Attending to Early Modern Women 2018

Accounting and Agency in the Americas

Summary:
This workshop uses the term “account” to join narrative and financial accounts. In it we will look at ways to read a range of texts with attention to financial, material, and spiritual enumeration and exchange. In particular, we consider ways that literary and financial accounts and exchanges reveal collective agency and networks of interactions among women, enslaved people, natives, and non-elites more generally in the Americas. Texts include relations, personal narratives, diaries, and account books.

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Workshop description:

In this workshop we will address strategies for reading and teaching a range of texts with attention to financial, material, and spiritual enumeration and exchange. Attending to women’s agency without defaulting to “the illusion of choice” is a challenge we face as scholars and especially as teachers. Strategies for thinking about accounting, both in financial records and in narrative relations provide ways to examine women’s agency within community and their investment in the material exchanges of colony and empire apart from notions of autonomous Self.

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur famously sums up Andrew the Hebridean’s newfound autonomy and self-realization with the same play on the word “account” we offer: “By the literal account hereunto annexed, you will easily be made acquainted with the happy effects which constantly flow, in this country, from sobriety and industry, when united with good land and freedom” (180). However, women can’t follow the same path to freeholder and reading their agency within and against prevailing notions of accounting requires different reading strategies. While works like Jennifer Baker’s Securing the Commonwealth and Michelle Burnham’s “Female Bodies and Capitalist Drive: Leonora Sansay’s Secret History in Transoceanic Context” consider speculation and commodification as global capitalism emerges in the revolutionary period and early republic, women’s participation in early modern American “accounts” merit further investigation.

The texts we examine include two personal narratives, a diary, and a ledger. In each case, transatlantic or intercultural exchanges inform local accounting. One key element of our approach to these texts is pedagogical: how do we introduce students to a range of texts that tell us about women’s lives, but not always in clear narrative forms. While Rowlandson’s and Erauso’s texts include financial and material exchanges within sensational narratives that
circulated both widely and for a long time in Europe and the Americas, account books and
diaries prove more challenging for students to interpret even as they often foreground more
strongly the material exchanges that draw our attention in the narratives. For instance, account
books are generally used by economic historians to study an overwhelmingly masculine,
patriarchal world, but they tell us so much more about the materiality of human lives. Likewise,
Ursula’s *diario* is clearly a form of spiritual writing that, because of her status as a religious
servant (*donada*) who was formerly enslaved, sits uneasily among the chronicles and
hagiographies of Catholic women’s texts in the 17th-century Americas. In addition to offering
an hemispheric approach to these questions, we plan to address disciplinary approaches that
our locations in English and History departments offer on this range of texts.

Key questions:
How do scenes of exchange constitute sites of agency for women in the early Americas?

How do accounts of these exchanges, financial, literary, and otherwise, narrate particular
collectivities? What are the sites of agency within those collectivities?

How do the subjects involved in these exchanges situate themselves with regard to the
exchange itself and the account? What collectivities do subjects claim, and how are these
claims strategic?

What alternate forms of agency do these accounts point to? How do these accounts attempt a
redefinition of agency? of collectivity?

What alternative (to patriarchy) networks are invoked by these accounts, and how might we
read them?

Would you describe Rowlandson’s naming of her own ransom (twenty pounds) a moment of
agency? What kind of agency exactly, if so?

What theoretical paradigms can we bring to bear on Rowlandson’s bartering practices? Do we
see traces of those practices in the written account of her experience?

How might the understanding of accounting practices or exchange enhance a classroom
discussion?

How can we uncover women claiming agency through their purchases, the credit they establish,
and the goods they sell to the store?

Primary readings:
1996. Chapter 3. (4 pages)

Mary Rowlandson, Sovereignty and Goodness of God


Recommended readings:


Van Deusen, Nancy E. Part I of The Souls of Purgatory (see primary sources), especially pages 19-32.


CHAPTER 3

From Panama she travels with her new master, Urquiza, the Trujillan merchant, to the port of Paita and the village of Saña.

Left Panama with my new master, Juan de Urquiza, aboard a frigate bound for the port of Paita, where he was expecting a large shipment. But as we neared the port of Manta, we were overtaken by such foul weather that the ship capsized in a squall, and those who could swim—myself, my master, and some others—made it to shore. All the rest drowned. In Manta, we managed to find passage on one of the king’s galleons, for a princely sum, and we headed for the port of Paita, where my master found his shipment as expected in a vessel belonging to a Captain Alonso Cerrato. He then charged me with the task of sending on the shipment in numerical order, and went on ahead.

I set myself to the task I had been given, unloading the goods and sending them on in the proper order. All the while my master was receiving the stuff in Saña, some sixty leagues away, and when I had finished unloading everything, I set out from Paita with the last few items to rejoin him.

When I arrived in Saña, my master gave me a warm welcome, delighted with the work I had done and with the deal itself, and straightaway he gave me two new outfits, one black and the other brightly colored. He set me up in one of his shops, placing in my care a great deal of property in the form of both goods and cash, all in all more than one hundred and thirty thousand pesos’ worth, and then he wrote down in a book the various prices of the items and how I was to sell them. He left two slaves to assist me, and a black woman who was to cook for me, and indicated I was to spend three pesos on daily expenses, and having done this, he loaded up the rest of the goods and took them on to Trujillo, some thirty-two leagues away.

Now, in this book I’ve just mentioned, my master also left the names of the people I could trust to take goods on credit, provided I did so carefully, with my wits about me, and made a note of each sale in the book. In particular, he wanted me to know that this applied to my lady doña Beatriz de Cárdenas, whom he held in perfect confidence and high regard. My master then left for Trujillo, and I remained behind in the shop in Saña, selling the goods according to the guidelines he had given me, collecting the money, and making notes in the book as to the day, month, and year of the sale, the item, the quantity, the name of the customer, and the prices—and doing the same with all of the purchases on credit.

Immediately, my lady doña Beatriz de Cárdenas began taking goods, and went on taking so much, and for so long, that I began to have my doubts—and without letting her know what I was up to, I wrote my master in Trujillo telling him in detail about the whole affair. He wrote back that that was perfectly all right, and that, so far as the lady’s penchant was concerned, even if she asked me for the entire shop, I should give it to her. So I put the letter safely away, and carried on with business as usual.

Who would have guessed those tranquil days were numbered, or that trouble lay just around the next corner! One
Sunday, when I had gone to the theater and pulled up a chair to enjoy the show, a certain Reyes showed up, and placed his chair squarely in front of mine, and so close up I couldn’t see a thing—I asked him if he wouldn’t mind moving a bit to the side, he responded in a nasty tone, and I gave him back a little of the same. Then he told me I’d best disappear, or he’d be forced to cut my face wide open. Seeing as how I was weaponless, except for a short dagger, I made my exit, more than a little enraged, and with a couple of friends at my side who followed along trying to calm me down.

The next morning, a Monday, I was in the shop doing business as usual when I saw Reyes walk past the door, first one way and then the other. I closed the shop, grabbed up a knife, and went looking for a barber to grind the blade to a sawtoothed edge, and then, throwing on my sword—it was the first I ever wore—I went looking for Reyes and found him where he was strolling by the church with a friend.

I approached him from behind and said, “Ah, señor Reyes!” He turned and asked, “What do you want?” I said, “This is the face you were thinking of cutting up,” and gave him a slash worth ten stitches.

He clutched at the wound with both hands, his friend drew his sword and came at me, and I went at him with my own. We met, I thrust the blade through his left side, and down he went.

I ran straight into the church, followed just as quickly by the sheriff, don Mendo de Quinones, a knight of Alcántara, who dragged me out and carted me off to jail—the first I ever in—and clapped me in irons and threw me in a cell. I got word to my master, thirty-two leagues off in Trujillo, and he came at once and spoke to the sheriff and, by dint of one thing or another, managed to get the irons removed. He continued to plead my case and I was returned to the church, and three months later, after numerous appeals and maneuvers on the part of the head bishop, I was free to go.

At this point, my master told me he had figured out a way for me to get out of this mess without the law banishing me, or Reyes or one of his friends killing me, and it was this—I should marry doña Beatriz de Cárdenas, whose niece was married to that no-good Reyes himself, whose face I had cut up. Do this, he said, and everything would calm down.

Now, it should be noted that doña Beatriz de Cárdenas was my master’s mistress, and that what he had in mind was to hold on to the both of us—me for business and her for pleasure. And they must have worked the whole thing out between them, because after I had been taken back to the church I used to sneak out at night to the lady’s house, and there she would caress me, and implore me, supposedly for fear of the law, not to go back to the church but to stay with her. Finally one night, she locked me in and declared that come hell or high water I was going to sleep with her—pushing and pleading so much that I had to smack her one and slip out of there.

I lost no time in telling my master this marriage just wasn’t going to happen, that there wasn’t any way in the world I was going to have a thing to do with it. He begged and pleaded and promised me mountains of gold, reminding me of the lady’s beauty and talents, and how this would put an end to all that business with Reyes, and he mentioned other things too—still, I held my ground.

Once he saw this was the case, he said I should go to Trujillo and set up shop there—and that is exactly what I did.
anyone say such things about this cleric, which is why I am so frightened. Has that trickster come to play tricks? I believe only in God. Mercy. I ardently commended him to God, but I feel such anguish. Such matters make me want to bury myself below the earth, dress in a hide, and not see, hear, or speak with anyone. I do not know what he wants me to do. God will take care of it.

On Low Sunday, I made a great effort to pray the entire rosary, for him, the one in the kitchen. I told the Lord I would pray the crown, which was not as difficult, in order to do it better. They told me to say the rosary 150 times and to lift the heart up to our Lady.

Another Tuesday, the voices told me that the Lord enjoys it more when a sinner is converted or is brought to Him than when people here on earth get jobs they really wanted. They also told me to counsel the young girl who came in the other day. I have forgotten much of what they told me, but I will tell what I can recall. They say that when an apprentice begins to work with a piece of stone, he is not as capable as a skilled craftsman. I should tell her what benefits her, and what does not. Living in a religious community is not for one's amusement. Those who have a true heart and desire should help and encourage her. The young girl was with me this morning saying that the nuns have caused her to worry because they gossiped and said she wanted to dance. I told her that the nuns had annoyed me in the same way when I took the habit and that it is necessary to suffer. If she paid attention to these matters, she would not get anything done. She should make herself pay attention and suffer everything for God. With that they will lose interest and leave her alone. Even if she did dance, she should not forget to pray, if they tell her one thing or another. I would not want that one to come with his lies, God help me. Later, they asked why I always complained. They also told me to counsel the young girl who came in the kitchen and that I should see if I could carry first. What can we do? It all comes from His hand, and that I should see if I could do anything on my own. When does He not give? Three days have passed, and although I have wanted to leave this place, I cannot. I forgot to say, that in that same place, when they said that bodies are the monstrance of the Blessed Sacrament, he said that no one deserves to receive Him, not even the Blessed Virgin, who is so pure and holy. When she carried Him in her womb she always feared and greatly revered Him. She continually maintained an internal dialogue with Him, and that is what I should do. At times I quarrel with the multitude of young girls here, with all the work to do in the kitchen, and the other things they add on. I went into the narrow passageway of the kitchen and said to God, “I am the one worth nothing, what else can I offer?” They responded, “What do I do for Him,” and it pays to look Him over from head to toe to see what He has done for me. Because I do not truly see Him, I shall never finish mending my ways.

Monday, 27 April, the nun in charge of prayers awakened at dawn feeling very ill, and for this reason, she could not go. The little time I do have to see my Lord is during the siesta. With all this happening, I hurriedly asked Him for His blessing, although I know very well I did not deserve it. I deserve to go to hell. Out of the blue, I can see more deeply, and they showed me a place deep down precipitous cliffs. I saw extreme darkness there. Moreover, they said that although these two paths came together, and those in purgatory suffered the same torture as those in hell, still they have hope because it is not forever and they are consolated. Those who climb the stairway carry the cross that our Lord Jesus Christ carried first. Only those who follow Him can take this path. I do not know how to describe what happened there. On Saturday, I was preparing to take communion, and the voices told me that bodies are the monstrance of His sacrament. There in front, they showed us His great love, what He had done in His incarnation, life, death, and Passion, and the sacraments He left for us, identifying them one by one. He suffered and cared for us for such a long time. Many things of this sort happened there. Then the voices said that I should give an account of the good He has done, and they told me a number of things I should give an account of. A few days ago, they told me that those in the world paid a great deal of attention to kings and viceroys, but they were like bits of earth. He was the universal Lord of heaven and earth, and everything that has been made passed by His hand. He takes care of each and every one of us and is the judge of all. Here in my head they enumerated so many that the list seemed infinite. I do not know how to say what happened there. If I knew how to write and had the priest's approval, it would be admirable, but I forget everything. When I am working or in a state of recollection I remember things or things come to me. Everything happens so quickly that there is no time to tell it all. On one of these days, I was in the confessional, tired and being lazy. I began speaking to God and wondered whether He could hear what I said. The voices responded, “I hear everything, see everything, and thank the poor pitiful ones for what they do for me, as it should be.” I do not know what word He said, and I do not know if it was the Trinity. (171) It was something like when I entered a state of recollection facing the back of my Lord. As it happened, I saw His back covered with wounds and felt moved to compassion. I began feeling terribly distressed, and the voices said to me, “What can we do? It all comes from His hand, and that I should see if I could do anything on my own. When does He not give?” Three days have passed, and although I have wanted to leave this place, I cannot. I forgot to say, that in that same place, when they said that bodies are the monstrance of the Blessed Sacrament, he said that no one deserves to receive Him, not even the Blessed Virgin, who is so pure and holy. When she carried Him in her womb she always feared and greatly revered Him. She continually maintained an internal dialogue with Him, and that is what I should do. At times I quarrel with the multitude of young girls here, with all the work to do in the kitchen, and the other things they add on. I went into the narrow passageway of the kitchen and said to God, “I am the one worth nothing, what else can I offer?” They responded, “What do I do for Him,” and it pays to look Him over from head to toe to see what He has done for me. Because I do not truly see Him, I shall never finish mending my ways.

On Wednesday morning, doña Antonia de Serrantes sent her slave to ask me to cook for her. I told her black female slave, “Go with God, your owner only remembers me to give orders.” But then, I called her back again to do what she asked me. During the siesta I went to pray, and the voices said, “If you have left the world behind why do you complain? Was it not better to accept that without becoming angry and do it out of compassion and love of God?, and other things of this sort.

Thursday, some days my heart races, and everything tires me out. I went before God to ask Him for His grace. There I saw a stairway extending from earth to heaven, with one path leading off to my right and another to my left. The voices explained that the stairway was the path of those who carry the cross. The right path is for those going to purgatory, and the left one for the condemned, and those who do not fear God and disobey His holy Commandments. The latter fall into this tremendous place and drop down
She is now working regularly, although she has a dark spot where the skin burned. Still, it did not blister. He and the others tell me today that with all those cooks to put the fire out, but they did not do it quickly enough, so I took water and I take them off. He did not turn away from hard work. What did it mean to love, bringing crosses, place heavy crosses on these shoulders, and then when it starts to get heavy, requested? Later the same day, he asked, her to God. The voices told me that one celebrates and enjoys God within the same light, this one time, she would always want me to do it. Afterward I felt remorse and sent that for Him. I also commended that nun with whom I had quarreled. They told me placed me on a God, because on some days I just want a chance to catch my breath. I endured a strategy before your will, I would not do more than what they order me to. Some came, asking me to run errands, others, to cook this or that for them; and then, the request from the convent, which, in itself is enough to stay busy all the time. I am always eager to go where the Lord is, and these things take away the little time I do have. It was a day of excessive work, but as it happened, after I served the food in the refectory, and without eating myself, I found a little time to prostrate myself before the Lord. While going there (18r) I asked the Lord, “Did you cause this to happen? If I knew it were not your will, I would not do more than what they order me to. So I come here to prostrate myself before you.” The voices said, In the thirty-three years I spent in this world, I endured a tremendous amount of work and oppression. When I left this world they placed me on a piece of wood, as though I were a vile slave and thief. These words alleviated the distress and tiredness I felt, and I returned feeling happy, thanks be to God, because on some days I just want a chance to catch my breath. On Wednesday, I had to deal with the same cooking situation and oppression. I went to the Lord and I said that if that cleric were His, I would offer everything I did for him. I also commended that nun with whom I had quarreled. They told me that when I was in her house, I freed her from many dangers, and I understood that if she did not mend her ways, she would be punished. Thursday, a nun sent some meat for me to roast for her. I refused because I knew that if I did it for her this one time, she would always want me to do it. Afterward I felt remorse and sent her a little porronier of broth. The feast day of Felipe and Santiago, even since last night, I wanted to prepare to take communion and meditate on what it was I was about to do, but I could not think of anything else. After taking communion, the same thing happened. After eating, I went to the choir and chanted on a clarion and drum brought by the one who helps with the Holy Sacrament. I commended her to God. The voices told me that one celebrates and enjoys God within the heart. The other was vanity and I should say so to doña so-and-so (whom they named). Later the same day, he asked, Why had I not roasted that meat the nun requested? Was that not about being nice to your neighbor? Do you not say, “Oh Lord, bring crosses, place heavy crosses on these shoulders, and then when it starts to get heavy, I take them off. He did not turn away from hard work. What did it mean to love, if not to endure hardship for Him?” There were a lot of cinders burning when they had finished eating, and I noticed that so-and-so was hanging around there. I told the cooks to put the fire out, but they did not do it quickly enough, so I took water and put it out myself. The voices asked me, Were my intentions good? Would I like it if someone did that to me when I wanted to cook? The devil made me do it. It is true that I did it in a complaining manner, which I did not realize until they pointed it out during the reprimands they made that day. I don’t know how to explain this, except in these bits. On one of these past days, a compadre burned her foot while taking a boiling pot off the fire. She fell to the ground complaining a lot about the pain. I felt very sorry for her and took a little bit of water, then placed it on her in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and she stopped complaining. She is now working regularly, although she has a dark spot where the skin burned. Still, it did not blister. He and the others tell me today that with all those other people around, I did not pay attention to His gifts and that is why I did not give thanks. Now sir, am I to think she was healed because of me? So, when I awakened they began by saying I should think about the terrible pains the Blessed Virgin suffered when she saw her saintly Son hanging on those three hooks on the cross and how He suffered from that incomparable torment.

Sunday, at dawn, the voices told me to take communion for the sake of those in mortal sin, those at sea, the poor in hospitals—because this is His love—and for those in the throes of death. (18v) During the siesta, I went to the confessional. I do not know whether this is temptation, I do not take it seriously. I placed myself there but was tired and kept nodding off. When they began speaking to me, I woke up. A while later, while in a state of recollection, I did not wish to pay attention to what they were telling me. They were very persistent, however, and it turns out, it was that cleric I mentioned before. The voices said I should commend his spirit to God. They told me about those nuns to whom he owed an apology, and why he does. I said to myself, “How did I get myself involved in this?” The cleric said, “Do it for the love of God.” I said, “No, how can I say that?” He said, “Go to Licenciate Refolio, who can write it in his own hand, and on one of these days, I said to my angel, “What can I do to please God?” He told me to be very humble and please others as much as possible, and observe true poverty, cast everything aside, and always communicate with God internally. It is all in pieces. Monday, in the morning, the voices tell me to enumerate all the bad things He has saved me from. They all appeared in front of me. I recognize that they are all true and know that when they address this matter, it comes directly from God. When these visions come with other types of visions, they can, as they say, be illusions. I always feel fatigued. During the siesta, I went to the confessional and saw a dog there gnawing a bone so persistently that blood came out of its mouth. I stood watching, fascinated, and the voices told me that sinners must work until they bleed to rid themselves of their sins. Then they talked about the poor souls who die before they are converted. This is a little of what happened there. In the afternoon, I passed by
Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*  
(https://www.gutenberg.org/files/851/851-h/851-h.htm#link2H_4_0008)

....Thus were we butchered by those merciless heathen, standing amazed, with the blood running down to our heels. My eldest sister being yet in the house, and seeing those woeful sights, the infidels hauling mothers one way, and children another, and some wallowing in their blood: and her elder son telling her that her son William was dead, and myself was wounded, she said, "And Lord, let me die with them," which was no sooner said, but she was struck with a bullet, and fell down dead over the threshold. I hope she is reaping the fruit of her good labors, being faithful to the service of God in her place. In her younger years she lay under much trouble upon spiritual accounts, till it pleased God to make that precious scripture take hold of her heart, "And he said unto me, my Grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12.9). More than twenty years after, I have heard her tell how sweet and comfortable that place was to her. But to return: the Indians laid hold of us, pulling me one way, and the children another, and said, "Come go along with us"; I told them they would kill me: they answered, if I were willing to go along with them, they would not hurt me....

I had often before this said that if the Indians should come, I should choose rather to be killed by them than taken alive, but when it came to the trial my mind changed; their glittering weapons so daunted my spirit, that I chose rather to go along with those (as I may say) ravenous beasts, than that moment to end my days; and that I may the better declare what happened to me during that grievous captivity, I shall particularly speak of the several removes we had up and down the wilderness....

**THE EIGHTH REMOVE**

On the morrow morning we must go over the river, i.e. Connecticut, to meet with King Philip. Two canoes full they had carried over; the next turn I myself was to go. But as my foot was upon the canoe to step in there was a sudden outcry among them, and I must step back, and instead of going over the river, I must go four or five miles up the river farther northward.... When I was in the canoe I could not but be amazed at the numerous crew of pagans that were on the bank on the other side. When I came ashore, they gathered all about me, I sitting alone in the midst. I observed they asked one another questions, and laughed, and rejoiced over their gains and victories. Then my heart began to fail: and I fell aweeping, which was the first time to my remembrance, that I wept before them. Although I had met with so much affliction, and my heart was many times ready to break, yet could I not shed one tear in their sight; but rather had been all this
while in a maze, and like one astonished. But now I may say as Psalm 137.1, "By the Rivers of Babylon, there we sate down: yea, we wept when we remembered Zion." There one of them asked me why I wept. I could hardly tell what to say: Yet I answered, they would kill me. "No," said he, "none will hurt you." Then came one of them and gave me two spoonfuls of meal to comfort me, and another gave me half a pint of peas; which was more worth than many bushels at another time. Then I went to see King Philip. He bade me come in and sit down, and asked me whether I would smoke it (a usual compliment nowadays amongst saints and sinners) but this no way suited me. For though I had formerly used tobacco, yet I had left it ever since I was first taken. It seems to be a bait the devil lays to make men lose their precious time. I remember with shame how formerly, when I had taken two or three pipes, I was presently ready for another, such a bewitching thing it is. But I thank God, He has now given me power over it; surely there are many who may be better employed than to lie sucking a stinking tobacco-pipe.

...During my abode in this place, Philip spake to me to make a shirt for his boy, which I did, for which he gave me a shilling. I offered the money to my master, but he bade me keep it; and with it I bought a piece of horse flesh. Afterwards he asked me to make a cap for his boy, for which he invited me to dinner. I went, and he gave me a pancake, about as big as two fingers. It was made of parched wheat, beaten, and fried in bear's grease, but I thought I never tasted pleasanter meat in my life. There was a squaw who spake to me to make a shirt for her sannup, for which she gave me a piece of bear. Another asked me to knit a pair of stockings, for which she gave me a quart of peas. I boiled my peas and bear together, and invited my master and mistress to dinner; but the proud gossip, because I served them both in one dish, would eat nothing, except one bit that he gave her upon the point of his knife. ...There was here one Mary Thurston of Medfield, who seeing how it was with me, lent me a hat to wear; but as soon as I was gone, the squaw (who owned that Mary Thurston) came running after me, and got it away again. Here was the squaw that gave me one spoonful of meal. I put it in my pocket to keep it safe. Yet notwithstanding, somebody stole it, but put five Indian corns in the room of it; which corns were the greatest provisions I had in my travel for one day....

THE NINTH REMOVE

But instead of going either to Albany or homeward, we must go five miles up the river, and then go over it. Here we abode a while. Here lived a sorry Indian, who spoke to me to make him a shirt. When I had done it, he would pay me nothing. But he living by the riverside, where I often went to fetch water, I would often be putting of him in mind, and calling for my pay: At last he told me if I
would make another shirt, for a papoose not yet born, he would give me a knife, which he did when I had done it. I carried the knife in, and my master asked me to give it him, and I was not a little glad that I had anything that they would accept of, and be pleased with....

THE THIRTEENTH REMOVE

Instead of going toward the Bay, which was that I desired, I must go with them five or six miles down the river into a mighty thicket of brush; where we abode almost a fortnight. Here one asked me to make a shirt for her papoose, for which she gave me a mess of broth, which was thickened with meal made of the bark of a tree, and to make it the better, she had put into it about a handful of peas, and a few roasted ground nuts....As I was sitting once in the wigwam here, Philip's maid came in with the child in her arms, and asked me to give her a piece of my apron, to make a flap for it. I told her I would not. Then my mistress bade me give it, but still I said no. The maid told me if I would not give her a piece, she would tear a piece off it. I told her I would tear her coat then. With that my mistress rises up, and take up a stick big enough to have killed me, and struck at me with it. But I stepped out, and she struck the stick into the mat of the wigwam. But while she was pulling of it out I ran to the maid and gave her all my apron, and so that storm went over....Then came an Indian to me with a pair of stockings that were too big for him, and he would have me ravel them out, and knit them fit for him. I showed myself willing, and bid him ask my mistress if I might go along with him a little way; she said yes, I might, but I was not a little refreshed with that news, that I had my liberty again. Then I went along with him, and he gave me some roasted ground nuts, which did again revive my feeble stomach.

THE FIFTEENTH REMOVE

We went on our travel. I having got one handful of ground nuts, for my support that day, they gave me my load, and I went on cheerfully (with the thoughts of going homeward), having my burden more on my back than my spirit. We came to Banquang river again that day, near which we abode a few days. Sometimes one of them would give me a pipe, another a little tobacco, another a little salt: which I would change for a little victuals. I cannot but think what a wolvish appetite persons have in a starving condition; for many times when they gave me that which was hot, I was so greedy, that I should burn my mouth, that it would trouble me hours after, and yet I should quickly do the same again. And after I was thoroughly hungry, I was never again satisfied....

THE NINETEENTH REMOVE
They said, when we went out, that we must travel to Wachusett this day. But a bitter weary day I had of it, traveling now three days together, without resting any day between. At last, after many weary steps, I saw Wachusett hills, but many miles off. Then we came to a great swamp, through which we traveled, up to the knees in mud and water, which was heavy going to one tired before. Being almost spent, I thought I should have sunk down at last, and never got out; but I may say, as in Psalm 94.18, "When my foot slipped, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." Going along, having indeed my life, but little spirit, Philip, who was in the company, came up and took me by the hand, and said, two weeks more and you shall be mistress again. I asked him, if he spake true? He answered, "Yes, and quickly you shall come to your master again; who had been gone from us three weeks." After many weary steps we came to Wachusett, where he was: and glad I was to see him. He asked me, when I washed me? I told him not this month. Then he fetched me some water himself, and bid me wash, and gave me the glass to see how I looked; and bid his squaw give me something to eat. So she gave me a mess of beans and meat, and a little ground nut cake. I was wonderfully revived with this favor showed me: "He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives" (Psalm 106.46).

My master had three squaws, living sometimes with one, and sometimes with another one, this old squaw, at whose wigwam I was, and with whom my master had been those three weeks. Another was Wattimore [Weetamoo] with whom I had lived and served all this while. A severe and proud dame she was, bestowing every day in dressing herself neat as much time as any of the gentry of the land: powdering her hair, and painting her face, going with necklaces, with jewels in her ears, and bracelets upon her hands. When she had dressed herself, her work was to make girdles of wampum and beads. The third squaw was a younger one, by whom he had two papooses. By the time I was refreshed by the old squaw, with whom my master was, Weetamoo's maid came to call me home, at which I fell aweeping. Then the old squaw told me, to encourage me, that if I wanted victuals, I should come to her, and that I should lie there in her wigwam. Then I went with the maid, and quickly came again and lodged there. The squaw laid a mat under me, and a good rug over me; the first time I had any such kindness showed me. I understood that Weetamoo thought that if she should let me go and serve with the old squaw, she would be in danger to lose not only my service, but the redemption pay also. And I was not a little glad to hear this; being by it raised in my hopes, that in God's due time there would be an end of this sorrowful hour. Then came an Indian, and asked me to knit him three pair of stockings, for which I had a hat, and a silk handkerchief. Then another asked me to make her a shift, for which she gave me an apron.

Then came Tom and Peter, with the second letter from the council, about the captives. Though they were Indians, I got them by the hand, and burst out into
tears. My heart was so full that I could not speak to them; but recovering myself, I asked them how my husband did, and all my friends and acquaintance? They said, "They are all very well but melancholy." They brought me two biscuits, and a pound of tobacco. The tobacco I quickly gave away. When it was all gone, one asked me to give him a pipe of tobacco. I told him it was all gone. Then began he to rant and threaten. I told him when my husband came I would give him some. Hang him rogue (says he) I will knock out his brains, if he comes here. And then again, in the same breath they would say that if there should come an hundred without guns, they would do them no hurt. So unstable and like madmen they were. So that fearing the worst, I durst not send to my husband, though there were some thoughts of his coming to redeem and fetch me, not knowing what might follow. For there was little more trust to them than to the master they served. When the letter was come, the Sagamores met to consult about the captives, and called me to them to inquire how much my husband would give to redeem me. When I came I sat down among them, as I was wont to do, as their manner is. Then they bade me stand up, and said they were the General Court. They bid me speak what I thought he would give. Now knowing that all we had was destroyed by the Indians, I was in a great strait. I thought if I should speak of but a little it would be slighted, and hinder the matter; if of a great sum, I knew not where it would be procured. Yet at a venture I said "Twenty pounds," yet desired them to take less. But they would not hear of that, but sent that message to Boston, that for twenty pounds I should be redeemed. It was a Praying Indian that wrote their letter for them.

**THE TWENTIETH REMOVE**

Amongst other things which my husband sent me, there came a pound of tobacco, which I sold for nine shillings in money; for many of the Indians for want of tobacco, smoked hemlock, and ground ivy. It was a great mistake in any, who thought I sent for tobacco; for through the favor of God, that desire was overcome. I now asked them whether I should go home with Mr. Hoar? They answered no, one and another of them, and it being night, we lay down with that answer. In the morning Mr. Hoar invited the Sagamores to dinner; but when we went to get it ready we found that they had stolen the greatest part of the provision Mr. Hoar had brought, out of his bags, in the night. And we may see the wonderful power of God, in that one passage, in that when there was such a great number of the Indians together, and so greedy of a little good food, and no English there but Mr. Hoar and myself, that there they did not knock us in the head, and take what we had, there being not only some provision, but also trading-cloth, a part of the twenty pounds agreed upon. But instead of doing us any mischief, they seemed to be ashamed of the fact, and said, it were
some matchit Indian that did it.... Mr. Hoar called them betime to dinner, but they ate very little, they being so busy in dressing themselves, and getting ready for their dance, which was carried on by eight of them, four men and four squaws. My master and mistress being two. He was dressed in his holland shirt, with great laces sewed at the tail of it; he had his silver buttons, his white stockings, his garters were hung round with shillings, and he had girdles of wampum upon his head and shoulders. She had a kersey coat, and covered with girdles of wampum from the loins upward. Her arms from her elbows to her hands were covered with bracelets; there were handfuls of necklaces about her neck, and several sorts of jewels in her ears. She had fine red stockings, and white shoes, her hair powdered and face painted red, that was always before black. And all the dancers were after the same manner. There were two others singing and knocking on a kettle for their music. They kept hopping up and down one after another, with a kettle of water in the midst, standing warm upon some embers, to drink of when they were dry. They held on till it was almost night, throwing out wampum to the standers by. At night I asked them again, if I should go home? They all as one said no, except my husband would come for me. When we were lain down, my master went out of the wigwam, and by and by sent in an Indian called James the Printer, who told Mr. Hoar, that my master would let me go home tomorrow, if he would let him have one pint of liquors. Then Mr. Hoar called his own Indians, Tom and Peter, and bid them go and see whether he would promise it before them three; and if he would, he should have it; which he did, and he had it. Then Philip smelling the business called me to him, and asked me what I would give him, to tell me some good news, and speak a good word for me. I told him I could not tell what to give him. I would [give him] anything I had, and asked him what he would have? He said two coats and twenty shillings in money, and half a bushel of seed corn, and some tobacco. I thanked him for his love; but I knew the good news as well as the crafty fox. My master after he had had his drink, quickly came ranting into the wigwam again, and called for Mr. Hoar, drinking to him, and saying, he was a good man, and then again he would say, "hang him rogue." Being almost drunk, he would drink to him, and yet presently say he should be hanged. Then he called for me. I trembled to hear him, yet I was fain to go to him, and he drank to me, showing no incivility. He was the first Indian I saw drunk all the while that I was amongst them. At last his squaw ran out, and he after her, round the wigwam, with his money jingling at his knees. But she escaped him. But having an old squaw he ran to her; and so through the Lord's mercy, we were no more troubled that night.
Rosalind Beiler – Glassford and Henderson Account Ledgers, 1760-1761


A note about reading the following ledger pages:

British seventeenth- and eighteenth-century accounts were recorded across two pages. On the left-hand side is an account holder’s purchases (Dr or Debit); on the right-hand side her/his payments (Cr or Credit). To read the following accounts for Mrs. Elizabeth Connell, “Negro” Sue, and Mrs. Jean Turley (indicated w/ a red arrow), you will need to line up the first page and the second page for each account holder.
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>7 1/2 lb. Block of 50 lbs.</td>
<td>30.36</td>
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<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>5 1/2 lb. Block of 50 lbs.</td>
<td>22.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>4 1/2 lb. Block of 50 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>3 1/2 lb. Block of 50 lbs.</td>
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<td>Nov 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 24</td>
<td>1 1/2 lb. Block of 50 lbs.</td>
<td>2.36</td>
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**Total:** 56.10

**Balance from Jan. 1:** 1.00

**Balance from Feb. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Mar. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Apr. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from May 1:** 0.00

**Balance from June 1:** 0.00

**Balance from July 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Aug. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Sep. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Oct. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Nov. 1:** 0.00

**Balance from Dec. 1:** 0.00
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<td>1756</td>
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<td>By Capt. T. Thomas on Occoquan</td>
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<td>By Cash</td>
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<td>By Capt. T. Thomas on Occoquan</td>
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<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>By Mr. Knowles, Sewing 1683, 1338</td>
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Colchester 1760–61

Feb. Sterling Guinea

Aug. 11 By 1st Warrant: Goods received Money by 15th Feb. 1760

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Balance to Debtor 6 18.6

[Redacted]

May 5th By 1st Warrant Tobacco on Orequan

&c. 1760 1761 1762

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

By an All. on Feb.

Sept. 2 By 1st Warrant Tobacco

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]