

Adviser Supplement
PSI: Primary Source Investigation
Tar Heel Junior Historian, Spring 2009

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Lesson Plan: Personal Primary Sources

Grade: 4–8

Overview: Historians use objects from the past to learn about the lives of people who made, owned, and used them. In this way, objects serve as primary sources. Objects in a museum are called *artifacts*. Artifacts are especially useful as primary sources when studying North Carolinians who have left few written records, such as early American Indians or enslaved African Americans.

Objective: Students will gain an understanding of the use of artifacts as primary sources for studying history—including challenges and limitations, as well as advantages.

Procedure: Introduce the lesson by spending a few minutes as a class defining a *primary source*. You may want to have students read the article “Historian’s Tools: Primary and Secondary Sources” by Jo Ann Williford, starting on page 1 of the spring 2009 issue of *Tar Heel Junior Historian*. Ask each student to bring in an object from home that can serve as their “personal primary source”—an object that would help a future historian learn more about them and their life. Remind them not to tell the other students what their objects are or why they are important.

Pair students and have them swap objects. Instruct them to think as if they are historians one hundred years in the future. They have no previous knowledge about students from the early twenty-first century and are attempting to understand this society based on the object in front of them.

Give each student five minutes to complete the following:

1. Write down one or two guesses of what this source tells you about the life of the person who owned it.
2. Write down one or two observations that this source tells you about the lives, society, and/or culture of students in your town in the early twenty-first century.

You can model this activity by doing a group example using a “personal primary source” of your own or an object from the classroom.

Have the students share their ideas about their partners’ objects with the class. As each does this, let the partner reveal the reason for bringing in that particular object as his or her primary source.

As a class, discuss the benefits and problems of using artifacts as primary sources. What can you learn by studying objects? What questions do objects as primary sources not answer? Where could you find the answers to those questions?

Have students read the articles on pages 4 through 8 in the spring 2009 *Tar Heel Junior Historian* to learn more about how historians and curators use objects to learn about the past.

This lesson plan was adapted from Making History Mine: Meaningful Connections for Grades 5–9 by Sarah Cooper.

Extension Activity:

After playing the role of curator, learn about the work of a museum registrar. Registrars document and organize a museum's collection of artifacts for storage, inventory, and display.

Students can work together to sort their objects into categories. In science class, this process is called *classifying*. In a history museum, it's called a *collection*. Keep an ongoing list of the many collections the class can create and which items fit into each collection. Objects can be sorted in a variety of ways—by function, materials, era, and so forth.

Consider the following questions:

1. How many ways could you organize the items?
2. What does each collection have in common?
3. What would you name each collection? For example, the North Carolina Museum of History has a military collection, a decorative arts collection, and a photography collection.
4. Were there items that did not seem to fit into any category? What do you think that registrars would do with those items?

To learn more about curators, registrars, and other careers related to history, access http://ncmuseumofhistory.org/THJHA/THJHA_Careers.html.

To learn more about the North Carolina Museum of History's artifacts, access <http://ncmuseumofhistory.org/nca/index.html>.

Lesson Plan: More than a Pretty Picture

Grade: 4

Overview: Photographs are primary sources that can teach us a lot about people in the past. Look at old images and learn how to “read” their stories.

Objectives: Students will be able to

1. use a photograph to find clues about the past.
2. learn how to use additional resources to “date” a photograph.

Procedure: Begin by sharing a brief history of photography with the students. *Do you like to take pictures? What do you take pictures of? Before cameras, how do you think images were captured?* (portrait, drawing, woodcut, sculpture, and so forth). *What kinds of things would be recorded?* (important events, important people, and so forth). The process of capturing an image with photography was only possible 180 years ago, so in the scheme of things, photography is a new tool for historians.

The word *photography* comes from the Greek words *photos* (“light”) and *graphein* (“to draw”). The word was first used by the scientist Sir John F. W. Herschel in 1839 to describe a method of recording images by the action of light on a sensitive material.

Show picture of camera obscura. An innovation leading up to photography—*camera obscura* (Latin for “dark room”)—had been around for at least four hundred years, but its use was limited to an aid to drawing. If a room was completely darkened, with a single hole in one wall, an inverted image would be seen on the opposite wall. A person inside of the room could trace this upside-down image. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) wrote about using a camera obscura. In the 1600s and 1700s a tabletop model developed. By adding a lens and a mirror, it was possible for a person outside of the box to trace the image reflected through it.

Show picture of first photograph. The first successful permanent photograph was created in the summer of 1827 (182 years ago) by a French inventor named Joseph Nicéphore Niépce [pronounced Neeps]. Using chemicals on a metal plate, placed inside of a camera obscura, he was able to record an image of the view outside of his window. He called his process *heliography* (after the Greek, “of the sun”). The image is difficult to decipher, but there is a building on the left, a tree, and a barn immediately in front.

Problem: Exposure time was eight hours, and the image faded after awhile.

Show daguerreotype. Niépce partnered with Louis Daguerre to refine the process. In January 1839 (170 years ago) Daguerre invented the process of using silver on a copper plate to capture an image. He called the result a *daguerreotype*. Daguerre got the exposure time down to thirty minutes—better than eight hours, but still . . . The daguerreotype became popular with the middle class, which could not afford to sit for portrait paintings. By 1850, there were more than seventy daguerreotype studios in New York City alone.

In 1884 George Eastman of Rochester, New York, developed dry gel on paper, or flexible film, to replace the plates. Now the photographer did not have to carry around boxes of plates and toxic chemicals. Eastman later invented the Kodak camera. Anyone could take a photograph! The camera became available to the mass market in 1901 as the Kodak Brownie. Problem: The photo was taken quickly, but the photographer still had to wait for the development process.

Digital technology—introduced in broadcasting equipment in 1969 and in regular cameras in 1981—changed the immediacy of photography. Now we can see the image right after snapping a photo, and there is no film or development necessary! Problem: There are so many photos . . . of everything . . . Where do we stop? How do we store the images?

Once you have shared some of this history of photography, move on to the rest of the lesson.

Today we're going to look at photographs from North Carolina to see what they tell us about the past. We already know one thing based on our lesson on the history of photography. These images could not have been taken prior to the mid-1800s because cameras weren't invented yet.

Hand out selection of photos to students.

Step One: Observation

Have students examine the photograph for a couple of minutes. Prompt them in their observation. *What's your overall impression of the photograph? What is the photo about? Who is depicted?*

- Look closer at the details of the photo.
- Look at each person's clothing. Were they rich or poor? In what decade was the photograph taken? What type of home do the people live in?
- Look at the landscape. What season of the year is it? How can you tell? Is this a city or country scene?
- Look at other details. What types of tools are the people using? Do we still use them today?

When you glance at a photo, you may miss some of the details. Today we're going to use a method of studying one-fourth of the photo at a time. *Hand out sheets of paper that have one quadrant cut out and demonstrate how to use them to examine the photo more closely by covering three-fourths of it.*

Step Two: Analysis and Inference

What new details become available as you examine the photograph by quadrants?

- List the people, objects, and activities you see.
- What can you infer (conclude, guess, figure out) from this photograph?
- What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?
- Where might you find answers to your questions?

Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

| People | Objects | Activities |
|--------|---------|------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Have the students share something interesting they discovered in their photo analysis. Remind students to try out their photo analysis techniques on their own photos the next time they're snapping pics with their cell phone or camera or posting pics on their Facebook or My Space page. What kinds of things can people infer about you? What might future historians learn about you from your photographs?

The North Carolina State Archives has a Flickr photo page where you can find historic photographs to use in this lesson. Access it at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/north-carolina-state-archives>.

For more ideas on how to analyze a photograph, read the article by David J. Walbert, "A Snapshot in Time: How to Study a Photo," that starts on page 20 of the spring 2009 issue of *Tar Heel Junior Historian*.

Lesson Plan: Mary Porter's Will

Grade: 8

Overview: Mary Porter died in Chowan County in 1717 and left an extensive will. See what students can learn about the lives of wealthy North Carolina planters in the early 1700s by analyzing this document.

Objective: Students will be introduced to the concept of analyzing official documents as primary sources for studying history—including challenges and limitations, as well as benefits.

Procedure: Students should read the article about Mary Porter and her will, "Historians Piece It All Together" by Debra A. Blake, starting on page 12 of the spring 2009 *Tar Heel Junior Historian*.

Pass out copies of the transcribed will (which starts on page 7 of this *Adviser Supplement*) and have students read the information. It may be helpful to work as a class to list on the board all of Mary Porter's belongings and to whom she left them.

Have students answer the questions on the Activity Sheet (page 10 of this *Adviser Supplement*), citing their evidence. Review the students' answers as a class.

[The Last Will and Testament of Mary Porter]

North Carolina, SS.

In the Name of God Amen, this 12th day of November, 1717 I Mary Porter of Chowan precinct in the County of Albemarle, in the province of North Carolina Widow being of sound and perfect memory, doe make Constitute and ordaine Declare and apoint this to be my last Will and Testament Revokeing and annulling by these presents all former and other Will and Wills heretofore by me made in manner and form following Impts, I recomend my Soul into the hands of allmighty God who gave it and my body I comit to the earth to be Decently buried at the discretion of my Exors hereinafter named,

Item I give and bequeath unto my well beloved Son John Porter my Negroe man knowne by the Name of Sandy half a dozen Rousia leather Chairs my oval Table large one midle Sized pewter dish, 2 large pewter basons and a Shovel and tongs tipped with Brass Item I give and bequeath unto my well beloved Son Edmund Porter my Negroe man knowne by the name of Oliver one large plank chest one Silver Drinking cup with 2 handles half a dosen Silver Spoons one large China bason already in his possession the large pair of Tongs and Shovel one bedstead one wooden couch the largest of the Small looking glasses the large Cedar table half a dosen painted Chairs and my whole Stock of hoggs that I shall leave at my decease After my Debts and legacys paid and one pair of Iron Doggs, 50 # weight of feathers and all the money due to me lying in the hands of M^r. Welstead and Oliver, Merch^{ts}, in Boston he paying out of the s^d. money within Six Months After the receiving it unto my beloved Daughter, Eliz. Porter Six Silver Spoons each weighing Ten Shillings Sterling at least, and one Iron pot & pot hooks and 12 Soup plates But it is my Will and pleasure that if the s^d Edmund shall not be in this Government at my decease that then and in Such Case all and every of the Legacys here left to the s^d. Edmund shall remain in the Exors hands hereafter Named until his arrival here or until he shall impower any person After my Decease to take and receive the Same and if it shall happen that the s^d. Edmund Shall never arrive here nor Impower any person as Afors^d. after my Decease then all & every of the Legacys Afrs^d. I give and bequeath to my Sons John Porter and Joshua Porter and to my Daughter Eliz: Porter to be equally divided amongst them, Item I give and bequeath unto my Wel beloved Son Joshua Porter a tract of Land lyeing in Yawpim, bounded by Mr. Clayton's & Mr. Clarks lines to him the s^d Joshua and his heirs forever my Negroe woman knowne by the Name of Edy one ticken Feather bed and bolster and Two Pillows one feather bed covered with Canvas and bolster and one Pillow three pillow cases Suitable Two pair fine Sheets 2 p^r of Coarse Sheets one Set of red watered Curtains and Wallons one Spotted worsted Rugg, 1 Red Rugg 2 p^r good Blankets 1 flowered Bed Covered 1 Bedstead that Stood in the hall Chamber Six Rousia leather chairs one of the large looking glasses and my largest and one middling Iron pot the large andirons a large brass Skillet and Trivet and one brass Candlestick one pair brass Scales and weights 1 pair of Shillifards two Drapier towells a pewter mustard pott the Coarsest of brass ridles my Dantzick lock Chest a lime Sifter a Case of Knives and forks, a Cross cut Saw a writeing Desk four Pewter Porringers, 1 earthen Poringers, 10 pewter plates 1 Iron pestle 1 Ash Table 1 large Soup Pewter dish one large Shallow Dito one midle Sized D^o 1 large 1 Small Pewter bason 2 Earthen basons and 2 plates Do 1 set of Wedges and Six wooden Chairs 2 Joint Stooles 2 wooden turned chairs 2 Iron Tramels 1 brass butter ladle 1 small brass Kettle 1 pewter chamber

pot a hand Mill peckers 1 glass salt 1 Iron chafing dish a pair bellows all my reap Books
 a Square cloath brush afaroe and Curryng Knife and the half of my Sheep and Cattle and
 the half of a Tarr Kilne now on foot and the half of all my Crop now in the ground with a
 pottle pewter pot and a pint pewter pot 1 Glass Gall: Bottle and a broad Axe my Debts
 first to be deducted Item, I give and bequeath unto my beloved Daughter Sarah Lilington
 my Negroe woman called Maria 1 Chest of Drawers six painted chairs now in her
 possession one pair of Iron fire dogs 1 small Cedar table 1 pair of fine Sheets 2 pair
 coarse Sheets 2 pillow cases Two drapier towels, my larges quilt one lignum Vitae Spice
 Morter one large Soup dish 1 midle Sized dish 1 Small pewter bason 1 brass Skimer 1
 Small Iron kete the least of my painted Trunks 2 earthen basons and plates 1 English
 Flasket 1 large Glass bottle one Stone Jugg 1 pewter Chamber pot 1 bed pann, three of
 my others which she likes best and the full third part of the cotton and Wooll that shall
 belong to me at my decease, Item I give and bequeath unto my beloved daughter
 Elizabeth Porter my Indian woman called Judith and her daughter Named Sukey 1 chest
 of Drawers one oval Table my best Set of ~~red~~ Curtains & Valens belonging to my
 lodging roome one Ticken Feather bed and bolster 4 pillows one bedstead belonging also
 to my lodging roome, three pair of fine Sheets 2 pair Coarse sheets 4 pillow Cases my
 Green Rugg made of worsted 1 pair of the best rose blankets the least of my quilts my
 Calico counterpaine and Tester cloath, my bible my Spice box 1 warming pan 1 p^r
 Chamber doggs with brass 1 Black Trunk and one painted trunk a large brass Kete and
 Two Skimers, a Brass Shie and 2 Iron potts one linked Tramel a brass Flam one Copper
 Chocolat pot 1 white rug 1 Gridiron four matted Chairs my Silver Salt Marked I PM, and
 a Silver peper box with the Same marke large pewter Soup dish 1 Shallow D^o 2 midling
 pewter dishes 1 large and 1 Small pewter bason 10 pewter plates, 6 painted chairs 5
 pewter porringers 1 p^r brass Candlesticks and snuffers and Snuff dish my Smoothing Iron
 heaters and Frame 1 Gall Stone Jugg 1 Glass Cruit Two glass cups one mustard pott 2
 pewter Chamber 3 earthen basons 1 large dish and 2 plates 1 Tin pudding pan 1 Spit
 1 leaden pan and 2 painted brushes a brass shovel and tongs 1 large looking Glass the
 best of the bed pans, 1 pewter Salt 1 Glass Decanter 2 tin dish Covers 1 brass Ridle a
 large turned Elbow chair 1 Dripen pan 1 Case of bottles, one half of my Sheep and Cattle
 that shall remain after my Debts and legacys paid and half of the Tarr Kiln now on foot
 and half the Crop now in the ground, 12 drapier napkins one drapier Table Cloath, Two
 drapier Towells and one Bell skillet, Item, I give and bequeath unto my Grandson John
 Porter, 1 Young Cowe and 1 Young Ewe, to run for his Benefit at my decrease to be
 delivered to him with the increase at the age of one and twenty or day of Marriage which
 shall first happen and also my Silver tankard marked IPM to be delivered at the same
 time Item I give and bequeath unto my Grand daughter Sarah Porter one young Cowe and
 one young Ewe at my decease to run for her benefit and also Six Silver Spoons Marked
 IPM to be delivered to her with the encrease at the age of eighteen years or day of
 Marriage which Shall first happen Item I give and bequeath unto my Granddaughter
 Elizabeth Lilington one Young Cowe and one Young Ewe and my Smallest looking
 Glass to be delivered with the encrease at the age of eighteen years or day of Marriage
 Item I give and bequeath unto my Granddaughter Mary Lilington one young Cowe and
 one Young Ewe and my Silver Dram Cup Marked IPM, to be delivered to her with their
 encrease at the age of eighteen Years, or day of Marraige which shall first happen, Item I
 give and bequeath unto my granddaughter Sarah Lilington one Young Cowe and one
 young Ewe to be delivered to her with their encrease at the age of eighteen years or day

of Marriage, which shall first happen, Item I give and bequeath unto Robert Herrick if alive and in this Government at my decease, the Sum of five pounds to be paid out of my Estate Item, all the rest and residue of Estate not herein and hereby disposed of debts being thereout first Deducted I give and bequeath unto my son Joshua Porter, and my Daughter Eliz: Porter to be equally Divided between them and lastly I doe hereby nominate and appoint my said Sonns, John Porter and Joshua to be Exors Jointly and Seperatly of this my s^d last Will and Testament but it is my Will and pleasure and I doe hereby nominate and appoint my Son Edmund upon his Arrival in this Government After my Decease Joint Exor with his Two Brothers.

Mary M Porter (Seal)

Signed, Sealed and Delivered
in the presence of:

JLovick Chowan SS
Mary X Henry

Jany 21st, 1717

proved in open Court by the oath of John Lovick.

Robert H CC

Letters Granted to the Exors Decemb^r 12th 1718

Courtesy of the North Carolina State Archives

Activity Sheet: Mary Porter's Will



How many children did Mary Porter have (name them)? _____

Why do you think some children received more things than others?

What does it mean if her son is "not in the government?"

At what age might a girl get married? _____

~~~~~

~

The will is dated 1717. Who was governor of North Carolina at that time?

\_\_\_\_\_

Was North Carolina a state at that time? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is Chowan County located in North Carolina?

\_\_\_\_\_

~~~~~

~

What is a ewe? _____

What is a looking glass? _____

What is a "ticked" bed? _____

What do you think the Porter home looked like?

~~~~~

~

What does it mean when Mary gives a “Negroe man” or a “Negroe woman” to someone? Can you give someone a person today?

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Were American Indians enslaved at this time? \_\_\_\_\_

~~~~~  
~

Based on the items listed in the will, do you think that the Porter family was wealthy, poor, or middle class? Why?

Is there anything not listed in the will that you think Mary Porter would also have owned?

What can you tell about society in the early 1700s based on the items listed in the will? What types of things were valued at this time?

Make an inventory list of items in your bedroom on another sheet of paper. Can you list everything? How does the number of items in your room compare to the number of items that Mary Porter owned?

How are the types of items that you own different from those of Mary Porter?



Article

William R. Davie House: A Building Tells Its Story

*by the Eastern Office Staff, Historic Preservation Section**

We generally think of public documents—such as land records, wills, and death certificates—as the main primary sources available for historic research. In the field of historic preservation, however, buildings themselves often become the primary source of information. Buildings can teach us a lot about the lives and accomplishments of the people who lived and worked in them.

William R. Davie, for example, was considered a leading figure in North Carolina in the 1700s. Davie was a member of the 1787 Constitutional Convention, governor from 1798 to 1799, an envoy to France, and founder of the University of North Carolina. We can read about him, but we can also examine his home in the historic town of Halifax in northeastern North Carolina for insight into Davie's lifestyle and social standing.

While most North Carolinians during the 1700s lived in simple, one- or two-room houses, Davie lived in a spacious, two-story home with seven rooms—indicating that he was a prominent and wealthy man. Architectural elements that tell us that

the Davie house was expensive for its time include the elaborate carved cornice and multiple-pane windows on the outside and the decorative staircase and raised-paneled doors with handmade hinges on the inside. These architectural details are associated with the Georgian style of architecture—an English style of design liked by educated, wealthy Americans of Davie’s time.

The layout and use of interior spaces give us a glimpse of family life. Davie chose a floor plan with a hall on one side and a large interior chimney on the opposite side—a fashionable house design more common in large towns. With his big family of three boys and three girls, Davie may have used this house plan to show his social standing in the community. A large entry hall and parlor take up most of the first floor, showing the importance of formal or public spaces in the home. Davie and his wife likely used the largest second-floor room as their bedroom. Just as today, boys and girls usually had separate bedrooms, but in the 1700s it was common for many more children to occupy one small bedroom. This was likely the case in the Davie house.

The location of a historic house can reveal much about the residents’ personal and professional lives. Davie chose to live in Halifax, an important trading port on the Roanoke River and seat of much political activity before and after the American Revolution. As a practicing attorney, Davie needed to be in a town and a county seat where he had many legal clients and where court was held. His job certainly influenced his decision to build his residence in Halifax. Davie’s interest in local, regional, and national political affairs also made Halifax a good place for

him to live. During the late 1700s, Halifax was the meeting site for the North Carolina Provincial Congress and the Council of Safety—earlier forms of our General Assembly and National Guard.

By combining the study of primary sources related to a person with a study of the style, layout, and location of the house they lived in, a more complete picture of that person's life is possible. Try using the example of William Davie's house to learn more about buildings and people in your area. Buildings can be excellent primary sources for studying history!

**At the time this article was written, in spring 2009, the Eastern Office Staff, Historic Preservation Section of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, included Reid Thomas, restoration specialist for eighteen counties in northeastern North Carolina; Scott Power, regional supervisor and preservation specialist; John Wood, restoration and preservation specialist for eight counties in the northeastern region; and Stan Little, the office administrative assistant.*

Extension Activities:

1. Have students read this article and the article "Have You Ever Read a Building?" by Deanna Kerrigan, which begins on page 9 of the spring issue of *Tar Heel Junior Historian*. Then work together or in small groups to analyze a building or buildings in your community.

2. His house is not the only primary source that William R. Davie left behind. Davie was influential not only in North Carolina politics but also in the shaping of the United States Constitution. Ask your students to research Davie's life and political career and make a list of the important documents and efforts to which he contributed.

Online Resources

North Carolina History

Documenting the American South
<http://docsouth.unc.edu>

Duke University Libraries Special Collections
<http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections>

Education Resources Database, North Carolina Museum of History
<http://nchistoryresources.org>

LEARN NC's *North Carolina: A Digital History*
<http://www.learnnc.org/nchistory>

North Carolina ECHO (Exploring Cultural Heritage Online)
<http://www.ncecho.org>

North Carolina Historical Publications Shop
<http://nc-historical-publications.stores.yahoo.net>

North Carolina State Archives
<http://www.archives.ncdcr.gov>

North Carolina State Historic Sites
<http://www.nchistoricsites.org>

State Library of North Carolina
<http://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov>

The Way We Lived in North Carolina
<http://www.waywelivednc.com>

Other North Carolina Artifact and Photograph Collections

East Carolina University, Joyner Library Digital Collections
<http://www.digital.lib.ecu.edu>

North Carolina Maps

<http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps>

North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives

<http://www.lib.unc.edu/ncc/photos.html>

North Carolina State University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center

<http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/specialcollections>

Western Carolina University, Hunter Library Special Collections

<http://www.wcu.edu/1597.asp>

National History

Dismuke's Virtual Talking Machine (Vintage Phonograph Recordings, 1900–1939)

<http://www.dismuke.org>

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/index.html>

Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov>

National Archives and Records Administration

<http://www.nara.gov>

Our Documents

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov>