

The Inkwell

SPRING 2018

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Volunteer!
410-398-
1790

**Renew
your
membership
today!**

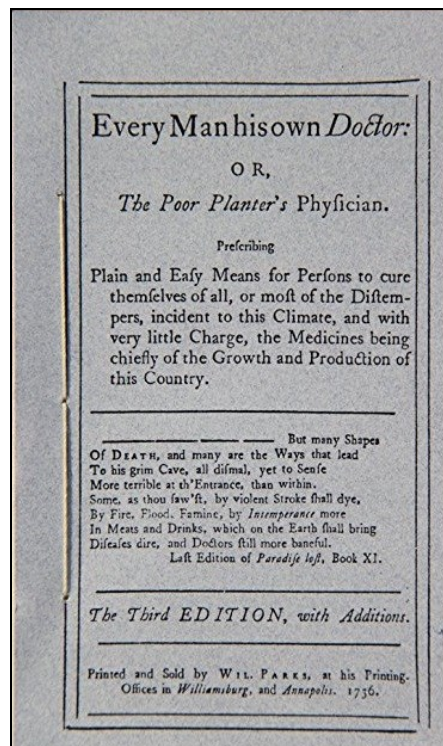
Cecil County and the History of American Medicine

By Rusty Eder

Today we take the privilege of top-flight medical care for granted, but imagine what a “doctor’s visit” was like for our colonial ancestors. Back when Cecil County was only a little removed from the frontier, medical care was usually a self-service issue, with most people relying on folk remedies, a solid knowledge of the local flora and fauna, or a popular booklet entitled *Every Man His Own Doctor: Or The Poor Planter’s Physician*.

This tome offered home remedies for everything from gout and dropsy to the “dry gripes” (colic from lead poisoning) and the “King’s Evil” (tuberculosis of the lymph glands in the neck). Real doctors were few and far between mostly because if you wanted to get a proper medical degree, you needed enough time and money to study abroad at universities in Edinburgh or London. There simply was no medical school in Great Britain’s American colonies. This all changed in 1765, thanks to a number of young men educated at Cecil County’s own West Nottingham Academy. Not only did Academy graduates establish the first medical school in the colonies, they also represented some of the most important medical figures in American colonial history.

The story begins with Drs. William Shippen and John Morgan, graduates of both West Nottingham Academy and the aforementioned University of Edinburgh. Shippen was the first to earn his M.D. (1762) and upon his return to Philadelphia he initiated the first series of lectures on anatomy ever delivered in America, including anatomical drawings and casts prepared for him by noted Dutch artist Jan Van Rymsdyk. Shippen ran into difficulty, however, when he included midwifery as a topic and opened the lectures to both men and women. In the 18th century, midwifery



Homemade Frontier Medicine

Continued on page 4....

President's Corner

It's been a long winter, but our volunteers have not been in hibernation. On the contrary, we have been busy getting our ducks in a row for the new year. Our first program was presented by one of our new Board members, Margie Blystone, who gave us pointers about how to tell our family story through photographs and memorabilia. The story is so important because it gives future generations a glimpse into the personality of the face in the photograph. It may answer questions, like where did I get my quirky sense of style or my sense of humor, work ethic or special talent. Right on the heels of this program will be our new exhibit "Historic Threads: 150 years of clothing, accessories and the stories that bind them." There will be a Cecil County related story for each decade beginning in 1830 along with pieces from our textile

collection to bring that story to life. Of course, there will be loads of photographs and if you had a distinctive hair style or facial hair, you may end up on our wall. We've been combing the yearbooks so beware! There will be an opening reception on the First Friday in April.

Exhibits are costly to construct and so are the materials needed to preserve our textiles so we are asking for people to Adopt-a-Box at various dollar levels to help fund the preservation of decades of textiles and to help us with future exhibits.

Unfortunately, our Family History Day scheduled for last October was canceled due to an all day driving rain. The weather wasn't even fit for ducks. But, we are going to try

again on April 29, 2018 at the Big Elk Chapel.

I am so thankful for the dedicated volunteers we have at the Historical Society, but I think it will surprise most of you to know that there are less than 20 people who are providing all the services and keeping the doors to the Society open. So when it seems like things take longer than they should, i.e. our new website, just be aware that we are doing our best and if you would like to be part of the team, please contact us. You don't need to know history to be of help to us, so come in and check out the possibilities.

*Paula Newton
President*

Officers

- ◆ PAULA NEWTON – PRESIDENT
- ◆ BETH MOORE—VICE PRESIDENT
- ◆ DEBBIE STORKE – TREASURER
- ◆ MIKE DIXON – HISTORIAN
- ◆ CAROL DONACHE – LIBRARIAN
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- ◆ LISA DOLOR – CO-CURATOR

***HSCC wants to email the Inkwell
to as many
members as possible!***

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- ◆ TRACY JENTZSCH
- ◆ MARGIE BLYSTONE

***Do you want to get involved?
Contact us!
cecilhstory@gmail.com***

Welcome, New Members!

- Irene Butler
- James Campbell
- Yvonne Checketts
- Juanita Clark
- Theresa-Ann Clark
- Carol Craig & Gregory Tarone
- Michael Harlan
- Lucy Hollick
- Parke John
- Tierra Kellow
- Diane Lawler
- Frenchy Lightcap
- Dorothy Lofland
- Kim Magaw
- Tony Martelli
- Tanya Miles
- Greg Miller
- John Palmer & Steven Jennings
(Brookbend Interiors)
- Cynthia Redemann
- James & Mary Lea Shipp
- Jeffrey Shultz
- TerriLynn Smith
- Garey Wheatley
- Len & Robin White
- Chris Widdowson
- Chris Williamson

**Do you know someone who should
become a member? Let us know!
Send us an email or give a call.**

Volunteer Spotlight: Rusty Eder



Meet Our Volunteer

Name and where you are from: Rusty Eder.
Born and raised in Elkton, MD. I currently live in
Conowingo, MD

What did you or do you do in your working life:
I am a history teacher at West Nottingham
Academy, where I also direct the plays for the
Nottingham Players and serve as Academy
Historian.

What is your job at the Historical Society:
Trustee

**What encouraged you to volunteer at the
Society:** I have enjoyed being a member and
contributing to the recent WWI exhibit, so
when I was asked to served on the Board of
Trustees I happily agreed.

What are your interests or hobbies: Reading,
music, golf, sharing time with friends and
family.

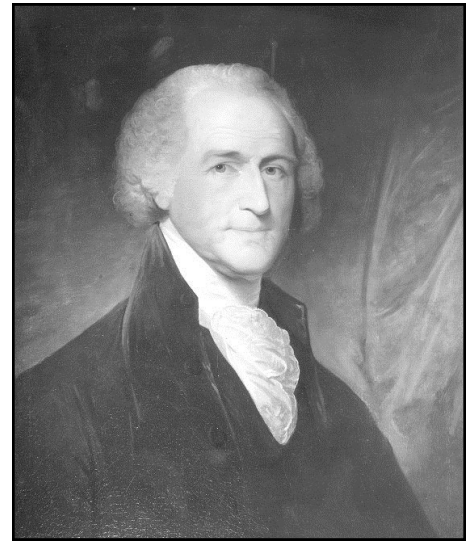


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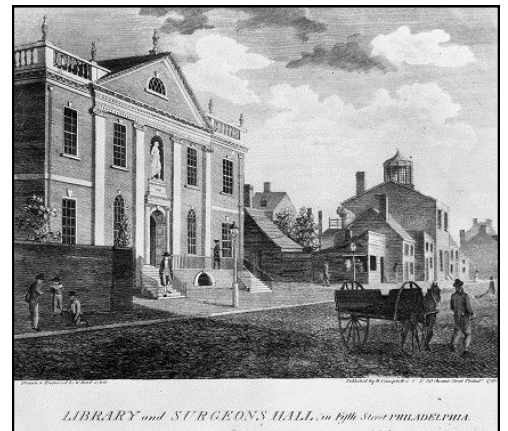
was not a “seemly” topic for men, so Shippen had to occasionally duck rocks hurled through his windows or angry mobs rushing his dissection lab.

While Shippen was delivering his lectures, he was also in close contact with his old schoolmate, John Morgan, who earned his MD in 1763 and then spent the next two years traveling in France and Italy. Before he left for his final year of medical school, Morgan had often discussed the need for an American medical school with Shippen and the two had made tentative plans to present a proposal to the College of Philadelphia. Imagine Shippen’s surprise when Morgan beat him to the punch, presenting his own proposal and having himself named Chair of Theory and Practice of Physic without consulting with his old friend first. In fairness, Morgan did ask that Shippen be named Professor of Anatomy, which position Shippen accepted. He also arranged for perhaps the most illustrious WNA graduate, Dr. Benjamin Rush, to join the faculty as Professor of Chemistry in 1769. Still, Shippen never forgave him for the slight.

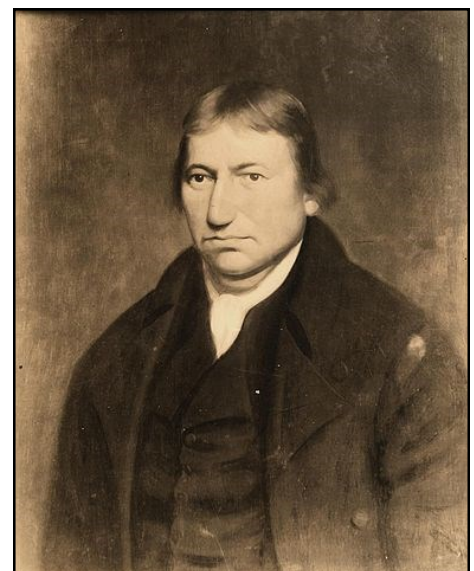
The new school flourished, graduating some of the most important doctors of the Revolutionary era, including two other West Nottingham alumni, Drs. John Archer and James Tilton. Receiving his M.A. in Theology from The College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) in 1763, Archer had originally intended to be a preacher, but decided that he was not suited for that life and turned to medicine instead. In 1768, by alphabetic convenience, he was granted his bachelor’s degree in medicine (M.B.) becoming the first person to receive a medical diploma from an American university. He then returned to Medical Hall, his home in Bel Air, MD and filled his lifetime with medicine, law, and politics. He is credited with training over 50 doctors himself and with helping to found the



Dr. William Shippen



Library and Surgeon’s Hall

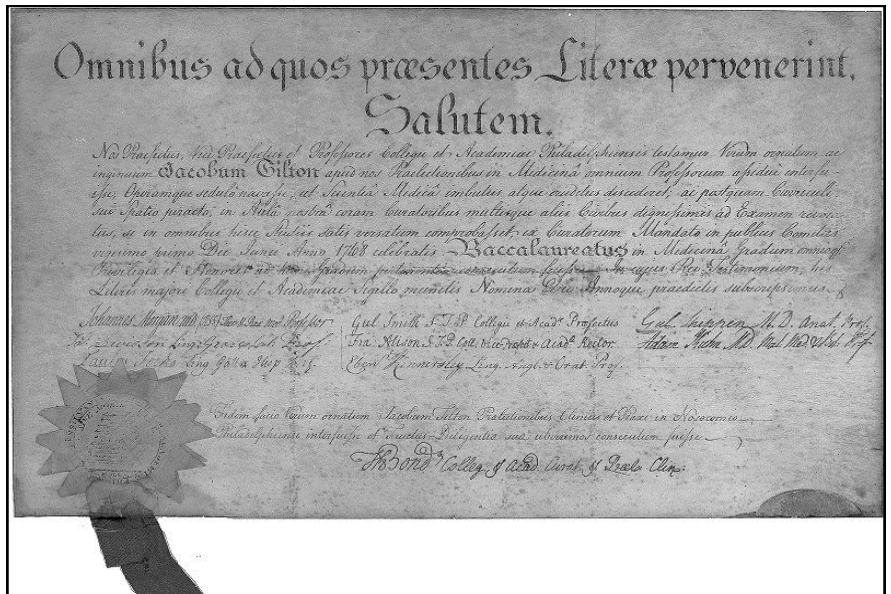


Captain John Archer

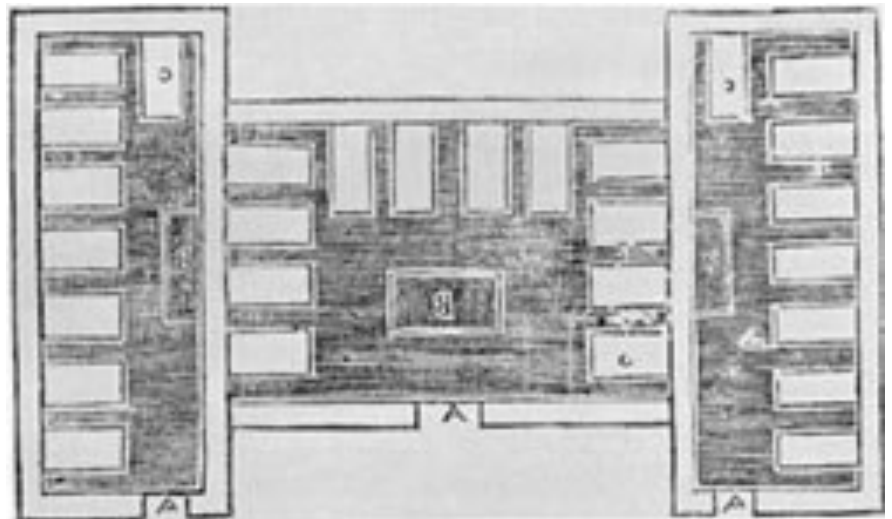
Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of the State of Maryland in 1799, which survives today as MedChi, the Medical Society of the State of Maryland.

Archer's classmate and fellow WNA alumnus, James Tilton, graduated at the top of the class in 1768, returning to complete his M.D. in 1771. He went on to a long and distinguished career in military medicine, developing important medical innovations for the Revolutionary Army, particularly in the areas of sanitation and the design of field hospitals. In private practice when the war began, he volunteered his services quickly and commanded several hospitals after serving as a battlefield surgeon during the battles of Princeton, Long Island, and White Plains, NY. While tending the wounded there, he noticed how many more soldiers were dying of diseases they contracted in the hospitals than from wounds they received in battle. He crafted a plan for small, well-ventilated huts for the sick, which featured earthen floors, since Tilton believed wood could hold infections, and beds arranged around central fireplaces with the sick and wounded laying with their feet facing the fire. Tilton believed that the smoke had a purifying effect on the sick, whom he also segregated by illness.

While some of his science may seem a little shaky today, his "Indian Huts" or "Tilton Huts" as they were called, succeeded in slowing down the spread of infectious diseases, as did Tilton's emphasis on the need for better sanitation in every field encampment. Continuing this work, Tilton saw his "Code of Regulations for the Army Medical Department" enacted into law in 1780. Then, during the War of 1812 his pioneering efforts and energetic sense of order led President Madison to appoint him as the nation's first



James Tilton's Diploma



Tilton's Log Hospital

"Physician and Surgeon General of the Army." He went on to serve in both the Continental Congress and the Delaware state House of Representatives and was elected the first president of the Medical Society of Delaware.

Meanwhile, the bad feelings between Shippen and Morgan continued to grow. While Shippen accepted the lesser position he was offered, he never forgave Morgan for beating him to the punch. This spat boiled over in the Revolutionary War, when Shippen, who was named Medical Director of the Flying Camp in New Jersey, actively undermined Morgan's authority as Director-general and Physician-in-chief of the American hospitals, reporting directly to General George Washington. Shippen wrote letter after letter criticizing pretty much everything Morgan did, from the management of medical supplies to the

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treatment of wounded and sick soldiers. In 1777, all this agitation (and some possibly legitimate charges of mismanagement of supplies) led to Morgan's dismissal from the Continental Army. Worst of all, he was replaced by... Shippen. The Continental Congress eventually published a handsome apology, but it came with no restoration to service and left Morgan angry.

So, what does an angry man do to an old friend who has done him wrong? In Morgan's case, he joined with his friend and fellow West Nottingham Academy alumnus, Dr. Benjamin Rush (who had accepted an appointment as surgeon-general of the middle department of the Continental Army) to write a series of critiques of Shippen's work, charging him with malpractice, eventually leading to Shippen's Court Martial on charges of speculation in supplies and ill-treatment of the men. Sound familiar?

In January of 1780, then, Shippen was arrested on five charges. Basically, he was accused of speculating in supplies like wine and sugar, which were needed for the sick and wounded and an incompetence that caused "needless suffering and death." He was acquitted by one vote after an unusual trial in which the membership of the trial board changed and during which he entertained the members of said board with fine food and wine, often adding in his own very mocking imitations of Dr. Morgan. His behavior convinced most folks that he was indeed insensitive to the suffering of the soldiers in his charge. It also didn't help his reputation that he never visited with or comforted the soldiers or dressed any wounds himself. He managed to keep his position, however, until January 3, 1781.

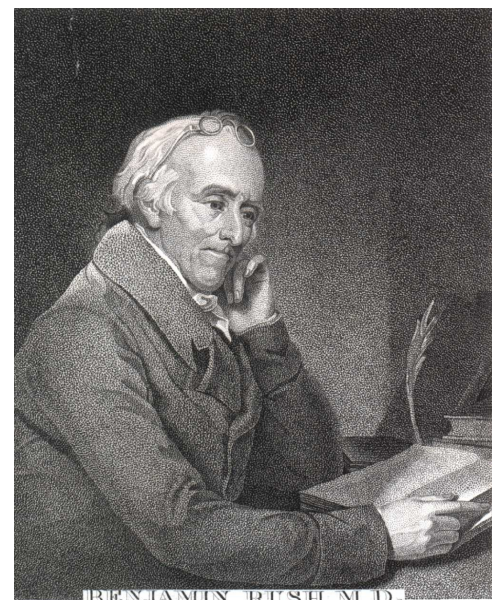
Given his part in the attacks on Shippen (not to mention his involvement in the very hazy Conway Cabal) Rush had to resign from being Surgeon General of



John Morgan

the Middle Dept. This was a sad moment, and not the only one in his illustrious lifetime, but of all the students taught by Rev. Finley Benjamin Rush stands at the head of the list. Physician, social activist, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and the "Father of American Psychology"; Benjamin Rush lived an American life worth remembering.

Unlike most of Finley's pupils, Rush did not come from a wealthy family. After his father's death, his mother ran a small store in Philadelphia as



Caption Benjamin Rush, 1745 – 1813

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Donations

Special thanks to our generous donors. We appreciate the community's support:

- Helen Long
- Emily Kilby
- Jo Ann Gardner
- Michael Leary
- Louisa Zeh
- J.P. Morgan
- Ralph and Paula Newton

Dear Historical Society of Cecil County Member,

We are excited to announce our upcoming exhibit "Historic Threads: 150 Years of clothing, accessories and the stories that bind them." In January, we were fortunate to have had the University of Delaware SWAT team assist us with the cataloging of our textile collection. For 8 days, the group of graduate students catalogued, photographed, vacuumed and rehoused a large part of our clothing collection. Through this process many unique pieces were discovered and we are thrilled to showcase some of them in our upcoming exhibit.

Textiles remain our largest collection and we still have more work ahead to finish this project. We are reaching out to our membership to help us complete this process with the remaining pieces and to help us exhibit some of these treasures. Your donation to the "Adopt A Box Program" will help us to generate the much needed funds to purchase archival boxes, mannequins and display pieces. We look forward to seeing you in April at the opening reception of this exhibit.

We thank you for your generosity in helping us to meet this goal!



Adopt a Box Program

\$250 ___ \$100 ___ \$50 ___ \$30 ___ \$25 ___ other ___

Name: _____

Address: _____

Mail your Donations to: Historical Society of Cecil County 135 E. Main St. Elkton, Maryland 21921

(Donations of \$100 or more will be recognized in our exhibit)



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL COUNTY PRESENTS

FAMILY HERITAGE DAY

a one day festival of history, genealogy, food & fun

guest speaker: emily kilby

Fair Hill history talk.

historical society:

Take your memories and photos out of the shoebox and share with others or use our research materials to start to find your roots.

elk creek preservation society:

History and Heritage of the Elk Creeks watershed & structures.

big elk chapel ladies aid society:

History of Big Elk Chapel and samples of treasured recipes from the Big Elk area.

bluegrass music and more.....



DON'T MISS THIS EVENT

4.29.18

gates open FROM 1:00-4:00^{PM}

Join us at BIG ELK CHAPEL corner of GALLAWAY and BIG ELK CHAPEL ROADS

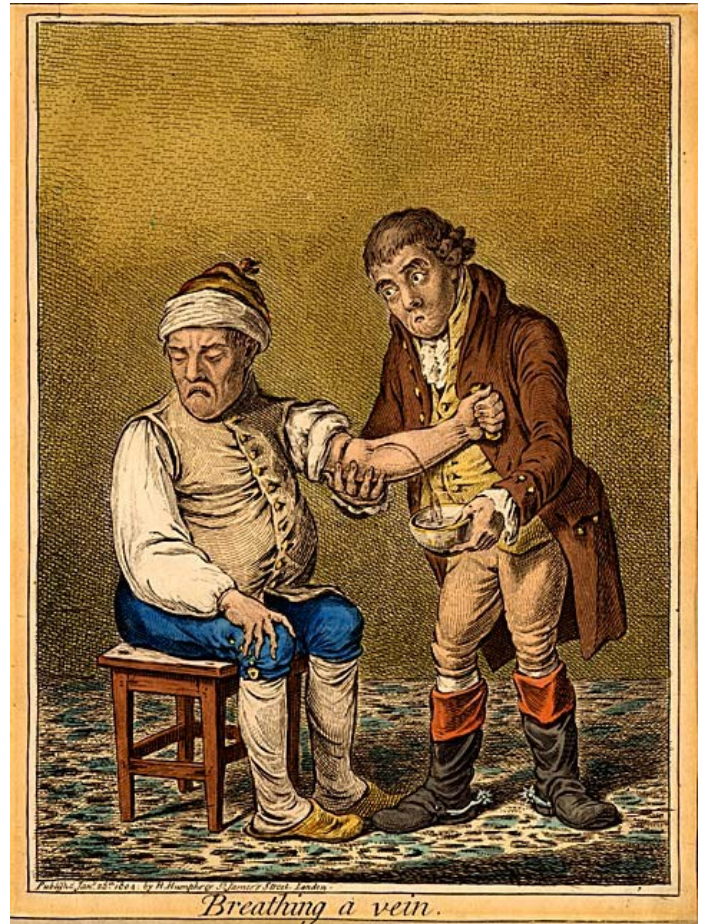
HSCC MEMBERS \$5/ NON-MEMBERS \$10/ UNDER 12 FREE

email us for more information: cecilhistoria@gmail.com

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she tried to keep her family together. Fortunately for her, and us, her sister married the Rev. Samuel Finley, and young Benjamin became WNA's first "scholarship" student and its most noted alumnus. After his years at WNA, Rush followed many of his schoolmates to the College of New Jersey, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1760 at the ripe old age of 14 (not an uncommon occurrence back then.) He intended to study law but was dissuaded by his old teacher who felt "the practice of law is full of temptations" and who advised him to fast and pray over the issue and then consider medicine as a more proper field. In his autobiography, Rush doesn't mention actually doing the fasting or prayer, but he did turn to medicine. He first apprenticed with Dr. Redman in Philadelphia before travelling to Scotland and earning his M.D. from the University of Edinburgh in 1768.

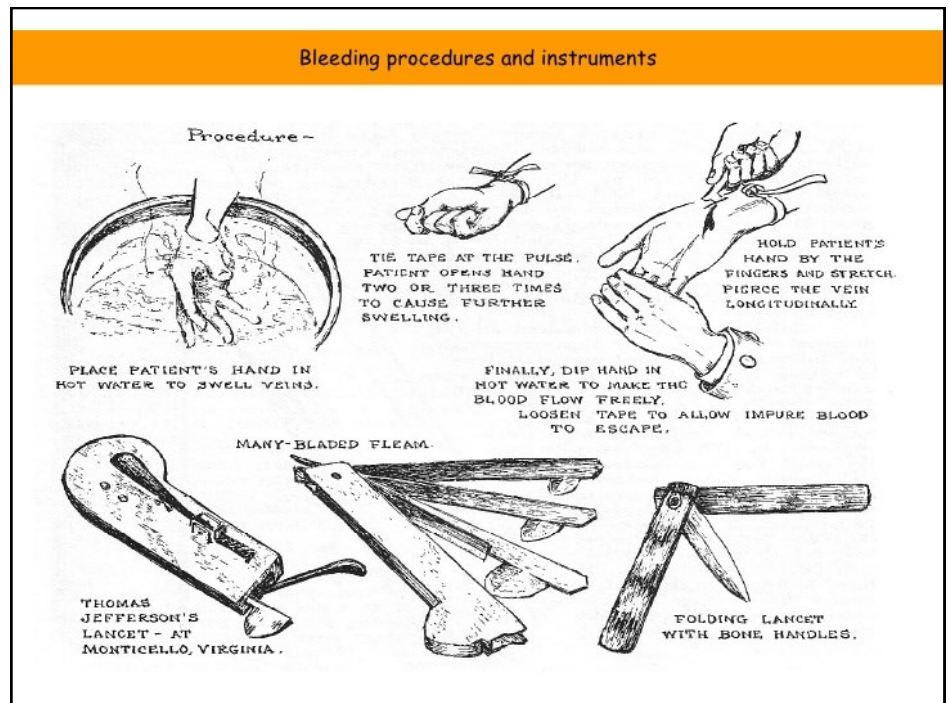
Returning to America, Rush quickly established his reputation as a first-class surgeon and scientist. He also became involved in the movement for Independence, eventually signing his name (along with fellow WNA alumnus Richard Stockton) to the Declaration of Independence. For the rest of his life, he would blend service to the nation with service to his patients. In 1793, he worked heroically to help the city of Philadelphia deal with the latest yellow fever epidemic.



Breathing a Vein

Some of his treatments, especially bleeding, created controversy, but everyone acknowledged the dedication it took to treat as many as 100 patients a day in that terrible time.

His chemistry skills were much in demand, both at the medical school (noted above) and by Lewis and Clark when President Jefferson sent the Corps of Discovery out to explore the west. The President sent Meriwether Lewis to train with Rush, where he learned practices of bleeding and sweating and from whom he secured a list of medical supplies including some fifty-dozen of "Rush's Thunderclappers," a proprietary blend of calomel and jalap designed to promote effective "purgation" in



Bleeding procedures and instruments.

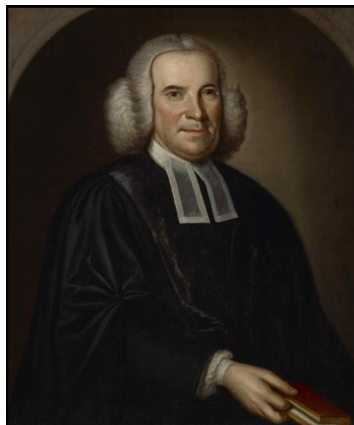
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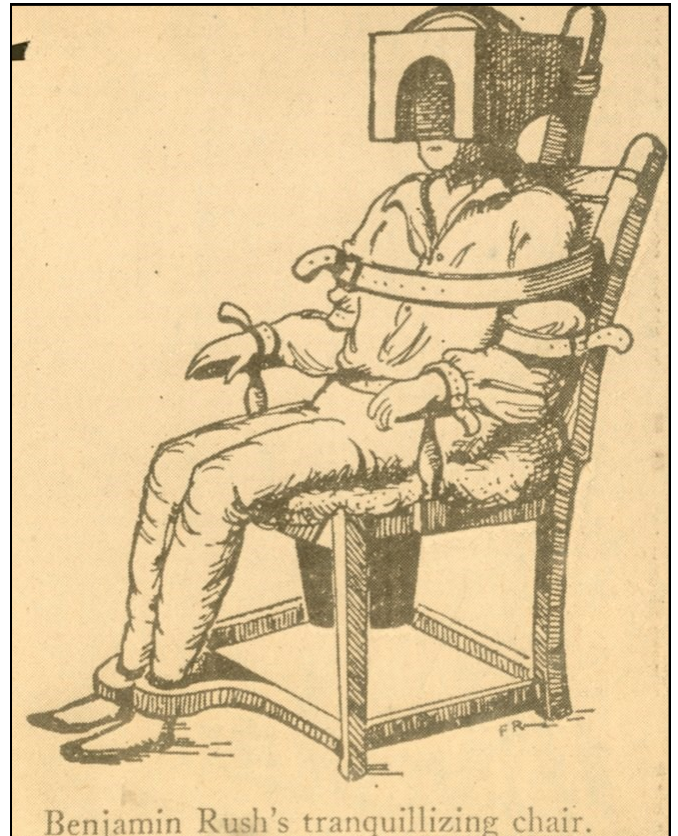
times of medical stress. (Perhaps it's just coincidence, but the only fatality suffered by the Corps was one man lost to a burst appendix.) One of Rush's longest-standing contributions to American medicine was in the field of psychology. He was one of the first proponents of treating psychological problems as real illnesses. A few of his treatments, such as the "Swinging Chair" and the "Tranquilizing Chair," which alternately spun the nervousness out of you or gave you complete isolation to calm your nerves, would not stand close scrutiny today, but they were the earliest efforts to treat these problems medically, not criminally. This position and his detailed writings on the subject have earned Benjamin Rush the title of "Father of American Psychology."

Rush was also an abolitionist, temperance lecturer, and early proponent of better education for women; a rich legacy for a man of his times. Unfortunately, his insistence on continuing the practice of bleeding, long after most doctors had given up on it, led to a real loss of prestige later in his life. After much public criticism, some of it so harsh he pursued and won a lawsuit for libel, Rush retreated some from his medical practice, although he continued in public service. Perhaps his most notable contribution to American life would come near the end of his own, when he managed, through a series of letters to both gentlemen, to convince Thomas Jefferson and John Adams to remember their old friendship and put an end to their long-standing feud.

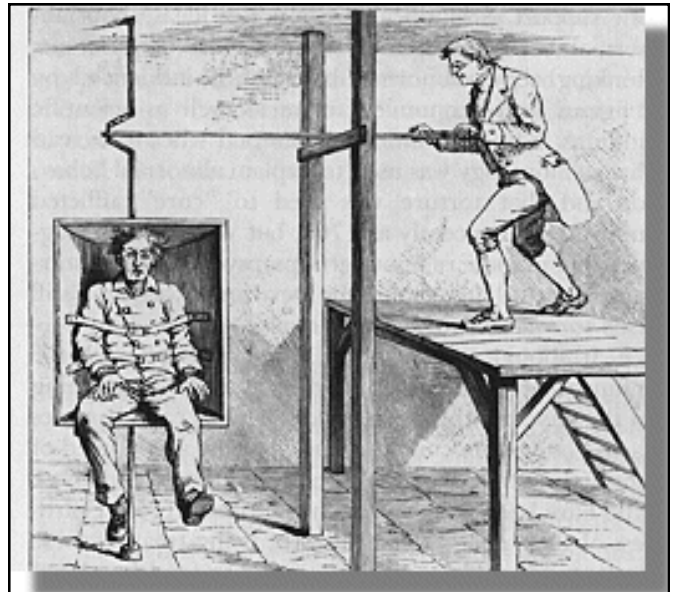
Many other important figures would come from Rev. Finley's Academy; governors, senators, doctors, lawyers, postmasters and men of substance and privilege. Their contributions were all important to the foundation of our nation, and like the medical stars listed above, they all began their intellectual pursuits in a small log school in Rising Sun. ✨



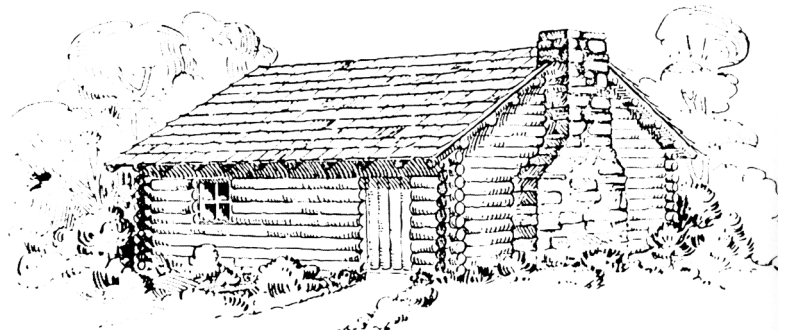
Reverend Samuel
Finley, 1715-1766.
Headmaster at WNA
1744-1761



Rush's tranquilizing chair.



Rush's swinging chair to restore sanity and complete calm.



Artist's conception of the first schoolhouse at West Nottingham Academy

Celebrating the hugely successful opening of "Historic Threads: 150 Years of Clothing and Accessories and the Stories That Bind Them"

JoAnn Gardner and Lisa Dolor Enjoy First Friday Festivities





It's almost baseball season! Before you dust off your glove and hat, take a look at this team sponsored by Elkton Diner. Do you know anyone? If you love the game, check out the Elkton Eclipse, the local team that plays by the rules from 1864. For more information visit <http://www.elktonbbc.com/index.html>

*Renew your
Membership!*

\$20 for an individual

\$25 per couple

\$10 for students

*Send to HSCC
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Elkton, MD 21921*



*Do you recognize this location? Send your answer to
cecilhistory@gmail.com*

Or call (410) 398-1790

