @1.25	9 table cloths @ \$3	38.25
8 table cloths coarse @ \$2.	7 breakfast do @1.	23
5 pair pillow cases @75¢	5 smaller @50¢	6.25
5 do do Single and coarse @ 25¢		1.25
3 do do Old @ 25¢		.75
12 Napkins @ 25¢	12 do @ 12½¢	4.50
12 Hand towells @30¢	6 long do @50¢	6.60
4 Short do @40¢	4 Bed quilts @ 1.	5.60
1 Lot of Wearing Apparel		30
1 pier Look <sup>g</sup> Glass \$4	1 Small do (taken before)	4
4 chairs @25¢	1 bedstead & ticking \$4	5
1 bed \$10	1 table \$1.	11
1 box for Papers	1 chamber carpet	2
1 Stair carpet \$3.	1 lot baize \$2.	5
2 Coverlets 1.50	1 do pieces of Carpet \$2	3.50
1 Wheel & Reel	lot of flax \$4	4
Work bench & tools & boxes		4

Plate	oz.
1 Silver tankard	29.5
1 do Coffee pot deducting handle	27.10
1 do Stand	8.18
1 do Cream Jug	5.9
1 do Small	3.3
1 do Soup ladle	3.

6 do Table-spoons	EH	oz.	10.15
5 do do	MH	10.	
3 do do	IE	7. 6	
2 do do	E	3.13	
1 do do	SB	1.18	
1 do Small do	ME	.16	
12 do Tea-spoons	IE	5. 8	
6 do do	WMH	2. 2	
5 do do	E	2. 9	
5 do do	K	1. 3	
4 do do	EH	1. 9	
3 do do	IH	1. 8	
5 do do	diff't marks	1. 9	
2 do Straining spoons			
and pepper box		4.11	
1 pair Sugar tongs		.16	
2 Silver cups		2.15	
		<u>135. 3</u>	\$153.17
1 lot of Old Gold	15.12 gr @ 89¢		13.79
1 do Old Silver	7.15 @ 46¢		8.78
1 Gold Watch			30.
1 Silver do }	1 pair Spectacles & Case } \$3		
1 do do }	1 pair Spectacles & Case } 25¢		18.25
1 do do }			
Plated ware			
1 Coffee Urn	\$4	2 tea pots	\$6 10
1 pair Candle-sticks	\$5	1 Sett of Castors	\$5 10
1 Lot of Glass Ware	\$10		10
1 do China	\$20		20
1 do Queens Ware	\$12		12
1 Tea Urn	\$10	1 old do	\$2 12
1 Large Waiter	\$2	2 Small do	1. 4
1 tea box	\$1	1 old waiter	\$2 3
1 Stand Lamp	1.50	1 painted do	1.50 3
2 Tables	1.	4 Chairs	50¢ 1.50
1 bench & Stool	12½¢	1 Ironing board	1.50 1.62½
1 Lot of Pewter	\$6	1 Wooden Mortar	\$1 7
1 brass mortar	\$1	1 bell metal Kettle	5. 6
1 Lot wooden ware	50¢	1 pair bellows	50¢ 1
1 pair andirons		1 do Shovel & tongs	3
1 Lot of tin	\$3	1 do brushes & Sieve	1. 4
5 brass Lamps	\$4	candlesticks & Snuffers	1.50 5.50
1 Lot of Knives & forks			8
1 Lookg Glass		1 pepper mill	1
1 Lot of Queens ware			
1 Washing Kettle			10
1 do do Small			8
1 Lot Iron Pots	7.50	Tin Kitchen & brass ware	\$3 10.50



1 warming pan 1.	Lot of Wash Tubs 2.50	\$ 3.50
2 Pickling Tubs	1 Soap do	5
Bake Iron flat Irons &c		8
Meat box & Cloaths horse	Lot Stone Jars	3
1 Safe & Iron Hood	ash pans & Steam pot	4
1 Lot of Flax \$3	2 wheels \$3	6
1 Open Stove		10
1 ten plate do in Wash house		14
1 do do in Shop		15
1 Couch	1 Screen	3
2 Mortars 56"x27"	83" @20¢	16.60

## Sundries at the Farm House

1 Sconce Lookg Glass		9
1 Dining table \$7	1 breakfast do \$3	10
8 Walnut chairs \$8	1 pair andirons 1.	9
1 dining table \$5	1 breakfast do 1.50	6.50
1 Sconce Lookg Glass \$5	6 windsor chairs \$3	8
1 bedstead \$2	1 do Red \$3.50	5.50
1 bureau \$2	1 dressing glass 1.25	3.25
1 Stand 25¢	1 bed \$10	10.25
3 chairs @ 25¢	1 bedstead \$3.50	4.25
1 Lookg Glass \$2.50	1 bureau 2.50	5
1 Gunn 1.50	1 bureau \$4	5.50
1 bedstead \$5	1 do 1.50	6.50
1 bed \$10	1 do \$6	16
1 Lookg Glass 75¢	3 chairs 1.11	1.86
2 bed quilts \$1.	1 table \$1.	2
1 bedstead \$2.50	1 small do 50¢	3
1 walnut box 50¢	2 Chairs 25¢	.75
2 Wheel & reel	33" wool @ 45¢	14.85
1 lot of Old Iron	water pot & warm pan	2.50
1 lot of glass ware 1.50	1 do china 1.50	3
1 box & bell	1 Sett of Castors	
1 bread basket	1 lot of Queens ware	2
1 table & chairs 3.34	1 pair andirons & mills \$2	5.34
1 ten plate stove \$5	1 lot of Iron pots \$4	9
1 lot of Earthen & Stone ware } 75	brushes } 75	1.50
1 do Tin ware	bottles }	
1 do Wooden ware \$6	Paints & Oils \$6	12
Painted Cloth \$6	1 do \$2	8

## Stock on the South Farm

100 bush <sup>1</sup> Oats @ 40¢	7 bush <sup>1</sup> Wheat @ 2.	54
19½ do Rye @ 1.25	10 do Corn @ 85	32.87½
Corn on the ground 45 bush <sup>1</sup> @ 67	Rye valued at \$15	45.15
Potatoes on do 75do	Pumpkins 2.50	30.62½
Apples on do 15 bush <sup>1</sup> @ 1.25	Corn Fodder 5.	23.75
6 Cows @ 18	1 Calf 8.	116
1 bull 10.	15 Sheep @ 2.50	47.50

Swine	36.			\$	36
Fan	6	Cart & Gears	15		21
Roller	\$4 1 wood do	Cheese press	5.		9.25
Lot of Casks & Cutting box		1 lot of Tools	4.		5.75
Hay	220.75	3 bush plaster	.90		221.65
North Farm					
Corn on ground	53.60	Buckwheat on do	13.40		67
Potatoes on do	6.	Hay	56.25		62.25
Oats	35.	Corn Fodder	10.		45
2 Cows	24.	1 Harrow	2.		26
Rye					37.50
Light Waggon & Harness	\$120	Chaise & do	\$60		180
2 Horses (1 old Saddle \$1)	1 @ \$40 1 @ 59				91
1 Share in Philad <sup>a</sup> Library					26.67
5 do Schuykill Bridge					30
1 do Water Loan					100
					<u>\$ 2845.01<math>\frac{1}{2}</math></u>

Philadelphia 10<sup>mo</sup> 13th October, 1810

Jesse Williams  
David Sellers

# APPENDIX C

## MICROANALYTICAL DATA FOR A SELECTIVE CHECKLIST OF REPRESENTATIVE LABELED ELLIOTT LOOKING GLASSES

Owner	Type	Dimensions	Secondary Wood(s)
<u>CHESTNUT STREET LABEL</u>			
Mrs. Donald F. Carpenter	A		spruce (Genus Picea)
Chester County Historical Society	A	H. 45" W. 23"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Colonial Williamsburg	A	H. 35" W. 18 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Mrs. Alfred C. Harrison Mrs. George Lord	A		spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. Norman Herreshoff	A	H. 52 3/4" W. 24 1/2"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. Norman Herreshoff	A	H. 37 3/4" W. 18 1/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. Joseph McFalls	A	H. 37 3/4" W. 16 7/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Dr. Daniel B. Moffett	A	H. 36 1/2" W. 18 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Colonial Williamsburg	A	H. 40 1/2" W. 21 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea) scots pine (Pinus syl- vestris)
Chester Country Historical Society	B	H. 36 1/2" W. 18 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Evans	C	H. 17 1/4" W. 9 5/16"	spruce (Genus Picea)

Owner	Type	Dimensions		Secondary Wood(s)
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Evans	C	H. 22 3/16"	W. 11 3/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Winterthur Museum	D	H. 62"	W. 28"	spruce (Genus Picea)
<u>CHESTNUT STREET LABEL WITH HANDWRITTEN "WALNUT"</u>				
Metropolitan Museum	E	H. 48"	W. 20"	scots pine (Pinus sylvestris)
Winterthur Museum	E	H. 57"	W. 20 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea) scots pine (Pinus sylvestris)
Mr. Joseph McFalls	F <sub>1</sub>	H. 25 7/8"	W. 12 3/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. Joseph McFalls	C	H. 22"	W. 11 5/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
<u>WALNUT STREET LABEL I</u>				
Independence National Historical Park	A			spruce (Genus Picea) scots pine (Pinus sylvestris)
Mr. and Mrs. George B. Daniel	A	H. 36 1/2"	W. 18 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Philadelphia Museum of Art	A.			spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. Joseph McFalls	F <sub>1</sub>	H. 24 1/4"	W. 11 3/4"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Winterthur Museum	F	H. 42 1/2"	W. 19"	spruce (Genus Picea)

<u>Owner</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Dimensions</u>	<u>Secondary Wood(s)</u>
Mr. David Stockwell	A	H. 38 1/4" W. 20"	spruce (Genus Picea) scots pine (Pinus sylvestris)
<u>WALNUT STREET LABEL II</u>			
Philadelphia Museum of Art	A		Scots pine (Pinus sylvestris)
Mr. David Stockwell	F <sub>2</sub>	H. 29 5/8" W. 13 3/16"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Winterthur Museum	B	H. 38 1/2" W. 21 1/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Joseph McFalls	A		spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. David Stockwell	A	H. 36" W. 18 1/4"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Mr. David Stockwell	F	H. 22 5/8" W. 11 5/8"	spruce (Genus Picea)
Chester County Historical Society Hopper Log House	H		northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Mr. Joseph McFalls	I	H. 45 1/2" W. 23 3/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
<u>JOHN ELLIOTT, JR. LABEL I</u>			
Mrs. T. Van C. Phillips	J		eastern American white cedar (Chaemaecyparis thyoides)

Owner	Type	Dimensions		Secondary wood(s)
<u>JOHN ELLIOTT, JR., LABEL II</u>				
Mrs. G. Dallas Coons	I	H. 44 1/2"	W. 19 1/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Anonymous #5	I			northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
<u>JOHN ELLIOTT, JR., LABEL III</u>				
Chester County Historical Society	J	H. 32"	W. 16 1/2"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
<u>JOHN ELLIOTT, JR., LABEL IV</u>				
Westtown School	I	H. 37 1/2"	W. 19 1/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Wilson-Warner House, Odessa, Delaware	I	H. 34 3/8"	W. 18 3/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
<u>JOHN ELLIOTT, JR., LABEL V</u>				
Dr. Daniel B. Moffett	I	H. 42 1/2"	W. 22 3/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Mrs. T. Van C. Phillips	I			northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)

Owner	Type	Dimensions	Secondary Wood(s)
Colonial Williamsburg	I	H. 48 1/4" W. 24 3/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Winterthur Museum	I	H. 39" W. 16 7/8"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Mrs. Cox	I	H. 45 1/2" W. 23 1/2"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
<u>JOHN ELLIOTT &amp; SONS LABEL</u>			
Mr. and Mrs. Caleb R. Layton, 3rd	K	H. 37 3/4" W. 19 1/4"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Philadelphia Museum of Art	K		northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Westtown School	K		northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)
Mr. David Stockwell	K	H. 25 1/2" W. 15"	northeastern American white pine (Pinus strobus)

APPENDIX D-1

DISTRIBUTION OF NINETY-ONE LABELED ELLIOTT LOOKING GLASSES ACCORDING TO CLASSIFIED TYPE

	Chestnut/ Chestnut Street	Walnut Street	Walnut Street I	Walnut Street II	John, Jr. I	John, Jr. II	John, Jr. III	John, Jr. IV	John, Jr. V	John Elliott & Sons	Unspe- cified
A	13 (7*)		4 (1*)	6 (2*)							3 (1*)
B	1		1	1							
C	2	1	1	2							
D	1		1								1
E		2 (1*)	2	1							3 (1*)
F		1	1	1							
F <sub>1</sub>		1	2								
F <sub>2</sub>			1	1							
G			1	1							1
H				2							
I				3				2	8		
J					1	1	3		1		
K										9	
* indicates those glasses having a pierced shell in the crest											



# APPENDIX D-2

## TYPE AND TIME PERIOD DISTRIBUTION OF LOOKING GLASSES LABELED BY JOHN ELLIOTT, SR.

A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
F <sub>1</sub>			
F <sub>2</sub>			
G			
H			
I			
	Chestnut Street label	Handwritten label and Walnut Street label I	Walnut Street label II