

# On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – Feb 2010

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The 18<sup>th</sup> Century Vegetable Garden

### Up Coming Events in 2010

Sept.

### Southern Cross Free Trappers Camp at Beaver Creek

17th – 20th September. Spring Rendezvous with friends at Beaver Creek, Whorouly. An extended single weekend – Friday 17th through to Monday 20th.

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Nov

**Holey Plains** date & details to be confirmed

**MMFAT** date & details to be confirmed

### Up Coming Events in 2011

#### Easter - Historical Conference

see the website for details

<http://www.danelaw.org.au/XVIARC2011/XVIARC2011.html>



### Important information

Victorian Police's –  
Re-enactors Guide Booklet

[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?media\\_id=36984&status=active](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrievemedia.asp?media_id=36984&status=active)

## THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY VEGETABLE GARDEN



*Gardner and Barrow*

Colonial families grew most of their vegetables & herbs in the kitchen garden. In the spring & again in the fall, they planted the seeds of their cool weather crops such as broad beans, cabbages, kale, lettuce, mustard greens, onions, parsnips, peas, radishes, spinach & turnips. As the warmer months approached, they set out seeds for their summer crops such as pole beans, beets, carrots, cucumbers, okra, potatoes, muskmelons & watermelons, as well as seeds for their fall crops of squash & pumpkins. Seeds of perennial herbs were tucked here & there in the garden for flavoring food & fighting disease.

The period from the end of January until the middle of March was sometimes referred to as the

**Six Weeks of Want.** Some years this precarious span of time lasted much longer than 6 weeks. By this time, most stored vegetables had been eaten, but planting had not yet begun.

Early spring greens, both cultivated & wild, could satisfy the family's craving for something fresh after months of pickled & salted foods. Throughout the entire growing season, the family preserved vegetables for the winter hoping they would last until the new plants began

to appear.

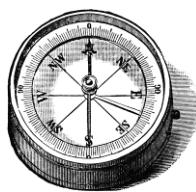
Almost any vegetable could be pickled in a vinegar or salt brine with spices. They preserved some vegetables, like peas & beans, simply by drying them. Most root crops like carrots, beets & parsnips could last for months buried in damp sand in a cellar or yard, if squirrels & rodents did not discover their existence.

Pumpkins, squash & onions could be stored in a clean, dry place such as the loft in the farm house, where next year's seeds might also hang in bags waiting for the spring season.



Because seeds from this period were not hybridized, but reproduced naturally through pollination, colonial gardeners attempted to keep their seeds pure & prevent cross-pollination with other species.





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## The following list of Vegetables have been found in the Gardening journal 1792 of William Faris of Philadelphia

Artichokes.  
Asparagus,  
Beans, (several varieties of Fava / Broad Beans & Kidney Beans )  
Brussels Sprouts,  
Cabbages, (several varieties of - sugar loaf, battersea, early york or yorkshire, early dutch, and russia )  
Cantaloupes,  
Carrots,  
Cauliflower,  
Cherry Peppers  
Cherry Tree Seeds.  
Corn,  
Cucumbers  
Curled Savory  
Greens,  
Job's Tears.  
Lettuce, (Several Varieties Of )  
Kale,  
Musk Melons,  
Nutmeg,  
Parsnips,  
Peas,  
Onions,  
Parsley,  
Parsnips  
Radishes,  
Rosemary,  
Sage  
Spinach, ,  
Squash,  
Thyme,  
Walnut Tree  
Watermelon.

For



## Bell jars,



Bell jars, also called "cucumber" or "melon" glasses were used in the 18th century in both Europe and America by gardeners to protect delicate plants from the cold. English horticulturist Sir Thomas Hanmer first documented their uses in 1659. Eighteenth century bell jars were generally 18 inches wide at the rim and the same in height. Some were made of the same dark green glass that was used for wine bottles.



Cauliflowers in 18th century bell jars

## Greenhouses



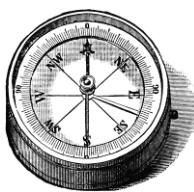
The lettuce greenhouse

During expected colder winter nights, the Colonial gardeners layer the greenhouses with a few inches of hay before covering them with a sturdy canvas blanket. This would normally only be needed when the temperatures get into the teens but It never hurts to be ready, just in case.



Colonial Gardener placing hay atop the greenhouses





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Necessary Instruments for  
Gardening from *Le Jardinier  
Solitaire* by François Gentil, Louis  
Liger published in  
1706.



**1 Spade.** The first instrument the Gardener takes in his hand to learn a dexterity in turning up the Ground and working it smooth and even and it is chiefly used by Apprentices.

**2 Shovel.** Used for throwing Earth out of Trenches or Ditches or for throwing rakers into a Wheelbarrow or Dosser.

**3 Rakes.** This tool is in the Gardener's Trade. a symbol of Neatness. One for smoothing Beds and Plots, the other for cleaning the Walks.

**4 Rakers.** A necessary tool for keeping the Garden clean of weeds.

**5 Displanter.** Used for transplanting and for taking up all Flowers, that the Gardener is obliged to transplant from the place where they were sowed to another.

**6 Prining knife.** So necessary, that a Gardener ought always to have one in his pocket for there's a hundred occasions in the way of Gardening to make use of it

**7 Dibbles.** For planting small flowers that have roots and for planting Bulbs.

**8 Watering Pot.** Nothing is more useful in a Garden than a Watering-Pot, so that a Gardner cannot be without it. It imitates the rain, falling from the Heavens.

**9 Beetle.** This serves to smooth the Walkes and hinders most effectively the growing of Weeds upon 'em.

**10 Flower Basket.** A Gardener that cultivates Flowers, ought to have Baskets by him, to gather the Flowers in upon occasion. This sort of Basket, shew a Gardener's Neatness and the genteel way of his Profession.

**11 Sieve.** 'Tis by this that the Earth is reduced almost to Dust and is rendered fit for receiving Anemones, Rannunculas, and other fine flowers.

**12 Saw.** 'Tis used for cutting the Branches which he can't lop with his knife.

**13 Transplanter.** Used for raising together with the earth, plants for transplanting.

**14 Garden Pot.** A Gardner ought to have good store of Pots to put some Flowers in, that grow better fo than in full Earth, such as Pinks, Bears-Ears, Tube-roses, &c. These may be either of plain Earth, or of Dutch Ware, the former are much larger, for holding Jessamins, Clove-Gill-flowers, and such other Plants.

**15 Plainer, or Rabot.** Tho you run the Rake never so often along the Walks and Paths of a Garden, it will leave some Roughness which is easily rectified with an Infrument call'd a Rabot; and therefore a neat Gardiner ought not to be without it.

**16 Paillassons or Panniers of Straw.**

This is very necessary to keep out the Froft, which would hurt the Flowers that are sowed, especially those who can't bear much cold.

**17 Mallet.** Used with the Chisel for lopping the Branches, that can't be so neatly taken off with the force of one's hands.

**18 Wheelbarrow.** To carry the Stones and Rakings of a Garden, to, places appointed to receive 'em ; or, to carry Earth, or Mold, to improve such Grounds as are hungry.

**19 Handbarrow.** To carry into the Greenhouse, Trees or Shrubs, set in Boxes, which a Man can't carry upon his Arm. Tis likewise of use for carrying Dung upon the Beds.

**20 Catterpiller Sheers.** For removing Catterpillers, which would otherwise deftroy all- It has a Handle ten foot long fitted to it, that it may reach to the upper Pans of a Tree. They clip, or cut the end of the Branch upon which the tuft of Catterpillers is lodg'd.

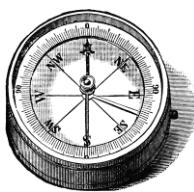
**21 Garden Sheers.** They are of use for trimming the Box, Yews, and other Trees and Shrubs, that serve to embellish a Garden.

**22 Double Ladder.** For trimming the upper part of the Arbour, or high Bower.

**23 Pickaxe.** For raising the Plants that adorn the Borders...or for giving some small Culture to Trees and Shrubs.

**24 Rolling Stone.** For smoothing Walks after they are raked.

**25 Hook.** A Gardener that has Rows of Greens to dress, can't trim them well without a hook, which is used after a certain way.



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**26 Glass Bell.** A Forist can't be without this unless he has a mind to run the risk of losing his Plants, such as are soon in Beds immediately after the end of Winter.

**27 Straw Bell.** Proper for covering Plants newly transplanted in order to guard them from the Heat or the Sun, which might annoy them at first.

**28 Garden Fork.** For spreding and disposing of Dung upon the Beds.

**29 Trowel.** By the help of which a Flower Gardener takes up Plants with Earth around them.

**30 Hurdle.** For passing the Earth through. Of great use for separating the good Earth from the Stones.

## Thumb-Controlled Watering Pot



Seen in 17th-and 18th-century English gardening prints. You Immerse the pot in a barrel of water to fill and, holding a thumb over the top hole, carry it around the garden to water the plants. Releasing your thumb allows a stream of water to flow from the bottom. Replacing your thumb stops the flow.  
12"H x 5" dia.



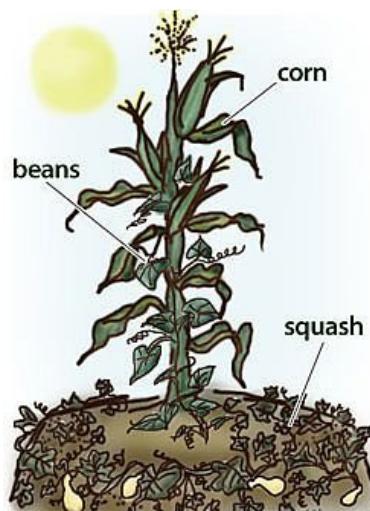
## Cloche – Straw Bell

The purpose of these cloches is to trap heat at night and to force vegetables to bear earlier than they normally would.

Also for covering Plants newly transplanted in order to guard them from the Heat or the Sun, which might annoy them at first.

## The Three Sister Planting

The Three Sisters are, corn, beans and squash. The term Three Sisters is a commonly used analogy for the practice of companion planting these crops, where each supports the other; through providing structure, moisture retention or nutrient exchange. It is one of the oldest and best-known examples of companion planting and was, planted by many Native American cultures and Colonial Colonist



*Direct-Sow, Easy-to-Grow:  
The Ancient **Three Sisters** Method*

## Web Reference :

### Colonial Williamsburg - Research dept

<http://www.history.org/history/cwlan/d/resrch1.cfm>

A Discussion of 18th-century Beans

A Discussion of 18th-century Brassicas

A Discussion of 18th-century Melons

A Discussion of 18th-century Salad Greens

A Discussion of 18th-century Root Crops

A Discussion of 18th-century Alliums

A Discussion of 18th-century Peas

A Discussion of 18th-century Solanaceae

A Discussion of 18th-century Cucurbits

A Discussion of 18th-century Stems and Buds

Early American Gardens--a museum in a blog

<http://americanagardenhistory.blogspot.com/2009/12/18th-century-craftsmans-garden.html>

### 18th Century Historical Trekking, 1680-1760 (Australia)

<http://woodsrunnersdiary.blogspot.com/2010/01/gardens-for-food.html>

<http://woodsrunnersdiary.blogspot.com/2009/11/three-sister-colonial-garden.html>

