

THE HISTORIC
Tucker House
& ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXHIBIT



THE BERMUDA NATIONAL TRUST



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To protect Bermuda's unique natural & cultural heritage forever

Preface

Ever since Bermuda was first settled 400 years ago, its residents have been making an impact on these islands, for better and for worse. They have crafted and built beautiful things...houses, boats, furniture and silver spoons. They have also changed the landscape, using biodiversity-rich marshes as rubbish dumps, importing invasive plant and animal species that threaten the native species, over-developing this narrow strip of land in the ocean. The threat of losing valuable open spaces and historic treasures sparked the creation of the Bermuda Monuments Trust in 1937 by a group of Bermudians who wanted to ensure that future generations would have the opportunity to understand their past. In 1970 the Bermuda National Trust was founded and took over from the Monuments Trust. Since then it has grown to become one of the island's most respected institutions. It is an independent not-for-profit organization which promotes the preservation of the island's architectural, historic and environmental treasures, and encourages public access to and enjoyment of them. Its members and friends are from all walks of life, having in common a love of Bermuda and the desire that its special aspects should be safeguarded for everyone to enjoy now, and forever.

Each of our historic houses tells a story about Bermuda's intriguing past. Their exhibits comprise an outstanding collection of furniture, silver, porcelain and paintings made and owned by Bermudians. This guide provides information on the architecture and history of this very special Bermuda National Trust property. It highlights the people who occupied the premises and sets the building into the historical timeline of our history. Images will help you to identify unique pieces of art, furniture and artefacts. We hope that your visit to our historic house will be enhanced and that you will be encouraged to visit other Trust properties soon.

For more information on the Bermuda National Trust, the properties in its care, programmes, events, membership and volunteer opportunities please visit www.bnt.bm or contact us at 441 236 6483.

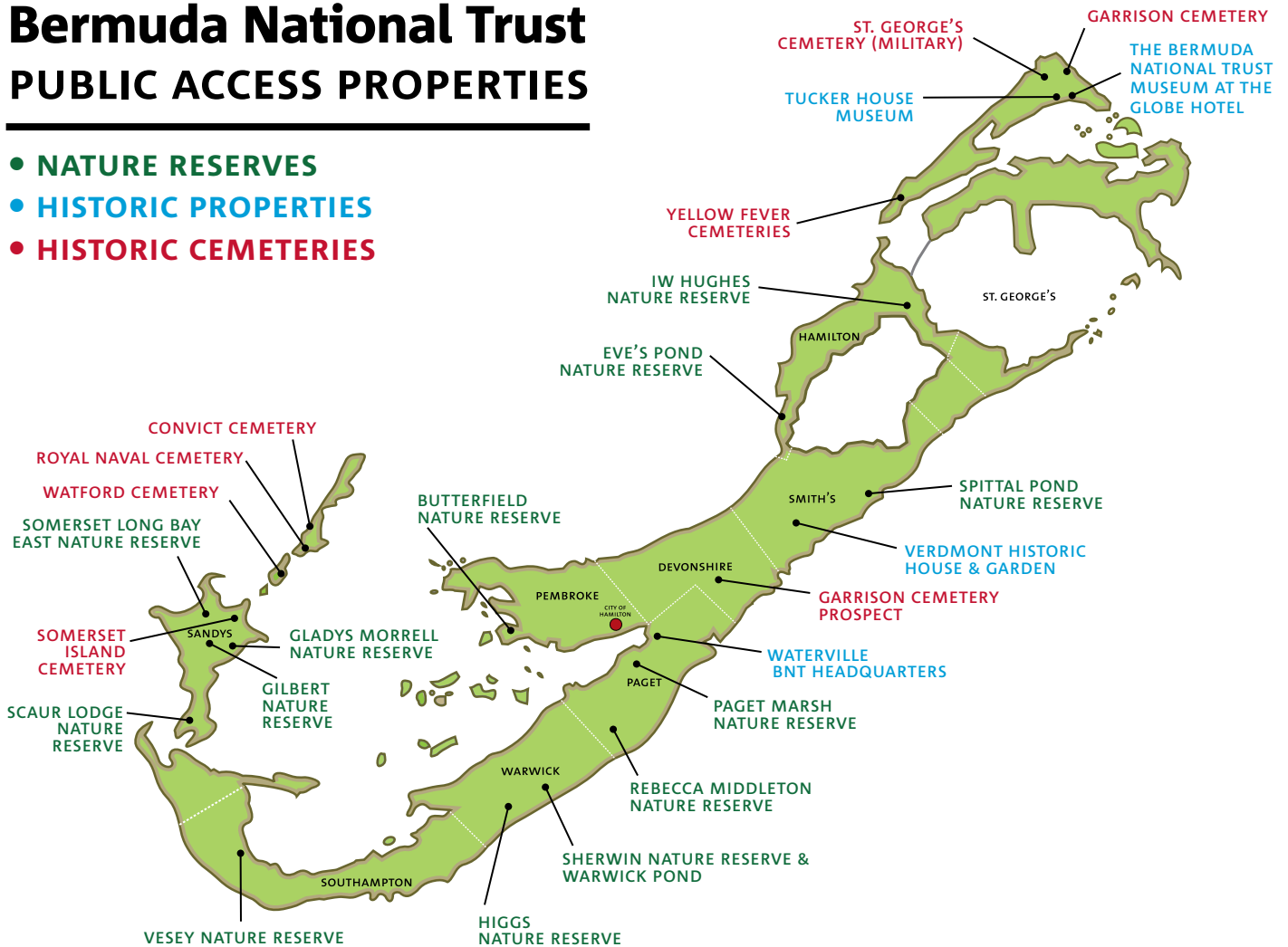
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Bermuda National Trust

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Directions

Location: 5 Water Street, St. George's

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Ferry: Apr-Nov only - yellow route

THE HISTORIC **Tucker House** & ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXHIBIT



THE HISTORIC TUCKER HOUSE WAS THE FIRST PROPERTY ACQUIRED by the Historical Monuments Trust in 1939 and it remains one of the most important buildings in the Bermuda National Trust's possession. It was opened in 1953 by the Monuments Trust largely thanks to Robert Tucker of Baltimore, a distant cousin of President Henry Tucker, who bequeathed his extensive collection of Tucker family furniture to the Monuments Trust when he died at the age of 102.

The first owner of the land on which Tucker House stands was Sarah Tucker Hubbard, but it was Thomas Smith, not she, who built Tucker House. Sarah lived in a house which no longer exists on the waterside lot. In 1752 her daughters sold the northern part of the property to merchant and mariner Captain Thomas Smith, who built Tucker House much as it exists today.

The building is a typical merchant's house with cellars below and living quarters above. It has a steeply pitched hip roof on the south side, with a double-flue chimney at the west end and lateral steps up to a simple porch in a style which was common in St. George's because of the constraints of the narrow streets. The Flemish gables at the rear of the house may have been inspired by the architecture of the Dutch colonies to which Smith's merchant career took him, but they could have been copied from the Globe Hotel.

After Sarah's death, Smith acquired the waterside lot from her daughter, Rebecca Hubbard Outerbridge, and built a wharf, storehouse and fishpond. All of this prosperity was to be short-lived however; in 1771 he lost a lawsuit, and was forced to sell Tucker House and move to Mitchell House, the home of his wife Effie's aunt.

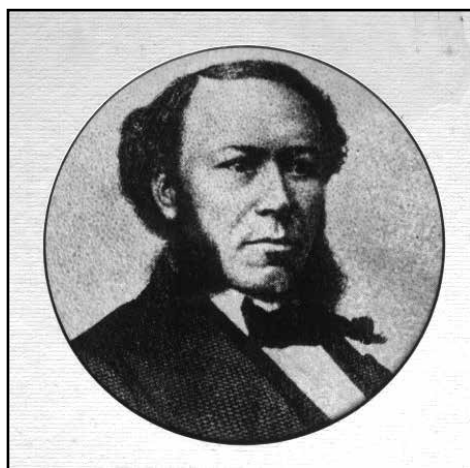
The Collector of Customs, Thomas Smith of Vermont, owned Tucker House for a short time, but sold it in 1775 to Henry Tucker and his wife Frances, the daughter of Governor Bruere. In 1770 this well-connected man had been appointed Colonial Treasurer by his father-in-law, becoming a member of the Governor's Council the following year. Thanks to the influence of his own father, he also held the posts of Secretary and Provost Marshal, which came with a handsome salary. In the 1790s he was appointed President of the Council and, occasionally, Acting Governor.



Almost immediately after Henry moved in to Tucker House, the notorious Gunpowder Plot blew up. During the American Revolution, Bermuda was fearful of losing trade with the American colonies on which they depended for food as well as profit. Colonel Henry Tucker, President Henry's father, led a delegation to Philadelphia to plead Bermuda's cause. The Americans needed munitions, and soon afterwards a group of Bermudians stole gunpowder from the arsenal above Tobacco Bay and sent it to the Revolutionary American forces in Boston. It was an embarrassing state of affairs for the son-in-law of the British Governor, but in the tense times that followed President Henry is believed to have helped calm the situation in spite of the widespread belief that his brother St. George was somehow involved.

As their family grew Henry and Frances needed to expand Tucker House. They added outbuildings, and a long extension to the north on the western side, only half of which survives. At the same time, the living quarters were upgraded. In 1807, having decided to move to England, Henry put Tucker House up for lease, but he died unexpectedly of influenza in February 1808. In 1809 his widow Frances sold the house to an agent of Gosling and Company, but when the firm went bankrupt and he could not pay the mortgage she was forced to foreclose. In 1813 the house was sold again, this time to Liverpool merchant James Richardson. In 1825 Benjamin Dickinson Harvey, ship owner and lawyer, bought the house for £ 1,100. He lived in Hamilton Parish but some of his 11 children lived at Tucker House. In his work as a lawyer, he was described as a champion of American causes in the Bermudian courts, and came under criticism for being 'a most determined Democrat'. He served as a Member of the House of Assembly for some 40 years. After his sudden death in 1833, his daughter Althea lived in the house.

In 1860 Tucker House was briefly sold to brothers William Tudor Tucker and the Reverend Richard Tucker, sons of the William Tucker who had earlier owned both the Casino and Reeve Court. They sold the house back to Althea but kept the waterside lot and the land to the north fronting on York Street. When Althea died in 1876, her nephew Captain Aubrey Harvey Tucker of the 68th Regiment of Foot sold the house to an Irishman from Londonderry, Robert Boggs, keeper of the new prison which had been built at the foot of Rose Hill. It was the daughter of Robert Boggs who sold the house to the Historical Monuments Trust in 1953, although she lived out her life there.



Joseph Hayne Rainey

During Althea's tenure, Tucker House housed another notable person. Joseph Hayne Rainey was a free black man who left his native South Carolina during the American Civil War to avoid forced labour on seaport fortifications. In Bermuda he worked as a barber, renting the detached kitchen at Tucker House as a barber shop, while his wife built her reputation as a skilled dressmaker. Rainey was self-educated, and drew on the knowledge of the merchants of the town to further his education. After the Civil War, the Rainey family returned to the US where he became the first black member of the House of Representatives.

African Diaspora Heritage Trail • Bermuda

The Bermuda Department of Tourism and the international body **African Diaspora** created a trail linking sites, monuments and museums which have a common legacy of slavery and portray the heritage and culture of the people of African descent. These sites were officially designated as part of the transnational heritage tourism initiative formed in 2001 and are part of the **UNESCO Slave Route Project** with the aim to protect and educate about the heritage and culture of those belonging to the African Diaspora. A bronze plaque on Barber's Alley created by Bermudian sculptor Carlos Dowling indicates the official heritage status of Tucker House.



The Owners & Occupiers

WORLD EVENTS	YEAR	HOUSE OWNER	NOTES
United Kingdom of Great Britain formed (1707)	1699	Sarah Tucker	The lot with water lot access was granted to Sarah
Peter the Great, King of Russia dies (1725)	1749	Jane and Rebecca Tucker	Daughters inherited the property from Sarah
J. S. Bach dies (1750) British rule India (1757)	1752	Captain Thomas Smith	Thomas bought the unimproved northern lot and built Tucker House much as it stands today
James Cook Expedition to the Pacific (1760-1780s)	1760	Thomas Smith (same as above)	Acquired the water lot across the street from Rebecca Outerbridge and then built a wharf, storehouse and a fishpond
	1771	Thomas Smith of Vermont	Thomas was the Collector of Customs.
1775-1783 American Revolution & Independence	1775	President Henry Tucker & Frances Bruere - Tucker	Henry and Frances expanded the house to accommodate their family of 12 children and lived at Tucker House during the period of the Gunpowder Plot.
1803-1815 Napoleonic wars	1809	John Till	Frances sold the property for £3,000 by installments to John Till. Till was unable to pay his mortgage and the property went back to Frances Tucker who then had to foreclose.
	1811	Frances Tucker	
	1813	James Richardson	James was a Liverpool merchant
Slavery was abolished in Bermuda (1834)	1825	Benjamin Dickinson Harvey	Benjamin bought the property for £1,100. He served as a Member of the House of Assembly for 40 years.
American Civil War (1860-1865)	1860	William Tudor & Richard Thomas Tucker	A brief transfer to the Tucker brothers by Althea (daughter of Benjamin Dickinson Harvey). She bought the house back but the brothers kept the water lot and land north of building.
		Althea Harvey	Joseph Rainey rented the kitchen at Tucker House from 1862 to 1865 and used it as a Barber Shop.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suez Canal opens (1869) • Diesel Engine patented (1892) 	1876	Robert Boggs	Boggs was an Irishman and the keeper of HM Prison at Rose Hill
World War II (1939-1945)	1939	Bermuda Monuments Trust	Robert Boggs' daughter sold the house to the Bermuda Monuments Trust.
Theatre Boycott in Bermuda (1951)	1953	Bermuda Monuments Trust	The President Henry Tucker House Museum opened on May 5, 1953.
U.S. President Richard Nixon orders an invasion of Cambodia, widening the war in Vietnam.	1970	Bermuda National Trust	The Bermuda National Trust began caring for Tucker House.

Tucker House Today



Tucker House was opened as a museum on Tuesday, May 5, 1953, by the Bermuda Historical Monuments Trust, forerunner of the Bermuda National Trust, who then began caring for this beautiful home in 1970. In the early years, only the front portion of the house served as the museum with the curator Miss Trotter living in the rear rooms. Admission was 25 cents or 1 shilling and 9 pence.

left:
Walled Garden

The building, which dates from the mid 18th century, is a typical merchant's house with cellars below and living quarters above. It has a steeply pitched hip roof on the south side, with a double-flue chimney at the west end and lateral steps up to a simple porch, in a style which was common in St George's because of the constraints of the narrow streets. The outside walls are white-washed with contrasting shutters in green. Tucker House has two small gardens enclosed within characteristic St. George's courtyard walls. The plants in them would have been available in Bermuda at the time Henry Tucker and his family lived here between 1775 and 1808. Some of them would have been useful for cooking or medicinal purposes.

The entrance to Tucker House is located on the southern side of the building. Steps leading from Water Street to the elevated porch guide visitors into the rectangular entrance hall.

Furniture, Paintings, China & Silver Collection

The Tucker House collection of 18th century furniture, paintings, china and silver is particularly interesting because it was largely inherited from the Tucker Family. Much of was originally assembled by President Henry's sister, Frances, who married a cousin, also named Henry Tucker. It was generously bequeathed to the Bermuda Historical Monuments Trust by their great-grandson, Robert Tucker of Baltimore. Following his death in 1950 at the remarkable age of 102, it took two years for the furniture to arrive on the island and be placed in the house.



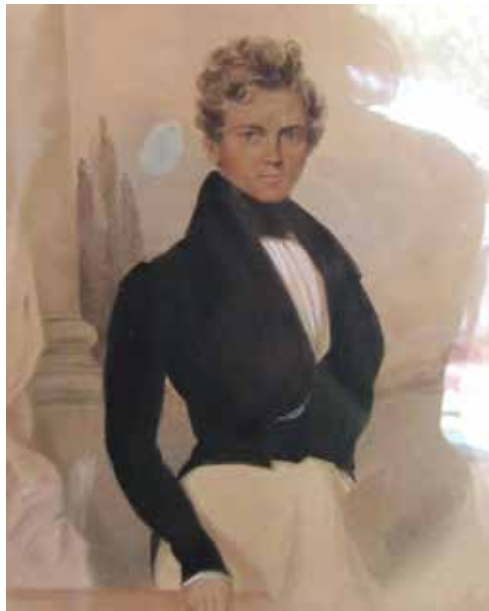
left:
Plate from English dinner service

centre:
Dining room

right:
St. George Tucker (1752-1827)

Entrance Hall

The white walls of the entrance hall are decorated with two water colour paintings. There is a small portrait of **Henry John Tucker** (1811-1843) and a second larger painting called '**The Tucker Armorial**'. There is also a framed photograph of **Robert Tucker** (1848-1950), the nephew of Henry John Tucker and donor of much of the furnishings. Furniture in this area consists of a Bermuda-made cedar high banister-back side chair and an ancient Bermuda-made cedar armchair. Both chairs are believed to have been crafted between 1690 and 1720. Noteworthy are an early brass lantern clock from c.1700 and a George III brass-mounted glass hanging lantern from c.1820.



left:

Henry John Tucker (1811-1843)
Robert Tucker's uncle

right:

Robert Tucker (1848-1950)



left:

Bermuda-made cedar arm chair

centre:

Brass lantern clock

right:

**Bermuda-made high
banister-back chair**

Drawing Room

The drawing room is located to the left of the entrance hall and is decorated with a variety of remarkable furnishings. Outstanding is a **Bermuda-made cedar tea table** from c1740. The table has a moulded rectangular top above a conforming frame with scrolled skirts on cabriole legs with dimple carving to the knees and triple, or drake, feet.



left:
Drawing room

right:
Bermuda-made cedar tea table
c.1740



left:
Drawing room

right:
English sabre and scabbard,
c.1820, manufactured by Henry
Wilkinson, Pall Mall, London

There are five beautifully crafted **Bermuda-made cedar Queen Anne chairs** with caned seats and Spanish feet. Interesting is the **English sabre and scabbard** hanging next to Colonel Tucker's portrait. It has a steel blade and was manufactured by Henry Wilkinson, Pall Mall, London c.1820.

The **Jamaican Games Table** is a superb chess and backgammon table manufactured from eighty-four different Jamaican woods crafted by Ralph Tumbull and Son, Kingston, Jamaica in March 1839.



left:
Jamaican Games Table
with Bermuda-made cedar
Queen Anne chairs

right:
Jamaican Games Table open,
1839



The **George III mahogany long-case clock** is of English origin and was made c.1810. It has a brass dial with Roman chapters, date and second hands. The arch above the clock face depicts two children on a seesaw.

left:
Mahogany long-case clock

Portraits Displayed in the Drawing Room



left:
Major Henry Tucker (1652-1728) of Surry County, Virginia, the artist is unknown. This is the earliest Tucker portrait.

right:
Colonel Henry Tucker 1713-1787) of 'The Grove', Southampton, by Joseph Blackburn, is signed and dated 1752. Colonel Henry Tucker was a leading individual on the island during his time.



left:
Ann Tucker, née Butterfield (1722-1797), the wife of Colonel Henry Tucker by Joseph Blackburn. The painting shows her with two of her children, Nathaniel (1750-1807) and Elizabeth (1747- 838).

right:
Elizabeth Tucker (1747-1837) the daughter of Ann Butterfield Tucker and Colonel Henry Tucker by Lucius Munson.

Dining Room

The dining room is located to the right of the entrance hall. It is the largest room in the house and has a beautifully balanced feel to it. The dominating feature is the **Bermuda-made dining table** made of Cuban wood surrounded by a set of nine George III mahogany dining chairs. The table is set with an **English dinner service** depicting a colourful parrot, flowers and foliage. This transfer-printed stoneware, dates from c.1840, and would have had the colours added by hand before firing. This type of service must have been very popular in Bermuda as it was a gift from three different homes.



left:
Dining room

below:
English dinner service



Portraits in the Dining Room



left:
St. George Tucker (1752-1827)

right:
Nathaniel Tucker (1750-1807)



left:
Frances Tucker (1740-1825)
right:
Thomas Tudor Tucker (1744-1828)

Bed Chamber

The bedchamber is located off the drawing room to the far left. A delightful George III carved **mahogany four-post bedstead** is the centrepiece of the bed chamber. It is beautifully carved with flowers and wheat. It was made in England c.1785.

Other furnishings include a **Bermuda-made cedar pedestal side table**, a **George III mahogany commode** in the form of a miniature chest of drawers



left:
Bed Chamber
below:
Lt Colonel George James Bruere
(c.1721-1780)

A **portrait of Governor George Bruere** is displayed in the bedchamber. He served in Bermuda from 1764 to his death in 1780. The portrait remained in the Bruere family until it came up for auction in 2005, and Trust Past-President David L. White bought it for the Trust. Christie's auction house attributes the painting to John Russell, RA, a leading portrait painter of his day in London. This painting is the most recent of the collection. Despite his daughter having married into the Tucker family, Governor Bruere fell out irrevocably with Colonel Henry Tucker over the Colonel's negotiations with the American Revolutionaries and the open support of two of the other Tucker sons for the American cause, and harsh words were said to have been exchanged. It was felt that it would not be right to hang their portraits in the same room as other family members.

Other paintings in the bed chamber include: Major Henry Tucker, the Marquis de Lafayette, the Tucker ship *Lion*, George Washington, and Dr Jonathan Tucker.



Nursery

The nursery is located off the drawing room and to the right of the bed chamber. The centrepiece of the nursery is a **Bermuda-made cedar tall post bedstead** from c.1840 and a smaller child's crib from c.1810. The tall posts were most likely designed to hold a mosquito net over the sleeping area. There are also various other furnishings made out of Bermuda cedar such as a **rocking chair, cradle, side chair, doll's bed** and a **small chest** next to the bedstead.

The **mahogany chest of drawers** was made in Bermuda by Henry Smith III and his brother Samuel Smith c.1810. The Smith brothers were leading housewrights and cabinet makers in Bermuda in the early 19th century. Their workshop produced some of the most sophisticated and elegant furniture ever made on the island.



left:
Nursery

Library or Silver Room

This room is located to the rear of the entrance hall. Most noticeable is an exquisite **silver candle holder** made in London c.1858, which is positioned on a round **Bermuda mahogany and cedar table** in the centre of the room. The **candle holder** was presented to Alexander Ewing Esq by the Bermuda legislature in 1864. The room also displays the Tucker family **tallboy**, which is a Bermuda-made cedar high chest of drawers.

A unique Bermuda-made **mahogany secretaire bookcase** holds a collection of fragile antique books that came from various Tucker households. The titles represent the kind of reading material typical for most good households in the 19th century.



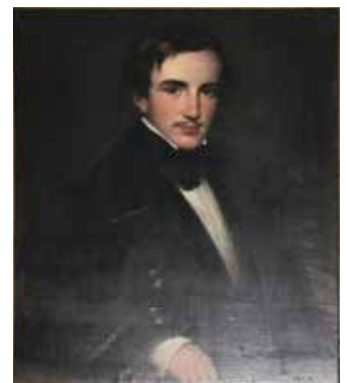
left:
Library or silver room



left:
Library or silver room
with George III mahogany
breakfront bookcase

The **George III mahogany breakfront bookcase** on the left hand side of the room has descended through branches of the Tucker family over generations. It holds a superb collection of silver items which were used by the family on a regular basis but which also provided ready capital as the price of silver maintained a basic market value. The pieces on display were made in England, America and Bermuda between 1710 (Thomas Savage's footed tray) and 1860 (silver plated water pitcher).

The large portrait hanging above the door depicts Henry St. George Tucker C.B. (1823-1897). He was the son of Henry St. George Tucker (1771-1851) and worked in the Indian Civil Service.



above:
Henry St. George Tucker C.B.
(1823-1897).

Kitchen

A small hallway beyond the library leads down a few steps into the kitchen. The hallway is decorated with **a print of the large family tree of the Tucker family**, a couple of cabinets with small silver items and a **wooden bust of Samuel Johnson**.

The kitchen contains a fire place for cooking. The room is sunken into the ground which provides a cooling effect to the area. The furnishings include a rectangular **Bermuda-made cedar stretcher table**, a **Bermuda marble topped cedar side table** and a large mahogany press (cupboard) with three-panel doors and drawers. The kitchen equipment is very interesting as the pieces are typical household equipment that would have been used by the Tuckers. The kitchen has access to two small courtyard gardens.



left:
Tucker House kitchen



left:
George III oak dough bin on stand
A dough bin was used for large-quantity baking. After preparation, the dough was placed in the bin and allowed to rise. The dough was then shaped into individual loaves and baked in the bread oven.



left:
Copper pots – used for cooking
and a **dough mould** – to bake a
single bread loaf

right:
Palmetto leaf broom – made
from palm leaves and used to
sweep floors



left:
Citrus press – designed to separate
the pulp and juice from fruit

right:
Candle mould – for making
multiple candles at one time



left:
Mortar & Pestle – for grinding
corn. Mortars of various sizes
were used in households

right:
Scale with brass pans –
for measuring during
food preparation

President Henry Tucker & the Gunpowder Plot

PRESIDENT HENRY TUCKER, THE ELDEST SON OF COLONEL HENRY TUCKER OF SOUTHAMPTON, WAS SENT TO LIVE IN ST GEORGE'S and work in the shipping office to oversee the family business. While there, Henry, the solemn young man from Southampton, fell in love with Frances, the lively daughter of Governor George James Bruere, the “gallant old soldier”, and they were wed in 1770. Five years and two small children later, Henry and Frances bought Tucker House and lived in it from 1775 to 1808. During this time, Henry and Frances increased their family to 10 sons and 2 daughters, one of whom died at birth.

After a few years, Henry had a very important position – he served as President of the Governor’s Council. As President, Henry was responsible for advising the Governor on issues that arose in Bermuda and any decisions that had to be made. This meant that he had to work very closely with his father-in-law.

In 1775, shortly after President Henry moved into Tucker House, he was caught up in a major crisis – the Gunpowder Plot! In the dark of the night on August 14, 1775, a group of Bermudians crept up the hill to the north of the Town of St George and broke through the roof of a small building which stored the government supply of gunpowder. Quickly, they jumped inside, unlocked the door and rolled out the barrels, one by one. Quietly and cautiously, they transported the barrels over the hill to Tobacco Bay, where several boats waited to carry the ammunition to a larger ship anchored offshore. Once the gunpowder was safely on board the ship made its way to America where the gunpowder was used in the American Revolutionary War against Britain. Why would someone risk punishment and possibly his life to steal gunpowder? And how was President Henry involved?

The story really begins with the American colonies that did not want to be forced to pay taxes to Britain anymore, 3,000 miles away, without having any say in the matter. This and other factors led to the American Revolution that began in 1775. Britain sent soldiers to fight in America and after many battles the 13 American colonies were granted their independence in 1783. However, during the war the American colonies stopped sending any goods to other British colonies like Bermuda. This was disastrous for Bermuda because much of the wheat and other grains used to make bread, a daily staple, came from these American colonies.

With their supply of wheat cut off, were the people of Bermuda going to starve? Not if the Tucker family could help it! President Henry’s father, along with some other Bermudians, went to Philadelphia to see what could be done. The Americans agreed to send wheat IF Bermuda supplied gunpowder to them so they could fight the British troops. Thus, the gunpowder was stolen!

What we don’t know is who stole the gunpowder? President Henry’s father, the Colonel, and his brother, St. George, were supposed to have been involved in the theft, but this was never proven and no one was ever charged.

President Henry, though, was caught right in the middle between his family and his wife’s family. His family was very supportive of the American colonies seeking independence and, in fact, two of his brothers settled in America. However, he was also married to the Governor’s daughter and Governor Bruere had quite opposite views. He was fiercely loyal to Britain and King George III, and, indeed, lost two of his sons fighting for Britain in the American Revolution. How did President Henry respond? His eldest son (also named Henry) wrote, “My father kept neutral ground.” It seems that President Henry remained on good terms with both his father and his father-in-law. Not once was he ever suspected of being involved in the Gunpowder Plot.

Joseph Hayne Rainey



JOSEPH HAYNE RAINey WAS BORN INTO SLAVERY IN GEORGETOWN, South Carolina in 1832. His father Edward Rainey purchased freedom for his family and moved them to Charleston when Joseph was 14. There both father and son worked as barbers. Rainey's mother was of mixed race with French and African ancestors. In 1859 he married Susan who was from the West Indies and also of mixed race. They had three children: Joseph II, Herbert and Olivia. In 1862, during the Civil War when the Confederacy drafted all free black men to construct fortifications around Charleston, Rainey worked building walls and digging ditches. He also worked as a cook and labourer on blockade-running ships and while doing so he and his wife fled to Bermuda and settled in St. Georges.

Bermuda had abolished slavery in 1834 and was very hospitable to the Rainey's. They rented the detached kitchen at Tucker House where he set up a barbershop. His wife had considerable talent as a dressmaker and was able to establish a business making dresses for several leading ladies of St. George's. At this time the house was owned and occupied by Althea Harvey, who inherited the house from her father Benjamin Dickinson Harvey. Rainey used the conversations with his clients to improve his education and knowledge about current affairs in Bermuda and the US.

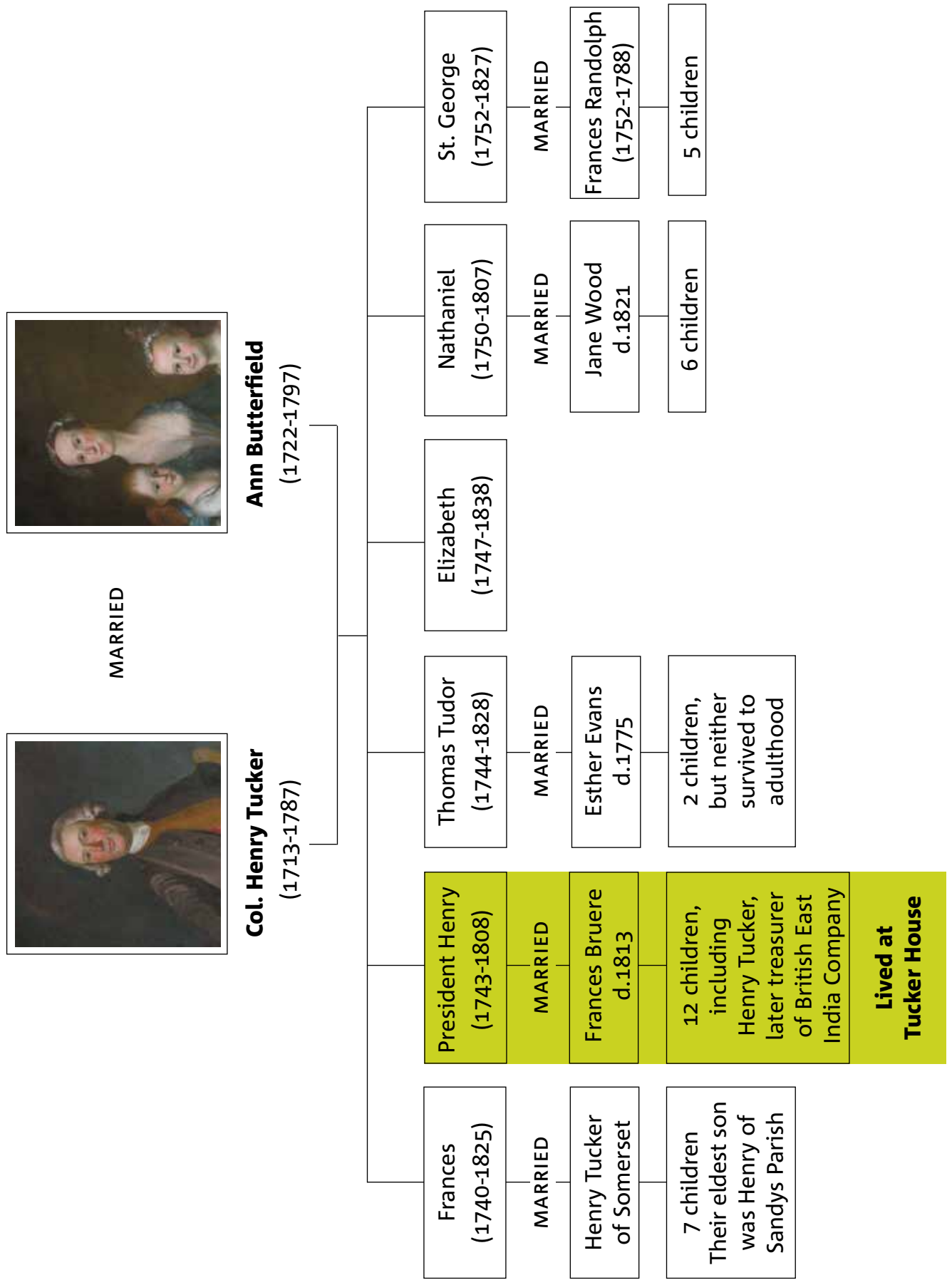
On January 1, 1863 American President Abraham Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, declaring slavery outlawed in all Confederate States which were still in a state of rebellion. However, slavery in the loyal border-states was untouched by this proclamation and slaves there had to endure almost another 3 years before they were freed. It was the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution which finally outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude on December 6, 1865.

After the end of the Civil War in 1866 the Rainey's took their savings from Bermuda and returned to Charleston. There Rainey became increasingly involved in politics and was well regarded within the community. In 1870, he was elected to the State Senate of South Carolina and later that year he was elected to the Congress of the United States as a Republican. In 1874, he became the first black man to preside over the House of Representatives. He was re-elected four times and served until March 1879, which was a record length of service for a black Congressman only surpassed in the 1950s.

During his term Rainey supported legislation which promoted the human rights of southern blacks and economy of the south. He focused on the desegregation of schools and protection of blacks from action by the Klu-Klux Klan. He also advocated radical Republican Senator Charles Sumner's Civil Rights Bill of 1875, which outlawed racial discrimination on juries, in schools, on transportation and in public accommodation.

After Rainey retired from Congress in 1879, he was appointed a special agent of the US Treasury Department in South Carolina. He served two years and then started and managed a couple of businesses. Shortly before he died of congestive fever on August 1, 1887 he and his wife had opened a millinery shop in Georgetown.

The Tuckers of Tucker House



Archaeology at Tucker House

The Tucker House was the site of Bermuda's first terrestrial archaeological project undertaken by David Fleming in 1973. However, it was not until 1988 that archaeology fully explored the property. The archaeologists wanted to investigate the material life of Henry Tucker and begin to explore the material world of Bermuda in a comparative Atlantic perspective, most especially in relation to Williamsburg, Virginia. From 1988 to 1991 Marley Brown III from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, in cooperation with the Bermuda National Trust Archaeological Research Committee, undertook four seasons of work under the floorboards of the main house, now the basement archaeological museum exhibit. Additionally in 1997 Marley Brown III, along with Dwayne Pickett from Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, returned to the Tucker House to excavate under the floorboards in the kitchen.

Archaeological work in the kitchen provided evidence for the Tucker House's other famous 18th century resident, Thomas Smith, who was Collector of Customs. Smith also owned Verdmont in Smith's Parish. While the kitchen excavations did not shed light on Henry Tucker's material world, the earlier work under the main house provided a wealth of evidence for what he owned and how he presented himself and his family to the world. The archaeological evidence shows that the Tuckers used imported refined earthenware for their dinner service and imported Chinese porcelain for their tea service. Comparatively, this social display places the Tuckers on a par with some of the wealthiest urban colonists of North America, including Williamsburg, Virginia and Charleston, South Carolina. Archaeologists and historians have interpreted these signs of elite wealth not necessarily as symbols of Henry's monetary wealth. Rather, Henry's access to these goods, at potentially more affordable prices, was a testament to Bermuda's unique trading location within the 18th century Atlantic world.

Source
Dr. Brent Fortenberry, 2012



left:
Archaeology Exhibit

Archaeology Exhibit

The display cases in the exhibit show fragments of china, glass, earthenware, early buttons, marbles and artefacts made of bone. There are also clay pipes, gun flints, hat buckles and hinges, tooth brush fragments, decorative beads and shoe buckles. Not all artefacts have been identified; some remain a complete mystery to all who have seen them. Additional information on the Tucker family tree can be found in one display case.



left:
Archaeology exhibit
display cases



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