

Period Rooms Wish List

Updated April 2024

Basin and Guglet (Bottle) or Ewer/Pitcher Soap Cups (two small) White-bodied ceramic, c1780-1810

To sit in the Best Chamber, the basin should be round and sit safely in an 8 1/2-inch diameter opening and the two soap cups in 2 3/8-inch diameter openings. "12 large hand basons" and "4 large bottles" are included in the list of creamware purchased for the household in the 1780s, and archaeology of the site provides evidence that creamware and later whitewares (tin-glazed earthenware, pearlware, and later whitewares, some with blue decoration) were commonly used (and disposed of) by residents of the property. "The Early 19th-Century Washington Database shows 20 (71%) of the households in the study having these items, usually described as basins and pitchers, clearly documenting that the bottle form, though still available from manufacturers, had given way to handled pitchers in popularity."¹



Cost estimate to acquire a basin and pitcher: \$1,500-2,000

Cost estimate to acquire reproduction set with soap cups: \$200

Footstool, wood (plain or painted) with textile covering, c1780-1810



Small wooden footstool (prefer walnut or other local woods), possibly covered with a carpet remnant. Period images depict children standing atop them when reciting lessons or other activities, and travel accounts in America note them for their commonality.² In households with grown children, these footstools could have been utilized in combination with an easy chair for the infirmed or in other manners. To be placed alongside the easy chair in the Best Chamber or within the Breakfast Room.

Cost estimate for acquisition of footstool with appropriate textile: \$200-800

¹ See Ellen Donald, *Dumbarton House Historic Furnishings Plan*, p. 174. The archaeology collection includes shards of a variety of white wares – most plain or minimally decorated.

² See Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett, *At Home, The American Family 1750-1870*, p. 72

Tin Vasculum & Seed-Saving Materials

In temperate weather the gardens around Dumbarton House would have provided fresh inspiration for female-centered artistic and academic pursuits. Bringing in cuttings from the gardens in a tin vasculum (or specimen container) provides a visual link to the Nourse family in general, who were known for artistic pursuits, as well as Maria Nourse specifically, who is documented as having an interest in sharing and saving seeds and plant specimens. In addition to being used in the Breakfast Room alongside a watercolor paint box in a painting scenario, the vasculum could also be placed in the Best Chamber, paired with jars of seeds, small cuttings, wrapping paper, correspondence to flesh out this seed-saving STEM storyline.



Reproduction vasculum based on 18th-century example, by Carl & Marcia Giordano: \$100
Cost estimate for jars, small paper seed packets, wrapping paper, correspondence: \$150

Tray, wood (walnut or plain mahogany) or painted/japanned tin, c1800-1825



Wooden or painted/japanned tin tray that could be utilized in several scenarios in various period rooms. One scenario may have it displayed along with a polish cloth and small polish pot, candles, and candlesticks—to be set up as an interpretive scenario on a table just outside the Breakfast Room

door into the Passage or as part of the seasonal room furnishings. Used to help illustrate housekeeping and service practices in the Federal period; idea of limited artificial lighting and use of polished surfaces to reflect limited light.

Cost estimate for acquisition of tray: \$200-\$1,000 depending on material & condition
Cost estimate for props to accompany tray (polish pot, cloth, candles): \$50

Cruet Set with Stand, silver or silverplate with cut glass, Washington, D.C., c1800-1820



Silver or silverplate stand with accompanying bottles of cut glass and silver fittings.³ Ideally crafted by a local Washington, D.C. silversmith or could be English Sheffield plate. Period recipes call for the dressing of salads, center dishes, vegetables, and other foodstuffs with ketchups, oil, vinegar, and other seasonings. Washington, D.C. probate inventories of the period suggested ingredients -- bottles of - essence of anchovies, quice [quince?] sauce, east india soy, pepper. (WHARTN18) The cruet set would be a key part of a Dining Room table setting.

Cost estimate for acquisition of cruet set: \$300-\$1,500 depending on material & condition

³ See Ellen Donald, *Dumbarton House Historic Furnishings Plan*, pp. 217-218; 228.

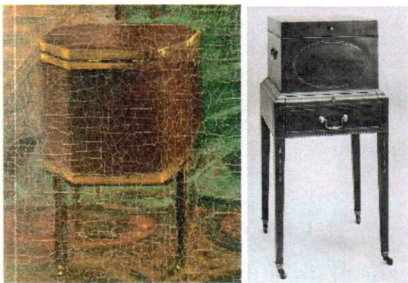


Dinner Forks, silver, Washington, D.C., c1800-1830
Forks and Knives, bone or ivory handled, c1800-1820
Other cutlery, silver, Washington, D.C., c1800-1830

The Dumbarton House collection has a small grouping of silver cutlery or flatware manufactured in the Washington, D.C. area in the early Federal period. The Dining Room would greatly benefit from an increased collection of silver flatware, specifically dinner forks, as well as selections of bone or ivory-handled cutlery, which was seen with frequency in early Federal Washington, D.C. inventories. The bone or ivory-handled cutlery may have been dyed a color or even decoratively turned.⁴ For the silver cutlery, some of the local silversmith names currently represented in the collection include Keywork, Villard, Burnett, and Williams; Georgetown and Alexandria as well as Washington, D.C. had several active silversmiths in the interpretive period of 1800-1830.

Cost estimates for acquisitions: \$50+ depending on quantity, form, material, and condition

Cellaret or Bottle Case, mahogany, possibly with brass banding, American, c1800-1820



Although not listed in the Historic Furnishings Plan by Ellen Donald, bottle cases or cellarets are depicted in period images and listed in period inventories and accounts. Use of such a form in the Dining Room would be in keeping with period practices.⁵ "1 mahogany wine cooler with Brass hoops...10.00" is listed in the Washington D.C. probate inventories (HELLEN15). The form may be mahogany banded in brass (as in Sargent's *The Dinner Party*, at far left), meant to pull up to a table, or a box on stand in walnut or other regional wood (as in this inlaid Baltimore, MD example, at near left), commonly meant to stand against a wall. Would have been a form used in conjunction with sideboard for transport, storage, cooling, and serving of beverages.

Tablecloth & Napkins, linen, plain or diaper weave, modern reproduction or vintage

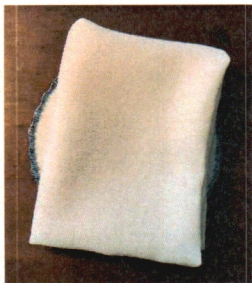


Table linens for the Dining Room are limited to one set with six napkins; we currently have no appropriate table linens for a Breakfast Room dining scenario. To enable more varieties of interpretations in the Period Rooms, we are seeking white linen rectangular tablecloths of plain, damask, or diaper weave, as well as accompanying linen napkins.⁶ Small-width hems preferred to mimic those made by hand sewing of the period.

⁴ See Ellen Donald, *Dumbarton House Historic Furnishings Plan*, pp. 218-219. Donald examines probate inventories relative to the Nourse residency and beyond; a fair number of inventories examined had bone or ivory-handled cutlery noted; a mix of silver and bone/ivory is recommended to allow for a variety of interpretations.

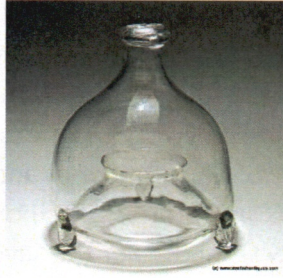
⁵ See Southern Furniture, pp. 529-541.

⁶ See Ellen Donald, *Dumbarton House Historic Furnishings Plan*, pp. 233-235 for more information on the variety of weaves seen in the period in the Washington, D.C. area; these were available ready-made or could be finished at home.

Hand-woven reproduction examples are available through artisans such as Justin Squizzero of @theburroughsgarret [image at left – Goose Eye Diaper napkin in twill weave by Squizzero, \$245]

Summer Seasonal Scenario:

Fly Trap, glass, c1800 or reproduction



Pest management was a common task, especially during the summer months when windows were likely thrown open to catch errant breezes. [The Fly Catcher, 1808, shows a French scene of trying to catch flies that seem to have distracted a youth (one fly he has already trapped within his glass on the windowsill).] For a summer scenario in the Dining Room or Breakfast Room -- include gauze over looking glasses; can drape fresh fruits; set out a glass fly catcher (or even just a glass overturned); rely on period household management or cookery books for pest management. Pair with a faux fly or wasp.

Cost estimate for glass fly catcher: \$250-500

Cost estimate for gauze and faux fresh fruit: \$200

Fall-Winter Seasonal Scenario:

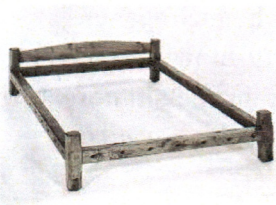
Trundle Bedstead, painted wood (poplar or pine preferred), 1790-1830

Bedding, reproduction, to include bed, sheets, pillow, pillowcase, and blanket

Towel, reproduction

Mortar and Pestle, bell metal, c1800

Gallipots, reproduction, tin-glazed earthenware (delft)



This cool-weather Best Chamber scenario depicts a sick room with a small child. This installation can tie into the start of school on our modern calendar. What sort of medicinal texts were in the library at the time? Who was responsible for concocting remedies – likely the lead female of the house. Sickness was a serious event in households, where child mortality was more common than our modern experiences. The medicine chest already in the

room will be pulled into focus and paired with small jars or vials and a mortar & pestle for mixing of remedies.

Cost estimate for acquisition of trundle bedstead: \$300-500 [may require minor conservation]

Cost estimate for acquisition of mortar and pestle: \$75-150

Cost estimate for bedding & towel: \$600

Cost estimate for gallipots: \$50

Please contact Abby Schulte, Curatorial and Collections Assistant [abbyschulte@nscda.org] or Gretchen Pendleton, Visiting Curator [gretchenpendleton@dumbartonhouse.org], with any questions or to provide contact information for dealers or upcoming auctions with suitable examples.