

What work could a boy do when he grew up?

A boy often grew up to do what his father did. If he was the son of a farmer, he was likely to go into farming. If his father was a planter, he might become a planter, and maybe a lawyer, too. The son of a merchant might go into business. But many boys, especially those of the middling sort, needed to learn a trade. They started thinking about their future when they were about ten years old.

One choice was to become a blacksmith. James Anderson had a shop on Francis Street. He made all kinds of metal tools and could repair a musket as good as new. In the mid-1770s, when the Revolutionary War came, Mr. Anderson made and repaired weapons. A boy working for James Anderson would have helped supply the American troops with guns.

A boy might decide to model himself after Benjamin Powell. Mr. Powell was a successful *undertaker*, which in

the 1700s was a building contractor, not a funeral director. Benjamin Powell built the tower and steeple on Bruton Parish Church. He had a fine house on Waller Street with a separate office building next door.

Being a cabinetmaker was another useful and highly skilled trade. Benjamin Bucktrout, who lived at the north end of town, made furniture. He also repaired harpsichords and spinets and made coffins.

Elkanah Deane, who lived on Prince George Street, had a busy coach-making shop. He and his workers built many of the carts, wagons, and carriages you would have seen on the streets of Williamsburg.

After a boy and his family decided what trade was best for him, his parents arranged for him to become an apprentice.



*Seesaw, Margery Daw,
Jack shall have a new master.
He shall have but a penny a day,
Because he won't work any faster.*

