

Felicity

Arlington in the 1770s

In the 1770s, Williamsburg was the political and economic center of Virginia. The land that is now Arlington, was mostly farms and woodland, bordered by the town of Georgetown on the north and Alexandria to the south.



The Ball-Sellers house, Arlington, Virginia.

However, one building from that time still stands today: the Ball-Sellers House at 5620 Third Street South. Settler John Ball received 166 acres of land from Lord Fairfax in 1742, and built the log portion of the current building and the shed, or lean-to, next to it. John Ball did not have any sons to inherit the farm, so after his death in 1766, the property was sold to William Carlin in 1772.

GLENCARLYN NEIGHBORHOOD

Eventually the land went to William Curtis and Samuel Burdett in 1887, and they developed what is now known as the Glencarlynn neighborhood. Through all this, the Ball-Sellers house stood and even expanded. The oldest part of the house still retains its unusual clapboard roof

and sports a two-story addition from 1885. Owned by the Arlington Historical Society, the log section of the house is open to the public on weekends during part of the year.

EDUCATION

As the eldest daughter of one of the largest merchants in Williamsburg, Virginia, Felicity was expected to be properly educated. Besides reading, writing and basic arithmetic, Felicity needed to learn how to run a household; that meant cooking and sewing lessons, how to plant a kitchen garden, and how to act the perfect gentlelady and hostess. Felicity received important etiquette and fine art and music lessons in the home of Miss Manderly.



A little over a century and a half later, young ladies in Arlington also had an opportunity to advance their education, both academic and ladylike, at Arlington Hall, a finishing school at the intersection of Route 50 and George Mason Drive. The teenagers at Arlington Hall were taught many subjects, from Spanish to Secretarial Studies to proper posture. They lived at the school and rode horses, practiced archery, and even recorded their voices to practice diction. Felicity's lessons with Miss Manderly were the start of a proper young lady's education, while graduates of Arlington Hall had "finished" their lessons and were ready to be introduced into society.

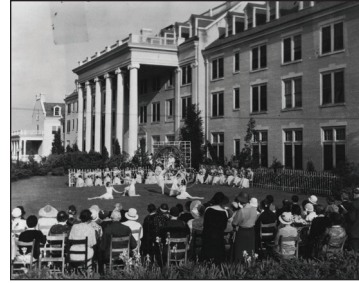
GENERAL STORES

Edward Merriman, Felicity's father, owned one of the largest general merchandise stores in Williamsburg. General stores of this time period carried

a wide variety of items, from specialty foods like ginger to household items like horse tack as well as cloth and metal tools. After the Industrial Revolution, people bought more things ready-made, and stores became more specialized: grocery stores, hardware stores, furniture stores, toy stores.

In early 20th century Arlington, the Eisen family store, located at 2920 Columbia Pike, sold groceries and in 1937 David Eisen turned the building into Arlington Hardware.

Arlington's current "general store" would be Ayer's Variety & Hardware, in the Westover Shopping Center. It lives up to its name, with a huge variety of items for sale, like gift wrap, toys, screwdrivers, fans, pens, gardening supplies, measuring cups, and more.



A May Day performance at Arlington Hall, ca. 1939.



The Eisen family store, ca. 1930.



Ayer's Variety & Hardware, located at 5853 Washington Boulevard.